

NISWONGER NEWS

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 1

FALL 2012

Creating Opportunities for Individual and Community Growth through Education and Other Sustainable Projects

Collaborative Professional Development Day

Unites Region's Educators in Common Cause



Counselors gather at Greenville Professional Development Offices

History was made on Tuesday, November 6, 2012 as the Niswonger Foundation's Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium (NETCO) hosted a regional collaborative inservice program for high school teachers and professional staff members. This marks the first time that all Northeast Tennessee school systems have committed to a common professional development day. More than 1800 participants from 15 area school systems met for training in the implementation of the

new Common Core State Standards. This represented 95% of all high school teachers and staff members from these systems.

Participants had the opportunity to choose from eight subject areas hosted at different sites throughout the region. Subject areas included: mathematics; English, library, and fine arts; social studies and world language; science and wellness; special education; career technical education; school counselors; and administrators. Host sites included Chuckey-Doak High School, David Crockett High School, Dobyms-Bennett High School, East Tennessee State University Gray Fossil Site, Greenville City Schools Professional Development Center, Greenville High School, Greenville Middle School, and Tennessee High School.

Specialists in each discipline lead discussions, group projects and "hands-on" activities, while encouraging an open exchange of information and experiences. The presenters included: Diane Briars, Past President, National Council for Supervisors of Mathematics; Shannon Jackson, Knox County Schools Reading and ELA Supervisor for Secondary Schools; Katie Gerhardt, Measurement, Inc. Project Director: TCAP Writing Assessment; David Riesenfeld, Assistant Principal, Robert F. Wagner Secondary School of Arts and Technology, Queens, NY; Joyce Tugel, Science Consultant, Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance; Andrea Mayfield, Special Education Consultant, Tennessee Department of Education; Jill Pope, Literacy Teacher, Maryville High School;

See Collaborative (page 2)



Scott M. Niswonger

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT **The Challenges of Change**

I was recently introduced to the concept of *EPIC 2020*. Focused on leading edge reform in higher education, this blog shares a theory that education will change dramatically for the better during this decade. I encourage you to review www.epic2020.org. You are likely to be surprised by the content of this website which re-envision education as we know it. I am equally as certain that the website will cause you to reconsider the importance of thoughtfully and successfully preparing our students for a dynamic future.

A primary purpose of our Foundation is to support schools as they face the challenges of preparing their students for college and career. Likewise, through our Niswonger Scholars program, we are working to empower a new generation of leaders. The future of our region rests with our ability to prepare skilled workers to meet the demands of an uncertain economy and the rapidly changing job market of this new century. As described at a recent economic summit, it is important to build and support a "knowledge economy" that combines education, technology and learning as the keys to economic growth. We want this concept to be central to everything we do.

In the cover story, we are proud to share the success of our *Collaborative Professional Development Day*. Fifteen school systems, 1800 high school teachers and professional staff members, rallied around the cause of understanding and implementing Tennessee's new common core requirements. The power of teamwork was evident as the 15 school systems of Northeast Tennessee committed to joining together

See Challenges (page 2)

IN THIS ISSUE

Collaborative Development Day	1
President's Letter	1
Landair 31st Birthday	3
Tennessee's Outstanding Educators	3
Investing in Innovation	4
Hamblen County Schools	4
Professional Development	4
Online Instruction	5
"A Year In The Life"	6-9
Scholars Journal	9
Alumni News	10
Scholars Shine!	11

Collaborative (from cover)

Science teachers collaborate at the ETSU Gray Fossil Site



Math teachers prepare for session at Chuckey-Doak High School

Richard Flanary, Deputy Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals; Vivian Franklin, Director of Counseling, Niswonger Foundation; Denise Arnold, Director of Learning Resources, Niswonger Foundation. Blair Henley, Linda Irwin, Richard Kitzmiller, Robbie Mitchell, Carolyn McPherson, Larry Neas, Marsha Ottem, and Dale Schneitman, Niswonger Foundation NETCO staff members, served as facilitators at the sites. Jeff Townsley, Chief Student Services Officer for the Greeneville City Schools, also assisted as a facilitator.

Anne Dunn, mathematics teacher at Sullivan South High School, described the day as follows: “As a relatively new teacher (of 6 years) I find myself starving for collaboration beyond my own colleagues. I work with some wonderful math teachers that work very hard. However, I find myself stagnant at times...yearning for new techniques, new lesson enhancers, fresh insight as to the struggling students. Basically, I am motivated, inspired and rejuvenated when I

“Without a doubt, it was the best 1-day inservice that I have attended in my four years of teaching. It was relevant and useful for my classroom.”

