

The GAMbit

The Official Publication of the Gifted Association of Missouri

Summer in Sight

With spring break in the rearview mirror summer is now quickly coming into sight. It's been a wild year full of challenges and flexibility, to say the least. As we approach the conclusion of this school year though, we should each take a moment to reflect on how much we've grown as educators. We have each been pushed to grow and adapt, to learn new skills, to integrate more technology into our work, and to find ways to teach our students creatively and courageously.

This issue of the GAMbit contains plenty of information that can help you carry that momentum into the summer and beyond. Inside you'll learn about upcoming workshops, art integration activities, professional development, and GAM's annual New Teacher Workshop for those new to gifted education (please pass the info along). Have a great remainder of the year and start of summer!



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From all of us in the
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Education Department,
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Teacher Appreciation Week
May 3 – 7, 2021
#ThankaMOTeacher



President's Update

Meredith Wisniewski



Hello! By the time you read this you will be on the other side of spring break, heading towards the final part of the school year. It has also officially been a year since Covid made its presence known. It changed how we approach education, how we get our groceries, and how we view everyday life. It's taken permanent residence in our vocabulary, made itself right at home in popular culture, and more. It's even become a recurring theme in my thoughts to you. So, I think it's time to give it a little break. Spring has sprung (hopefully -- this is Missouri, after all), which is always a good time to look at things anew.

I am active on Twitter (both personally and on behalf of GAM), and this year I have connected with teachers from all over the country. Their anecdotes about the day in, day out of the classroom can have me howling with laughter one minute and reflecting deeply the next. Although not all of the educators I follow are part of gifted programs, the similarities are absolutely there. Seeing the clever quips and brutal honesty from both teachers and students always brings me back to reality. It is a place where success is shared, frustrations are vented, and the realities of our world are debated. It's not always an easy place to be, but it always leaves me with affirmation that my feelings are valid. I've learned so much from people I only know by username or profile picture, and it can be refreshing to see an outside perspective. Connection is key, and GAM hopes to provide that to all of you.

There are so many gifted students, parents, and teachers across the state doing amazing things in their classrooms, at contests, in their communities. This issue of the GAMbit will recognize a few of these individuals, but just know that we see all of you! Awesomeness comes in many forms, and all of them deserve recognition. The GAMbit is a longstanding tradition, and we want to use it as a place for celebration. Is something happening in your district or program that you want to shout from the rooftops? If so, let us bring the megaphone! Sharing good news from around the state can provide us a little reassurance, some good cheer, and a reminder that you've got a whole community out there. We'd love to hear from you!

Thank you for all you do.

Meredith Wisniewski



DESE Update • March 2021
Christine Nobbe
Director of Gifted Education
Christine.Nobbe@dese.mo.gov

The pandemic is a year old. The photo above is from March 18, 2020, 8:50 AM, in the State Board of Education Board Room, before our Prepare to Work from Home meeting. I've worked hard during the pandemic, which is good. The work is important and has given me purpose during a challenging year. Here are some of the things I've focused on since my January update:

- Professional Development on Talent Development for Camdenton
- [Gifted and Talented Tuesdays](#)
- [Space Talks for Students](#)
- Consulting with districts, gifted education specialists, and parents via virtual meetings, phone calls, and emails
- [Data, data, data](#)
- As many webinars as I can fit in
- Worked with the [Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Students](#) (the Council), including the Rural/Small Schools Committee and the Gifted Administration Cohort

- Treasurer for Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted
- Attended St. Louis Metro Gifted Council, Department of Mental Health, Missouri Green Schools, and Project MEGSSS meetings
- Collaborated with several gifted educators on a third article focusing on SEL and building relationships to be published in the Missouri Elementary Principal magazine
- Collaborated with two DESE teams on SEL and virtual meeting and conference planning
- Researched talent identification programs and [created a list](#) which was shared via the Gifted Education listserv
- Worked on website development for a fresh, more organized gifted education website (launch date TBD)
- Created a video for GAM Day at the Capitol
- Joined the Thursday #gtchat as often as possible
- Participated in the GAM District 6 Unconference
- Helped with MSA selection

Planning for summer professional development is well under way. I am excited about the offerings! Registration will be on Eventsquid; [information can be found here](#).

Please reach out if you need support on spring screening and assessment (or on another topic).

To read this article with active links go to: <http://bit.ly/DESEupdateMar2021>.



