When our community found out we had won, some community members arranged an escort for the team when we came in town! There was a police car ahead of us and a fire truck behind the bus and they had the lights and sirens going and escorted us from the city limits of Carl Junction to the high school. When we got to the high school, there was a community rally!! They had made signs, “We Are The Champions” was pumping from a sound system, and everyone was cheering! The students were just amazed! They kept saying that they were thrilled that academics were getting this kind of response! It was awesome! (Story on page 6.)
The GAMbit is published quarterly by the Gifted Association of Missouri to inform educators, parents, and others about the unique educational, social, and emotional needs of gifted and talented children and the issues that impact their development.

Information on special programs and events is included on a space-available basis as a service to members. Publication of information does not imply endorsement of programs or events by the Gifted Association of Missouri unless such endorsement is specifically stated.

Submissions for publication, inquiries, and comments are encouraged. Send to GAMbit, c/o Lea Trimble, 134 Industrial Park Drive, Hollister, MO 65672 (leatrimble@trilakes.net).

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**GAM CALENDAR**

- **August 10-14**: World Conference on Gifted and Talented, Louisville, KY
- **Oct. 18, 19**: GAM 32nd Annual Conference, Drury
- **Sept. 1**: GAM Awards nominations and scholarship applications due
- **Nov. 7-10**: NAGC, Indianapolis, IN
- **Feb. 26, 2014**: GAM Day at the Capitol
- **Mar. 8, 2014**: District A Conference
Recently my good friend, Linda Irvin passed away. As a pioneer in the field of gifted education in the state of Missouri, Linda Irvin left a legacy of helping gifted students. For many years she taught honors history at West Junior High in Columbia. She recognized that gifted learners had special needs in the public education system. Along with the administration in her school she started a program for gifted learners long before there was state assisted programs. She became a leader in her school, in Columbia, and in the state of Missouri advocating for the gifted student.

Linda and I spent four years team teaching together in the 1990’s. She influenced me as a teacher more than any other person. She encouraged me to become a better teacher. I remember one day in 1993 she met me for lunch and asked me to move back to Columbia to team teach with her at West Junior. I was so honored that she would set this up for me and little did I know how teaching with her would change my life. We had some of the coolest, most nerdy kids and we loved them equally. One of those students, Stephanie Crooks recently said, "I am the person I am today, a teacher of gifted students because of Linda's influence on me as a teenager. She was the largest positive influence and role model I had in junior high and beyond, and the most important. More than anyone except my parents, I pretty much learned how to be from Mrs. Irvin. I remember how supportive Linda was...how she would just cross her arms and raise an eyebrow at our whacky kid ideas, and then just make them happen anyway. And we traveled a lot together...we went on all those trips to Williamsburg, and Florida, Iowa and Disney World with OM. That was a highlight. Her talent was nurturing our creativity and she did that in so many ways; Future Problem Solving and Odyssey of the Mind. She was so solid, so positive and caring...she was just there for us, and what you need."

Another student, Presidential scholar and Princeton graduate, Kate Swearengen sent this note, "I have fond memories of Mrs. Irvin coaching the National Champion Knowledge Masters Team from West Junior High School (her patience during our endless practice sessions and her pride when our efforts paid off), and of taking my junior high gifted class on excursions to Epcot Center and Washington D.C. Those trips were so special. We learned so much but she built in fun also. We loved seeing the twinkle in her eye and the little smile when our junior high silliness came through."

Linda Irvin taught kids to learn, to think, to question, and to be the best that they can be. She pushed them and pushed them more and then celebrated with them when they were successful. She loved coaching Odyssey of the Mind teams and Future Problem Solving teams. She often had ten OM teams and fifteen Future Problem Solving Teams working at the same time in the same room. She was committed to bringing out the creative side of learners. As Affiliate Director, Linda became very involved in Future Problem Solving...
both at the state and national level. The current FPS Affiliate Director, Janet Fite said this about Linda. "Linda Irvin was Missouri Future Problem Solving. Linda and her husband Jim directed the program for many years. They ran the organization meticulously and the program was strong under their leadership. Linda was a great coach and state director. For example Linda suggested Nanotechnology as a topic in 2000, a topic that most of us had not yet heard about. Linda loved thinking about the future and she loved teaching kids to think creatively."

Linda continued this dedication to education by ensuring quality professional development for teachers through her work with GAM. As executive secretary she spent hours each year helping plan the GAM conference and made sure each conference happened flawlessly. Linda developed the phrase, "dress your best to honor the best." This sentiment could be seen each year at the ceremony honoring those who supported gifted learners. Linda herself was recognized as GAM teacher of the year and received many other honors for her commitment to teaching gifted children in Missouri. Linda Irvin was a tireless worker, an educational leader, a thinker, a great teacher. Students in Linda’s classroom knew Newspapers in Education, Odyssey of the Mind, Knowledge Master, Future Problem Solving, Print Shop, technology, social justice, economics, The Stock Market Game, creative thinking, all topics Linda loved to teach. Linda’s husband Jim said, “Linda was very invested in teaching and focused on gifted children. Whether it was in the classroom or in her home, Mrs. Irvin found ways to challenge the children in her life.”

“If you asked her a question, she wouldn’t necessarily give you the answer,” her daughter, Kathy Becker, said. “She would make you look it up yourself. She wanted to make sure you knew how to get the answer yourself.” John Irvin said, "As a teacher my mother was very open-minded and accepting. If a child learned a certain way, she would modify her teaching techniques to help them." Moreover, Linda Swearengen, a parent of one of Linda's students recently said this about Linda Irvin. "As parents of a child doubly fortunate to have had both as a history teacher and a gifted education teacher, we recognized Linda as an unequaled role model. Linda Irvin was unfailingly positive, was intellectually gifted without conceit; and possessed a strong work ethic. But above all, Linda was able to recognize the best as well as the potential for the best in every person she met. For a quarter of a century Linda academically, socially, and emotionally boosted every student under her care. Our daughter was very blessed to be one of those students."

Kathryn Fishman-Weaver is a gifted educator in Columbia Public Schools. She says this of Linda, "For most of my education, I’ve been a stereotypical gifted girl: farsighted, distance runner, straight A student. But in junior high I was lost. I tried every student activity from cheerleading to Science Olympiad to find my place. Nothing seemed to fit. There was only one place where I really felt at home in Junior High, the gifted education room. There, both my humor and divergent interests made sense. There being smart was okay, and by proxy so was I. I know this classroom culture was gently and deliberately made by Mrs. Irvin. As an awkward adolescent I wasn’t grateful enough at the time. Now as a gifted educator myself, creating this classroom culture has become my aim."

Linda was also devoted to her Church and her family. She loved playing with her grandsons and attending their basketball games and rodeos. She loved all things Mizzou and was always ready to attend a good sporting event. After retiring from teaching in Columbia Public Schools Linda, Jim and their son David owned HUT Products. Linda prized this endeavor and appreciated putting the economic concepts that she taught junior high students into practice.

Linda Irvin left a legacy that we as gifted educators must honor. She was committed to gifted children. We, as gifted educators should ask ourselves how can we match the efforts of those before us. Are we providing the best services to gifted learners and how can we do better? As we planned our classes each day, Linda ended our discussions by asking me those questions. I challenge each of you as a gifted educator to ask yourself, are you providing the best services to gifted learners and how can you do better? If so, Linda Irvin's great works will live on.
Linda Irvin with a twinkle in her eye, remains a rare individual that touched the lives of all she met. In 2000, she piloted GAM’s charge at our 20th annual state conference by “Expanding the Promise: The Odyssey Begins” as our Program Vice-President.