— Rich Reece

Chemistry and Physics teacher, Tennessee High School

share common teaching methods with educators in a larger area. I begin to think beyond what my limited mind understands. I could easily spend an entire day collaborating with math teachers throughout upper East Tennessee. I just wanted to thank you for organizing the event.”

NETCO was created through an 18 million dollar United States Department of Education Investing in Innovation (i3) grant awarded to the Niswonger Foundation in 2010. The consortium consists of Carter, Cocke,

Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington Counties; Elizabethton, Greeneville, Kingsport, Johnson City and Bristol City Schools.

Commenting on the success of this first collaborative inservice, Linda Irwin, Foundation Vice President and Administrator of the i3 grant remarked that “This inservice program far exceeded our expectations. Not only did our regional high school teachers hear the same message regarding our new common core standards, they were able to meet and collaborate with all other teachers from their subject area within our region. We are delighted to be setting the standard for regional cooperation in an effort to improve our students’ chances to be successful in reaching college or beginning a career.”

Conference attendee Dr. Catherine Edwards, Science Hill High School, stated: “Whenever the name ‘Niswonger’ is attached, something positive will occur. Whether it is the birth of a baby at the Niswonger Children’s Hospital, or in my case, a grandchild, scholarships for deserving students, or research based teacher inservice and instruction, it is always a positive experience.”

All the collaborative inservice presentations are available online at www.nflconline.com.

Challenges (from cover)

for this day. What better way to prepare our region’s teachers to be successful with the new common core standards than to unite them in a common cause!

Another important step in this process is highlighted in the story “*Online Instruction Expands Educational Opportunities*.” You will read about how we are focusing attention on the delivery of online instruction to the 29 high schools in Northeast Tennessee. This teaching method is vastly expanding the course availability for students. The resources of a system or the size of the high school should not be the determining factors for how many courses a student can take to compete for a career or a position at the college or university of choice.

Case in point, in the past our region’s students found themselves at a disadvantage when competing for scholarships based on ACT and SAT results. Primarily, our efforts are focusing on the core subject areas and Advanced Placement (AP) classes. For all high schools this represents an enhancement to already existing course offerings. For some, this is the first time students have been given access to AP classes. Another focus of our efforts is working with our local colleges to increase the number of students taking dual enrollment classes. All of these efforts promise to give students a new edge to compete for their “dream” schools, to gain the

financial support needed to make a post-secondary education a reality, and to be more successful in those classrooms.

You will also read about “*A Year in the Life*” of our Niswonger Scholars and some of the most recent accomplishments of our Scholars and Alumni. Now a network that is 62 members strong, they are using leadership skills in colleges, professional positions and in their communities. The leadership program is focused on providing the guidance; training and support the Scholars need to take advantage of the opportunities of the job market of the future. Most importantly, our Scholars are committing to “*learn, earn and return*” to our region prepared for the future.

Perhaps it is best we plan for the future as we would plan to swim in a tide. We know that if we resist a wave, it will pull us under. But, if we dive straight in with confidence, we will swim with it - through it - and come out on the other side exclaiming “*Man, what a ride!*”

Scott M. Niswonger
President and Founder

Landair Transport, Inc. Celebrates 31st Birthday



The staff of the Niswonger Foundation extends our congratulations and expresses our sincere appreciation to our President and Founder, Scott M. Niswonger, as Landair Transport, Inc. celebrates its 31st birthday. We are deeply appreciative of Scott's personal risk and extraordinary vision which has provided us the opportunity to positively improve education and develop future leaders for Northeast Tennessee.

Following is a note Scott sent to the Landair staff on November 4, 2012:

"There can be no great accomplishment without risk."

— Neil Armstrong

Thirty one years ago today, Ed Saylor (former Chief Pilot for Magnavox) and I started Landair with a secretary working out of my apartment kitchen and living room at 501 Skyview Drive in Greeneville. We founded the company by opening a bank account and depositing \$2000 each into the new Landair account. I had saved enough money to live without pay and make my apartment rent for 6 months. Beyond that point, Landair had to generate a positive cash flow or the company's life (and mine) would be over.

We were able to finance two new Inveco 12 foot box trucks and one used International straight truck with a 21 foot box. That was the

original Landair fleet! "The plan" was for Ed to oversee operations and maintenance and I would handle sales and marketing.