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SUMMER 2021 *online*

June 1 – July 2

- ED 550 G**—Introduction to Gifted and Talented
- ED 652 G**—Affective Needs of Gifted
- ED 605 G**—Psychology of Exceptional Children

July 6 – August 6

- ED 650 G**—Identification of Gifted
- ED 653 G**—Programming and Administration of Gifted
- ED 605 G**—Psychology of Exceptional Children

FALL 2021 *online*

August 23 – December 17

- ED 651 G**—Curriculum for Gifted
- ED 604 G**—Professional Learning: Gifted Policy, Practice, & Research
- ED 632 G**—Research: Applied Education Psychology



Gifted Education Summer Workshops

Workshops Organized by Christine Nobbe, Director of Gifted Education

Registration, Handouts, Meeting Links are on Eventsquid.

Bootcamp for Gifted Program Leaders

This workshop is intended for Missouri public school employees who are managing gifted programs. Attendees include gifted education coordinators, principals, gifted education specialists/lead teachers, superintendents, special services directors, core data specialists, etc. Workshop attendees will gain a clear understanding of DESE guidelines for gifted programs with a focus on equity and meeting the needs of all gifted learners.

Tuesday, June 8, 2021 from 10am-Noon

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 from 1:00-3:00pm

Signup for one or both, but the session content will be repeated. Q/A and discussion will vary

Register here: <https://www.eventsquid.com/event/12904>

Gifted Learner Outcomes

Participate in crafting optional gifted program student outcomes. Our gifted education program guidelines state: "School systems shall establish and maintain on file in the school system the program goals and learner objectives which should be achieved by gifted students participating in the program." Some schools are seeking advice on gifted learner outcomes. In this workshop, we will strive to create outcomes that may be adapted and used by Missouri gifted programs.

June 15, 16, 17, Tuesday-Thursday, 10:00am-Noon daily

Register here: <https://www.eventsquid.com/event/12905>

GECC: Gifted Education Curriculum Collaborative

The Gifted Education Curriculum Collaborative is an opportunity for gifted education specialists to write units, provide and receive feedback on curriculum, and share best practices. Participants will write and share one unit. We will meet virtually on June 10 (1-3), June 22 (10-11), July 8 (10-11), and July 29 (1-3). We can be flexible on these dates with the exception of June 10. The GECC kick-off will be from 1:00 - 3:00 PM on Thursday, June 10.

June 10, 1:00-3:00 Kick-off

Additional dates can be flexible but June 22 (10-11), July 8 (10-11), and July 29 (1-3) are scheduled.

Register here: <https://www.eventsquid.com/event/12908>

Workshop for Small Districts with Only One Teacher of the Gifted

This workshop is intended for gifted education specialists who are the only teacher of the gifted in their district/charter, or who are a member of a tiny team. Workshop attendees will gain a clear understanding of DESE guidelines for gifted programs with a focus on equity and meeting the needs of all gifted learners. Attendees will have an opportunity to network for future collaboration. Participants are invited for the morning session, afternoon session, or both.

August 10, Tuesday, 10-Noon, 1-3:00pm; participants may attend one or both sessions
Register here: <https://www.eventsquid.com/event/12909>

Workshop Organized by GAM and Collaborators

Beyond SEL: Building Equity in Our Classrooms

Meetings will include PD with a focus on application of equity in the classroom; writing collaborative original curriculum, for possible publication, in small groups; and giving feedback on previous and new curriculum. Meetings to be held virtually on Zoom: July 13-15, July 20-22, July 27-29; 9 AM – noon. Three hours of credit will be available through Lindenwood University

Please contact Dr. Tracy Bednarick-Humes for further information and to register.
tracybednarick@lindberghschools.ws

Live Links:

<http://bit.ly/Summer2021PD>

OR

bit.ly/Summer2021PD

Image: free Pixabay image





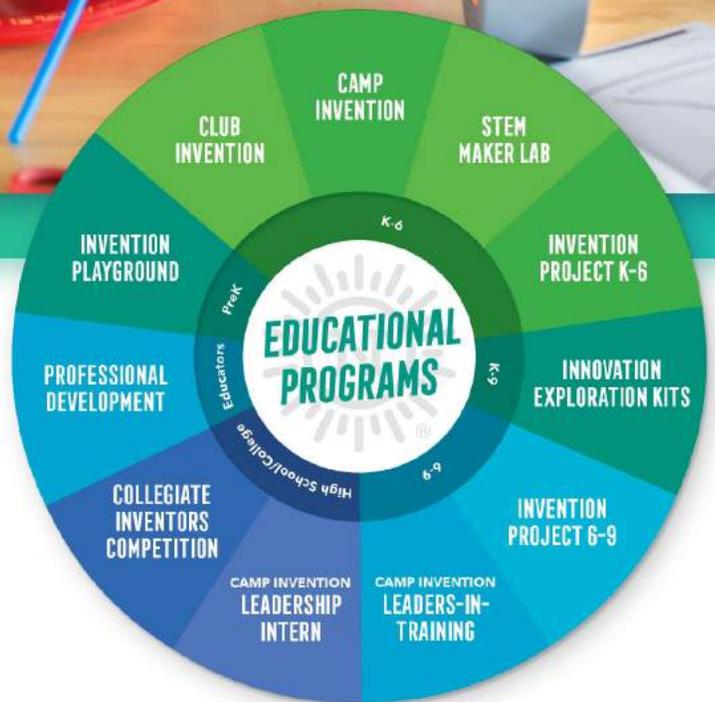
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**Helping Educators Meet The
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Come learn more about:

