

An Official Publication of the Gifted Association of Missouri



A Letter from the President

By Dr. Tracy Bednarick-Humes

**A Reflection on the 2023 Annual Conference,
October 6 & 7, Truman State University**

I told the GAMbit editors that I wanted to wait until after our Annual Gifted Association of Missouri Conference to write the “Letter of the President,” because I thought it would be a good opportunity to reflect on the conference in my letter. Actually, I lied! I wanted to wait until after the conference, because I didn’t think I’d get a chance to catch my breath until after the conference wrapped up with everything going on in my life from opening a new gifted center to dealing with some family hardships. So, while I’d like to reflect on our amazing conference and will in this note, this also got me thinking about procrastination and the gifted individual. I think we often tie perfectionism and procrastination together when thinking about gifted students. Perhaps, they put things off to make sure they have all their ideas together or they are continuing multiple drafts or iterations until they get it “perfect.”

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**IN MEMORY OF SHARON
WARD**

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I think it's more nuanced than that, because I am certainly not a perfectionist. I'm the queen of it's good enough! For me, and I'm not sure if this is due to my giftedness or my desire to be a high achiever, I'm terrible at saying "no." If I know how to do a task or am good at a task, I want to jump in and help. I want to be involved. How many of our gifted and high achieving students are like this as well? Do they overcommit? Does this cause them to crash and burn? Do they find a way to do it all? Or, do they cover themselves with little white lies while trying to keep all their plates spinning? Today, I stepped away from everything for a bit: changed my summer clothes in my closet to my winter clothes, took a nap, and roamed around in the yard for a bit. Were the 100 emails in my inbox on my mind the whole time? Yes, but did I also recharge just a little bit? Yes! My ask in all this is that you check on the gifted individuals in your life (including yourself!) and possibly help them set boundaries that keep them healthy physically, emotionally, and mentally!

And now for the conference...what a wonderful experience we had at Truman State University! The title of the conference was the "Gifted Network" and we were immediately reminded of how important it is to meet other teachers of gifted students in person. So many ideas were shared, stories told, and challenges problem-solved! Such a big focus of the sessions was on educating and supporting the WHOLE gifted child.

Really, this is the reason gifted education exists, in my opinion. Gifted students need to understand who they are and have a support system around them as they navigate growing up in a world where they can use their strengths and challenges to make a difference!

We had an amazing team of GAM members who worked to help plan the conference led by Amanda Sauerwein: Ashley Zeiler, Crystal Koenig, Cindy Turner, Emily Woodall, Ginger Beard, Heather Tomicich, Jody Thompson, Mary Blackwell, Melanie Orr, and Shannon Fuller. Additionally, our executive secretary, Jenny Condren, was amazing with organizing all the details such as securing the amazing rate for the hotel rooms and all the seamless communication! Lastly, we are forever grateful to Jeanne Harding, our Truman contact, who facilitated hosting the conference. And a final thank you to our Gold Sponsors: Art of Problem Solving's Beast Academy and Multi-Health Systems: Beyond Assessments. We are excited to already be in talks with the University of Missouri for the Fall 2024 conference and should have dates to announce soon!





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ED 652 G — Affective Needs of Gifted*

ED 653 G — Programming and Administration of Gifted**

* Offered first 5-week session

** Offered second 5-week session

FALL 2024

ED 550 G — Intro to Gifted & Talented*

ED 604 G — Professional Learning: Gifted Policy, Practice, & Research**

ED 605 G — Psychology of Exceptional Children^

ED 619 G — Gifted Internship^

ED 632 G — Research: Applied Education Psychology^

ED 651 G — Curriculum for Gifted (1st or 2nd, 8-weeks)

SPRING 2025

ED 605 G — Psychology of Exceptional Children^

ED 619 G — Gifted Internship^ **ED 632 G** —

Research: Applied Education Psychology^

* Offered first 8-week

session ** Offered second 8-week session

^ Full semester

Learn more at:
gifted.truman.edu or



Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming GAM Events

- Virtual Speaker Series - Click [here](#) for more information
 - October 16, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.
 - November 13, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.
 - January 22, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.
 - February 12, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.
 - March 11, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.
 - April 15, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.
- January 20, 2024: GAM Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Virtual
- February 21, 2024: GAM Day at the Capitol, Jefferson City, MO
- April 20, 2024: GAM Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Location TBD
- July 2024 - Exact dates TBD: New Teacher Workshop and GAM Board Meeting, SAGE Center, North Kansas City Schools, Kansas City, MO
- October 2024 - Exact dates TBD: Annual Conference, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

