

The Community Advisory Committee for Gifted and Talented Education
cordially invites you to attend our bimonthly meeting featuring

David Ghoogasian

(researcher and educator of how the brain works)

Tuesday, January 23, 2007, 6:30 p.m.

Location: I.U.S.D. Administration Center, 5050 Barranca Parkway, Irvine

COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

This year has been wonderfully busy for Irvine's GATE community, especially during the month of October. Our first Community Advisory Committee meeting held on October 24th featured guest speaker Victoria Ragsdell, a clinical psychologist from Kentucky. The focus of her topic was understanding the nature and the factors of intensity. Teachers and parents found her information helpful in working with and/or living with intense individuals. Dr. Ragsdell was able to offer guidance in cultivating positive reactions with stressors that trigger intense reactions. If you happened to miss this meeting, you won't want to miss our future meetings with outstanding featured presenters. Make sure you mark your calendars for two excellent opportunities: David Ghoogasian will be speaking on brain research on January 23, and Lori J. Flint will be returning on April 24th to share her research on motivating underachieving gifted students.

Backtracking to Monday, October 16th, while teachers were involved with site in-services, 100 fourth-sixth grade students participated in the Community-Advisory-Committee's GATE Day. Music, soccer, puppetry, math, and musical theater were just a few of the unique sessions offered at GATE Day. Huge thanks go to Wendy Pokorski for her tireless efforts in planning the day from start to finish. Additional thanks to Jean Rodrigues for her assistance with planning, and Julie Thai, Mili Mehta, Josephine Lin, Mary Blaschko, and Sara Trask for helping to make everything run smoothly. Eastshore's staff, again, went above and beyond with providing the venue; extra thanks to Erica Hoegh, Cecie Bertone, Terryl McAllister, and Jose Garcia, for their patience and help throughout the day. Money raised from GATE Day will be used to provide teacher mini-grants to help with purchasing materials that benefit instruction.

This year's GATE Teacher Training for 4th and 6th grade teachers began in October and ended November 28th. Over 60 teachers participated in the three-day training that focused on differentiation strategies and understanding and meeting the social and emotional needs of our gifted students. Research-based theory of differentiation was woven into the time to write, practice, and share lessons fostering higher level thinking skills across the curriculum. These lessons have been posted on the district's Intranet for teachers to share with and benefit from each other.

Another October event was the Orange County Council for Gifted Education's, (OCC-GATE's), annual conference for teachers and parents. Jeanne Purcell, the keynote speaker, offered her expertise on the significant conceptions of intelligence and giftedness. Through Dr. Purcell's presentation, attendees had the opportunity to look ahead on emerging conceptions of giftedness and note some common threads in the most recent conceptions. The conclusion focused on how classroom practitioners can enhance the gifts and talents of all students. Jeanne Purcell's presentation is available at our GATE Web site: (http://www.iusd.org/parent_resources/gate/gate.htm)

October was just the beginning of numerous opportunities for IUSD's gifted community. If you have been waiting for a good time to become more involved, that time has arrived. Get to know IUSD's Community Advisory Committee for Gifted Education (CAC-GATE) and take advantage of the opportunity to work together in providing the best possible GATE program for our students. We hope to see you at the January 23rd meeting.

Sincerely,

Beth L. Andrews
Beth L. Andrews

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

APAAS Orientation Night

Date: February 13, 2007

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Place: Oak Creek Elementary

CAC-GATE Chairpersons' Message

Every new year brings about a time for new beginnings. So as we begin year 2007, the Community Advisory Committee would like to inform you about some opportunities that are now available for our teachers and graduating seniors. Through Wendy Pokorski's efforts and ambition, CAC-GATE was able to bring back GATE Day for the district's 4-6th grade students last October 16th. CAC-GATE is thrilled to be able to use the money raised during GATE Day to be able to reinstate the Teacher Mini-Grants up to \$500.00. Teachers interested in purchasing supplemental materials to assist with meeting the needs of their GATE students are invited to submit a grant proposal available on our web site at <http://intranet.iusd.org/curr/GATE/index.htm>. All proposals for the Teacher Mini-Grants must be received by February 9th, 2007, at 6:00 P.M.

For Irvine's graduating seniors, CAC-GATE is offering a \$500.00 scholarship in Carol Smith's memory. Carol, a dedicated educator of gifted students and original Coordinator of Irvine's GATE and APAAS programs, passed away last July. As a way to honor Carol, the Carol Smith Memorial Scholarship was established. The scholarship is available for graduating seniors who have participated at some time in either Irvine's GATE and/or APAAS programs and will be attending a four-year university. For more information go to: http://www.iusd.org/parent_resources/gate/gate.htm.

I look forward to seeing you at the CAC-GATE meeting on January 23rd to hear from our guest speaker, David Ghoogasian.