That same year, GAM hired Linda as our first Executive Secretary. She continued Expanding the Promise by computerizing all our conference records, supporting the board of Directors and building relationships until her retirement in 2009.

When Linda and her husband Jim pulled into Tan-Tar-A with their trailer filled with conference notebooks, packets and registration organized, we all sighed and knew all was well. Linda and Jim, thank you for giving us wings!

Donna Pfautsch
State Representative 33rd District
The Carl Junction R-1 school district can add "World Champion" to its list of student accomplishments. Seven Carl Junction High School students competed in the Destination Imagination Global Finals tournament held on the campus of the University of Tennessee- Knoxville and earned the title of Global Champions.

The tournament is a four-day competition that features 1,200 teams from 45 states and 13 countries. Over 15,000 people attended the international problem solving competition.

Seniors JW Keckley, Parker Fitzgerald, Carter Richardson, Nate Demery, Morgan Ross, and Julie Jones and junior Abigail Danley competed against 66 teams including state champions from 45 states and international teams from Mexico, Singapore, Beijing, China, Turkey, KACE South Korea, KASI South Korea, Guatemala, Toronto, Canada, and Poland.

Destination Imagination, Inc. is a non-profit that helps students around the world discover their creativity. Students build a lifelong confidence in working together to solve any challenge.
At the start of the season, teams choose one of seven Challenges. After weeks spent creating and developing their solutions, they go to a local tournament. Top-scoring teams advance to state or country tournaments. The winners of these tournaments move on to Global Finals—the world's largest celebration of creativity. The CJ students are the first high school team from the state of Missouri to place first at Global finals.

The team's central challenge required them to extensively research wind energy and incorporate the research into a technical device and a skit. Fitzgerald stated, "The technical device was essentially a reduced-friction neodymium-magnet motor powered by compressed air. The device utilized the properties of magnets to precipitate motion without any physical contact between gears. Working together with my teammates, it took 85 hours to construct. The gold medal makes it all worthwhile."

The team not only placed first overall, they received medals for having the highest Instant Challenge score in their division. DI teams learn to solve Instant Challenges in a short period of time. The challenges are kept confidential until the day of the tournament. Students apply their acquired problem-solving skills to create solutions to challenges they have never seen before. The students have between three and five minutes to solve the challenges. The team continually practiced Instant Challenges, but they did not know what they would be asked to do until they walked in the Instant Challenge room at Global Finals.

This team was given a three part challenge. In Part One the team had 30 seconds to divide into two teams. In Part Two, the team had five minutes to complete a maze to gather individual materials to build two separate towers. In Part Three the team built two self-supporting towers with the acquired materials. The group was also scored on teamwork.

Keckley commented, "Each year we prepare for Instant Challenge the best we can, but we can never be sure how it's going to turn out. Instant Challenge is a huge part of the total score, so no matter how well we prepare our central challenge, it all comes down to those few tense minutes. This year, we nailed it despite the pressure."

The team has worked for years acquiring problem-solving skills. Greg Campbell, assistant team manager said, "The combined years of experience for this team is 57. That's a remarkable amount of years in the program. Some have been doing it annually since second grade."
Demery remarked, "Success in DI is about teamwork. Each member of my team has devoted a huge portion of his or her life to this program, and the payoff couldn't be better."

Team coach Lori Good described her students as focused, kind and aware of one another’s strengths and weaknesses. That combination, she said, helped make them winners.

“This group has worked so incredibly hard,” she said. “It’s kind of one of those lessons where if you work hard enough, it’ll happen. I mean, we were competing with (teams from) Beijing, China. We can run with the big boys.”

Good ended by saying, "These students deserve a lot of credit for bringing the first high school creative problem-solving world championship to the state of Missouri. We are proud to represent the school district and the city of Carl Junction. It was a perfect ending for a group of students who always displayed a tremendous work-ethic, character, and respect for others."

Lori Good is a gifted program teacher for the Carl Junction R#1 School District. She has been married for 32 years to Chuck Good and they have 22 year old twins. Lauren is a first year music teacher in the Carl Junction school system and Christopher, and his wife Rachel, live in Seattle, Washington. Rachel is a teacher and Christopher is a writer and a student. Lori has taught for 29 years and has been a gifted program teacher 20 of those years. She has been a Destination Imagination team manager for the past 17 years.

MORE MISSOURI STARS

Ireynn Holst and Emily Kepley, sixth graders from Strafford Middle School, participated in National History Day for the first time this past year. They took their Junior Group Performance, "The Jewish Immigration to Israel: Returning after World War II", all the way to Nationals! This was a great experience for them, and they are already hot on the trail for a new topic and a repeat trip to Washington, D.C.
Acknowledgement: Our empowerment groups were made possible through collaboration with our talented guidance department.

Introduction:

The bell rings for A lunch. Almost immediately two girls flutter into the gifted center talking about a recent assignment in AP Language and Composition. They’re followed immediately by three more girls carrying baked goods. I tell the five students I’ll be right back with our vat of macaroni and cheese from the teachers’ lounge. When I get to the teachers’ lounge however, the macaroni is missing. I pass my co-facilitator in the hallway. Surely she’s taken the macaroni for our empowerment luncheon. She hasn’t. I tell our group the dilemma and they jump into action. There is an intercom message and an email sent to the entire staff. While the case of the proverbial missing macaroni is, as yet, still unsolved, we did go on with our empowerment luncheon. A dozen exceptionally bright junior girls, sit outside with a guidance counselor and me talking and eating cookies and cheese cubes just as we’ve done for several months now. We remind the participants that this is our last official meeting of this year’s empowerment group. They are not happy about the group coming to an end.

“Won’t we keep meeting next year?!”

“You know,” offers another student “We’re a group now. We can keep meeting no matter what.”
There are nods all around. “Maybe we’ll even figure out what happened to the missing macaroni.”

**Background:**

The self-realization that these students belong to a group now carries great value and is the product of our empowerment group for gifted high school girls. Informed by my practice as a gifted educator as well as research in gifted education the following article discusses the peer group that resulted from our empowerment counseling group.

As the chair for gifted education at my high school, I’ve run these empowerment groups for gifted junior girls for three years and some notable trends have emerged including the importance of the peer group. Our groups of 9-16 girls meet on an alternating schedule during the two lunch shifts and after school. Our lunch meetings have the added benefit of allowing us to eat together. I believe there is value in breaking bread (or Cheeze-its) together. All of our lunch meetings (like the one described in the introduction) are pot lucks. We meet formally once or twice a month for six months and I have frequent on-going check-ins with the participants between meetings.

**Rationale:**

Too often gifted students are forgotten when forming counseling groups and interventions. I see this as part of a mythology that says being smart equals being “okay”. My work in gifted education and the research in this area do not support this myth. Ginny Maurer writes, “Although growing up a girl is just plain hard… growing up a gifted girl with an intense degree of perfectionism, perseverance, sensitivity, empathy, nonconformity, or introversion, may make it even harder.” (Maurer p. 198) The adjectives Maurer uses above, typify the girls in our empowerment group. Barbara Kerr adds, “The implications for gifted girls and women of the data at our disposal are great. We know from other studies that gifted girls…that the conditions of adolescence in our society …points to the awesome responsibility teachers and parents have to protect and promote the self-esteem and aspirations of gifted girls. “(Kerr p. 168) We hoped our empowerment group would help protect and promote the wellbeing of these students.

