



OUTSTANDING MENTOR AWARDS

SPRING 2019

ABOUT THE AWARDS

The UNO College of Education is excited to announce the winners of the Spring 2019 Outstanding Mentor Awards. These individuals are being recognized for their incredible dedication to UNO's teacher candidates!

Mentors were nominated by their student practicum or clinical practice candidates. Students could nominate a cooperating teacher, a UNO faculty member, or anyone who helped guide them as they gained teaching experience this semester. The top nominees for both clinical practice and student practicum were selected by a panel of reviewers.

AWARD DESCRIPTION

Characteristics of an exemplary mentor may include but are not limited to:

- Is available to answer questions, address concerns, and provide guidance.
- Is approachable and positive.
- Cares about me and encourages development.
- Listens and responds to needs and concerns.
- Offers support and resources when needed.
- Encourages new ideas and supports candidates in trying new things.
- Models professional actions and ethical practice.
- Demonstrates knowledge of best practice and is a valuable resource.
- Provides feedback on strengths and areas for growth (verbal, written, or electronic).

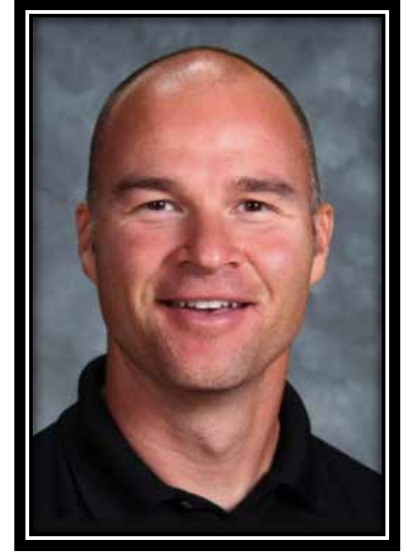


the
INFLUENCE
of a good
TEACHER
can NEVER be
erased

CLINICAL PRACTICE OUTSTANDING MENTOR RECIPIENTS

Mike Huffman has gone above and beyond for me as a mentor teacher throughout this entire semester. I initially met Mike two years ago during my advanced practicum placement at Bellevue West. He was incredibly supportive and helpful then, so I knew right away that I wanted to work with him throughout my clinical practice experience. One of my favorite things about Mike is his ability to be blunt with me about what went well or what I need to work on during my lessons. A few mentors I have had in the past would sugar coat criticism or simply tell me that I was doing a “great job” without going into detail about my teaching abilities. I would not receive much feedback other than “keep up the good work”. Mike is very honest and to the point. When giving me feedback, he begins by asking what I think that I did well. Afterwards, he listens to what did not go exactly how I planned.

Michael Huffman
Bellevue West High School

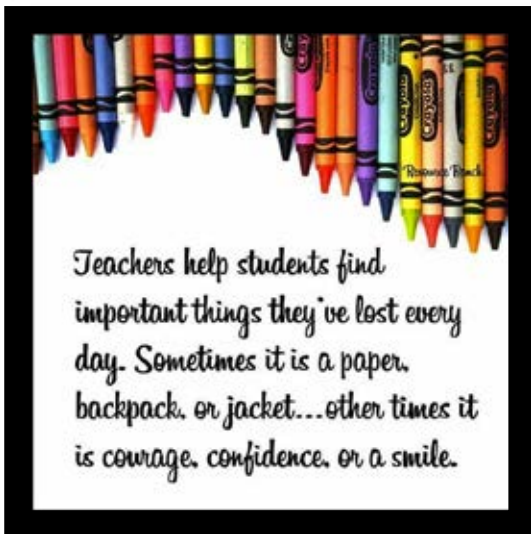


Cassie Wall goes above and beyond when it comes to providing me with all types of guidance. If I have a question about a lesson or something is confusing me, I know I can ask her without shame and I will get an honest answer. She gives great feedback that I can use and work on to improve my teaching and communication with all students and staff. She is supportive if I want to try something new and she is always willing to step in if something does not go as planned. She has encouraged me several different times throughout the semester, whether it be about an upcoming lesson or observation or building me up if something goes wrong. She is available after school hours to answer any question that comes up, and she never complains about the amount of questions I ask her.

