

Leading Edge

Winthrop University Richard W. Riley College of Education

ILA Book Study Project



Pictured front and middle row: Ms. Kimberly White, third grade teacher, Sugar Creek Elementary and third grade pen pals. Back row: ILA Student Council pen pals; Big Stuff, Winthrop University's mascot; and Dr. Shawna Helf, faculty advisor for ILA Student Council.

In fall 2015, members of Winthrop University's International Literacy Association (ILA) Student Council participated in a book study with third graders at Sugar Creek Elementary School. Undergraduate Winthrop teacher education majors and elementary school students were electronic pen pals, reading and discussing a piece of children's literature over a six-week period. The purpose of the project was to engage elementary school students in an authentic literacy activity and provide the teacher candidates opportunities to observe elementary students' literacy development and respond to the children in a meaningful context.

During the weekly interactions, the preservice teacher candidates were able to make important connections between theory and practice and between reading and writing processes. They observed features of reading and writing development, examined the students' thinking and writing, and provided a model of writing for their pen pals. This project promoted reading as social activity and provided an authentic context for writing — helping students see writing as real communication. At the end of the book study they all met in person to celebrate reading!

Inclusion Across the Lifespan Conference



Pictured above: Kelsey Poole, Dominic Cianciosa, Brittany Bullard, Sam Latham, Britney Black and Tanner Crossnoe

The second annual Inclusion Across the Lifespan Conference was held Nov. 21, 2015 at Winthrop University. The conference, sponsored by the Winthrop Council for Exceptional Children, brought together more than 100 professionals and families who are passionate about promoting inclusive practices for individuals with disabilities across home, school and community settings. Conference registration proceeds will provide scholarship funds for the Winthrop Think College (WTC) program, a fully inclusive post-secondary education program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

More than 20 different sessions were offered related to K-12 education, post-secondary education and transition to independent living. Presenters included Winthrop faculty, undergraduate students, alumni who are now teacher leaders, and WTC students, as well as UNC Charlotte doctoral students, expert teachers from across the region, administrators, agency representatives and parents.

Conference participants spent the day reflecting on their inclusive practices and learning new ways to enhance their service and support delivery for all students. The goal of the conference was to facilitate change to strengthen the connection between general and special education. When administrators, special education teachers, general education teachers, related service providers and families work together to create inclusive schools, learning improves for all children, not just students with disabilities. For more information about creating inclusive schools, visit the national technical assistance website, SWIFT Schools, at: www.swiftschools.org/.

We are looking forward to the third annual Inclusion Across the Lifespan Conference is scheduled for Nov. 5, 2016 at Winthrop University. E-mail Deb Leach at leachd@winthrop.edu for more information about presenting and/or attending the conference.

Profile of a South Carolina Graduate

In cooperation with the South Carolina Department of Education and TransformSC, the Richard W. Riley College of Education held an event on campus for others to learn more about the Profile of a South Carolina Graduate and South Carolina's initiative to transform P-12 education.

The meeting provided live, interactive demonstrations from PK-12 students, teachers and Winthrop faculty. Community and education leaders from Transform SC, the SC State Department of Education, Winthrop University as well as teachers and administrators from Winthrop's Partnership Network schools were on hand to discuss current challenges, initiatives and successes.

The press was on hand to cover the event. See the news story and pictures from the event below.



Learning to drive robots!

Instructional Technology Center Graduate Assistant Thomas Cornelius shows PK-12 students how to use an iPad to control our [Sphero robots](#).



Creating books and art!

Laura Gardner, associate professor of fine arts and program director of art education, was on hand with her students to demonstrate book making.



Gaming and learning!

Mary O'Grady-Jones, fifth grade teacher at Sunset Park Elementary, brought her class to demonstrate how they use commercial board games like *Settlers of Catan* to learn teamwork and resource allocation and planning.

Winthrop Alumna Receives South Carolina Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year Award

Winthrop graduate, Carie (Hucks) Lowdermilk, was named the 2016 Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators. Lowdermilk is the assistant principal of Rock Hill School District's Castle Heights Middle School. She is a College of Education triple alum as she received her bachelor's degree in elementary education, master's in middle level education, and a second master's in educational leadership, all from Winthrop University.

Read more here: www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/news.aspx?article_id=14272



Richard W. Riley College of Education

Facebook

106 Withers/W.T.S. Bldg. ... 803.323.2151

winthrop.edu/coe/default.aspx