

# RESEARCH AND EVALUATION BUREAU



Spring Semester Newsletter

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## REB PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS...

### EHHS Graduate Exit Survey

Research Team: Lynn Kerdnaimongkol



The EHHS graduate exit survey is administered online by the REB toward the end of every semester to graduating Bachelor-level students in the College of EHHS. The purpose of the survey is to learn about students' opinions regarding their experiences in EHHS and their academic programs. The most recent report includes the combined results of three semesters: Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Summer 2014.

Surveys were sent to 870 students. 309 surveys were returned completed. Results indicated that the majority of EHHS students agreed or strongly agreed that EHHS academic coursework gave them a strong foundation for their career.

Highest evaluations in this area were given by students in the School of Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum Studies.

The majority of EHHS students also agreed or strongly agreed that their instructors were knowledgeable about the academic content of their program. Highest evaluations in this area were given by students in the School of Lifespan Development and Educational Services.

All EHHS student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their program was comprehensive enough for them to acquire professional understandings and abilities.

### School Improvement Grant

Research Team: Eddie Bolden, Debbie Shama-Davis, Lynn Kerdnaimongkol, Stacie Berg, & Leanna Lostoski

The three-year School Improvement Grant (SIG) was implemented within three low-performing Akron public schools. The main evaluation compo-

nents included professional development, support staff for teachers, increased technology in the classroom, and the implementation of problem/project-based learning.

Overall, our evaluation found evidence that SIG programs had a positive impact on students' achievement and behavior. Student data from the OAA and progress monitoring assessments supported parent and teacher reports of improvements in student learning and social-emotional growth.

Sustainable elements of SIG include implementation of problem/project-based learning, the use of technology in the classroom, and collaborative teaching.

### SPOTLIGHT STAFF MEMBER Stacie Berg



I am currently in my final semester of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's program. In addition to my work in the Research and Evaluation Bureau as a Graduate Assistant and Data Lab Coordinator, I am also completing an internship in the Baldwin Wallace University Counseling Center. I received my B.A. in Psychology from Kent State in May of 2012 with minors in Sociology and Women's Studies. After I graduate this May, my husband and I are planning to move to my hometown of Columbus, OH where I hope to pursue a career in college counseling. While I am very excited to graduate and move closer to my parents, I will miss Kent State and all of the friends that I have made here. Outside of school and work I enjoy reading, watching Netflix, baking, and spending time with my husband, Michael, friends, and cat, Sandy.

#### Fun Facts:

My husband and I just got married this past August. We met here at Kent State while we were undergraduates through Alpha Phi Omega, a co-ed community service fraternity.

#### Points of interest in this issue:

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##### Spotlight Staff Member

- Stacie Berg

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##### REB Project Highlights...

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# REB PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS, CONT...

## Closing the Achievement Gap in Akron Public Schools

Research Team: Deborah Shama-Davis, Eddie Bolden, & Rachel Piskos

The REB has been providing an evaluation of Akron Public School's "Closing the Achievement Gap" (CTAG) program since the 2010/2011 school year. CTAG targets at-risk 9th graders in four high schools in Akron, aiming to increase their achievement and graduation rates.

Eighty-six students targeted in the 2010/2011 school year

were tracked to the 2013/2014 school year, their high school graduation year.

The Bureau compared at-risk students who participated in the CTAG program with at-risk students who did not participate in the program. We found that more than twice as many CTAG participants graduated than did non-participants: 44.2% of CTAG participants graduated com-



pared to 21.2% of non-participants.

This finding lends support to the value of the CTAG program in Akron Public Schools.

## The Use of Mobile Applications for Informal Science Learning in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Bureau Research Team: Pamela Freeman, Deepa Shanadi, & Eddie Bolden

The REB is part of a multidisciplinary team, led by EHHS professor Richard E. Ferdig, Ph.D. and KSU's Research Center for Education Technology, that will create a GPS-based mobile app titled "Park 'N' Discover" in partnership with Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

The mobile app will have multiple interactive features, including the ability to learn more about the history and

ecology of the park. The goal of the app and the project is to help visitors become engaged "citizen scientists."



The three-year project is funded by the National Science Foundation's Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) program.

The REB is serving as the project's evaluation team, and we will examine the app's impact on informal science learning as defined by the Six Strands of Informal Science Learning. The project includes both formative and summative evaluation components.

## IN THE STATS LAB...

Stats Lab Coordinator: Lynn Kerdnaimongkol



The Stats Lab is a computer lab open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to faculty and students for use of SPSS, Winsteps, and NVivo. Lynn Kerdnaimongkol,

one of the REB's graduate assistants, is available Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to answer any SPSS questions that students may have.

## IN THE DATA LAB...

Data Lab Coordinator: Stacie Berg

Operation of the Data Lab would not be possible without our dedicated student workers.

Danielle Rupprecht has been working in the Lab and assisting in its management since Fall 2012. Danielle is from Pittsburgh and is in the combined

B.S./M.A. Speech-Language Pathology program. Candice Lawson, a psychology major and women's studies minor from Defiance, OH, has been working in the Lab since Fall 2013.

The REB would also like to welcome our two newest work-

ers, Justin Leiter and Katrina Holt, who have joined us this past semester. Justin is a psychology major from Bascom, OH. Katrina is a master's student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and is from Versailles, KY.

## ATTENTION EHHS FACULTY!

If you are working on a grant-funded research project and are seeking an external evaluator, the REB is qualified to fulfill that role!



We also offer assistance in developing and writing research/evaluation plans for your grant proposals.

# OVERVIEW...

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The Research and Evaluation Bureau offers comprehensive research, evaluation, and assessment services to schools, medical and health related institutions, human services agencies, community organizations, businesses, faculty, graduate students, and other individuals. The mission of the Bureau is to provide research and evaluation services that assist in enhancing education, health, and human service outcomes worldwide.

In addition, we work with you to develop and write a project evaluation and/or research plan, with the agreement that if the project is funded, the Bureau will be the project's evaluation team. In most cases, the Bureau is considered by funding agencies (including NSF) to be *external evaluators*.

## Meet the Staff

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