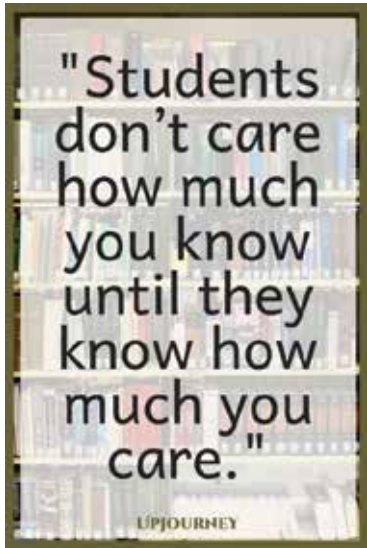
Cassandra Wall
Longfellow Elementary

Deborah Bradley is my university supervisor this year for clinical practice, and she has gone absolutely above and beyond to fulfill her role. She has explained all of our requirements thoroughly, has been extremely flexible among snow days and sick days, and has been a kind listening ear to my cohort's abundance of questions. During our first seminar I was a bit overwhelmed because I had gotten married just two days before beginning clinical practice. I was extremely nervous to ask about taking a trip over spring break to visit him, as well as take an excused absence day within my first week of clinical practice in order to get my military paperwork taken care of at Offutt. During my first one-on-one conversation with Deb that day I started crying - a mix of nerves, lack of sleep, and tackling a huge life event just days before. I was extremely embarrassed, but Deb was quick to comfort me. She dropped everything and asked me to pull out pictures from the big day and tell her about my wedding.

Deborah Bradley
University of Nebraska Omaha



STUDENT PRACTICUM OUTSTANDING MENTOR RECIPIENTS



Diann Moore was more than I could have asked in a mentor teacher. On our first day, she provided me with a teacher bag that was full of professional resources for the years to come. She made herself available at any time of the day. I came in early every morning to work on lesson planning with her, pick her brain on my future and where I wanted to go, study for the praxis, and vent on life. She became like another mother to me. When my car was not working one morning she ensured I made it there even offering to pick me up. She opened her home to a family struggling. She gave students her phone number over spring break so she wouldn't go 11 days without contact.

Diann Moore
Wakonda Elementary



Angie has made this practicum the best experience I've had so far at UNO. She has been there 100% to support me and push me to be the best possible educator. Angie treated me like a fellow teacher rather than a "practicum student". She called me throughout the week and was very flexible with all of the snow days we've had. She was professional, yet, very personable. She has willingly told me she would write me a letter of recommendation for my future career and has gone above and beyond in multiple ways. She's an experienced teacher who loves her job. She was willing to be there for me, but also learn new things from me as well. I'm going to miss being in her classroom.

Angie Loberg
Rohwer Elementary

Mrs. Jones was the perfect example of the teacher I wish to be someday. From the moment I stepped into her classroom I knew that this field experience was going to be like one I've never had before. I want to first off start by talking about the relationship she has with her students. You can tell Mrs. Jones genuinely cares about the students not only in her classroom but also outside of her classroom. The first week in the classroom Mrs. Jones wanted us to establish relationships with our kids in order for them to be respectful and have the relationship with us where they would want to work. As we moved into the second week of field we talked about when we would teach all of our 12 lessons and Mrs. Jones made it a point to sit down with us during her plan period and look over her schedule

Jennifer Jones
Ashland Park-Robbins Elementary



OUTSTANDING CLINICAL PRACTICE & STUDENT PRACTICUM AWARDS SPRING 2019

ABOUT THE AWARDS

The UNO College of Education is excited to announce the winners of the Spring 2019 Outstanding Clinical Practice and Student Practicum Awards. These candidates are being recognized for going above and beyond to meet students' needs!

Candidates were nominated by cooperating teachers, speech-language pathologists, and supervisors for four different candidate awards: student motivator, knowledge expander, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) innovator, and humanities integrator. The top nominees were selected by a panel of reviewers.



STEM Innovator Award

Uses science, technology, engineering, and/or math

- In innovative ways to engage others in learning
- To employ different techniques and instructional strategies
- To emphasize higher order thinking skills and metacognitive strategies

AWARD DESCRIPTIONS

Knowledge Expander Award

- Teaches strategies to support reflection on learning process
- Uses a variety of techniques to maintain interest and momentum
- Is concerned with having participants learn and demonstrate understanding of meaning rather than memorization
- Creates appropriate alternative ways to proceed when faced with any given scenario; he/she can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues

Humanities Integrator Award

Uses art, music, language arts, and/or social science to

- Incorporate the contributions of varied cultures and multiple perspectives into teaching and learning
- Engage students at multiple cognitive levels
- Promote the analytical skills of the students