We quickly developed contract relationships for the trucks with a company known as the Flying Tiger Line. This was a worldwide air freight company founded by 6 pilots after World War II that were part of the original Flying Tiger group that defended China from the Japanese prior to America's entry into World War II. One of Landair's first contracts for trucks with Flying Tigers was in Tampa. We hired one driver and set off for Florida. Once in Tampa, Ed drove one of the trucks doing pickup and delivery and I drove the linehaul truck every night to Orlando to meet the Flying Tiger aircraft at night and back to Tampa at 6 a.m. Ever since that experience, and as many of you have noticed, I have really never cared for early morning arrivals!!

Well, that is how it all started 31 years ago. Today, Forward Air and Landair continue to thrive with over 4,000 employees and contractors. Several of you have been here for almost the entire journey. Most of you are more recent to the Landair family. But to all, many thanks for making the past 31 years possible. Because of your efforts, we have been able to assist in making positive changes in education, health care and quality of life for our community and to the region we all love and call home.

Sincerely yours,

Scott M Niswonger

Tennessee's Outstanding Educators



Tennessee Teacher of the Year
Allyson Chick
Richland Elementary School, Memphis



Tennessee Principal of the Year
Jane Winter
Mingewood Elementary School, Clarksville



Tennessee Supervisor of the Year
Bobby Cox
Former Assistant Director (now Director of Schools), Warren County Schools

The Niswonger Foundation honors the educational professionals who are making an important difference in the lives of children across the State. The Tennessee Department of Education recently named the recipients of the Tennessee Teacher, Principal and Supervisor of the Year for 2013.

We are proud to sponsor all three of these award programs that recognize excellence in teaching and leadership. In addition to the three top awards, numerous other educators are recognized and receive awards in all three categories. The Niswonger Foundation provided these educators

with nearly \$30,000 in combined cash awards this year.

We extend our appreciation and congratulations to these outstanding educators.

INVESTING IN INNOVATION (OUR i3 GRANT)

Highlights from Our Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium (NETCO)

- ✓ During summer 2012, NETCO offered 28 different online courses with registration of more than 1100 students in Northeast Tennessee.
- ✓ More than 300 students are enrolled in 26 online courses this fall semester.
- ✓ In this past year, distance learning enrollment in NETCO schools increased by 77%; online enrollment increased by 87%; and dual enrollment course participation increased by 39%.
- ✓ Eighty-one high school educators received training as Advanced Placement course instructors.
- ✓ Two NETCO high schools – Greeneville High School and Cocke County High School – were named to the College Board Honor Roll for their increased number of AP courses offered and increased AP test scores. Only four schools in Tennessee were recognized by the College Board.
- ✓ NETCO College and Career Counselors had contact with over 6,000 students, individually, offering guidance and support with college applications, scholarships, personal and academic issues.
- ✓ College and Career Counselors worked with over 7,000 students in group settings.
- ✓ Over 700 parents have sought assistance from the Counselors.
- ✓ Counselors have had over 1800 contacts with students enrolled in online courses.
- ✓ NETCO Counselors have attended training offered by ACT, College Board, Tennessee College Access and Success Network, Tennessee Counseling Association, the University of Tennessee, Duke University and the FAFSA Completion Project.
- ✓ Counselors presented their work with rural schools at the College Access and Success Conference in a session entitled “One Size Does Not Fit All”

Professional Development as Key Focus

In addition to the *Collaborative Professional Development Day* highlighted in our cover story, the Niswonger Foundation and its Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium (NETCO), has recently sponsored two regional professional development opportunities for our teachers and school leaders.

The *Sixth Annual School Success Symposium* was held at the Niswonger Performing Arts Center and Greeneville High School on Thursday, June 21. A keynote address from Rachel Tompkins, former president and current senior fellow of the Rural School and Community Trust was presented to over 600 educators in attendance. A selection of 35 presentations and workshops followed, addressing best practices across all grade levels.

The *Second Annual Collaborative Professional Development Day*, held on Wednesday, June 20, successfully brought together more than 900 high school teachers from across the region. Educators focused on their specific areas of interest as subject specific sessions were held at 10 different sites across the region.

The dates for the 2013 events have been announced, with the School Success Symposium to be held on Wednesday, June 12, and the Collaborative Professional Development Day scheduled for Thursday, June 13.