- **Nature & Needs of Gifted Learners**
- **Assessing Student Needs for Identification**
- **Social Emotional Learning workshop**
- **Curriculum & Instruction Creative and Critical Thinking**
- **Gifted Advocacy**



Cost \$150.00

- **Quarterly Professional Development**
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**Register
at www.mogam.org and use the
EVENTBRITE link, Eventbrite fees
will apply.**

Registration Questions please contact Sue Peters: suepeters16@gmail.com



The Missouri Bicentennial, amplifying legislative voice, and arts integration are ways the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education and the Gifted Association of Missouri can work together.

Access live direct links to resources below and to the full MAAE-GAM update via this QR code or bitly link.

<http://bit.ly/MAAEgam01>

Bicentennial Fun in '21

Plan now to celebrate the Bicentennial! August 10, 2021 marks the 200th Anniversary of Missouri Statehood. We encourage Missouri educators to plan lessons and student experiences to mark the occasion.



Partners
in celebrating
Missouri's 200th
Anniversary
of statehood
1821 – 2021



There are wonderful resources available to deepen an awareness of the journey taken by those who've come before. Celebrations could be as simple as a "show and tell" type exploration with an artifact or photograph from the past, allowing students to explore the historical context, function or purpose of an object, or extend to a more in-depth exploration of an aspect of Missouri's history. Please reach out to the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education for assistance in designing Bicentennial opportunities that use the arts as you help gifted students celebrate this important event in our state's history.

This State Historical Society of Missouri's [SHSMO] [interactive map](#) can help pinpoint projects and events in your region easily adapted for classroom experiences. For those who wish to dig into the Bicentennial planning a bit more deeply, the [Missouri Community Legacies Program](#) has developed a [resource kit](#) to guide the development of more extensive projects celebrating that which makes each of Missouri's regions and communities special and unique. Learn more at Missouri Bicentennial – www.Missouri2021.org

Resources from yesteryear are at your fingertips through the various collections of the [STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI](#). Consider visiting these repositories (searchable by keyword, county and more)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Demand Stories • Missouri Digital Newspaper Project • Photograph Collection • Art Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial Cartoons • MAPS • Aerial Photographs • Plat Maps of Missouri • Missouri Historical Review • Oral History Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American Experience in Missouri • American Civil War in MO • Jewish Community Archives of Kansas City
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ADVOCACY

Each year the Gifted Association of Missouri and the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education share mutual interest in the **Missouri Academies for Scholars and Fine Arts**. However, our shared legislative interest goes far beyond these academies. When education legislation is offered that impacts gifted programs and the arts it is important that both of our organizations work to inform elected officials. Decision-makers need to know the impact of policies and pending legislation and they need to know our student successes. This constant positive narrative is necessary and desperately needed.

Like the Gifted Association of Missouri, the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education has hosted our **Fine Arts Education Day** at the Capitol. Due to the pandemic, both our student advocacy training sessions and our Fine Arts Education Day celebrations were held virtually. More than 66 videos were collected to help tell the story that the arts are alive and well in Missouri. The videos celebrating student work in the arts were shared with lawmakers via email and also were projected on screens and display monitors throughout the Capitol rotunda on March 24, 2021. These videos helped underscore the narrative that the arts education is alive and well in Missouri. The collection of short videos which is searchable by school, legislative district and more can be accessed at <https://maae.educate.today/>

We invite individual members of GAM to consider joining the “Adopt-a-Legislator” campaign, alongside our partners in the Missouri Citizens for the Arts. Using [Signup Genius](#), tabs have been created for each region of our state, and you can sign up to become a legislative partner for your district. If you need to look up your legislator’s name or your district number, you can use this [LEGISLATOR LOOKUP tool](#). Working to build long-term relationships with elected officials will help lawmakers remain informed. Access the “**Adopt-a-legislator**” [Signup Genius](#) here.

