

- "February 10, 2012"

Posted by gray.15

Created on February 13, 2012 at 9:36am - Last updated February 28, 2012 at 8:27am

Dear Ohio State Mansfield Colleagues,

I am pleased to begin this report with mention of another shining example of the widespread impact that our faculty's empirical work is having across the nation and beyond. Assistant Professor Joanne Ruthsatz's research – that seeks to identify various genes that are linked to autism – was featured in a recent 60 Minutes report. In brief, Dr. Ruthsatz's work is focused specifically on child prodigies, who typically have a family history that is replete with members who have been diagnosed with various autistic conditions. Originally aired on January 27th, you can view the entire story at:

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560_162-57358845/jake-math-prodigy-proud-of-his-autism/?tag=currentVideoInfo;videoMetaInfo

The scholarship of this psychology professor also made the front page of the Mansfield News Journal this week, as well as several additional news outlets. Complementing all of this media attention, Dr. Ruthsatz recently received a \$90,000 grant from the Marci and Bill Ingram Comprehensive Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders in support of her work.

In other news, my office has been busy scheduling a number of visits that will bring some of my colleagues from the Council of Deans to the Ohio State Mansfield campus. College of Nursing Dean Bernadette Melnyk and her staff will be arriving on March 8th for a discussion about a number of exciting new initiatives that she is launching. This includes the possibility of bringing health care services – as well as additional mental health services – to our campus for students, staff, and faculty through her cadre of licensed nurse practitioners. For this reason, Dean Melnyk will be accompanied by Senior Vice President for Student Life Javaune Adams-Gaston (aka Dr. J) and Louise Douce, the Director of Counseling and Consultation Services on the Columbus campus. As well, the College of Nursing is going to be launching a new major in the area of health and human performance that would serve as an important alternative for students interested in health care delivery but unable to secure a spot in the highly competitive Ohio State nursing program. We will be exploring how our campus might play a role in helping students on the Ohio State Mansfield campus take advantage of this new program offering.

My office also was contacted by the College of Arts and Sciences in order to set up a visit by Executive Dean Joe Steinmetz, who is interested in hosting an informal conversation in order to get a sense of the issues and concerns that may be on faculty members' minds. We have secured April 6th as the date for Dean Steinmetz's visit, and the discussion with faculty will take place over the common hour. Please mark your calendars! On another Arts and Sciences note, Dean Steinmetz recently appointed Professors Del Lindsey, Bill Putikka, and Yongmin Sun to the newly formed College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Advisory Committee. Many thanks to all

three of these professors for agreeing to undertake this important service to their college!

Talks continue with our North Central State College colleagues on the possibility of reallocating some space in Bromfield Hall. In large part, this is due to NCSC having more space available in the Fallerius Center because their Business Department was moved to the Kehoe Center in Shelby. At present, the most likely rooms to be reverted to Ohio State are existing offices. Over time, there also may be some classroom space reverted to Ohio State. In all likelihood, however, NCSC will retain its laboratory classroom space in Bromfield. It is important to note that Ohio State and NCSC will continue to partner on other important shared services areas in this building, including the Bromfield Information Commons, as well as carrying forward our conversations about new and enhanced programs that will allow greater numbers of NCSC students to complete their bachelor's degrees on our campus. To this latter end, I am pleased to note that our advisors are now promoting these opportunities live and in person through regular office hours held in Kee Hall.

On Thursday, I gave a brief report to the Executive Committee regarding my meeting last week with Dr. J and Fred Fotis, Ohio State's Director of University Residences and Dining Services, who have given our campus an initial green light to develop a proposal to create a math education learning community and living environment (LCLE). LCLEs are meant to be unique educational experiences that extend the reach of the classroom and create learning opportunities across campus and into the communities that surround us. This proposal would be built on a platform that revolves around three nationally recognized initiatives in the Mansfield City Schools that are raising mathematics test scores and building teacher competencies in mathematics education (I have written about this work, conducted largely by Professor Lee McEwan, Associate Professor Terri Bucci, and Associate Professor Heather Tanner, in a previous biweekly report). Our proposal will argue that the confluence of these initiatives has created an opportunity to recast teacher preparation efforts on the Ohio State Mansfield campus, with the development of an LCLE becoming the ideal way to support the career interests of students who seek to become math educators (think bachelor's degrees in education) or otherwise wish to work with underprepared students in middle schools and high schools (think bachelor's degrees in social work, psychology, and/or sociology). Although our initial work in the coming 2012-2013 academic year would revolve around the LC (learning community) portion of this proposal, we would be seeking to create residential opportunities for interested students as early as 2013-2014. We hope to have a draft document completed by mid-month in order to have our proposal vetted through proper channels as soon as possible in order to take the next steps in the planning process. Stay tuned!

My final words for this biweekly report turn toward the more entertaining portions of my job here on campus and in the surrounding community. This past Monday, I was part of a group of professionals who were assembled in order to represent different career choices at the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of North Central Ohio offices here in Mansfield. I was invited by Cathy Mlay who, in addition to working for BBBS, is one of our current MSW students (our other "family" connection there is the Director, Jim Nicholson, who is the husband of Associate

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Professor Dawn Kitchen). This was a very impressive event, with over 75 “bigs” and “littles” in attendance. Following an emergency room physician, a nurse, a basketball coach, a music teacher, a hair stylist, and a ski and snowboard instructor, I was able to transmit the simple but direct message that – no matter what your career interest – Ohio Mansfield is the place to make your dreams come true. Of course, I took the opportunity to teach them the O-H-I-O cheer as well, and in the process created more than a few new Buckeye Nation converts! And it didn't hurt that the press was on hand as well:

<http://www.mansfieldnewsjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2012202080312>

I end now with a bit of an advertisement about our fantastic schedule of events coming up next week on Monday February 13. First up that day is the “Staff Soup-er Bowl Chili Cook Off” from noon to 2:00 p.m. in 117 Bromfield Hall, featuring my own family recipe alongside over a dozen additional staff entrees. As a further bonus, the Mansfield Staff Advisory Council (MSAC) will be providing a baked potato bar and other refreshments. Staff members should remember to RSVP to Andrew Mueller ASAP if you already have not done so. Come to eat, help crown the “Soup-er Bowl Chili Cook Off Winner,” and build staff relationships by enjoying your lunch hour with campus colleagues. The second event, to be held later that day, is our inaugural “Ski with the Dean” night at Snow Trails from 5:00-9:30 p.m. We received special pricing from owner Dave Carto (a former Ohio State Mansfield Board member) for this event, and there will be free hot dogs in the lodge for all Ohio State Mansfield skiers, snowboarders, and tubing riders. Many thanks to Joanne Rutsatz (yes, she is the Alpha and the Omega of this biweekly report!), who has been spearheading this effort to involve students through our OSU Mansfield Ski Club. Faculty and staff are encouraged to join our students on the slopes for this evening of fun!