



PARK
UNIVERSITY

Career Center News

SPECIAL

**EDITION:
EDUCATION**



IN THIS ISSUE:

**Student:
Rodney
Foster**

**Professor:
Dr. Shannon
Cuff**

**Employers:
Fort Osage
R-1 School District**

&

**Dr. Dorothy
Harper Watson
Literacy Center**

**Student Stressor:
Academic Studies
& Inclement
Weather**

Upcoming Events:

**Park University
Mock Interview Day
For
Communications,
Graphic Design,
and Marketing
Majors:
Tuesday, March
20th, 2012
8:00am—1:00pm**

VOLUME VII, ISSUE III DECEMBER/JANUARY '11-'12

Rodney Foster: Secondary Education & English Major

By LaKeisha Brashier

It was the Fall of 2006, and Rodney Foster decided he needed a career change. "I had been working in an auto parts store for 13 years...but felt that I was not meeting my potential or using my life in a fulfilling manner," he says. Rodney is married with four children, and he says his experiences raising his kids helped shaped his decision to return to school to major in Education. He started out at Maple Woods, earning an Associate's Degree in Teaching and he eventually transferred to Park in 2009 to pursue a degree in Secondary Education with an English concentration. He has since added English Literature as a second major, and will graduate in May 2012 after completing his student teaching experience.



Rodney would like students to know that the field of education is ever changing, and new research continues to guide how best to provide a successful learning experience for students. In addition, advances in technology continue to reshape how teachers can present information and assess students. He says that perhaps the most challenging thing for many teachers is keeping up with these changes and deciding the best way to put the knowledge into practice. The Education Department at Park is helping students along the way by updating the Portfolio process.

Rodney began his student teaching experience last semester at Fort Osage, working with Mrs. Anne Farmer who was the Fort Osage Teacher of the Year, and runner-up for Missouri Teacher of the Year. Rodney has already been able to see how the theories and methods he learned in his courses can be implemented in a real classroom, especially since "Mrs. Farmer encourages the use of my ideas for lessons," he shares. He plans to start his career as a High School English Teacher soon after graduation, and thanks his professors at Park who he says have made all the difference in his educational experience..."I want to have the same kind of impact on my students when I am in charge of my own classroom".

Fort Osage R-1 School District

By LaKeisha Brashier



"Employment with the Fort Osage School District is not simply about finding a job, it is finding a family. We believe each and every employee is an important partner in the education of our student learners. Whether you are a recent graduate looking for a first job or someone seeking new challenges, we hope you consider the Fort for that career move. Some say that you will never work harder than you work at Fort Osage, but it is work with great purpose, making a difference in the lives of children. Fort Osage certificated and classified staff are afforded the opportunity to grow as adult learners, through professional learning experiences. With researched best-practice at the core of that learning, the Fort is considered a very progressive district."

Source: <http://www.fortosage.net>

Dr. Shannon Cuff Has a Passion for Teaching & Education

By LaKeisha Brashier



Dr. Shannon Cuff is in her second year at Park as an Assistant Professor of Literacy Education, and chose the education field because she says, “there is no greater honor than to be a part of students’ lives as they pursue their own goals and dreams. The successes I experience with students sustain me professionally and spark my desire to learn more”.

Dr. Cuff received her Ph.D. in Literacy Education from the University of Missouri in May 2010, and chose to teach at Park because of its Liberal Arts education and the opportunity to develop relationships with students because of the small class sizes. The fact that one of her mentors at the University of Missouri was Dorothy Harper Watson, the woman for whom Park’s Literacy Center is named, also factored into her decision.

“Students who are successful in the Education major work hard; communicate well with students, teachers, and parents; practice reflective thinking, and seek professional development”.

Students at Park who would like to major in Education can choose from three degree programs: Early Childhood, Elementary Education, and Middle/Secondary Education. Once the program has been successfully completed, including student teaching, graduates become certified to teach in the state of Missouri. Dr. Cuff states that “students who are successful in the education major work hard; communicate well with students, teachers, and parents; practice reflective thinking, and seek professional development”. A common challenge in the field is trying to meet the needs of all learners in classrooms that are very diverse in terms of learning styles. However, the rewards come in having the opportunity to make a difference in children’s lives by applying what was learned at Park.

Dr. Cuff says that although jobs for certified educators aren’t as plentiful as they once were because of the current economic situation, the education program at Park continues to prepare competitive teacher candidates. For example, Park’s Third Annual Literacy Conference will be held on April 14th, and will be beneficial to students. Dr. Cuff hopes that the Education major continues to grow, and that as many opportunities as possible are provided to students to experience the joy of teaching.

Dr. Dorothy Harper Watson Literacy Center

By LaKeisha Brashier

Dorothy Harper Watson graduated from Park College in 1952 with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She completed a Master's degree in Education in 1964 at the University of Missouri - Kansas City, and a Ph.D. in 1973 at Wayne State University. From 1957 to 1966 she was a classroom teacher in inner-city Kansas City, MO.

The Literacy Center was dedicated in June 2003, and opened officially in the Fall of 2003. As the Literacy Center grows older, the level of activity is gradually increasing with numerous classes and meetings being held, continual growth of the resource collection, professional development opportunities, and the launching of outreach projects within schools and community organizations in the Kansas City area. Expect to see additions to the history of the Literacy Center as the coming months unfold!

Student Stressor: Winter Weather Worries Revisited

By LaKeisha Brashier

It’s that time of the year again! You know the time when inclement weather causes classes to be cancelled and campus offices to close. Usually this causes feelings of elation, but the subsequent piling up of chapters to read, papers to write, and assignments to complete can definitely be headache-inducing. To help combat any unnecessary stress, students should check their e-mail and/or contact their instructor for instructions on missed class work. Also, reserve extra time to read or study until the next scheduled class period. Be sure to check Park’s website for closings in the event of future inclement weather, and in the meantime, be safe and keep warm!