Arts Integration - know that you are welcome

Missouri educators who work with gifted students have an open invitation to participate in Arts Integration professional development opportunities. **Arts integration** is an approach to teaching and learning for all subjects. Many teachers include the arts in their work in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, turning STEM into STEAM. Arts Integration prides itself in increasing student engagement and making learning fun and authentic. Based on a foundation of Missouri Learning Standards, and incorporating standards-based assessment measures, Arts Integration can deepen student understanding in both arts and non-arts subjects, and can improve communication skills as students share their findings and evidence of their learning with others.



MAAE sponsors the **Missouri Arts Integration Network [M.A.I.N.]** events. These monthly one-hour meetings via ZOOM gather educators from across the state, encompassing any subject, arts discipline or age level together to promote more holistic teaching and learning. All are welcome to join this FREE professional learning community which allows those engaged in arts integration to seek support and inspiration. Find the registration links for each [MAIN EVENT session on our website - here.](#)

Check out these **arts integration professional development** opportunities sponsored by arts integration partners across the state. See if there are any opportunities which might be a match for you! Funding support may be available for teams of two or more. Email director@moaae.org for more information.

SUMMER PD IN ARTS INTEGRATION

Three Missouri arts integration sites which sponsor annual training sessions in arts integration have announced their plans:

 <p>KS/MO KENNEDY CENTER Partners in Education <small>JCCC CARLSEN CENTER • SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT KANSAS CITY YOUNG AUDIENCES • LIBERTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</small></p>	<p>The KS/MO Kennedy Center Partners in Education Summer Symposium July 27-28, 2021 • virtual - https://www.ksmopartnersineducation.org/ contact: Aaron Money - Fine Arts Director Liberty Public Schools aaron.money@lps53.org or 816-736-5660</p>
 <p>SPRINGFIELD REGIONAL ARTS INTEGRATION CONFERENCE 2021</p>	<p>Springfield Arts Integration Conference July 29-30, 2021 • virtual - https://www.springfieldarts.org/SRAIC contact: Breana Kavanaugh -Fine Arts/World Language Coordinator Springfield Public Schools bnkavanaugh@spsmail.org or 417-523-5532</p>
 <p>COCA edu</p>	<p>FALL 2021</p> <p>COCA edu Arts Integration Professional Development Opportunities Fall 2021 - https://www.cocastl.org/cocaedu/ contact Janelle Velten - COCAedu Prog Mgr. Arts Integration Specialist jvelte@cocastl.org or 314-561-4889</p>

For more information on the work of MAAE, contact Phyllis Pasley, executive director Missouri Alliance for Arts Education. 314-306-7575 director@moaae.org - www.moaae.org

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE Our education programs are taught by expert faculty. Lindenwood University is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

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Calling all interested in gifted social-emotional lessons!

Due to the success of the MOSEL group from last summer, we are going to work on more lessons focusing on equity and diversity during July 2021.



Beyond SEL: Building Equity in Our Gifted Classrooms

**Meetings to be held virtually (via Zoom):
July 13-15, July 20-22, July 27-29, 9am - 12pm**

Meetings will include PD with a focus on application of equity in the classroom; writing collaborative original curriculum, for possible publication, in small groups; and giving feedback on previous and new curriculum.

Interested? Complete the [Google Form](#) no later than May 10, 2021 to express interest. Those selected will be notified by mid-May.

**Three hours of graduate credit will be available through Lindenwood University.*

INTRODUCING OUR 2020

Award & Scholarship Winners

Vicky Bennett Distinguished Student Award: Grace Lepin

Grace Lepin is a student at the Northland Innovation Center in North Kansas City. Her teacher says: "During my time with Grace I have experienced an individual who works hard, and carries herself in a polite, respectable manner." Grace is a ballet dancer, and she writes: "Dance has impacted me by teaching me the importance of hard work, attention to detail, and that kindness really does apply to everything." One of her dreams is to attend Julliard, although she is also considering studying law, fashion design, or astronomy. Harvard, the Fashion Institute of Technology, or Julliard would all be lucky to have her.



Dede Smith Friend of Gifted Award: Alexandra Forgeron

Alexandra Forgeron is a traveling teacher for gifted students in Rockwood; she teaches gifted classes at Rockwood South Middle School and serves as a gifted resource counselor at Rockwood Summit High School. As her supporters write: "She doesn't just teach her students -- she enables and nurtures their talents."

"Ms. Forgeron connects to her students on a personal level and generates an energy of enthusiasm that affects all of her students in her class."

"Ms. Forgeron continually demonstrates that she is a learning leader who cares immensely about the well-being of our students. Simply stated, she is without a doubt one of the most dedicated and committed educators I have worked with."