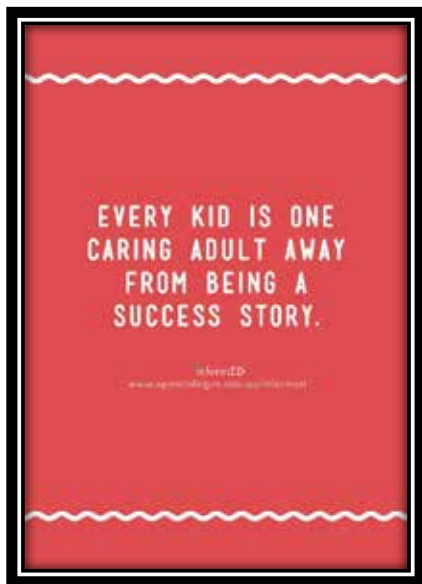
Student Motivator Award

- Is upbeat and gets others excited about learning
- Thinks about all the factors that might affect a situation or person
- Creates a supportive environment
- Shows awareness of those who feel left out and makes an effort to include them
- Demonstrates concern for others' emotional and physical well-being on a daily basis
- Volunteers for and participates in activities outside of the work day

CLINICAL PRACTICE KNOWLEDGE EXPANDER

Courtney does a great job of providing students and opportunity to show what they know, by learning from where they are not yet proficient. She leads with questions when conversations stall, but doesn't give away answers. She has modeled and guided examples, and then follows up with activities where students can work together to problem solve, and apply the concepts. She has embraced the idea of growth mindset implemented by Jo Boaler, and gives students to learn through mistakes, not by mindlessly plugging into formulas that they don't fully understand, but are able to correctly answer. I have no doubt that as she continues to gain experience, that she'll be able to expand this deeper thinking to the discussion with her teaching peers, and not simply in her classroom. Courtney has engaged students with technology, by giving quick online quizzes, as well as traditional assessments, and provides great feedback on to guide student learning, and future instruction. The online response gives quick info to both the class, and the instructor of where they can go next with the material. She makes all notes available online so that students who were gone, or misplace them can stay caught up.

Courtney Swift
Secondary Education Math

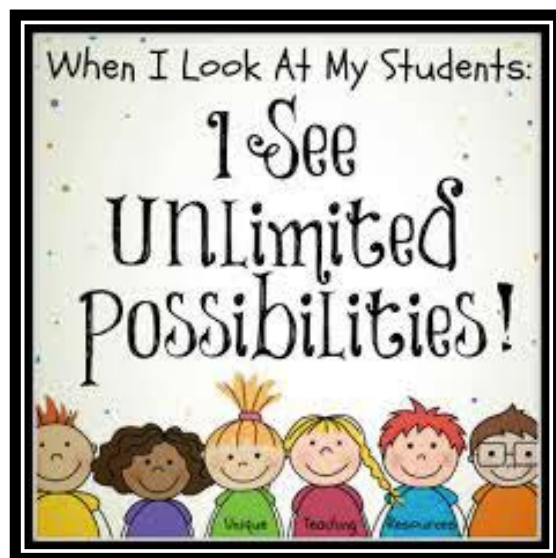


Epley Hamilton has been a true blessing to Bellevue West High School. From the day she arrived at Bellevue West, she brought an energy that I've never seen from a clinical practice/student teacher. Epley was enthusiastic in everything she did. Her excitement to teach was infectious, which both I and her students noticed immediately. That excitement lead to her students being equally excited to come to her class and learn from her every day. Epley is naturally gifted at creating relationships with her students. Epley has worked with a wide range of students, some of which are AP students, others who are on IEPs, and others suffer from behavior disorders. Epley has found a way of making a personal connection to each and every one of them. She truly cares about her students, and her students truly care about her. Epley has also shown time and time again that she is willing to support her students outside of regular school hours. She served as my assistant Senior Senate advisor, where she helped to plan and manage numerous charitable fundraising events, Baccalaureate, and the graduation ceremony. Epley served as an assistant track coach working with the high jumpers. Finally, Epley has made it a point to support her students at all levels. Whether that meant going to sporting events or attending the school musical, she was constantly was at school events to support her students.

Epley Hamilton
Secondary Education Computer Science

Kate has consistently demonstrated effective teacher thinking and practice to promote her students' learning. She posts the learning objective, states it, has her students repeat it and frequently refer to the objective throughout the lesson so students know the learning target, the first step in successful learning. Kate uses a variety of instructional strategies and assessments to promote student interest and engagement. These include: Nonlinguistic representation. Students worked with partners to complete a graphic organizer listing properties of liquids and solids throughout her lessons. Kate encourages students to reflect upon their learning and demonstrate their understanding. She created a discovery process for students to "uncover" symmetry. She adjusted instruction after observing students' sorting process and listening to their discussions. She provided opportunities to think through the information and make corrections.

