

(Clockwise) Taking their math discussion out of the classroom and on to the playground are Stephanie Turk, Kayley Platton, Jahmir Mapp, Paul Richter '06, Phineas Shapiro, Diana Zeminski '06 and Bridget Patterson '06.



Bringing Learning to Life

It's time for second-grader Stephanie Turk, and her fellow students at C.W. Henry Elementary School in Philadelphia, to prepare for the state's standardized testing. And Arcadia education major Paul Richter '06 is more than ready for the challenge—engaging a small group of enthusiastic 7-year-olds in a way that brings learning to life.

Richter encourages Stephanie to develop her own mathematical research project using an issue relevant to her life. Without hesitation, Stephanie selects the topic she wishes to explore: How can her school's library better serve its students? Many of the books are too high to reach, she points out, and there aren't enough tables and chairs for multiple classes to visit the library.

With the concentration of a skilled architect, Stephanie draws an oversized schematic of her vision. Sets, counting and division are just some of the skills she applies in this project-based learning experience. Stephanie is thrilled her ideas are being heard but, more importantly, she now realizes she possesses the skills to solve a real world issue just like a professional.

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This is the fourth in a series focusing on Arcadia's Strategic Vision. This article examines one of the University's five key strategic initiatives: Establish a unique, integrative learning environment infused with international and multicultural issues and values throughout students' experience. Future issues of the Herald will continue to highlight the many ways Arcadia faculty throughout the disciplines prepare their students to live and work effectively in our global society.

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"Integrating what students learn in the classroom with real world issues and experiences helps them understand the relevance of their studies and allows them to apply what they are learning," points out Arcadia President Jerry M. Greiner.

Dr. Peter Appelbaum, Associate Professor of Education, and Dr. Leif Gustavson, Assistant Professor of Education, oversee Richter and 59 other Arcadia seniors at Henry and F.S. Edmonds elementary schools. Dr. Appelbaum explains that "through exploration of their own questions, the elementary students develop specific skills and conceptual knowledge that enable them to be mathematicians." Dr. Gustavson notes that "when students at the elementary school or college level take ownership of their curriculum, ideas become clear and more relevant and concepts are grasped with enthusiasm."

Dr. Greiner explains that while student teaching, clinical experiences for health professionals, and scientific research projects are the most common examples of integrative learning, "Arcadia's strong emphasis on reinforcing classroom learning with professional experiences throughout all majors truly makes the University distinctive. Arcadia is preparing its students to live and work effectively in our global society."

Students in Arcadia's International Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) master's program take full advantage of all the elements of inquiry-based learning in a global setting. They traveled to Northern Ireland this fall to talk to various groups about cultural difficulties. After gaining field experience in this post-conflict community—even donning a full suit of riot gear at a Northern Ireland police station—the students then took on the roles of the different constituencies to write a memorandum of understanding, reaching consensus on security issues while taking into account everyone's needs.

Their field experience last spring was more remote. They drove 10 hours into the southern reaches of Costa Rica to meet with United Nations human rights mediator Jose Carlos and see the site where the government wants to build a hydroelectric power station. Damming the river, while bringing power to the remote region, also would destroy some indigenous peoples' lands. After their on-site inquiry, the students returned to the U.N. University for Peace, an IPCR partner university in Costa Rica, and developed an intervention strategy.


"Students graduate with relevant and marketable skills and are ready to hit the



In May 2004 International Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) students visited the Chiquita Banana Plantation in Costa Rica while researching the working conditions of migrant workers.

ground running," says Dr. Warren Haffar, Assistant Professor and Director of the IPCR program.

Faculty across campus are taking advantage of the University's commitment to global learning to shape inquiry-based experiences, many with an international twist. In the patient-centered Physical Therapy curriculum, students learn to integrate and apply clinical, behavioral and basic science knowledge. Their experiences may include interning in a local hospital or volunteering in Jamaica. Business majors have the opportunity to intern locally or in Thailand.

"Historically, higher education has been discipline-oriented," Greiner says, "but we're well-educated persons not because we learn about the world from one perspective, but because we learn from many perspectives and bring these perspectives to bear in thinking about the challenges of the world today." 



(Left) IPCR student Alceyni Diallo, an international student from the small West African country of Burkina Faso, views a mural in Belfast, Northern Ireland. (Right) On the same trip Diallo and fellow IPCR students try on riot gear at a police station. After graduation Diallo plans to return to his home country to work with government officials on conflict resolution.