Sincerely,

Martha Biemann

Rancho San Joaquin Middle School: Adventures in Learning



SPOTLIGHT ON RANCHO'S HUMANITIES 8TH GATE

Rancho's energetic and dedicated GATE team have developed, and continue to develop, a curriculum that is both challenging and rewarding in order to prepare our students for their high school careers. Our curriculum concentrates on a thorough exploration and integration of the California Language Arts and History/Social Science content standards. Also emphasized are higher-level writing abilities, enriched vocabulary skills, critical thinking, and developing presentation techniques.

Using the vehicle of United States history, our students explore not only what happened, but why. Rebellions, revolution, development of governmental systems, citizenship, exploration, industrialization, immigration, interaction with other cultures — all are vital facets of the developing nation.

Through literature and both written and oral communication, students enhance their ability to think creatively and responsibly and then to relate their conclusions and ideas to others via writing and presentations.

All instruction is student-focused to encourage a love of learning as well as excellent work and study habits. To be a part of the development of our next generation of thinkers, dreamers, and leaders is both a privilege and an honor.

-Shannon Van Dam and Dee McKay

RANCHO'S HUMANITIES 7TH GATE HIGHLIGHTS

What could be more adventurous than battling across a river even with padded sticks, trying to survive the plague and writing a legal brief to argue in court before a judge against or for the offenses of the European explorers, 7th grade GATE classes at Rancho have the rare opportunity to travel back in time to the 500's, moving towards the 1700's.

Reading historical novels such as *Shadow Spinner*, and *Jackaroo* just to name two, complement this year of study, and help to engage students with the literature and history through a variety of art activities and simulations: the Black Death or Plague; the always stimulating Warlords of Japan; forming of Guilds of the Middle Ages; Medieval journalists practicing interviewing, editorializing and producing a newspaper; and the "Meeting of the (Great Medieval/ Renaissance) Minds." The round table medieval banquet allows students to dress in costume for the famous personage about whom they researched and share the information over a feast of foods from around the world. The Black Death simulations allowed students to physically see through a secret plague victim how the epidemic could be spread throughout the community. Students participated in Medieval Games, jousting and demonstrating student-created catapults.

Last year, Rancho's 7th and 8th grade Gold WordMaster teams won highest honors in the nationwide analogy program. All activities and classroom instruction are geared towards exciting the students about the curriculum, reinforcing good work habits, outlining, study strategies, time management, and organization, while expanding essay writing and research skills.

-Kay Gee, Christine Alfonso and David Kingsbury



Springbrook GATE

By Bob Curly

The GATE program at Springbrook School emphasizes individualized education within the regular classroom setting. Cluster groups within the fourth through sixth grade classrooms are used to differentiate instruction in content areas by utilizing research, higher-level problem solving, and critical thinking strategies. These strategies encourage the essential components of depth, complexity, and novelty for a differentiated curriculum.

In the fourth grade, GATE students are provided with enrichment activities for different subject areas. In language arts, the GATE students have been included in the creation of the 4th Grade Book Club. Each student is assigned different jobs and responsibilities each week to accomplish in coordination with their reading. The students have just completed reading *Zia*, the sequel to *Island of the Blue Dolphins* - a book that is part of the core curriculum for the class. There were two alternative projects with this reading assignment — the creation of a mobile to process key aspects of the story and the sharing of artifacts from Native Americans. In math they are being enriched with problems that challenge them to use advanced logic, reasoning and higher-order thinking skills.

While reading the novel *Where the Red Fern Grows*, our GATE students were grouped to work at their own pace. They were challenged with higher level thinking as well as effective discussions that lead to a further understanding of the framework of the story. With the Houghton Mifflin language arts series our GATE students are given the challenge series as well as advanced grammar activities. In math, the GATE students are challenged with higher level, critical thinking problems as well as tackling a formidable data project.

The sixth grade GATE students are currently participating in the Challenge activities from our new Houghton Mifflin language arts series, which encourages the use of higher level thinking skills. In social studies, the sixth grade GATE students will begin individual and group research projects which encourage deeper and more complex study of social studies for the sixth grade GATE students. Math is an area of regular enrichment. The GATE students are challenged in all strands of math, with an emphasis on mathematical reasoning and complex problem solving. Through cluster grouping and individual response, each student will be able to expand on their strengths.



Stone Creek Gater News

By Flora Morgan

New to third grade is the Vocabulary for Achievement Enrichment program purchased through IPSF grant money received by Mrs. Sperber. Challenging the students to further enhance their reading and vocabulary is the Vocabulary Connections program. Math continues to challenge our third graders with multiplication mosaics, mental algebra, and hands-on geometry projects. Third grade is integrating science experiments with IUSD's Life Cycle Unit. All students love exploring the scientific method during our experiments! After sending the literature character, Flat Stanley, across the country and throughout the world, the third grade classes have been anxiously awaiting responses. Using our mapping skills both with flat maps and the computer, we will be charting Flat Stanley's travels.