Norine Kerber Parent of Gifted Award: Aisha Hasan

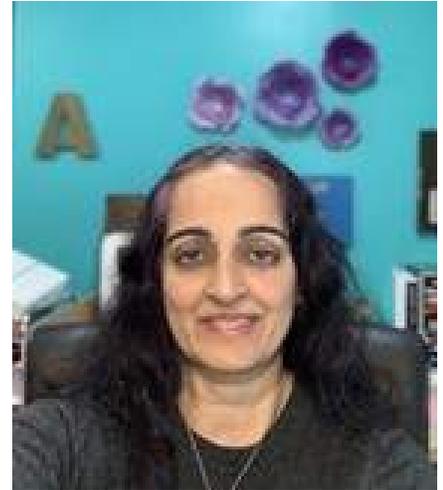
Aisha Hasan is a parent whose children are part of the PEGS Program in Lindbergh. Especially noteworthy is her passion for STEM. She is appreciated for her initiative, her dedication to learning, and her willingness to share with others.

As her nomination noted:

"She is passionate about girls in gifted education and supporting the social outreach efforts of gifted students."

"Aisha also highly values the partnership between parents and teachers."

"Aisha's goal in all of her work is to provide the best learning environment for all of our gifted students, regardless of age, gender, or abilities."



Bob Roach New Teacher of Gifted Scholarship: Lauren Schroer

Lauren Schroer is a gifted teacher in the Raytown School District. As noted in her professional biography, "Currently Lauren is completing her second year as a gifted educator and doing so in a time when teaching has been totally reinvented. She has persevered through these difficult times with professionalism and grace."

As her supporters write:

"Much like Mr. Roach, Lauren is a gifted educator whose passion for gifted education is infectious, and the gifted community benefits from her unwavering support."

"Her personal experiences with siblings and other family members instilled a desire to speak for gifted students and the 'hidden' challenges that can come with being gifted."

"In these uncertain times, she is a certainty within the Raytown gifted community."

Delma Johnson Outstanding Educator Award: Nicole Gordon



Nicole Gordon is a teacher with Lindbergh School District. As her coordinator writes, "Nicole is a rock star teacher who creates gifted curricula that constantly blows me away in its creativity, deep rigor of content, and high interest to students." Nicole herself notes that although she stumbled into gifted education, "Education is embedded in my DNA" -- her family is her inspiration.

Her nomination can be summarized by what one parent had to say: "Nicole Gordon exemplifies what it means to be an Educator of Gifted."

*Congratulations to
all our Award &
Scholarship
Recipients!*

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Teachers seeking Missouri Gifted Certification may enroll online as post-baccalaureate students without making an application to a degree program.

Courses may be taken in any order beginning in any semester.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Nancy Gerardy

Gifted Education Program Coordinator
Special Education Department
GerardyN@missouri.edu
573-268-7766



SUMMER SEMESTER 2021

- Readings in Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8085, master's program students only)
- Research with Exceptional Children (SPC_ED 8350)
- Curriculum Methods for Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8391)
- Differentiating Instruction: Reaching Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners (SPC_ED 8406)
- Administration and Supervision of Gifted Programs (SPC_ED 8410)

FALL SEMESTER 2021

- Curriculum Methods for Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8391)
- Assessment and Evaluation in Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8405)
- Differentiating Instruction: Reaching Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners (SPC_ED 8406)
- Practicum: Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8946)

SPRING SEMESTER 2022

- Research with Exceptional Children (SPC_ED 8350)
- Nature and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8380)
- Assessment and Evaluation in Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8405)
- Differentiating Instruction: Reaching Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners (SPC_ED 8406)
- Practicum: Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8946)

LEARN MORE online.missouri.edu/GAMbit-SP21

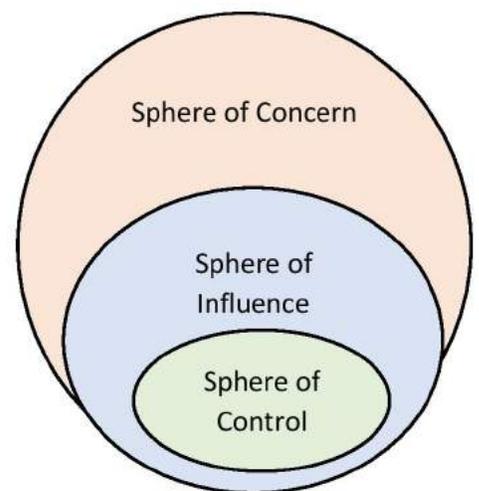
Equity in Gifted Education in Missouri

By Christine Nobbe, EdS

“The field of gifted education has much work to do to mitigate lack of opportunity and inequity within the field if all talents in the United States are to be developed.” This quote is from the [Access Denied Executive Summary](#), January 2019. We must all strive to equitably identify and serve gifted learners in Missouri.