I want to note here that the girls in our group were not struggling academically, quite the contrary. Consistent with educational trends across the country (Kindlon), our gifted girls were outperforming their male counterparts. In many instances the girls in my group were academic superstars. However, as I point out earlier, a high GPA (or SAT score) should not be taken to mean a student also has the skills she needs to be healthy and happy.

**Results:**

It was not unusual for a student in my group to have a schedule that included six advanced placement courses, two sports, three musical instruments, two world languages, and regular standardized test prep. Being so hyper-involved meant they didn’t have time for friendships, nor did they know there might be added value in doing so. A benefit of our empowerment group was the creation of a set time and space for such friendships to form. As one participant told me:

It was nice to do fun activities like yoga and crafting with the group, especially since I rarely do such activities on my own. Those were things that normal girl friends would do together, but I would never have invited my friends to do that outside of the group meetings because everybody was so busy, and there were few girls that I was close enough to do that with in the first place. --Empowerment Group Alum
Within our group, participants found they were not alone and overtime they came to identify and belong with the other girls in our group. As they did so, I noticed the mental health concerns which had been an early catalyst for our original group seemed distant. This might not be a coincidence.

Over and over again participants tell me that identifying with this peer group is the most beneficial aspect of our empowerment group. Peers groups and friendships are so much a part of adults’ schema of adolescent life that we take them for granted. Rosalind Wiseman who writes and lectures extensively on adolescent life writes, “Girls tend to have a group of girlfriends with whom they feel close, and often these friendships are great. They can be themselves, share secrets, hang out, and act silly, and have confidence that they will supported no matter what.” (p. 80) This is how my students came to relate to each other. In the words of one of our participants:

I think the most important impact of our empowerment group was just being with like-minded girls and being able to relax and talk about whatever. --Empowerment Group Alum

As a gifted educator, creating space for my students to just be young people, is paramount. Our empowerment groups afforded gifted girls this space. Before our group, I would have assumed that these high potential girls who are taking all of the same AP courses together, already knew each other, and confided in one another. I would have been wrong. Instead, we found every time we gathered the girls delighted in simply having time to connect with one another. For the first several months, our empowerment group was the only place they did so.

Sylvia Rimm, leading expert on gifted girls (and former GAM keynote) writes, “It is possible for you to set high expectations for your daughters [or students] and build their confidence without placing debilitating pressure on them.” I would add that giving them a space and community to form friendships, particularly under the guidance of compassionate adults further helps with this development. Rimm continues, “Praise is the most frequently used tool for communicating expectations, and it is an important technique for helping your daughters [and students] build self-esteem.” (Rimm p. 53) As the arc of our empowerment group changed from being a teacher-directed group to a self-directed circle of friends, I heard praise flow easily and genuinely between the participants. I credit the confidence and many of the mental health gains we noted to these new friendships.

This is why I was so pleased the day of the missing macaroni to hear my student say to her friends, “You know. We’re a group now. We can keep meeting no matter what.”

Works Cited:

Kathryn Fishman-Weaver is the chair for gifted education at Rock Bridge High School in Columbia, MO. She will be speaking more about her work with gifted girls through the empowerment counseling model at the GAM conference in October. Kathryn is also the mother of two and a PhD student in educational leadership and policy analysis (MU).
The 2013 State Legislative Session is officially over. All the advocacy efforts from members of the Gifted Association of Missouri paid off! GAM was successful on several issues that were legislative priorities this session.

1. **State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Children**: Senate Bill 17, was officially signed in to law by Governor Nixon, on July 11. This act creates the Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children. The Council will have seven members appointed by the Commissioner of Education. Members will serve for a term of four years, with the initial appointments of shorter lengths to stagger the council's membership. The Commissioner of Education must consider recommendations for membership from organizations of educators and parents of gifted and talented children. Members must be Missouri residents and selected based on their knowledge and experience with the education of gifted and talented children.

The Commissioner must seek the advice of the council regarding all rules and policies to be adopted by the State Board of Education relating to the education of gifted and talented children. The State Board must appoint a staff member to be a liaison to the council and must also provide necessary clerical support and assistance to the council.

GAM wants to give special thanks to our Senate and House sponsors: Senator Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia; Representative Chrissy Sommer, R-St. Charles; and GAM Past President & Representative Donna Pfautsch, R-Harrisonville.

2. **State Funding for Gifted Position at DESE**: Senate Appropriations Chairman, Kurt Schaefer, added funding for a full-time position at DESE to administer gifted and talented programs. House Bill 2, which is the appropriations bill for the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, now specifies that DESE shall provide a full-time position, not a quarter-time position, to meet the needs of our teachers and children in gifted education.

3. **State Funding for the Academies**: Senate Appropriations Chairman Kurt Schaefer, also reinstated funding for the Missouri Scholars and Missouri Fine Arts Academies for 2014. $200,000 will be added to DESE’s budget to fund these Academies next year.

GAM appreciates everyone’s advocacy efforts. Successes like these are not gained overnight, but come from dedicated members like you who continue the fight for our children who are gifted and talented.
Please take a moment to write a thank you note or leave a phone message at your Representative’s and Senator’s office. Also, a thank you note to Governor Nixon is also appropriate. Contact information is below.

Capitol Switchboard: 573-751-2000

Capitol Address:
The Honorable __________________
State Senate (or State House of Representatives) (or Governor’s Office)
State Capitol Building
Jefferson City, MO 65101

To find your legislators’ District contact information, go to www.house.mo.gov or www.senate.mo.gov

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR FEBRUARY 26, 10am-2pm, for GIFTED EDUCATION DAY AT THE CAPITOL!!

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to serve as GAM’s Governmental Affairs Consultant. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at kynaiman@earthlink.net.

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573-635-2858-fax
kynaiman@earthlink.net

I asked Mom if I was a gifted child.
She said they certainly wouldn’t have PAID for me.

– Calvin (Calvin & Hobbes)
Let the Students Speak

By Ted Droste, GAM Historian

For the last two years the fourth grade students at Kennard Classical Junior Academy in St. Louis have gone above and beyond the required learning standards when it comes to the law making process. Beginning with GAM legislation, 68 gifted students researched the importance of getting beneficial legislation passed that would help their underage voices be heard at DESE. Once the students realized how much they had to gain from favorable gifted legislation, they began composing letters to their senators and representatives in earnest. The culminating event was being able to hand deliver their letters to their representatives and being allowed to carry on a conversation about why gifted students end up making important contributions to society.

Why are gifted students so often overlooked or taken out of school funding formulas? By stifling opportunities for those that seek to excel, are we helping or hurting society as a whole? I believe that if we allow our students the opportunity to have a vision and see it to fruition, then the chances of having entrepreneurial tendencies likely increase. More entrepreneurs means business sector growth, growth means expansion, expansion means hiring employees, hiring employees means less unemployment and more tax revenue. Everybody wins.

Would it be nice if our gifted and talented teachers had access to some of the funding and opportunities and equipment given to other student populations? Don’t get me wrong, some students need extra resources and support to learn the curriculum and show growth on standardized tests. What then do we do? Like the students of Kennard, we can all begin by advocating for our children by communicating with the legislators about allowing high performing students opportunities to get out of the cookie cutter curriculum and offering more opportunities to dream bigger and go farther. I overheard one student on GAM Day at the Capitol talking excitedly to her friends about how her senator was her neighbor down the street and didn’t even know it.

