



## A Message from the Dean

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The School of Education embraced the fall 2020 school year as an opportunity to explore new ways to positively impact our campus, our community, our State, and our world. All of our candidates, from undergraduate through post-master programs, are learning how to teach and administer in the public school systems using a variety of technological tools.

We have candidates who are participating in all types of learning environments, including in-person, virtual, and many hybrid models. They continue to amaze us in how they are successfully developing relationships with their students and colleagues and delivering effective instruction to a diverse set of students.

We continue to see our graduate programs grow, and we are excited at how our candidates are contributing their voices and experiences in our courses to provide enriching, diverse conversations during their preparations to be effective teachers and administrators. Our new Master of Arts in Teaching Elementary Education and our new Master of Arts School Principal programs began this year. These two new certification routes enable us to widen the pathways available for candidates to pursue a career in education at Asbury University.

Please join us as we pray our candidates are able to be God's hands and feet in this ever-changing world of education.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

**Mary Jean McKenzie**  
**'76 Banter**



The College Readiness and Talent Development Program Specialist for the Georgia Department of Education in Atlanta, Banter's primary assignment is to guide and support the school districts' gifted coordinators as they work with the gifted teachers and students in the state. Before this position, Banter served her entire teaching career in the Peach County School District. She taught elementary and middle grades and coached Future Problem Solving Teams at the elementary, middle and high school levels. She also was a school level and district level instructional facilitator, district ESOL support, and the district gifted coordinator for around 17 years. "I have learned that it is important to work effectively, to have a passion for your work, and above all, to have a personal relationship with Christ. It is that relationship with Christ that will give you the strength, persistence, and grace to develop your skills in your profession as an educator. Asbury provided a wonderful foundation for my undergraduate training in education. I feel that it is truly a calling to be in the field of education, and one for which I am most thankful to call mine!"

# NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

- Congratulations to Donnie Piercey '04 for being named Kentucky's 2021 Teacher of the Year! Piercey, who teaches fifth grade at Stonewall Elementary, was named as Kentucky's Elementary Teacher of the Year, as well.
- Asbury graduated the first cohort of Superintendent candidates in Spring 2020. Two of the candidates currently work as administrators in Jessamine County. This program is a part of the Graduate Program that also includes a large principal and DPP program. There were nine candidates in this fall's cohort.

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: *Dr. David Riel '72*

Dr. Riel comes from a family of Asburians and teachers and he has followed in their footsteps. With experience as a teacher and then an elementary principal, Riel felt prepared for his position at Asbury as a professor and Director of Clinical Experiences.



Riel is the liaison between the SOE and the public schools in Kentucky, where AU students are placed. He also teaches several clinical courses and a grad course in the Superintendent Licensure Program.

It is a priority for Riel to help prepare students to change the world, assisting them to become the best teachers they can be to fulfill their calling. Seeing his students succeed after graduation and having them share accomplishments is "what I live for."

Riel believes that "education is the key to our country's and world's future" and that "we should not undervalue a college education." He reminds us that Jesus was the greatest teacher of all time, encouraging us to love Him with all our heart, spend more time to become like Him. "Laugh often -- and to the classroom your students will love this," he says. "Be the person you want your students to become."



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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: *Amy Rusnak '20*



A student in our Adult Professional Studies program, Amy is a wife and mother of two little girls. She will graduate in December with a degree in Elementary Education. She has wanted to teach her whole life and believes this is her calling. Teaching is where she can be her best self. Her time

at Asbury has been enjoyable and she is grateful for the experience and relationships she has formed with professors and classmates. Whether with questions or with tears, she knows that together with her professors, they will find a solution. Amy loves to encourage others to persevere. As a college student for the last ten years, she has found a place that will help her fulfill her calling to teach.

For more information about the School of Education, visit  
[asbury.edu/education](https://asbury.edu/education)

For upcoming events, visit:  
[asbury.edu/calendar](https://asbury.edu/calendar)

To update your contact information or to share a class  
note, please contact the Alumni Office:  
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