

GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY®

K12 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



GCU SUPPORTS K12 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SITES

Grand Canyon University has partnered with Westwood Elementary School of the Alhambra Elementary School District in an effort to increase student academic achievement and academic enrichment offerings, provide support to preservice teachers, school educators and administrators, and extend opportunities for university visitation programs. These programs benefit all constituents with the cumulative goal of raising student achievement school-wide. The program serves as part of GCU's greater five-point plan, which encompasses community revitalization, neighborhood safety efforts, job creation, STEM workforce development and K12 outreach. The scope of services being provided means Westwood Primary is now designated as GCU's first Academic Excellence Site.

The mutually beneficial relationship entails responsibilities by each organization. GCU's responsibilities are shared among three GCU entities: the K12 Educational Development department (formerly known as Strategic Educational Alliances or SEA), the College of Education and the GCU Learning Lounge®.

K12 Educational Development coordinates and leads a number of the initiatives, from student engagement activities to educator and administrative assistance. GCU's Canyon Professional Development supports teachers in their quest to deliver the best quality education. The Principals Collaborative Community affords principals a platform to network and coach at meetings that are scheduled throughout the school year. The creation of this Academic Excellence Site at Westwood is made possible by Westwood's participation in GCU's Participants in Learning, Leading and Serving Program, an alliance program for public schools and districts across the country.

GCU's College of Education offers faculty, staff and students to assist in meeting a broad spectrum of school and district needs. GCU will aid Westwood in supplementing teaching practices, designing lesson plans, analyzing performance data and adding a consistent teacher presence in the classroom. In turn, GCU students gain a deep understanding of teaching methods, while bonding with young people in need of mentorship.

The GCU Learning Lounge is a two-pronged entity that supports university students with free academic enrichment and K12 students with additional support resources outside regular school hours. For the Westwood project, the Learning Lounge will offer tutoring and mentoring. It will even transport Learning Advocates (LEADs) to Westwood's campus in order to best serve Westwood's students.

By virtue of the Memorandum of Understanding, Westwood Elementary and GCU will track metrics associated with student achievement and a summary of desired outcomes as established collectively by the two organizations.

"This is a significant initiative that demonstrates a mutual mission of academic excellence for all students. GCU is pleased to be providing comprehensive, targeted support through a variety of services," states GCU senior vice president, Dr. Tacy Ashby. "We are looking forward to monitoring and tracking the metrics and evaluating impact at the schools in which we are involved."

GCU EXPANDS PATHWAYS TO TEACHING THROUGH EXPLORE TEACHING

The need for teachers in Arizona remains strong, as close to [2,000 classrooms](#) across the state lack permanent teachers. While GCU's College of Education continues to produce high-quality teacher candidates, the need for alternatively certified educators continues. GCU is doing its part to help by exposing non-education majors to the K12 school environment with the hopes that a spark of experience will light the passionate fire required to teach and inspire today's youth.

GCU's Explore Teaching initiative, as its name implies, encourages soon-to-be-graduates of non-education degree programs to view teaching as a viable option post-graduation – and some have already found their calling.

GCU upperclassmen learn about the program through information sessions held on campus. Schools gain access to a wider variety of graduates and address the teacher shortage while graduates can serve as direct entry into a professional role upon graduation.

Students have the opportunity to visit participating schools where they can see classes in action and get a feel for the school culture. Students can also earn elective credit by volunteering in schools.

The Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) Center at GCU also plays a role in the initiative. They hosted five recruitment events where students could meet school leaders and either schedule a time to visit the schools or move directly into the interview process.

GCU has created an introductory training for new teachers with degrees outside of education. The five-day course with a midterm support session covers classroom management, classroom setup and basic lesson planning. There is also an option for onsite coaching and class observation. The introductory training and onsite coaching are free to GCU Explore Teaching graduates with majors outside of GCU's College of Education. The course is available for a fee to other new teachers.



“Any students that we are able to place in teaching positions as a result of this program lessens the pressure on schools and districts while providing a recent graduate with immeasurable experience,” states executive director, Leigh Critchley. “As these young educators learn about the joys of teaching and word of the program spreads, we anticipate more student participation and the capacity to serve a greater number of local schools.”