Other Important Upcoming Dates

- Missouri Scholars Academy
 - October 24, 2023: MSA Nomination Information Session
 - November 1, 2023: Student Nominations and Faculty/Staff/RA Applications Open
 - December 1, 2023: Faculty/Staff/RA Applications Close at 5:00 p.m.
 - February 2, 2023: Student Scholar Nomination Materials due by 5:00 p.m.
- Missouri Fine Arts Academy
 - October 16, 2023: Applications Open
 - January 28, 2024: Applications Close



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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Jena K. Randolph, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education
Online Program Director
RandolphJ@missouri.edu
573-884-1911

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For additional questions, contact:

Michelle Schoeck at mschoeck@maryville.edu



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DESE Gifted Education Update Fall 2023

Christine Nobbe
Director of Gifted Education
Christine.Nobbe@dese.mo.gov



Portrait of a Gifted Learner and MO-GLOs

I am excited to hear about the different ways in which districts are incorporating the Portrait of a Gifted Learner and the Missouri Gifted Learner Outcomes (MO-GLOs). If you are using the Portrait or the MO-GLOs, please reach out to me and share your success stories. Also, please consider writing an article for the GAMbit.

Missouri Scholars and Missouri Fine Arts Academies

It is time to nominate students for MSA and to help students complete their applications for MFAA! More at these links:

<https://moscholars.missouri.edu/> and
<https://www.missouristate.edu/MFAA/default.htm>

If you have not been involved with the MSA/MFAA process, please reach out and I will share more information. Students regularly say “the academy changed my life” and I want to ensure that students in every district have access.

Professional Learning

This fall I am presenting at or presented at the following conferences:

- Metro Gifted Assessment Council meeting
- Engage in Your Learning (Saint Joseph School District)

- MO-CASE Special Education Conference
- Interface (DESE’s STEM Conference)
- Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals
- GAM
- Missouri Association of Rural Educators
- Council of State Director for Programs of the Gifted
- Missouri School Counseling Association
- Missouri Charter Public School Conference
- Federal Programs Conference
- SW Center Annual K-12 Roundtable for Gifted Education
- Missouri Council of Teachers of Mathematics

My goal is to meet as many Missouri education professionals as possible and support districts as they start or grow their gifted programs.

I am chairing the Powerful Learning Conference planning committee again this year. If you go to the DESE webpage for the conference (<https://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/powerful-learning-conference>), you’ll find additional information.

Gifted and Talented Tuesdays are rolling along with guest speakers, a book study, and Space Talks for students. **I am looking for guest presenters for January – May 2024.** (The dates are January 9, February 13, March 12, April 9, and May 14 at 9:00 AM and January 16, February 20, March 19, and April 16 at 3:30 PM.) Please reach out if you have ideas or would like to volunteer! The 3:30 dates are great times to share lessons and mini-units.

The Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children

The Council presented to the State Board of Education on October 17th. Information is posted on this page:

<https://dese.mo.gov/state-board-education/agendas-minutes-recordings>

The Council meetings are scheduled for 2023-24: <https://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/gifted-education/gifted-advisory-council> I will also post reminders in the listserv. If you are not receiving Gifted-Ed listserv messages please register here: <https://lists.mo.gov/mailman/listinfo/gifted-ed>

Desk Audits and Data

It is that time of year! I began the 2024 desk audits by contacting some school districts about completing Core Data Screen 25 where the identification process is briefly explained. I began comparing the number of students who are receiving gifted education services this year to the prior year and contacted districts with a decrease of 20% or more. It is never too late to check and update your data!

People often reach out about data. There is quite a bit of data on the DESE Gifted Education page including a map and links to several current and historical reports in the green data tab. <https://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/gifted-education>

Become a Published Author

Several gifted education specialists have written for the Missouri Elementary Principal Magazine. I am always looking for new authors! Please contact me if you are interest in writing and study the information from the editor, Addie Gaines:

Spring 2024, Deadline-March 15, 2024
Theme: Why?

As leaders, I believe it is critical to know our "why" and keep that "why" in the forefront of our minds as we go about making a difference in the lives of others. Keeping that "why" handy helps us weather the storms. Reflecting on our "why" is time well-spent. Sharing

these types of stories are so important as encouragement to others.