For the last two years, gifted advocates across Missouri have lobbied on behalf of gifted students and legislation that supports their unique needs. For the last two years we have been successful at our legislative endeavors. None of us were gifted experts from the start. The complex world of gifted children keeps changing and shifting as our technological world evolves. Unless you and your gifted students speak up for gifted education, who will? I encourage all of you to go personally introduce you and your children to your legislators. I encourage press releases highlighting the achievements of gifted and talented students and share that press release with the GAM historian for statewide recognition. Finally, I encourage each and every one of you to be proud to be a gifted advocate.

Tad Droste
GAM Historian
mrdroste@gmail.com
Coming Soon: GAM Fall Conference

“Attending a GAM conference is one of the very best ways to learn the latest about what is working in gifted education.”

If you are a teacher, parent or grandparent, counselor or administrator involved in any way with gifted individuals, you will not want to miss the 2013 Gifted Association of Missouri’s 32nd Annual State Conference on Friday and Saturday, October 18 & 19.

Drury University will host the conference on its campus in Springfield, Missouri. The conference facilities on the DU campus provide an inviting environment to network and learn about gifted education. Drury University’s Lay Hall offers a computer lab for our use and is a wonderful setting for this year’s conference theme: Gifted Intensities: We need an app for that!

Dr. Susan Daniels will provide our keynote address on Saturday, during Parents Day. Conference favorites including Bally-Hoo, Conversations and Reflections, the State of the Gifted address, and our GAM awards luncheon will also be included in the two day event. Something new will be that our exhibitors will be scattered throughout Lay Hall.

This year’s 54 break-out sessions are organized in the following strands:

- Basics
- Creativity
- Curriculum Studies
- Differentiation/Identification
- Educational Technology (in a computer lab)
- Language Arts
- Parent Matters
- Social and Emotional
- Special Populations
- Special Topics
- STEM

You will also enjoy time to network and participate in the discussion of ideas with others who are passionate about educating and understanding our gifted population. You will have the opportunity to take back to your schools, homes, and community information which will impact gifted individuals.

Bookmark this site: www.mogam.org to stay on top of all the activities and updates.

“The presentations are informative and allow for audience participation. I always learn so much at the conference.”

I look forward to seeing you in October in Springfield!

Lori Brock

Conference Vice President
Gifted Association of Missouri
32nd Annual Conference

GIFTED INTENSITIES
We need an app for that!

Friday-Saturday
October 18-19, 2013
Drury University, Springfield, MO

Conference Highlights

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Susan Daniels
Co-author of
Living with Intensity and Raising Creative Kids

Just a few of the outstanding sessions offered:

- CCSS101: Common Core State Standards-What Gifted Educators Need to Know
- Differentiating Math for Gifted Learners
- STEM: Student Technology Enriches Minds
- Curriculum for a Crowded World
- Program Design and Identification
- Promoting Emotional Intelligence
- Leveled Literacy

Help us GO GREEN-Register online
Early bird rates apply through September 16th
www.mogam.org

See you in October!
Calling all parents!

Gifted Association of Missouri
32nd Annual Conference

GIFTED INTENSITIES
We need an app for that!

PARENT DAY
Saturday, October 19, 2013
Drury University, Springfield, MO

Conference Highlights

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Susan Daniels
Co-author of
Living with Intensity and Raising Creative Kids

Outstanding sessions for parents include:

» Helping Them Soar: Early College Opportunities
» Too Much of a Good Thing? Praise and the Gifted Child
» Calming Intense Emotions in Gifted Children

Help us continue to GO GREEN
Register online
Early bird rates apply through September 16th
www.mogam.org

HONORING OUR BEST

GAM Awards & Scholarships
Go online and nominate those who make a difference in the lives of Missouri’s gifted children.
www.mogam.org
Application deadline September 1st
# Gifted Intensities - We need an app for that!

Gifted Association of Missouri - 32nd Annual Conference  
October 18-19, 2013-Drury University, Springfield, MO

## Registration Form

GO GREEN-Register online-www.mogam.org

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| Preferred Mailing Address: | |
|---------------------------||
| City: | State: | Zip: |
| Telephone: Home ( ) | Work ( ) |

Email address:  
An email confirmation will be sent to the email address above  
Teacher of Gifted ___ Classroom Teacher ___ Administrator ___ Counselor ___ Parent ___ Other ___

## Registration Fees:
A CD of presentation materials is included with Conference Registration  
**Early Bird registration date 9/16/2013 **  
*No refunds after 10/4/2013*

| II. 1 Day Registration (Friday or Saturday-circle day)  
Member of GAM | $125 | $150 |
| Non-member | $200 | $225 |

| III. Parent Registration (Saturday only)  
Includes GAM Awards Luncheon  
One parent-member of GAM | $45 | $55 |
| One parent-non-member | $55 | $65 |
| Two parents-members | $70 | $80 |
| Two parents-non members | $80 | $90 |

*Purchase Orders accepted*  
Fax to: 888-569-3615  
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Go online to join or renew at [www.mogam.org](http://www.mogam.org)

If you have any special dietary needs, please notify us here:

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Return this registration form with payment to:  
Sue Peters  
Phone: (417) 838-3047  
2558 E. Chinkapin Lane  
Fax: (888) 569-3615  
Springfield, MO 65804  
Email: snepeters16@gmail.com

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Room accommodations at the Ramada Oasis Hotel and Convention Center  
To make a room reservation, please call 417-866-5253 or 888-532-4338.  
Rooms are available in a group block identified as “GAM” or Gifted Assoc. of Missouri.  
Make your reservation by September 16th to take advantage of special group rates.
“Oh, you’re going to be great with the smart kids.”
By Seth Jaeger

This statement, while given with complete sincerity, bothered me. I heard it multiple times as the news trickled out that I would be taking over the secondary gifted program at the school from which I graduated and in which I have taught since returning from my Peace Corps service. I was troubled with the comment because it spotlighted one of my (many) perceived weaknesses as an educator in that I wasn’t appropriately reaching my mainstream 7th grade world geography students at their readiness level. I began the gifted certification process fully aware of this shortcoming and focused my initial training in the field on correcting this deficiency in differentiation within the specialized population; I would be teaching and arming myself with the tools to reframe misconceptions held by my colleagues, administrators, parents, and the students themselves.

I attended the New Teacher of the Gifted Workshop a few weeks before the beginning of the school year and it was beneficial in several ways. The two-day seminar synthesized what I learned during my summer of online classes and provided practical applications by experienced and knowledgeable teachers from various districts around the state. Here I received the most useful piece of advice for someone overwhelmed with the prospect of beginning the school year with the best intentions and little knowledge of how to focus those desires into a significant learning experience for the students. In her words, Dr. Robin Lady gave me permission to take the first couple of weeks to get to know my students without a rigid and intractable curriculum. This allowed me to begin structuring the academic year with an emphasis on the student’s interests, abilities, and experiences to best address the specific challenges associated with educating high-ability learners.

