



## State Teachers of the Year

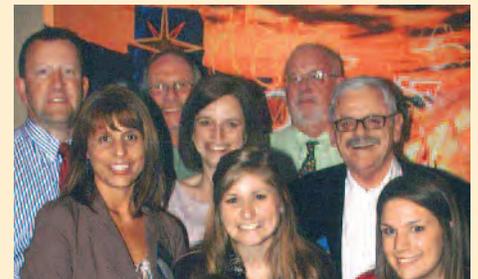
When the Maryland Department of Education announced its 24 county Teachers of the Year for 2011, nine were SU alumni – more than any other campus represented. One of those honored, Chad Pavlekovich (above), a Wicomico County middle school science teacher, was among the finalists in the running to be crowned Maryland Teacher of the Year. In the past decade, three members of the SU community have been honored with the statewide Teacher of the Year title. In addition, 25 percent of this year's 20 finalists for neighboring Delaware's Teacher of the Year were members of the Salisbury community. Two SU graduates have won the prestigious Milken Educator Award, sometimes called "the Oscars for teaching." Yet another has been honored with *The Washington Post's* Distinguished Educational Leadership Award, and *USA Today* has named one among the top teachers in the nation. In nearby Worcester County, so many good things have resulted from a Board of Education-SU partnership, that the National Association of Professional Development Schools took notice. It bestowed them with the 2011 Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement Award – one of only five presented nationwide.

## Social Workers in the "Field"

Social work students are making life healthier for the homeless and other vulnerable populations through a community garden created by HALO (Hope and Life Outreach). Four students in the Macro Social Work Practice course have worked hard to support the newly constructed garden located on what was a gravel and dirt parking lot near SU's campus. They raised over \$800 and bought HALO a bird bath, bird feeders complete with seed, a wheel barrow and five berry bushes. Willing to get their hands dirty in addition to fundraising, the four young women spent a day working the garden (below), creating a new garden space and planting the bushes they purchased. The community project not only provides fresh fruit and vegetables to HALO clients, but also encourages clients and organizers to work in the garden, creating additional health benefits. The students aiding HALO are just one out of 39 teams who completed projects to benefit the community during the semester. Through the course and the experiences of volunteering, social work students learned to work with communities and organizations to improve their functioning – a skill that will benefit them greatly in their career path.

## Student PDS Presentations

Engaging skits about the environment, special writing projects, Web page design, crisis planning – these are some of the topics education students presented at the 2012 Professional Development Schools (PDS) National Conference in Las Vegas. With them at the conference were support faculty and staff (below). Together, they talked about their PDS site internships, sharing examples of lessons planned and delivered with mentor teachers. They also discussed their action research projects, such as studying the impact of sensorimotor breaks on work completion. Their legacy projects addressed school improvement goals including researching and creating recommended book lists. In a second "open mic" session, they shared wishes for future PDS programs.





## People-to-People Sports Exchange

As part of the U.S. State Department's SportsUnited program, some 10 male and female basketball players from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa visited SU (above). While on campus they participated in a skills clinic with Coach Josh Merkel (below left) and members of the SU men's basketball team, and received instruction from SU Health and Sport Sciences Department faculty. Their visit, which also included two Congolese coaches, was part of a 10-day international people-to-people exchange. The SU portion of the trip was coordinated by Dr. Dean Ravizza of the Health and Sport Sciences Department, whose sports and conflict resolution programs and studies in Africa



(below right) have earned national attention. At SU, the players learned about injuries, hydration, nutrition, strength and conditioning, and conflict resolution strategies for sports from faculty. The exchange helps the students engage in team building, conflict resolution, physical conditioning and disability awareness in sports. The program builds on Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's vision of "smart power," bringing individuals together to foster a greater understanding of social norms and cultures. During their U.S. tour, the Congolese players also met with athletes from the NBA and WNBA, and visited Howard University, among other stops. Participants in the SportsUnited program have included NBA players Juwan Howard and Dikembe Mutombo, and WNBA player Nikki McCray.



## Hammond Book Draws Raves

*The Comprehension Experience*, a new book by Dr. Dorsey Hammond, Teacher Education Department emeritus faculty, received rave reviews. Co-authored by education consultant, mentor and writer Denise Nessel of Australia, the book is described by David Pearson of the University of California as "a gift to the profession." *The Comprehension Experience* explains how to teach effective critical thinking processes and promote discussions of K-12 students with fresh, research-driven practices. According to Hammond and Nessel, readers must do more than master skills and learn strategies; they must have highly engaging, deeply satisfying experiences with narrative and informational texts. Hammond and Nessel are both experienced in research and classroom practice. "Most important," they assert, "is to promote readers intellectual and emotional engagement with texts every day through effective thinking and discussion."