I would love to have you write for us. Know that each magazine's theme is "loose" meaning that articles can fit in directly or figuratively or not at all. Here are the publication guidelines:

- Articles can be about any topic that is of interest to elementary/middle level principals. They can be personal narratives, reflections, reports about an event or program, "how-to" type articles, opinions, stories about experiences, etc. Really, it goes back to being of interest to our readership.
- Please submit articles as Word attachments or you can share them as a Google Doc.
- There is no specific length required. As long as it takes to tell the story is fine.
- If you cite the work of others in your article, submit an APA style reference for each citation.
- You can submit photos to accompany your article as long as they are at least 300 dpi and you have the permission of any people in the photo for publication. Send them as separate files, not embedded in the story. If you don't have photos to submit or don't wish to, I can use stock photography when your pages are designed.
- Please include your name as you would like it published, your professional title, your school or organization affiliation, your email address, and any social media contacts you wish to share for the "About the Author" section.
- If you are not a member of MAESP that will receive a copy of the publication with your article and you would like one, please include your mailing address with your submission. (from Addie Gaines, editor)

Thank you for being you!

Compassion is the greatest form of love humans have to offer. I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will never know how far a little kindness can go.

-Rachel Joy Scott

-Christine

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Legislative Update

2024 State Advocacy Agenda

by Kyna Iman

The Gifted Association of Missouri requests your advocacy on the following issues:

PROTECTING GIFTED EDUCATION LEGISLATION

In 2022, GAM was successful in passing its priority legislation, that will require all school districts in Missouri to offer programs and services to students identified as gifted and talented. GAM continues to implement these programs and any rules and regulations governing implementation in 2024.

MISSOURI SCHOLARS ACADEMY & MISSOURI FINE ARTS ACADEMY

Support \$1 million in state funding for the Missouri Scholars Academy and Missouri Fine Arts Academy for June 2025 in House Bill 2.

- The Scholars Academy is a three-week residential program at the University of Missouri-Columbia for 330 rising high school juniors who are academically gifted;
- The Fine Arts Academy is a two-week residential program at Missouri State University for 150 rising high school juniors and seniors who are gifted in the arts.

MISSOURI SCHOOL FOUNDATION FORMULA FUNDING

Support increased funding for the Missouri School Foundation Formula. Support \$4 billion appropriation in House Bill 2 for the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.

OTHER GIFTED FACTS & FIGURES

- \$24,870,104 was appropriated for gifted education in FY2006. There were 295 school districts with state approved gifted programs. In FY2007, this amount was rolled into the new foundation formula. Without this line item providing earmarked funding for state approved gifted programs, those funds can be spent on other programs, and there are now only 200 school districts offering state approved gifted programs.

2024 GAM DAY AT THE CAPITOL

2024 GAM Day at the Capitol is Wednesday, February 21, at 10:00 a.m. You can find your legislators by visiting the Missouri Senate [website](#). It will give contact information and a webpage on your legislators.

If you have any questions, please contact GAM's Governmental Consultant, Kyna Iman, at kynaiman@earthlink.net.



What Makes the Missouri Scholars Academy So Valuable? Rural High Schoolers Discuss Their MSA Experiences

by Elizabeth Newell

Elizabeth is a junior at East Buchanan High School in Gower, Missouri. She studied music theory and journalism, while attending MSA in 2023.

Since 1985, the Missouri Scholars Academy (MSA) has provided unique intellectual and social experiences for Missouri's gifted high schoolers. These scholars come from diverse backgrounds all over the state of Missouri. While many of them come from cities and suburbs, some are from rural areas. I've interviewed two rural scholars on the value of the opportunities MSA has offered them.

Anthony Pizano's town of Nevada, Missouri, lies in the southwestern region of the state and hosts a population of about 8,198 people. Although Nevada itself isn't incredibly small, it's surrounded by rural farmland and villages. Anthony is one of three Nevada high schoolers attending MSA in 2023. When comparing MSA to his school, Anthony talked about MSA teachers encouraging scholars to apply the things they learn "In school," he said, "it's a game of memory... Here, everything is applied."

Anthony also mentioned that MSA provides many more unique courses than his school, and that although those courses only last three weeks, they address his interests more than his high school classes do. "There's a wide variety of choices," he said about MSA courses and programs, "It opens up what you're interested in." When asked for an example, Anthony said, "At school we don't have a law course, but here I've met four lawyers... MSA makes it attainable."

Rural MSA Scholars

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MSA doesn't only provide traditional courses on college subjects. The major and minor courses are designed to allow scholars to pursue more specific interests in a fun, low-stress environment. Anthony touched on this, saying that at his high school, everything is done for a grade, while at MSA, everything is done out of passion. "People here are genuinely interested in what they're doing," he said, and mentioned a scholar in his nature-themed course who had his writing on birds published in a scientific journal. Anthony addressed the variety of personalities found at MSA, and said he's made friends with both the "funny, sporty guys" and the "quiet, intelligent kids."