Receiving the Bob Roach Memorial Scholarship helped me complete the formal academic requirements for full certification, and my continued involvement in GAM has proven to be beneficial to my growth as a teacher of the gifted. I have connected with excellent practitioners and gained relevant insight into the extensive in-class and extra-curricular opportunities available to stakeholders in gifted education. My first year followed a path of intense activity, quiet reflection, animated celebrations and useful failures that I consider to be a work-in-progress as I anticipate having many of this first group of students again in the coming years. As I approach my second year, I am better-prepared through formal and informal GAM-sponsored resources, events, and networking to not only enhance student learning but to promote effective differentiation practices among my faculty. In this way I hope to influence teachers so that we all may be “good with the smart kids.”

Seth Jaeger, MPA (@sethjaeger123) is a second year teacher of the gifted/IB in Ozark, MO. He is a returned Peace Corps volunteer (Ukraine, 2004-2006) and professional musician (membersonlytribute.com). Seth lives in Nixa with his wife Olya and son Nicholas.
# GAM LIBRARY TOP 5'S
## JULY - AUGUST 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOST READ BOOKS IN THE WORLD</th>
<th>WORDS AND PHRASES YOU MIGHT FIND INTERESTING TO DEFINE AND USE...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (according to squidoo.com/mostreadbooks, based on books printed and sold over last 50 years) | • Scaffolded Discomfort  
• Standardized differentiation  
• Differentiated Standardization  
• Effective measurement  
• Relative giftedness  
• Locally-normed achievement  
• Greening (as in your school)  
• Breaking brick-and-mortar walls  
• Microdecisions  
• Redefinition and reformulation |
| 1. *The Holy Bible* | |
| 2. *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung* | |
| 3. *Harry Potter*, by J.K. Rowling | |
| 5. *The Alchemist*, Paulo Coelho | |
| 7. *The Twilight Saga*, by Stephenie Meyer | |
| 8. *Gone with the Wind*, by Margaret Mitchell | |
| 10. *The Diary of Anne Frank* | |

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<tr>
<th>FUN WITH TOYS OF YORE</th>
<th>MONSTER MASH-UP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(How to use classic toys in modern ways)</td>
<td>(fun ways to use monsters to teach)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Yoyo - Use a yoyo to teach different types of force.</td>
<td>• Frankenstein -the new Prometheus, connect to mythology, interesting science links, compare original book to cinematic versions, use to connect literature to neurological science</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Marbles - angles of incidence and reflection, Newton's laws</td>
<td>• Vampires - Bram Stoker's original book is a classic; why are we so enamored</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Silly Putty - accidental chemistry, create your own, transfer newsprint, bouncing</td>
<td>• Zombies - compare the new movie <em>Warm Bodies</em> to either the <em>Romeo and Juliet</em> story, and/or to Frankenstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Etch-a-Sketch - create art, a la Jeff Gagliardi</td>
<td>• Werewolf - use to study psychology of 'lunacy', read French stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jump Rope - go to jumpropegeometry.blogspot.com</td>
<td>• Witch - create the witch's brew from Shakespeare's <em>Macbeth</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Slinky - waves</td>
<td>• Mummy - good for framing Egyptology, embalming, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bubbles - use bubble cages to illustrate dimensions, connect to geometry (write for details)</td>
<td>• Books: <em>Invisible Man</em>, <em>Hunchback of Notre Dame</em>, <em>Picture of Dorian Gray</em>, <em>Jekyll &amp; Hyde</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jacks - patterns</td>
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</tbody>
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| PLOTS | |
| (some say there are only so many stories) | If you have recommendations for helpful, appropriate materials or items to add to any of these lists, or if you have questions about anything on here, please feel free to send your suggestions and questions to: |
| • 7 plots: Person vs... | Brian Stuhlman at stuhlmanbrian@yahoo.com |
| ◊ nature, person, the environment, machines/ technology, the supernatural, self, god/religion | |
| • 20 plots (according to Ronald Tobias): | |
| ◊ quest, adventure, pursuit, rescue, escape, revenge, the riddle, rivalry, underdog, temptation, metamorphosis, transformation, maturation, love, forbidden love, sacrifice, discovery, wretched excess, ascension, descension | |
BOOK REVIEW

Real Talk for Real Teachers by Rafe Esquith

By Debbie Green

July 19th I attended the book talk and signing for Rafe’s fourth book for teachers. As usual, Rafe is inspiring, motivating, and realistic. The book is divided into three sections for beginning teachers, teachers with at least five years under their belts, and veteran teachers. Each chapter has a summary of bullet-pointed items. After reading the book, I find myself going back to review these. A quote from Rafe, “Those who can teach, those who can’t, make the rules for those who teach.” This brought a chuckle from the audience as we obviously agreed.

Other points to ponder: Good administrators treat teachers as individuals. The Secret to Teaching: take charge of your own education. If you wish society to appreciate your work, it will not happen. Wow! Truth hurts! Appreciate and support each other, all for one and one for all. This is a long journey. We live in an “instant society”. Students and teachers think “instant education”. To become a master teacher takes a LONG time. Don’t do it alone! Bring experts into your classroom to support what you want to do when you may not possess the necessary skills. Everybody matters. If you are making an effort to do your best, work with people who are good at what they do.

Being a teacher for 30+ years, I wondered what this book could offer me. I was surprised as I read the beginning teacher chapters that many of the topics are areas that I can revisit and reuse. It caused me to reflect on my years in the trenches and excited me to use some of the ideas mentioned. Right off the bat, Rafe tells you straight up, “You are going to have bad days.” I like that kind of honesty. You are having a bad day because this is a hard job. No matter how long you have taught or the subject(s) you teach, there is always room for improvement. I plan to post and discuss on Day 1 the list of expectations. These ten suggested “Commandments” are not rules but reminders that students are responsible for what they accomplish and how they do it.

When I reached the middle section, I could totally relate to Rafe’s experiences. The great part is that the author of four books and recipient of many awards and recognitions, experiences the same trials and tribulations as every other teacher. Ask for help and seek out positive mentors to keep you charged. Add something new to your classroom every year. Change what you do every year to keep it interesting.

The veteran section has great suggestions to keep from burning out. Take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and socially. As Rafe says, “This job can kill you.” Stay positive and remember you are changing lives, and students need veteran teachers now more than ever.

It is hard not to worry about the end of the year test when so many of careers depend on the outcomes. We need to worry more about where these students will be in ten years. A helpful suggestion is to divide your class into three categories. Category 1: Great students, love to learn, parents sing your praises, etc. Category 3: The students hate you. The parents hate you. Nothing you do is ever going to be enough. Category 2: The students who go unnoticed, fly under the radar, average. These are the kids to concentrate on reaching because they need to be noticed, but more of them will join Category 1, which will in turn cause Category 3’s to become Category 2’s and maybe Category 1’s.
He is also the author of *Lighting Their Fires*, *Teach like Your Hair Is On Fire*, and *There Are No Shortcuts*. These are also filled with wonderful anecdotes, examples, and suggestions. I highly recommend all of these books, but I must say this is the best one. He has taught for 28 years at Hobart Elementary School, Room 56 in the Los Angeles Unified School District. For most of his students English is not their first language, and they qualify for free lunches. The neighborhood not in a posh part of LA!

I encourage you to visit the websites to see the Hobart Shakespeareans. These 4th and 5th grade students are amazing. He stresses the journey over the end product of everything they do. Please view their website www.hobartshakespreareans.org. They can also be seen on You Tube. You will see that these students have internalized the “Commandments that are stressed all year.

“Reading activates and exercises the mind. Reading forces the mind to discriminate. From the beginning, readers have to recognize letters printed on the page, make them into words, the words into sentences, and the sentences into concepts. Reading pushes us to use our imagination and makes us more creatively inclined.”