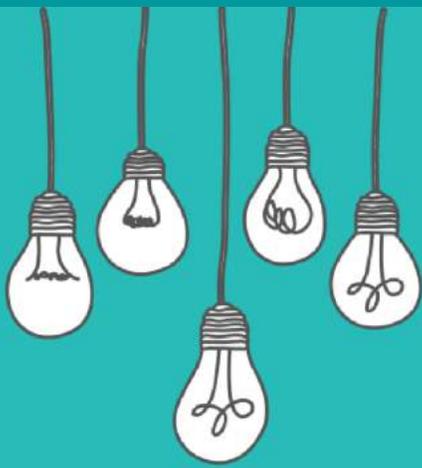
Equity and inclusion in gifted education is a complex and on-going issue that will not be solved because of one GAMbit article. However, we can take actions towards equitable opportunities for all gifted students. I’m suggesting five steps:

- 1) Complete an equity self-assessment. I created the *Gifted Program Equity Self-Assessment* based on equity audits developed by Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium. The self-assessment can be completed individually or with a team and includes 33 questions for self-reflection. The self-assessment is at bit.ly/GiftedEquityAudit . (Please provide feedback so I can improve this audit.)
- 2) Read [Identifying and Serving Underrepresented Gifted Students](#) and complete a check-up: Is your district or charter school universally screening all students for gifted education services? Does your district or charter have an alternative identification plan to target traditionally underrepresented gifted students? Does a team make placement decisions?
- 3) Study your school system’s [gifted education report](#) and compare the demographic data of the gifted program to the demographic data of the school district. Are there groups of students who are underserved? Are there schools within your system that are underserved?
- 4) Look around your classroom or office: do you have books, materials, art, curriculum, music, posters, etc. that reflect the experiences and perspectives of a diversity of people?
- 5) Use the information you learned in the first four steps and take action within your [sphere of control](#). What actions can you take to ensure equity and inclusion in your gifted program?



I invite you to connect with me to discuss ideas, share your plans, and report successes: Christine.Nobbe@dese.mo.gov

Go to: bit.ly/MOequityingifted to read with live links.



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RESILIENCE & REINVENTION

Gifted Association of Missouri
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OCTOBER 2021

*Submit your
proposal today at
megam.org!*

*Submission Deadline: June 1st
Virtual Conference: Oct 1 & 2*

Third Place in the National Future City Competition!

By Jennifer Hawkins

Nine middle school gifted students recently participated in the virtual Future City Regional Competition. The Future City Competition is an engineering competition where middle school students are challenged to create a city of the future. The competition includes a project plan, essay, scale model, and presentation. This year's challenge was to create a city of the future...on the moon! Both teams were successful in coming up with ways to use the moon's resources to build sustainable cities!

The 7th-grade city, Tereshkova, earned two special awards and 2nd place. Team members were Mattea Casey, Lilly Verrett, Ali Clark, Myah Beeson, and Cora Conner (6th grade). The 8th-grade city, Altera Domi, also earned two special awards (including Best Essay) and 1st place. This earned them an invitation to represent Missouri in the National Future City Competition.

Their research is evident in their 1500-word essay. Below are a few excerpts:

Our city, Altera Domi, or "second home" in Latin, is located near the south pole of the moon on the outside rim of Shackleton Crater. This is one of the moon's few Points of Eternal Light (PEL), and it is in sunlight for approximately 94% of the year.

Travel to Earth is more efficient by using electromagnetic rail guns that launch ships into space. The benefit of this is eliminating the use of fossil fuels, making travel more cost-effective. We use magnetic levitation trains, or maglevs, to transport people, food, and supplies over long distances. Maglevs are located in dormant lava tubes under the surface to provide protection. Citizens also use electromagnetic hoverboards and pod cars that balance in the air by magnetic repulsion against our roads.

Lunar cities face many challenges including solar radiation and asteroid impacts. To reflect solar radiation, Altera Domi uses advanced Solar Radiation Shields (SRS), and to combat the threat of meteor and asteroid strikes, they use an Asteroid Laser Ablation Array (ALAA). This system uses lasers to "de-spin" or "spin-up" an asteroid allowing, changing an asteroid's trajectory.