To learn more about Explore Teaching, contact exploreteaching@gcu.edu.

K12 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS STEM, INQUIRY-BASED TRAINING AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALLIANCE PARTICIPANTS

STEM began as a buzzword and has evolved into a movement in schools around the world. It is estimated there are 2.4 million unfilled job positions in science, technology, engineering and math, according to the [Smithsonian Science Education Center](#). Subsequently, the burden falls on the education system to produce industry-ready graduates.

GCU strives to help fulfill this demand for STEM graduates by growing enrollment, building world-class facilities, providing cutting-edge technologies and by meeting with local industry leaders to determine exactly what they are looking for in recent graduates. However, the university also assists students upstream by offering K12 school communities STEM events and professional development opportunities.

Much like the STEM landscape has grown and evolved, so too have GCU's offerings. STEM Ready, an immersive multi-workshop, is designed to aid schools in evaluating how they are currently incorporating STEM teachings, analyzing their needs and helping them create strategic plans for implementing more STEM in their teaching. The 2017-18 school year saw close to 50 participants attend four workshops throughout the year. The workshops delved into different aspects of getting STEM ready -- from identifying what it takes to become a STEM school to creating excitement and innovation in the classroom, grant writing and more. Each school team also received one day of customized STEM coaching at their site at the conclusion of the series. School teams interested in attending the revamped 2018-19 version of STEM Ready are encouraged to sign up early by visiting the site [here](#).

Canyon Inquiry is also revamped for the 2018-19 school year; Canyon Inquiry is a four-workshop series that focuses on Inquiry with Intention. The series teaches attendees to put student voice and choice at the center of their teaching practice, experience the power of the essential question and explore the process of discovery through project and problem-based learning.

GCU's Thunder Vision STEM Summer Camps explore a variety of trending STEM topics. Biovision delves into bioscience and biotechnology, while relating teachings to innovation and the health care industry. Cybervision explores cybersecurity, one of the fastest growing professions in the United States. Robovision sets out to enlighten students on the design process and the fundamentals of engineering while capitalizing on GCU's engineering lab spaces. Lastly, Technovision captivates students by demonstrating how coding concepts and tech tools can bring STEM projects to life. Information on 2019 summer camps for K-8 students will be available soon.

GCU's STEM 1,2,3 Impact Grant is a three-phase, competition-based grant that features over \$25,000 available to applicants! Phase 1 will see eight to 10 winners of a \$1,000 STEM Seed Grant. Winners will utilize this initial seed money to obtain professional development, meet with community stakeholders and develop a project plan with a budget of \$8,000 to implement and sustain the creation of a solution to a community or environmental issue. Winners of Phase 1 will compete for two additional \$8,000 grants to carry out their project plan! Lastly, the two winners of the Phase 2 grant will prepare an 18-minute showcase presentation to vie for a final \$2,000 school award. This grant project requires administrator engagement, dedicated school teams, student participation and communication with outside constituents.

GCU also celebrates Arizona Principals that demonstrate a commitment to teaching STEM in their schools. Now entering its fifth year, GCU's STEM Principal of the Month program honors these principals with a presentation and token of appreciation courtesy of GCU and co-sponsor SUoll Architects.

“Each of these STEM-training events serves to inspire teachers and students alike,” director of K12 outreach Cori Araza says. “By doing our part to encourage participation in STEM-based activities, we hope to inspire the next generation of creators that are already building the world of tomorrow.”

For more information on K12 STEM offerings, contact Cole Bucholc at cole.bucholc@gcu.edu.

For more information on GCU's STEM Principal of the Month program, contact Jennifer Johnson at jennifer.johnson@gcu.edu.