— Ben Carson, *Think Big: Unleashing Your Potential for Excellence*
"A chance to soar...and wings to set us free."

By Brian Stuhlman

The Missouri Scholars Academy (MSA) is an academic program that provides an enrichment experience for a selection of Missouri's upcoming high school juniors during the month of June. MSA is turning the corner on 30 years next summer, and a look back at how it got to this lofty age exposes a firm reliance on two mainstays: consistency and variance (or standardization and differentiation, for those fluent in education-ese)

CONSISTENCY: MSA's general numbers and stats stay generally the same. Every summer since 1985, MSA serves approximately 330 students who have just completed their sophomore year. With the end of the 2013 Academy, over 9,000 have participated.

VARIANCE: The 300+ students are different every year, nominated by schools and coming from hometown areas that are as varied as the students themselves. The scholars that arrive in early June have a range of abilities and aptitudes, talents and gifts...and they represent a full spectrum of gender, race, creed, socio-economic background, school/class size and social background.

CONSISTENCY: While the scholars that come to MU in June are all different and unique, they all share at least one commonality...a need or desire to be around people like themselves. In the Nov/Dec 2012 edition of Scientific American Mind, Lena Groeger says, "Although members...do not fit a single profile, they often join in search of a sense of belonging.” She goes on to cite Karyn Huntting Peters talking about a society similar to what can be found at MSA: "I've heard a lot of people refer to themselves as aliens until they found a group like this..."

VARIANCE: This sense of belonging, the community that MSA becomes is one which Plato wanted to create with the original Academy in Athens...a place where gifted and talented people can talk and work and discuss in safety and camaraderie. I compare the results to a barbershop quartet. Each individual brings their own voice, but when there is harmony amongst the individuals, an unexplainable "fifth voice" is created that is special and magical...and impossible to create alone (OR with the distraction of technology).

CONSISTENCY: Scholars live residentially at MU in a closed-campus format. Their daily activities are overseen by resident assistants (RAs), who are usually college-aged students. Scholars are required to participate in one chosen major class three hours every day and one chosen minor class one hour every day. The classes that scholars choose from all fall under four main areas: science, mathematics, social science and humanities.

VARIANCE: The classes that scholars will have available to them any given summer range from fairly typical to totally unexpected. This past summer, scholars might have courses in statistics, creative writing, chemistry or philosophy...or they might have explored the meanings of infinity, discovered how bubbles can
link theoretical geometry and Picasso, staged a self-written remake of Frankenstein, or even created a pig while studying animal physiology and reproduction. Without the strictures of homework or tests, teachers are able to use nontraditional methods to teach high-ability students...Shakespearean plays are deconstructed and performed in hours (not weeks), psychological experiments are planned and carried out, graphic novels are examined as literature, Sesame Street is used in instructing children's media methods and goals AND cultural change since 1969, and documentary filmmaking is put into the hands of the student.

CONSISTENCY: Scholars participate in one daily class of Personal and Social Dynamics (PSD). Curriculum lessons are delivered by a team of a minor class teacher and an RA, and are created (and revised) specifically for gifted teenagers. PSD is used to facilitate and encourage community, as well as to address the affective needs of gifted teenagers.

VARIANCE: Scholars are given many options of additional activities and programs to fill their afternoons and early evenings. Scholars might choose to participate in:

Community Service – done in the Columbia area, including discussions about service, and projects like stream clean-up, graffiti removal and work at the food bank.

Artistic Afternoons – projects with social connections, such as paper beads (Uganda), pysanky egg decorating (Ukraine), and workshops in clay, weaving, melting, splattering and repurposed art.

Current Events Discussions about issues such as stem cell research, death penalty, food production, accessibility for persons with handicaps, autism, and research integrity.

Career and Academic Goal Clarification

Exploring New Horizons – workshops and discussions from professionals in fields such as debate, self-defense, novel-writing, veterinary medicine, radio broadcasting, and international relations

MSA Choir & MSA Live - musical expressions

Religious Exploration – may include trips to local places of worship, tours of the Columbia Islamic Center, or participation in a Hindu Holi Festival

Collaborations with the University of Missouri, the Columbia Arts League, the Missouri State Historical Society, the MU Research Reactor, local museums and galleries, and others.

Other special concerts, readings, dances, lectures, plays and recreational activities.

CONSISTENCY: Scholars participate in the MSA Speakers Series, which brings in professionals from around the city, state, nation and/or world to discuss their field or experience and to inform scholars of issues of the world around them. Every year, these speakers range from such nationally-recognized motivational speakers like Mark Scharenbroich and Eddie Slowikowski, to Holocaust survivor Hedy Epstein, preacher, teacher and jazz pianist Dr. Eugene Lowry, Grammy-nominated storyteller Milbre Burch, nationally-recognized science teacher Bob Bender, and more.

VARIANCE: Every year brings new speakers that are selected based on what is happening in history or around the world. In 2013, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of crossword puzzles, puzzle maker Patrick Blindauer came to create a puzzle with scholars. To discuss what is happening with genocide in places around Africa, Sudanese Lost Boy John Dau came to speak about his experiences in fleeing his homeland and in becoming a refugee in America.
During the past 29 years, more than 9,000 Missouri high school students have connected with peers and adults with similar interests, expanded their horizons and embraced the gifts they have been given. In doing so, they have formed 29 unique, but similar communities of learning at the MSA.

The 2014 Missouri Scholars Academy is already being planned...the goal is to offer the same high-quality experience to a brand new group of scholars from around the state...but with some differences. With an expertly and patiently orchestrated balance of consistency and variance, the 30th Missouri Scholars Academy will be another uniquely similar, and wonderful experience.

Final Note: You can help make the 30th Missouri Scholars Academy great...encourage your school's former scholars to say thank you to all the folks who go them there...educate yourself and others about the great opportunities that MSA provides, and help out any way you can! Check us out at www.moscholars.org.

Society has not given the same attention to the education of the genius as has been given to other groups. We spend millions every year for the mentally retarded. The unfortunate child of superior intellect spends his time in a usual commonplace school assimilating a diet far below his expected capacity. The gifted child poses one of our greatest present-day problems beginning in the home and ultimately becoming a concern of the school. Teachers bear the responsibility to recognize and plan for the needs of the gifted.

– Sister Josephine Concannon, Assessing Human Potential
NEW TEACHERS WORKSHOP 2013

How'd she do that?
Parents may find it challenging to communicate with a gifted child for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it’s too few words. “She just doesn’t tell me anything important,” they say. Or, “He just gives one word answers, like ‘Yes,’ or ‘No,’ that don’t let us know anything.”

Children who communicate like this actually are telling their parents quite a lot, even if their parents aren’t picking up on it. Children who shut down are telling their parents to back off. A child who won’t communicate about what’s going on in his life is protecting himself from parents who seem too intrusive, too critical or too vested in their own controlling agenda for their child.

Sometimes it’s too few words, and sometimes it’s using too many words that don’t really communicate. Some parents mistakenly believe that communications with their child are fine because they talk at length about intellectual topics. But a narrow focus, especially one centered on a child’s intellectual prowess, may harm a child by emphasizing the wrong priorities.

Here are some tips to help you communicate more effectively with your child.

**Keep long-term goals in mind.** Aim to nurture a healthy relationship so that your child can come to you with concerns, learn from you, and trust your values as well as your advice.

