Thankful for our Protégés and Mentors

Around Thanksgiving, we are all called to think about what or whom we are thankful for. Many of us think of our family, friends, pets, and other individuals, who we hold dear. This year, we, the Graduate Assistants, would like you to know that we are thankful for having such an amazing group of mentors and protégés. We brag about you all the time. Keep it up, everyone! You are all truly wonderful.

Save the Date!

Survey Responses Due
December 7 11:59pm
Results from the survey will be used to adjust the program’s future

End of Semester Celebration
TC 1008
December 9
5:00pm-6:00pm
Time to celebrate you and your accomplishments of this semester

Quiet Study Session
BL L82A
December 12
5:00pm-7:30pm
Need a quiet place to study for final exams? We will provide the space and hot chocolate

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November Workshop Recaps

Adulting 101

On Wednesday, November 2, the Ph.D. Pathways held its fourth workshop of the semester that was facilitated by Eilis Wasserman of Ball State University’s Career Center. The workshop focused on the importance of personal branding in adulthood and how to utilize the services of the Career Center.

There were seventeen students in attendance for this workshop. We worked on activities and participated in discussions related to our personal brand and how to utilize them in our professional and academic lives. Though this workshop did not specifically focus on the other facets of adulting, we hope that this workshop was beneficial to all of the students present at the workshop. We also hope to bring fun workshops next semester on the other facets of adulting.

Volunteering with the Muncie Animal Shelter

On Saturday, November 19, the Ph.D. Pathways held its fifth and final workshop of the semester, which was a volunteering day at the Muncie Animal Shelter located on West Riggin Road. Even though it was snowing, we had eleven eager protégés. The workshop provided multiple benefits: volunteer hours, fulfillment of the workshop requirement, socialization time, and free animal therapy. The Ph.D. Pathways Program also offered a ride to and from campus for students who did not have transportation.
Relieving Stress with Therapy Dogs

On November 30, the Ph.D. Pathways Program was held an event with trained therapy dogs available for the members of Ph.D. Pathways. We had 18 Ph.D. Pathways members present, along with 14 other Ball State University students, staff, and faculty. This event would not be possible without the very generous help of Bonnie Krupa, the Graduate Advisor in the Ball State University Department of Special Education and owner of Advanced Canine Techniques; Dr. Theresa Kruczek, the Clinical Director of the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic; and the amazing volunteers who came with their dogs, which were Barb with Cookie, Sara with Sophie, Barb with Allison, and Susan with Moose.

Need For More Amazing Mentors! Help Us Spread the Word!

Do you know any driven professors or staff on campus who you think would be perfect for this program?

The Ph.D. Pathways Program, as you may have seen, is constantly expanding. We need more and more mentors to keep up with the amount of amazing students that we have apply each semester. If you know of any one who would be beneficial to our underrepresented students, please let your Ph.D. Pathways liaison know so that she may contact that individual and tell them more about our amazing program!
Where Are They Now?
Catching Up With Past Ph.D. Pathways Protégés

This month’s “Where Are They Now?” is especially important to us. The Ph.D. Pathways alumna who we are focusing on in this issue is our very own Jaylin Lee, a Graduate Assistant of the Ph.D. Pathways Program for Teacher’s College, and a past protégé of the program as well.

What was your experience like as an undergraduate student in the PhD Pathways Program?

My mentor provided me with valuable guidance. He was there for me when I applied for graduate school, as I transitioned into a professional, and along side me as I set post-graduate education goals. Ph.D. Pathways also helped me feel a part of the Ball State community as I became closer to the faculty and staff that help shape our experiences.

If you could go back and give freshman Jaylin three pieces of advice, what would they be?
1. Don't stress - it will only slow you down.
2. Failure is a learning and growing opportunity.
3. Take time to reevaluate your priorities and things that truly matter; over time those will change.

What about the program made you want to become a graduate assistant for Ph.D. Pathways?