K12 STUDENTS INSPIRED TO LOOK TOWARD THEIR FUTURE THROUGH THUNDER VISION PROGRAMS

Approaching GCU, modern buildings begin to fall into focus along with tall palm trees, towering athletics facilities and manicured lawns. The pristine campus is in stark contrast with the bustling, working-class neighborhood surrounding it. To many local passersby, the university is a sign of neighborhood rejuvenation and hope for the future. Thunder Vision, along with other youth-oriented opportunities, brings local youth on campus and reinforces the message that college is achievable for all.

Thunder Vision, an award-winning campus visitation program, invites middle school classes to tour facilities and learn what college life is all about. For many, this is their first exposure to a university and GCU's campus does not disappoint. Young students are sometimes surprised to learn that college students eat, sleep and live on campus! Tours are led by experienced GCU students who take the middle schoolers to visit various eateries, a mock dorm, academic buildings, sports facilities and more.

After their tour, the young students are taken to a lecture hall where they view a presentation titled "You Are College Bound. Are You College Ready?". The overview seeks to educate the young learners about steps they should take through middle and high school to ensure a smooth transition to college. Topics covered include reading habits, SAT/ACT, scholarships and tuition and more. At the conclusion of the scheduled program, students ask pertinent questions and get a special treat – a visit from GCU's mascot Thunder!

The popularity of Thunder Vision, seeing some 11,000 attendees since its inception five years ago, resulted in the creation of a campus visitation program in a larger venue – the GCU Arena. The first Thunder Vision Summit took place in February 2018 and saw over 2,300 middle schoolers bused onto campus for a morning of tours, talks, motivational stories and pizza!

For younger audiences, Lope Scope invites K-6 classes on campus for an abbreviated visitation program. The age group is different but the mission remains the same: to get Arizona youth acclimated with and excited about college. Upon arrival, eager elementary students are greeted by lively GCU students. Visitors receive small swag items and are broken into small groups, each of which have an accompanying GCU student guide. From here, teachers and student groups are led on a scavenger hunt across campus, which is set up to highlight campus staples. Upon finishing the tour, students review the answers to the scavenger hunt and eat their sacked lunches.

To date, GCU's K-8 visitation programs have introduced over 15,300 youth from across Arizona to college. "I really enjoyed watching my students get so excited about coming to college," said Kristina Schneider of Granada Primary School. "This experience made it very real for them."

New for the 2018-19 school year, Canyon on Your Campus allows schools to benefit from the same curriculum offered at Thunder Vision with the added convenience of hosting it at your site!

For more information on K-8 learning programs, contact Bethany Huffman at bethany.huffman@gcu.edu.



K12 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WELCOMES OUTSTANDING NEW TEAM MEMBERS

DR. DAN EGELER

I am honored and privileged to join the Grand Canyon University team. It's obvious that God has His hand of blessing on this university. I look forward to being a part of an ethos that wants to contribute toward a Kingdom impact and recognizes they are blessed so they can be a blessing.



Dr. Egeler currently serves as the vice president of CCSC Outreach at GCU. He attended Victoria Primary School in Tanzania for his primary years and Rift Valley Academy in Kenya through the 10th grade. His parents left Africa in 1974 and he graduated from a public high school in Ridgewood, NJ. He received a bachelor's from The King's College in New York, a master's from Washington State University and a doctorate in administration and instructional leadership from the University of Alabama.

Dr. Egeler served for 13 years as a teacher, soccer coach, high school principal and director of the Alliance Academy in Quito, Ecuador. He returned to the United States in July 1999 and has worked with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) in Colorado Springs, CO in a variety of roles in the global division. He most recently assumed the role of president of ACSI from 2013-18.

CAROL LIPPERT

I am excited about extending access to high-quality professional development for our educators, continuing and growing outreach programs for students, and building new programs for parents of prospective GCU students.



Carol Lippert is the executive director for K12 Educational Development and Student Outreach. In this role, she extends outreach to K12 districts and schools through high quality professional development and student engagement opportunities.