Fourth grade students are involved in the Navigators, which is a literature group that promotes the love of literature. The Navigators use novels to provide opportunities of differentiation through the dramatic arts. Students can create innovative scripts and skits. The Eagles is a research-based group that provides challenge and enrichment through critical thinking in math and writing.

Fifth grade students also are involved in the Navigators enrichment group. In fifth grade, they read the same novel, but complete teacher-created performance tasks that promote higher-level reading, thinking, problem solving, and teamwork. The Gate students research Latin/Greek roots to build a broader knowledge of etymology. Math competition teams and Scrabble tournaments are always favorites of the Gate students.

Sixth grade GATE students use author comparison pairs to analyze books written by the same author and books/topics written by different authors. Research projects are utilized to provide additional challenge to those students seeking an alternative to pencil and paper testing. GATE students also are involved in an accelerated pre-algebra project. They utilize divergent and critical thinking skills to prove why Ancient Egypt was considered a civilization.



Brywood Elementary APAAS

By Lynda Wilson

The APAAS students at Brywood are applying what they have learned and actively showing what they know.

This past fall was a busy season for the 4th grade APAAS students of Nancy Williams. They completed two written and oral book reports in the genres of realistic fiction and mystery. The students finished their first social studies project comparing and contrasting the regions of California and also became "experts" on Native Californians' tribes and folklore. In writing, the class focused on summary and response to literature standards. They wrapped up December with literature circles and culminating novel projects.

Meanwhile, 5th graders in WMTV (the class of Mary Thomas-Vallens and Lynda Wilson) began the year asking some big questions during their novel study about racism and the importance of having a home. In writing, they shared riveting personal experiences in "exploded moment" format using rich show not tell details and then stretched their imaginations by writing "exploded moments" from the point of view of pre-Columbian Native Americans living the regions they had researched. Along with the rest of Brywood's fifth graders, the class also participated in Native American Craft Day. In math, students used what they had learned to decide which type of graph would best represent the results of surveys they designed and conducted. In December, they traveled to the California Science Center in Los Angeles to enjoy many hands on displays that demonstrate science principles they are studying.

In Mr. Sipkovich's sixth grade class, the students have been working hard on their core curriculum assignments as well as being involved in hands-on learning activities. The students recently were involved in a simulated archeological dig in which they, in groups, created fictional cultures based on ten aspects of culture. The students buried their artifacts, cave painting (mural), and their Rosetta Stone in the sand box area and then traded locations with another group to unearth the buried evidence. After gathering all the evidence and making inferences about the items, the students prepared a report of findings and presented it to the class. This activity, as well as a modern culture report and a Thanksgiving feast of ethnic foods, helped the students understand the concepts related to culture and early man, which are covered in the first section of the social studies book.

Connecting learning to real life has been a mind-expanding experience for all. Brywood's teachers are grateful for the enthusiasm and curiosity their students bring to the classroom each day.



Culverdale Elementary School

By Karen Packard

Culverdale Elementary School continues to uphold the highest level of commitment to each student. Our dedicated staff provides an enriched curriculum, differentiated with depth, novelty, and acceleration for our GATE community, as evidenced by the myriad activities in every classroom.

Culverdale fourth grade students are solving challenging problems from Singapore Math and the activities in their fourth grade math text. They will work with Hands-On-Algebra and Bean Stick Algebra, activities that make abstract concepts concrete with a visual and physical representation of algebraic equations. In social studies, students will study and explore the history and geography of California, the California Missions and the Gold Rush with our text and through simulations. For our gold rush study, small sailing groups are formed in which students assume the actual roles of a crew on a trading ship bound for California from Boston. They barter and trade for hides from the ranchos of California. Students enjoy the Word Master Challenge which is a stimulating word study of new vocabulary using analogies. In language arts, students select projects from a menu. The projects are aligned to the current story and skills focused around the theme. A fourth grade lunch time group met in November and will meet again in February and April to discuss a book they all have read.

Along with the daily enrichment, GATE students in the **fifth grade** are presented an additional opportunity to broaden their learning across the curriculum. At the beginning of each month an Extensions Menu is planned for them. The purpose of this Menu is to expand the curriculum so the students can explore and make connections on a deeper level. Several activities are listed on the menu for each curriculum area. These activities align with the core curriculum but go into depth and novelty with the activities. Students have the option of selecting as many extensions as they'd like along with the targeted grade that they would like to earn.

Further enrichment is found in the Social Studies curriculum. Big Books are used for the study on Native Americans, Explorers, and Colonial Craftsmen. Within this cooperative group setting, GATE students have the opportunity to excel in leadership and enhance interpersonal communication skills. Power point presentations are utilized to enhance the learning experience while studying the U.S. Presidents. Fireside Chats enliven the oral reports for the Presidents. While studying the 50 states, students create a tri-fold state technology brochure. The fifth grade students also participate in the Word Masters Challenge.