Other lunar challenges include a lack of water and oxygen. Regolith is a valuable resource that solves these problems. Lunar regolith is fine dust made from the same material as lunar rock but easier to process. Regolith contains valuable materials including water, metal alloys, and oxygen. They mine regolith using Autonomous Excavation Suction Robots and transport it to the Regolith Processing Plant with pneumatic tubes. The machine first separates the rocks. Then, it extracts the oxygen and molten metal alloys with an advanced Molten Regolith Electrolysis Machine (MREM). This process uses calcium chloride to split off the

oxygen with an electric current, leaving metal alloys, and giving our citizens a steady supply of oxygen. They use hydrogen reduction reactors to extract water from regolith. To complete this process, workers add oxygen to the regolith, where it reacts with iron oxide. It requires extreme heat to work, so we use a field of mirrors, or "heliostats" that concentrate the sunlight onto the reactor tower and heats the regolith to approximately 1,000 degrees Celsius (1,832 degrees Fahrenheit).

National Competition:

The national competition was also virtual. The team participated in a Q&A session with judges on Saturday, March 6. Judges asked questions regarding zoning, moon resources, energy, water, and teamwork. The Altera Domi team then met again with special awards judges on the 13th. They met with ten groups of judges from various organizations who asked them questions on topics ranging from surveying to best use of aerospace technology.

The virtual award ceremony took place on Wednesday, April 7. The St. Clair Junior High team was invited to participate in a pre-ceremony interview where they learned that they were one of the top five teams. The top five teams' projects were showcased during the awards ceremony.

"My favorite part of this competition was researching all the technologies that we needed to use to build a Lunar colony. It also surprised me how much current technology we already have that could be used on the moon. Before this project, I didn't know how possible sustainable life on the moon would be," said Kaitlynn VanDeWiele.

After the special awards, team interviews, sponsor recognitions, and clips of the top five team's presentations, the award-winning teams joined the ceremony live via Zoom. St. Clair earned 3rd place and \$2,000 for their school's gifted program. They also earned a special award and \$300 for the Best Future City Model presentation.

"I am so proud of this group of future problem solvers and what they've accomplished," said Mrs. Hawkins, the gifted education instructor. "This is the first time Missouri has placed in this national competition, so it's not just a big win for St. Clair, but it's also a big win for Missouri."

The team would like to thank their engineering mentor, Angel Ramos, for all his support. They would also like to thank the national sponsors: Discover Engineering, Bechtel, Bently, Educational Foundation, Shell, Pentair, UEF, NASA, and New Worlds Await You. Congratulations to Altera Domi, Mrs. Hawkins, and St. Clair Junior High.





Congratulations to Natalie C. from Springfield Public Schools for designing the winner of GAM's postcard contest!



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The Missouri Scholars Academy: Challenge by Choice

By Ellie Schmidt

When I was a scholar at the '16 Missouri Scholars Academy, I remember being unable to make it through the day without hearing the phrase, "challenge by choice" at least once. The principle behind this phrase is simple enough: you'll get exactly out of the Academy what you put in to it. And MSA challenged me in ways I hadn't thought possible; it was my first prolonged experience away from home, I had chosen a "major" largely unfamiliar to myself, and it was the first time I became painfully aware that I was not the smartest student in the room. (Everyone can benefit from a good reality check once in a while.) Yet this experience is one that served me far longer than the three short weeks the Academy takes place. In fact, all these years later, I am still in daily correspondence with my peers and mentors from the Academy.

I was challenged (and continue to be challenged) by MSA due to my choice to be challenged by MSA - but I was afforded that choice due to outside financial assistance. Were the Academy not fully funded by the state of Missouri during my year, my financial situation at home would not have permitted me to attend at all. Please consider being the reason that another student has the choice to challenge themselves so deeply, so profoundly. All who walk away from an experience like Missouri Scholars Academy will find themselves all the better because of it.



Save the Date

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NCRGE's First Five Years: Results, Reflections, and Recommendations: Equitable Identification Practices and Online Professional Learning Opportunity

By Christine Nobbe

On Friday, March 26, 2021 I attended an online conference hosted by the National Center for Research on Gifted Education (NCRGE). The conference, *NCRGE's First Five Years: Results, Reflections, and Recommendations*, shared research findings and panels of experts responded to the research. The event also provided opportunities for questions/answers, chatting, small table discussions, and demonstrated the NCRGE [Shiny app](#) (research data). A summary of the research can be found [online](#), and the conference videos and slideshows are available [here](#). I recommend these materials for your professional learning.