I started to feel closer to the Ball State University community and quickly realized that here was my spot at being a part of our community. I wanted to take part in creating an environment where students can foster their own unique relationships and experiences.

How have you seen the program grow during your time as a graduate assistant for Ph.D. Pathways Program?

While the program has grown in numbers, our significant growth is reflected in the quality of the program. We have honed in on how we can make encounters more enjoyable for both mentors and protégés. I think that is what has attracted more students and faculty.

What are your plans after graduation?

Post-graduation, I plan to follow my passion and work as a Speech Language Pathologist in a pediatric medical setting to help treat communication disorders. Along the way, eventually I would like to also pursue a doctoral degree and become immersed in the Speech Language Pathology community.

What is your dream for the program?

Ph.D. Pathways is an organization that strips away the titles of being a "professor" and "student", in a way that mentors are able to embark further on their commitments as lifetime educators. Since it is highly encouraged for protégés and mentors to interact and schedule on their own, in addition to what we offer, the possibilities can be endless. I hope the organization continues to build on a platform that promotes what our faculty can teach without textbooks and syllabus. They surely have a lot to offer. I hope the program continues to embrace the unique relationships we have established, as well as guide each student and mentor to prosper.

We will all miss Jaylin very much. We wish her the best in her future endeavors and hope that she looks back at the Ph.D. Pathways Program with fond memories. Please join us at our End of the Semester Celebration on December 9 to wish her well before she leaves our university to follow her passions.
Laara Estar is currently a Junior who is studying Elementary Education with concentrations in Reading and Gifted and Talented. This semester she is involved in the Schools Within The Context of Community (SCC) Immersive Program. She stated, “I applied to be apart of this program because of how amazing an opportunity it is”. Schools Within the Context of Community (SCC) is an immersive program from junior-level Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education Majors. SCC immerses pre-service teacher candidates in a low-income, African American Community where they are matched with community-mentors who serves as cultural ambassadors and impart the strengths of the children and families whom candidates working during their practicum placement.

Their goal is to explore how the interrelationship between schools, families, and communities impact students’ education inside the classroom. They spend 10 hours a week in the classroom and 2.5 hours a week in an after-school program. Their classes are located at a local community center, off –campus, which allows them to be fully immersed in the community. The SCC group also volunteers at local events and is hosting events of its own. These events are diverse book displays in which people can come and order books from a catalog, which celebrates diversity in literature.

Because of the need they saw in their practicum placement, they have developed an idea to share Scholastic’s We Need Diverse Books© flyer and catalog of books with the community in which we are working and volunteering. They have planned four exciting events to acquaint community members with the diverse books and the need for them in schools and homes. These events include book displays and information sessions at the local community council meeting, at the elementary school for the teachers, at the school's Family Night for children and families, and in the Ball State Teacher's College for teacher candidates. They are fundraising through GoFundMe (https://www.gofundme.com/2sy5jn38), and their goal is to raise at least $2,000 so that they can place as many books as possible in the hands of their students. They believe that books should reflect the culture of the reader as well as give them a look into cultures and experiences different from their own. They are dedicated to this cause, and hope to have the support of the Ball State community to help them realize their goal.
We Want To Hear From You!

Do you know a prominent protégé? Have you heard about any of our amazing alumni? Have you recently presented at a conference? Are you doing anything exceptional yourself either academically or extracurricularly?

*Let us know!*

Please e-mail Paulina Wojtach, pwojtach@bsu.edu, with any stories that you think we should feature in our newsletter.

The Ph.D. Pathways Program is looking for protégés to join our Executive Board. The Executive Board is made up of College Leaders (one per college), a Student Recruiter, a Public Relations Director, a Community Service Director, and an Event Coordinator. Protégés who are part of the Executive Board will assist the Graduate Assistants hands-on with the program. This experience is wonderful for your resume, as these roles require time management, responsibility, and collaboration – all great traits that are applicable to every field. If you are interested in joining the Executive Board, please fill out an application, which will be emailed out to the protégés, and email the filled-out application to your college’s liaison by the end of the day December 30.