NETCO Counselors

Congratulations Hamblen County Schools

School District Winner - 2012 SCORE Prize

Presented by the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE), Hamblen County Schools was recognized with the 2012 SCORE Prize for dramatically improving student achievement. Hamblen County School System serves 9,615 students in East Tennessee. Sixty-two percent of the district's students are economically disadvantaged. The district's three-year TVAAS growth average is 13.9 in Algebra I, meaning the district is helping its students make great gains in this area. Thirty-nine percent of the district's high school students are enrolled in AP or IB courses, and the district has a 61 percent pass rate on AP exams.

The Niswonger Foundation is a charter member of SCORE, a coalition of business leaders and educational professionals from across Tennessee and the nation who are committed to improving public education in rural communities. Scott M. Niswonger serves on the SCORE Executive Committee and is Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Online Instruction Expands Educational Opportunity



Cherokee High School Students

Through the Niswonger Foundation's *Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium*, all roads lead to college and career readiness. One important step in the journey is supporting the growth of online instruction in our region's 29 high schools. Supplementing the already existing curriculum of these high schools, online instruction expands opportunities, shares resources and adds flexibility for student scheduling of courses.

Denise Arnold, NETCO Director of Learning Resources, shared that there are currently, 30 available courses representing all basic core requirements. Some career-technical offerings are also already available. Science offerings are being developed, with courses in biology, physical science and physics already available. "With Tennessee moving to a common core for all high school students," Ms. Arnold states that "care has been taken to ensure that all core course offerings meet the new requirements."

Each school is free to structure the requirements for their students to take online courses, in keeping with the needs of the school. Students sign up for classes with the assistance of school counselors, or administrators, who are most familiar with the students and their specific needs. Ms. Arnold comments: "Sullivan Central High School now provides a lab specifically for online students. Because of the schools' dedication, there are currently 75 students registered for classes."

Northeast Tennessee is rapidly gaining speed in the offering of online instruction due to the Niswonger Foundation's receipt of the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation (i3) grant. Ms. Arnold commented that "The major hurdle for most school districts is funding." In other school districts, students will likely bear the cost of the online instruction. With the Niswonger Foundation's grant, even textbooks are provided. "Thanks to our i3 grant, our region is well ahead, for now. Our concern is planning for sustainability at the conclusion of our grant," Ms. Arnold added. A comment from one student certainly shows that the effort is well worthwhile, "Because of the online courses, I was able to take sociology, which is not offered at my school. The online course helped me realize that I love sociology and I'm now considering pursuing it as my college major." - **Mary Sue R.**

All instruction is conducted by certified and highly qualified teachers, and instructional methods are creative and varied. They include discussion boards, chat rooms, essays, forums, research papers, etc. Teachers have set virtual office hours and pride themselves on their accessibility to students. Ms. Arnold states that "There is frequent communication with both students and parents." It is becoming evident that the new method of instruction is showing benefit to students, "I really like the Niswonger online courses because they allowed me the freedom to work at my own pace and on my own time. I liked being able to take extra time on the courses that were more difficult for me" - **Mary Sue R.**

We saw major growth in the number of students requesting an online class this summer. We had 1,184 course requests and finished the summer with 554 credits being earned, representing a 55% completion rate. According to Ms. Arnold, "Online course instruction requires students to be self-starters and advocates for themselves. If through experiences with online instruction we can improve these skills in our students, they will be way ahead of the game in college where online coursework is becoming the rule rather than the exception." A student's perception of the experience says it best, "The online class I am taking has taught me about self-motivation and has helped prepare me for college. There will not be someone in college reminding me to do my assignments or constantly watching over me. This class is all you; you must find the time, motivation, and resources within yourself to be successful. With the help of my online class, I now feel I am ready to begin my college career!" -- **Mackenzie P.**

When asked why students would choose the option of online instruction, Ms. Arnold cited several reasons including, "Smaller schools, or school systems, cannot provide the depth of course offerings. Online instruction offers flexibility so that students may choose to participate in more elective courses. Importantly, there is the opportunity for a broader depth of instructional opportunities."

This new mode of instruction definitely has the attention and approval of students. One student comments, "The online course I am currently taking is definitely challenging. You have to motivate yourself to work in and out of school with minimal guidance. It teaches you to rely on yourself and prepares you for your future and further education." -- **Baillie M.**



Mary Sue

“A Year In the Life”

Adventures of our Niswonger Scholars

Brilliant! Engaged! Motivated! These are words that are often heard as descriptors for our Niswonger Scholars. These words become evident as we follow them through a year of their scholarship program. Selected for their potential to become future community leaders for Northeast Tennessee, our Scholars come to us with outstanding high school records for their academics, leadership, service, and integrity. Our goal is to reinforce, enrich and expand their experiences and dreams for the future.