The goal of a conversation should not be to learn all about what happened at school or in the rest of your child’s day. Nor should it be to micromanage your child’s academic career or to assure yourself that she is preparing for the college, graduate school or career you think best for her. Down the line, it will be about supporting what she wants to do. But right now, it should be about strengthening a relationship so she wants to talk to you what she thinks is important.

If you find yourself trying to micromanage, talk with someone who can help you be objective and separate your life from that of your child, your desires from her reality.

**Give your child space.** Children usually want some down time after school. They need a break. The last thing they want to do when they see a parent is to report about their school day, especially with a parent focusing narrowly on academics. Yet all too often parents of gifted children pounce on their child with some version of the question: “How did you do at school today?” Think about it. Is talking about work the first thing you want to do when you get home in the evening? “Hi Dad. How did you do at work today? Did the boss give you an ‘A’?” You’d hate it. Give your child the same respect. Let him set the pace and share more when he’s ready.

**Show interest, but don’t interrogate.** Nothing turns a child off faster than a series of pointed questions about a topic primarily of interest to a parent. Gifted children are sensitive. They read parents extremely well. If it’s clear that you have a specific agenda in mind day after day, your child may shut you out. Children are most likely to share if you matter-of-factly show your interest and approval.

**Encourage conversation by using opened-ended questions.** Think like a reporter. Ask questions that begin with who, what, how, when and where. These invite explanations. Skip the “why?” questions. These cause defensiveness. Avoid questions that can be answered by “yes” or “no.” These lead nowhere.

“How’s your day going?” is always a good opener. Because it’s so open-ended, it gives your child freedom to move the conversation in many directions. Other possible openers are: “What’s going on at school?” or “Who did you eat lunch with?” or “What did you do at recess?”

**Follow up by paraphrasing.** Repeat back key elements of what you child said. A good paraphrase will get you more additional information than pointed questions. Paraphrasing communicates your interest as well as your understanding of what your child said. It invites her to continue talking.

**Encourage and praise, but be careful about what you show approval for.** It’s easy to fall into the trap of worshiping at the altar of your child’s intelligence. Gifted children are bright, and that’s an advantage. But they need many other skills and experiences if they are to be happy and successful. When parents pay too much attention to a child’s intel-
lectual prowess, the child becomes conditioned to seeking approval for that instead of moving on to develop important social skills, positive character traits and other abilities. Instead, determine in advance what character traits you want to encourage: Cooperation? Honesty? Loyalty? Persistence? Risk-taking? Then look for opportunities to do so.

**Share your advice tactfully.** It’s OK to talk about your experiences and lessons learned. Your child may be able to benefit from them. However, it’s not helpful to routinely push your advice on your child. Instead, try to get her involved in a problem-solving process that will help her gain new insights into her own challenges, especially interpersonal ones.

**Focus more on social interactions than academics.** Gifted children often crave adult attention and need support forming healthy relationships with their peers. Support can range from simply asking, “Which classmates share your interests?” to arranging out-of-school social activities. You might need to blend encouragement with a little coaching about cooperation, topics to talk about at lunch, letting others have some say in choosing activities, or how to say nice things to someone.

**Be careful about automatically taking your child’s side in disagreements with teachers or friends.** Bright children can alienate others by communicating an air of superiority or even disdain for others who may not be as intellectually gifted. This can lead to resentment and conflicts. Until your child learns to handle differences respectfully and relate to others constructively, he will not develop the social skills and relationships necessary for success in life.

Approach it as an opportunity to help your child learn to understand how he affects others. Get a good description of who did what and when. This is always a good start, and it slows down the rush to judgment. As you listen, try to imagine how the other person might have felt when your child was doing or saying what he did. Then ask your child how he thinks the other person felt. Ask what he might have done differently had he known how he was affecting the other person. What could he do now to improve the situation? What could he learn from this?

**Communicate your support for your child’s efforts to take risks and grow.** Focus on the process, not immediate outcomes. Focusing on short-term results tends to narrows her focus to areas where a gifted child already enjoys success, such as academics, and constricts her life experiences. Encourage your child to take risks, experiment with enriching activities and be part of a team. Help her develop resilience and coping skills by participating in activities which she might enjoy instead of trying to dominate. Learning to make mistakes is a healthy part of life. Communicate your acceptance and encouragement when your child tries and falls short of her expectations.

**Bottom Line:** do a self-assessment of the ways you communicate with your child, and then use these tips to improve it. Doing so will not only improve your relationship with your child—it will help her grow in healthy ways that would not be possible without your proactive support.

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Dennis O’Brien is a licensed clinical social worker, experienced educator and therapist. In addition to writing educational materials used by the Washington University School of Medicine Dept. of Psychiatry, weekly columns on parenting for the Suburban Journals and monthly columns for St. Louis Moms and Dads (Savvyfamily), he writes occasional columns for CHARACTERplus, Foster and Adoptive Coalition and Gifted Resource Council. He was honored by the Missouri Dept. of Mental Health for outstanding reporting on suicide in 2010. He was also recently honored for his service to nonprofits by both the Better Business Bureau and Community Service Public Relations Council (CSPRC).

This article is adapted from one that first appeared in 2005 in the newsletter of Gifted Resource Council (GRC) in St. Louis, MO. For information about GRC and additional resources, visit www.giftedresourcecouncil.org.
GAM District Reports

District A

Chandria Howard, Assistant Director, has retired from Hazelwood School District and will be vacating her position in October. We have been working on the District A Conference. It will be March 8th at Maryville University. The theme is "Too Many Gifts...Not Enough Time!" Dr. Julia Roberts will be the keynote speaker. Calls for proposal will be sent soon as well as a Save the Date flyer.

Debbie Green, GAM District A Director

District B

Making Memories

During the school year, we have a rule at our house – no video games on school days. It has worked well in the past, but now I have a child in high school and another one in middle school. They both have cell phones which seem to take up more time than video games since they can also access YouTube, texting, Facebook, Twitter and Snap Chat. Even though we don’t have a data plan, the kids have no trouble finding hotspots when we are out and about, and we also have wireless in our home. I have found myself wondering if all of these electronics are harmful. I have limited their time on the electronics, but then I am told that it is summer and they should have more time for the things they enjoy. So what is an easy balance? After posing the same question to our child’s pediatrician, we were told that no more than two hours of screen time was reasonable, and that kids need active time outside each day. Walking was his suggestion as well as team sports. At our house board games are a family favorite. If I pull out a board game, everyone forgets about their phones – including me. I think the answer is more family activities that are away from the phones and TV. In the Kansas City area we have Burr Oak Woods (free) in Blue Springs, Powell Gardens in Kingsville, Lego Land and the KC Aquarium in Kansas City as well as the KC Zoo. We also have the public library (free) which is a great place to visit weekly in order to keep both of my kids reading. Games like kickball, volleyball and tennis are cheap sports that can be played in the yard or driveway at home. It is so easy to “get lost” in the social media world, but memories aren’t made on Facebook.