Kate Stegman
Elementary Education



CLINICAL PRACTICE STEM INNOVATOR RECIPIENTS



Victoria constantly finds ways to engage all the students during learning including placing the students with partners, groups and connecting the students to work with each other as seen through the Up/Down activity. She uses a variety of instructional strategies and use of technology when leading the students towards understanding. She uses videos, DESMOS and other technology, along with having students use KWL's and real world applications as they address the day's objectives. Students are placed into groups determined by data from previous learning. The groups of students are lead through activities where they address the real world situations through math applications. Victoria is truly an educator focusing on best strategies to engage and teach students. Her use of questioning to involve all students is how she is able to promote critical thinking of her students.

Victoria Erdkamp
Secondary Education Math

Sarah uses many methods to engage the students in learning. A few that have really stuck out are the use of "pickers" for answering higher level questions to gain immediate feedback of student understanding. Sarah had students put together stop motion videos to show the processes of mitosis and meiosis and highlight some of the major parts of the processes. She has brought lectures to life through the use of video clips that the students can relate to and then ties them into her bell work/daily lesson. The one that comes to mind was about Punnett squares and included was a video clip of the Simpson's. Students figured out if Bart inherited a certain trait based on how it was passed on through family lines. One of the activities Sarah did recently was to categorize the vocabulary and give reasons for why the words chosen were in that category. Sarah found a very recent discovery that was published in an article that she brought to share with students and turned it into a critical thinking activity. She has questioned student's every day and because we are in a genetics unit currently she can continue to question them more and more about where traits come from and how to figure them out mathematically. One other reason I feel Sarah should receive an award is because Sarah has found "that one student" and has taken the initiative to help him and he has responded. I tried many things last semester and he just would not respond. He refused to come in after school, get work done in class, do homework, and give excuses. He has done a 360 from the time Sarah has come into the room. I believe that she has made the difference in this student's life and he is willing to work for her. This says a lot about Sarah because she is just not a student teacher but is touching lives of students in a short amount of time.

Sarah Birnbaum
Secondary Education Science



Clinical Practice Humanities Integration Recipient



Carmen focuses her instruction on her students' cultures and experiences. She led the students from the Harlem Renaissance to the Great Depression. She reviewed the pictures and writings of the Harlem Renaissance and then used pictures from the Great Depression for the students to begin analyzing that time period. This was how she led the students to the next reading, *Of Mice and Men*. Students were led through their critical thinking by having them each fill in their concept maps of the time period of the novel.

Carmen searches for a variety of resources to use with her students as she teaches new concepts. She wants to ensure the students understand the relevance and connections each of the objectives have to their own lives.

Carmen Anderson
Secondary Education English



CLINICAL PRACTICE STUDENT MOTIVATOR RECIPIENTS



One of the things I admire about Michael is how he motivates the students to learn in ways that they don't realize they are learning. For example: when they have to review their vocabulary words, Michael creates small heterogeneous groups of students and they challenge other groups in Kahoot (once a group selects an answer they have to explain why), Head-Bands in which the students pair-up with another student and each describe the word on their partner's head, use it in a sentence, then move to the next classmate. He has done Battleship to practice Coordinate Plane. There is also 4-Corners he used for review Science concepts, or You Be The Teacher - student gets up and work from the projector, explaining to their classmates how to solve a math concept, and the list goes on and on.

Michael Stennis
Elementary Education

Sarah has a wonderful, positive, cheery disposition. She always makes the students feel comfortable and welcome into the classroom. The students are motivated by her enthusiasm for the subject and lesson being presented. They value her input and search her out for additional help when needed. She has comforted and counseled students who are having personal or academic problems. She presents positive, and uplifting options for them to consider in helping them cope. We have a very diverse school population and Sarah always shows an interest in the various cultures and languages that our students speak. She has a genuine interest and curiosity in learning about the lives of our refugee students and often will discuss with them their experiences in coming to the United States. She has tutored students with their class work and interpreted information for them they may not fully understand. Sarah continually offers to help with any school activity and has attended many out of school functions involving our students. She has moved on to her elementary school student teaching experience and all of us who worked with her miss her already.

Sarah Schneider
Secondary Education Art



Lindsay Koltas has a contagious enthusiasm and joy for learning. Her voice is energetic and positive, always encouraging students to try their best and affirming their efforts. Her highly engaging lessons allow all students to participate and interact in a variety of ways. Lessons I have observed include practicing manners through role-playing, exploring magnetism using different item and donut magnets, drawing dream houses on graph paper to measure area, and discussing new concepts through turn and talks. Lindsay uses effective questioning to help students make personal connections with text and learning objectives.