MSA encompasses more than just the major and minor courses. Afternoon and evening programs offer a wide selection of local adventures, deep discussions, and once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Anthony mentioned how much he liked programs such as breakdancing lessons and a lecture by a survivor of the Rwandan Genocide. "These are really big things," Anthony said about such programs, "but you're just as big."

Caroline Stallman's hometown of Glasgow, Missouri, is almost eight times smaller than Anthony's, with a population of 1,093. Caroline is the first student in her high school to attend MSA in several years, in part because her school district has no gifted program. After being identified as gifted, Caroline advocated for her school to initiate a gifted program, but the school still doesn't prioritize creating one. MSA has been Caroline's first real opportunity to interact with students at her level. Like Anthony, Caroline also credited MSA with her first in-depth, meaningful learning experience. She mentioned meeting astronaut Linda Godwin as one of her favorite experiences, as well as listening to Ricky Kidd, a representative of the Midwest Innocence Project. "I knew that was a problem," she said, referring to wrongful convictions, "but I didn't know the scale of the problem."

Caroline talked about how stories of her hometown shocked other scholars. In addition to being unfamiliar with the concept of rural isolation, scholars were surprised to learn that Caroline didn't have the opportunity to receive gifted education. She discussed this while some of Missouri's education officials were teaching scholars how to advocate for their needs as high-level students. When asked if she would prefer to live somewhere larger with a better school system, Caroline responded, "I don't think I could live in an urban area." She elaborated, saying that she would rather live in a rural community and bring opportunities to gifted students there.

One more element of rural education Caroline mentioned was the lack of diversity in schools. She said one of her favorite experiences at MSA was simply being able to study among people of different cultures and backgrounds. "One of my favorite parts of MSA is meeting all these new people," she said. She said that while students at her high school don't share her interest in intellectual discussions, at

Rural MSA Scholars

continued from Page 12

MSA she's been able to delve into many different subjects. "I love everything," she said when asked if she had a favorite part of MSA, "it's all amazing."

The theme of the final week of MSA 2023 is "Bringing It Home". "There are a lot of things I'm going to try to bring back," Caroline said, then mentioned two things in particular that she wanted to advocate for in her hometown. She plans on teaching students at her high school about the Midwest Innocence Project and continuing to work towards the creation of a gifted program for kids in Glasgow.

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UPCOMING SESSIONS:

10/16/2023 - Motivation for Gifted Students

- Todd Stanley, The Gifted Guy

11/13/2023 - ADHD Strategies for Gifted Kids

- Kristin Seymour, MSN, RN, AHCHS

01/22/2024 - Shoplik: Academic Acceleration

- Ann Lupkowski

02/12/2024 - Books for Gifted Kids.

- Lynette Breedlove, PhD

03/11/2024 - Perfectionism in Gifted Students

- Phoebe Pohlman

04/15/2024 - Psychosocial Needs of Gifted Students

- Jessica Harris, King & Queen County Public Schools, VA
- Katherine Rottjakob, Rockwood Schools, MO

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Future City Competition - Missouri
International Academic Competitions
Missouri Future Problem Solving
St. Louis Metro Program for Exceptionally Gifted Students
Gifted Resource Council
David Welch

Board Member Update

Thank You for Your Service

The Gifted Association of Missouri Board would like to recognize board members for their service to the association this past year, both those who are stepping down and those who are continuing to serve. We also are excited to welcome several new members who will step up in January.

We recognize the following board members who are stepping down at the end of the year:

- District 2 – Justine Rogers
- District 3 – Jennifer Blank
- District 7– Holly Graves
- District 8 – Mary Blackwell and Hannah Noack-Reubling

We welcome the newly electives board members:

- District 3 – Jenna Nelson, Jody Brison
- District 4 – Angie Cochran, Anna McNay
- District 7 – Dr. Heather VanOtterloo and Christina Landburg
- District 8 – Aisha Hasan

We honor the board members who are continuing in their role:

- District 1 – Crystal Koenig and Ginger Beard
- District 2 – Brian Stuhlman and Jody Thompson
- District 3 – Kurt Austin
- District 4 – Emily Woodall
- District 5 – Ashley Zeiler and Sarah Mason
- District 6 – Michelle Bobo and Christina Wallace
- District 9 – Marissa Cochran and Lori Peel

Additionally, we welcome Emily Woodall to her new role as conference co-chair with Amanda Sauerwein.

We are excited to work together in the upcoming year!

Not sure what district you're in? Click [here](#) to check out the interactive MAP of Missouri on our website.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Sharon Ward

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL FOUNDERS

OF THE

GIFTED ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

THIS ISSUE OF THE GAMbit
IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
SHARON WARD