Sheila Bonner, District B Director

GAMbit Report

In order for GAMbit to be applicable to teachers and parents, we need contributions from our membership. (Did you notice this entire issue is from GAM members?) We are aware that the good things happening for gifted children in this state occur at a grass root level. Your knowledge, insight and perspective is welcomed so that we can share it throughout the state. Book reviews, activities, parent insights, curriculum paradigms, reform and assessments are possibilities but should not limit your thinking. And don’t forget Missouri Stars. If you know of a gifted student (or teacher) that has earned state or national honors, let us know. We like to brag. leatrimble@tri-lakes.net
Universities Offering Courses for Gifted Education Certification

**Drury University**

EDUC 677 Curriculum & Differentiated Instruction for Gifted, Online, 3 credit hours, taught by Dr. Kris Wiley  
EDUC 679 Counseling & Guidance of the Gifted, Online, 3 credit hours, taught by Dr. Brandi Klepper  
EDUC 679 is a blended course; half of the course is online and the other half is seated.  
They are both August 19-December 14, 2013.  
Mary Pothoff, Director  
Center for Gifted Education  
(417) 873-7386  
mpothof@drury.edu

**University of Missouri**

The University of Missouri offers ONLINE gifted coursework leading to Missouri Gifted Certification and/or a Masters in Education with a Focus in Gifted Education degree.  
(All courses listed meet requirements for Missouri Gifted Certification.)  
Courses may be taken in any order beginning in any semester. Teachers seeking a Missouri Gifted Certification may enroll online as a non-degree seeking student without making an application to a program.

**FALL SEMESTER 2013**

SPC ED 8406 Differentiating Instruction for Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners  
SPC ED 8380 Nature and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students  
SPC ED 8391 Curriculum Methods for Gifted/Talented Students  
SPC ED 8946 Practicum: Gifted Education  
SPC ED 8405 Assessment and Evaluation in Gifted Education  

**SPRING SEMESTER 2014**

SPC ED 8406 Differentiating Instruction for Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners  
SPC ED 8350 Research with Exceptional Children  
SPC ED 8946 Practicum: Gifted Education  
SPC ED 8405 Assessment and Evaluation in Gifted Education  

**SUMMER SEMESTER 2013**

SPC ED 8350 Research with Exceptional Children  
SPC ED 8380 Nature and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students  
SPC ED 8391 Curriculum Methods for Gifted/Talented Students  
SPC ED 8946 Practicum: Gifted Education  

For questions please contact:  
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gerardyn@missouri.edu  
573-268-7766 or 573-882-3741  
To enroll online click on:  http://online.missouri.edu/ 800-545-2604 or 573-882-3598
Meet Christine Nobbe at Webster University

Webster University School of Education would like to welcome Ms. Christine Nobbe, EdS, to her new position in the School of Education: Coordinator of Gifted Education and Talent Development. Christine has been an adjunct professor at Webster for 10 years, teaching a variety of courses, but focusing on classes needed for gifted education certification, and she will continue in that capacity.

Christine brings unique skills to Webster in that she is a National Board Certified Teacher, taught for 33 years in public school districts in Missouri, and has profound experiences in STEAM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/design, and Technology). She is an avid advocate for both gifted learners and for human exploration of Space. As an advocate for gifted learners, Christine is a member of the Gifted Association of Missouri and is on the Board of Directors for the National Association for Gifted Children, serving as Governance Secretary. She attends state and national conferences annually and presents on several topics, including perfectionism, moviemaking, and robotics. In August 2013 Christine will be presenting at the World Gifted Conference on Gifted on using social media to advocate for and teach gifted learners, as well as, networking and professional development. Christine said, "Social media has allowed me to connect with space enthusiasts all around the world. It is exhilarating to Tweet with a professor in New Zealand, a science writer in London, an engineer at NASA-JPL in LA, and an astronaut on the ISS - all within minutes. Social media is being used by educators to learn, to teach, and to inspire. I'm looking for ways to advocate for the needs of talented, creative, and bright learners using social media."

As an advocate for human space exploration, Christine serves on the Board of Directors for The Space Museum in Bonne Terre, participates in SpaceSocials, and organizes spacey events and rocket launches for area youth. SpaceSocials are special events organized for social media enthusiasts to "go behind the scenes" for a unique experience and to Tweet, Instagram, Facebook about the event in real time. Observers "at home" follow the event and feel like they are part of the event. Christine reported, "Social media enthusiasts must be good at multi-tasking - following the tour guide, listening carefully, posting updates, and not falling into holes! I was walking backwards in the huge wind tunnel at Glenn Research Center in Cleveland and fell over the sign reading, 'watch your step!' I'm still learning!"

Christine loves to learn and embed "love for learning" into her Webster University courses by incorporating novel methods and materials. She is excited about introducing new technology into her gifted education courses - LEGO Mindstorm EV3 robots - which will be purchased with a LEGO Education grant. Webster University is one of ten universities to secure the grant, written by Christine. Read more at: http://www.edublue.org/Item.asp?art=2

You can follow Christine's adventures on Twitter @NobbeChristine, like her Facebook fan page (also NobbeChristine), or meet with her face to face for coffee. In the photo, Christine is demonstrating outside the box thinking, during a visit to Seattle.

To learn more about the Gifted Program at Webster please contact Ms. Nobbe at christinenobbe60@webster.edu or nobbechristine@gmail.com. Currently the Webster University Course Schedule for gifted certification courses is as follows:

> Fall 1 EPSY 5800.01 Applied Research
> Fall 2 EPSY 5970.01 The Gifted Learner
> Spring 1 EPSY 5920 Meeting the Affective Needs of Gifted Learners
> Summer EPSY 5910 Curriculum and Instruction for the Gifted
> All Semesters EPSY 5601 Gifted Education Practicum
Dear GAM Parents,

Hope your summer was enjoyable. I for one cannot believe we are already talking about back-to-school!

Every day, more things seem to vie for our attention but nothing trumps our children, their safety and education. I hope as the school year begins, you will find some time to be/stay involved with your child’s school. Parental involvement is critical to a child’s education.

A couple of hot topics this summer in my neck-of-the-woods are student transfers and Common Core. I would encourage you to stay on top of Common Core as there is misleading information to be had. Please don’t talk with just one source, look for others; we have some great resources here in MO.

On a personal note, this is my final ‘The Last Word’ and last remaining days as Parent Network. A huge Thank you to my mentor and friend, Carolyn R. Cooper; Carolyn designed TLW and provided gentle encouragement. Thanks also to Lea Trimble for keeping this page and doing such a terrific job with the GAMbit; it’s a huge task. A group Thanks to the entire GAM Board for the education you provided me.

I appreciate the opportunity to have served the parents of Gifted and Talented kids in Missouri.
My Best Wishes to you all.

Mary Johnson
GAM Membership Application

Yes, I want to become a GAM member.
___ New Membership
___ Membership Renewal, September 1 to August 31

________________________________________________________
Name
________________________________________________________
Home Address
________________________________________________________
City
________________________________________________________
State Zip
________________________________________________________
School District
________________________________________________________
Missouri County GAM District
________________________________________________________
e-mail address

Telephone Numbers:
Home (________) _______________________________
Work (________) _______________________________

Please check appropriate box:
___ Parent/Guardian/Grandparent $15
___ Educator/Individual $25
___ Patron/Institutions $55
___ Sponsor $105
___ I would like to donate to the GAM Scholarship Fund.
   Amount enclosed $______
   (All donations are tax deductible)

I am a (n): (Please check all that apply)
___ Teacher of Gifted Education
   ___ Elementary ___ Middle School ___ High School
___ Teacher in the Regular Classroom
   ___ Elementary ___ Middle School ___ High School
___ Administrator
___ Parent
___ Other, _________________________________________

Mail to: Gifted Association of Missouri
P.O. Box 3252, Springfield, MO 65808

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