Sixth graders have a wealth of material to explore each month across their curriculum. Students are challenged through novelty, depth, and acceleration as they master the sixth grade standards. Language Arts finds them with weekly required reading involving distinctive genre and challenging novels, along with free reading choices. Word Masters continues to enrich vocabulary for our GATE students. Research and projects, tailored to appeal to everyone's taste, offers a mixture of unique topics to enhance the learning experience. Samplings of Social Studies projects include Indian Palm Leaf books, Egyptian ABC books and Books of the Dead, virtual tours, and Big Books for ancient civilizations. Math is differentiated with enrichment packets, and daily and weekly challenge problems. The *Primary Mathematics Challenging Word Problems* series is used to polish the students thinking skills and encourages students to use creative problem solving strategies. Students explore real-life math through participating in the Stock Market Game. Other novelty aspects include News Quiz, a GATE current events program, which is both enjoyable and competitive.

All grade levels avail themselves to Neufeld Math, a site-based computer-accessed curriculum, which allows students to work at their own pace and ability. In addition, a new computer program, Orchard Learning Science Tree, offers opportunities for enrichment activities during students' computer lab time or science class time.

Our students have the opportunity to utilize the Culverdale Website for updates to current assignments. As you tour Culverdale, plan to be impressed by the students' work displayed throughout the building! Providing a challenging and differentiated program that serves all of our learners at Culverdale continues to be a priority with each and every teacher at Culverdale Elementary. Our commitment is to excellence!

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JANUARY, 2007



Oak Creek School

By Kerry Rubel

Oak Creek GATE students have had a busy first trimester. GATE students at Oak Creek are cluster grouped in highly motivated classes where they are provided with differentiated instruction by terrific professionals. In addition to classroom instruction, Oak Creek GATE students have opportunities to meet with our Library/Media instructor to extend their learning with novel and complex projects.

The fourth graders started off the year by creating PowerPoint presentations featuring their views of Oak Creek: the students, the facility and the staff. In addition, the fourth graders have created a detailed PowerPoint presentation based on their research of the Coastal Miwok tribe of California. Each student produced slides that depicted ceremonies, clothing, leadership, hunting practices, or geography. They included transitions, backgrounds, and animation. For some this was their first experience with PowerPoint. They were quite proud to have it presented to their classmates.

Our fifth grade students have stretched their problem solving skills with work on analogies, grid riddles, word puzzles, and a U.S. flag attribute game. They also created two separate PowerPoint presentations based on their research of past U.S. newspaper headlines as well as the impact of the Spanish Conquistadors on the Aztec Empire. Using their research skills along with their creativity, they were able to share this information with their classmates. Finally, the fifth graders dug deep into their imaginative minds to develop song parodies based on their research of the Solar System. Classes had the opportunity to sing along with these familiar tunes with alternative lyrics.

In addition to some fun problem solving activities, our sixth graders shared their research about significant archeologists with their classmates. Each student developed an oral presentation with visuals to highlight the life of the archeologist and his/her accomplishments. They then moved on to produce a short video production based on a web-quest about ancient Mesopotamia. Students were given a role as a member of Babylonia society and they were to write a script of a conversation they would have had with their fellow Babylonians. Students had to describe their life in Babylon and determine how Hammurabi's Code affected them. The show was informative and entertaining with the use of costumes and props.

Our Oak Creek GATE students are looking forward to new challenges in 2007.

CALENDAR FOR 2006-2007

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| January 23 | Teacher in-service presented by David Ghoogasian. RSVP through GATE office. |
| January 28 | Astounding Inventions of the Future - Irvine Valley College - 1-3 p.m. (Grades K-8) |
| January 27 | SAT and subject tests - register by December 20, 2006 |
| February 13 | APAAS Parent Orientation - Oakcreek Elementary - 6-7 p.m. |
| February 14 | APAAS application available on IUSD GATE website |
| March 2-4 | CAG (California Association for Gifted) Conference , Santa Clara, CA |
| March 7 | District Science Fair - Irvine High School (Grades 6-12) |
| March 13 | Honors Vocal Concert - 7:30 p.m. - Calvary Church, Santa Ana |
| March 20 | Honors Instrumental Concert - 7:30 p.m. - Calvary Church, Santa Ana |
| April 24 | Community Advisory Committee (CAC-GATE) Meeting - Administration Center, 5050 Barranca, Irvine, 6:30 p.m. - Guest Speaker - Lori Flint |
| April 24 | Teacher in-service presented by Lori Flint. RSVP through GATE office. |
| July 2 - 27 | GATE Summer School - Grades 3-6 |

All Dates Are Not Confirmed and Subject to Change.