Lindsay accepts student responses in a positive and affirming way. Comments I have heard include, "I like your thinking," "Do you have something to add?" and "Thank you for sharing."

Lindsay is quick to notice a student who is upset or struggling. She will kneel down by the student, talking quietly about resolving whatever the issue is. She and her cooperating teacher create a safe environment where students are encouraged to take risks without fear of failure. Lindsay documents performance and provides individualized extra help or reteaches difficult concepts.

Lindsay Koltas
Elementary Education

STUDENT PRACTICUM KNOWLEDGE EXPANDER RECIPIENTS



Mr. Stangl used a variety of methods to teach, and always considered every learner. He quickly recognized who were visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic learners. If he wasn't in the thick of teaching, he was observing. Zech would quickly assist. Students bought in quickly to his calm demeanor and they themselves built confidence due to his presence. He created lessons that would benefit each and every student, reach their maximum potential, all while they were engaged in those lessons.

Zech Stangl
Elementary Education



Alicia was wonderful while in my classroom. She made it a point to learn their names and to talk with students during down time to get to know them. She was not afraid to try something that was new to them that she had seen in another teacher's classroom. The reciprocal teaching strategy was very effective with my students and they liked it so much they asked if we could keep using it. She lead a wonderful whole group lesson on alliteration where she rapped her alliteration example and the kids were still talking about it days later.

Alicia Laufenberg
Elementary Education



Rieley went above and beyond her acceptable contribution in the classroom with student learning. Her lessons were prepared ahead of deadlines and she ALWAYS conferred with me (classroom teacher) to make sure that she was hitting the learning targets and applying rigor in her lessons. She prepared lessons that allowed the students to critical think and adjust their learning from their point of view. With almost every solution or answer to a problem she would check understanding by simply asking the student to explain their response.

Rieley Burtzel
Elementary Education

STUDENT PRACTICUM STUDENT MOTIVATOR RECIPIENTS



Nicole came into the classroom every single day with a positive attitude ready to change the world. In teaching you leave some days feeling defeated but she always reflected upon it, asked for advice when needed, and came back the next day ready to change the world. Nicole worked hard to build relationships with each kid, make connections to them, and create lessons that were relatable to them. When working with students in whole group and small groups she made every effort to have all students be included.

Nicole Somlai
Elementary Education



Cameron was an absolutely wonderful asset to our classroom. His personality and energy level were apparent from day one. He took the time to get to know each of the students and who they really were as people. It was clear throughout his lesson planning and lessons that he had really thought about how each student would respond to lessons and how best to accommodate student needs. Outside of school, Cameron spends his summers in Texas working with children with special needs in a camp setting. Cameron has left a lasting impression on our classroom and we can't wait to see what he does in the future.

Cameron Dacanay
Secondary Education Special Education



Mitchell stands at the door between classes greeting all students and has established a good rapport with the students in classroom situations. As students are working independently, he roams the room offering additional help or answering questions. He "touches base" with all the students as they are working and stops to help those that may need some extra help completing projects by offering additional instruction or rephrasing of a question, etc. Mitchell has done a great job of modeling that with our students. He is always friendly, positive, and motivating to the students. He strives to build a relationship with all of them--getting to know their names quickly and finding out things about them that he can converse with them about.

Mitchell Fischer
Secondary Education

IN LEARNING YOU WILL TEACH,
AND IN TEACHING
YOU WILL LEARN.

Congratulations to all of our nominees! Thank you for engaging your students during field experiences and supporting our future educators!

Teacher Candidates

Allison Davis
Madeline Estergaard
Annie Catania
Christopher Jackson
Alex Nielsen
Lauren Neal
Janelle Moyle
Ashley Ortmeier
Janelle Moyle
Alyssa Smith
Genesis Ventura
Krista Kurlmel



Mentors

Tricia Soares
Tracey Grisham
Allen Thamer
Piper Porras
Kesha King
Jennie Heese
Kaitlin Long
Stacey Stoffel
Matt Burke
Paige Beaty
Micah Ringlein
Sarah Young
Matthew Pekula
Jamie Bizal
Dr. Mike Messerole
Nancy Rodriguez
Lacey Patrick
Mrs. Cinnamon
Brenda Reed
Megan Calseron
Denise Karloff
Kristan Strosnider
Thomas Krueger
Tricia Kuiper

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