In the session, *Research on Promising Practices for Identifying Gifted Students from Underserved Populations*, four recommendations were made:

1. Adopt Universal Screening Procedures
2. Create Alternative Pathways to Identification
3. Establish a Web of Communication
4. View Professional Development as a Lever for Change

Read with active links:
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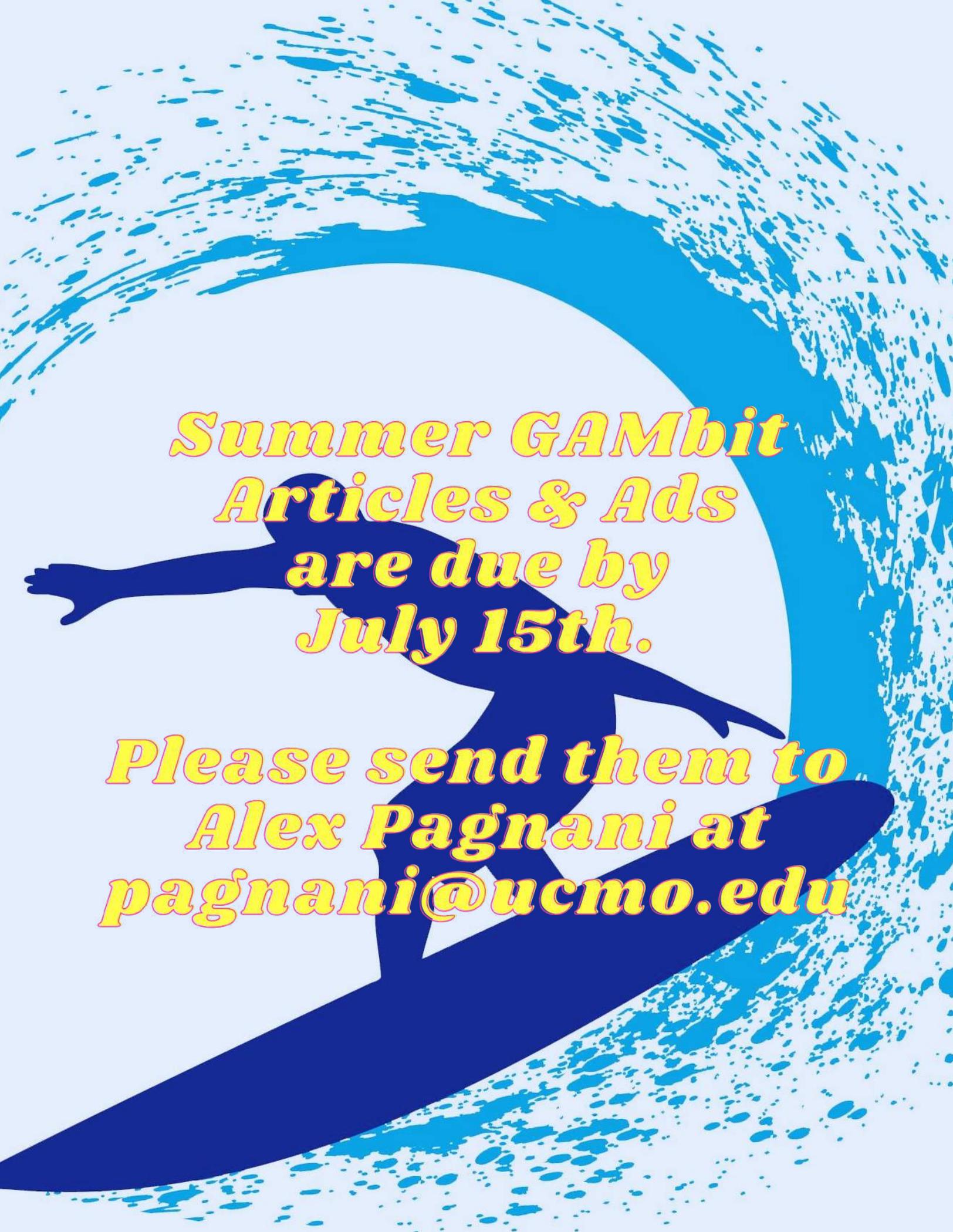
Please use these direct links to the [slide show](#) and [video](#) to learn more.

Please refer to our [Guidelines for Gifted Education Programs](#), [Identifying and Underserving Traditionally Underrepresented Gifted Students](#), and [Using Local Norms to Equitably Identify Gifted Learners](#) for guidance on the first two recommendations.

In establishing a web of communication, the researchers recommended:

- Develop a mindset of talent spotting
- Lead an identification committee with educational professionals of different roles and perspectives
- Collaborate within the school community to find children with gifts and talents
- Cultivate intentional outreach to the community at large

In Missouri, we can leverage the MSIP 5 (and, in the future, MSIP 6) professional learning standards. MSIP 5 states, "TL-2 - Professional learning drives and supports instructional practices in the district and leads to improved student learning." Professional learning on the nature and needs of gifted learners is vital to improved student learning and lays the groundwork for talent spotting, collaboration, and more equitable identification.



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