Previously, Carol held the position of associate superintendent for the High Academic Standards for Students Division at the Arizona Department of Education. In this role, she oversaw K12 Academic Standards, Early Childhood Education, the Office of English Language Acquisition Services, Gifted Education, Career and Technical Education and Gifted Education. She has also served as the principal of Washington High School in the Glendale Union High School District. Under her leadership, Washington was recognized as an Arizona Education Foundation A+ School, an All Subjects Higher Performing School by the ABEC and one of the Top Schools in the USA by topschoolsintusa.com

Prior to obtaining the principalship, Carol held various assistant principal posts for the GUHSD. In 2006, Carol was awarded the National Association for Secondary School Principals Assistant Principal of the Year for the State of Arizona. She received this award in part for her work in bringing college and career programs to her school with the creation of special events which linked businesses and colleges to the school. Preceding Carol's work as an administrator, she taught science at both the high school and middle school level. Additionally, she worked as an educational consultant providing professional development for teachers across the nation.

She holds a bachelor's in biology from University of Arizona, a bachelor's in secondary education from University of Arizona and a master's in educational leadership from Northern Arizona University.

RYAN BREDOW

It is a great joy and honor to join the GCU team. I firmly believe in the mission here and the intentional desire this community has to make a serving impact both locally and globally. I very much look forward to championing the robust vision set forth by president Mueller and his team and am excited to be a part of it.



Ryan serves as assistant vice president in K12 Educational Development. He joins GCU in support of their mission and championing the cause of growing and promoting Christian education at all levels.

Prior to accepting his current position in the summer of 2018, he spent 15 years serving in a variety of roles in Lutheran secondary schools, notably as a teacher, basketball coach, admissions director and marketing director. His family feels forever fortunate to have served alongside so many great people during that time.

Outside the office, he enjoys speaking and consulting with schools around the country in the name of growth strategies and best-practice promotion of Christian education. He is continually encouraged and humbled by how the Lord continues to work through the amazing gift of Christian schools.

A 2003 graduate of Concordia University Nebraska, Ryan holds a master's in marketing from the University of Colorado at Denver, specializing in entrepreneurship. In the summer of 2014, he began a doctorate program in education, specializing in organizational development through GCU, which he plans to complete in the fall of 2018.

MARNI LANDRY

My teaching is inspired by hearing students who said "I can't" say "I will."



Marni Landry is the K12 STEM outreach manager within K12 Educational Development. She came to GCU following a 16-year career at Paradise Valley High School. She wrote the curriculum for, and taught in the Center for Research, Engineering, Science and Technology program on the Paradise Valley campus. Courses included: Introduction to STEM Research, Principles of Biotechnology, Cell Biology, Genetics and Microbiology. In addition she was an adjunct professor with the University of Arizona teaching Molecular Cell Biology 101 & 102 as dual enrollment courses.

Her most recent teaching awards include: Arizona Tech Council Teacher of the Year, IEEE Pre-College Teacher of the Year, Arizona Bioindustry Association Educator of the Year, Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, Nobel Top 10 Educator of the Year, Flinn Foundation Distinguished Educator, Arizona Science Teachers Association High School Science Teacher of the Year and HOSA (Future Health Professionals) Advisor of the Year.

Marni has a bachelor's in biology from Arizona State University and a master's in curriculum and instruction from the University of Phoenix. She is certified in secondary biology and career and technical education (emerging technologies).

BETHANY HUFFMAN

I'm excited to find the best ways to serve and keep growing our programs to benefit the lives of students.



Bethany is a recent graduate of GCU, where she earned her BA in Christian studies. She is originally from Colorado Springs, CO where she spent most of her life after moving to the U.S. from Ecuador as a child of parents devoted to missionary work. Bethany moved to Phoenix to attend GCU and married her husband, Noah, after her junior year. Bethany worked as a student worker for Strategic Educational Alliances (SEA) for the duration of her three years as a student. Speaking weekly at "Thunder Vision," the campus visitation program for seventh-eighth grades that SEA offers, she gained experience working with middle schoolers and presenting college-readiness programs.

Her new position is the K12 Event Coordinator and she is focused on K-8 outreach. Continuing her work with seventh-eighth grade Thunder Vision, she has expanded to K-6 programming, offering multiple campus visitation opportunities, going out to schools to present and now working on parent programming as well.



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