Niswonger Scholars may choose to major in any field of study and are encouraged to attend the best college or university for pursuing their career choice. Needless to say, all Scholars are required to excel academically. In addition to academic excellence, join us in learning more about a typical year in the Scholars lives.

does it give me an opportunity to see people in their career choice, but it is also great to see that people are so eager to help others. It has truly been an honor to serve at the hospital Mr. Niswonger so highly admires. It is such a privilege to see many of the occupational therapists first hand and to see the way they genuinely care about their patients. It has been so rewarding to see a patient progress from day to day. The smile of a patient after completing an exercise he/she could not once do does not get old no matter how many times I witness it. I have gained much more than just experience; I have gained a deeper appreciation for the medical field and skills that I will carry throughout my life.”

Service



Lillie Seal

The philosophy of “Learn, Earn and Return” is reinforced early and often in the scholarship program. For example, Niswonger Scholars complete at least 40 hours of community service each semester, with many far exceeding this goal – a minimum of 320 hours during their college years. Since they already have an impressive record of service in their home communities, the focus of their service efforts is in their college communities.

Through this experience, the Scholars gain additional perspective on the challenges faced by communities and their abilities to “rise to the challenge.” Most choose to complete these service hours in an activity that relates to their major field of study. Lillie Seal, sophomore at Lincoln Memorial University, shares about her service experience this year:

“As a volunteer, I tutor second graders and kindergarteners in the Ellen Meyers Primary School afterschool program. I have known that I wanted to be a teacher for a long time, but I was unsure what grade level I wanted to teach. It only took me a couple of days working with these kids to know that I was destined to teach elementary school. Not only do I get the chance to give back to my community, but I also have gained experience that will help me in my future profession.”

Johneshia Good, senior at Milligan College, is proud to volunteer at the Niswonger Children’s Hospital. She is pictured by the statue which has been placed at the hospital in honor of our President and Founder, Scott M. Niswonger. Johneshia shares:



Johneshia Good

“Volunteering at the Niswonger Children’s Hospital has been beneficial in more areas than one. Not only

Leadership Training



Alex Croghan (far left)

Scholars have an intense experience in leadership development during their summer and winter training programs. Training focuses on personal growth and refinement of their skills in leadership, personal and business management, service and ethics. Classes combine speakers, activities, travel, discussions, and lots of fun. This past summer, with service as the theme, the featured speaker was Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi’s presentation entitled “Lessons I Learned from my Grandfather” set the stage for the week of activities including a study of the text “Anyway, The Paradoxical Commandments” by Kent Keith. Other examples of activities include a Community Mapping experience, followed by a debriefing from Scott M. Niswonger, Foundation President and Founder; and the annual Day of Service, in which all Scholars used their hands and hearts to benefit the Holston Home for Children. Winter training begins a focus on refining leadership strengths. Using the book, “What got you Here Won’t Get you There,” by Marshall Goldsmith, the Scholars will consider the need for continued examination and refinement of their leadership skills. Alex Croghan, Lipscomb University junior, reflects on his training experiences:

“Last year’s training opened my eyes to a whole new world of possibilities. I mean, how many people can say they actually had a chance to meet Arun Gandhi? Luckily, that’s what our Niswonger training is about. We, as a family, come together and better ourselves through vigorous training and then throw ourselves into the world, seeing what opportunities and changes come in our wake!”

Normandy, France

An amazing addition to the Niswonger Scholars' experience was added this year. The graduating seniors traveled to Normandy, France, via Paris and London, England. With a goal of more fully understanding personal sacrifice and the price that was paid for our privilege, the Scholars stood on Omaha Beach for the 65th Anniversary of D-Day. Rachel Witt, graduate of Vanderbilt University, shares about the experience:

"Our time in Normandy made me realize that humanity is like a pendulum, swinging from one extreme to another, capable of such terrible monstrosities and yet, it can act bravely and selflessly. In France, Law Loving, Jordan Kim, and I stood in the shadows of monumental medieval cathedrals and abbeys constructed from the strength and labor of thousands. We strolled through Monet's gardens at Giverny, awe-struck how an artist could capture the temporary and temporal beauty of nature and daily life. As we walked on Omaha Beach on the 68th anniversary of D-Day, the three of us quietly paid our respects to the men and women who fought for the freedom and equality of friends, family, and strangers. I do believe the experience challenged us to help humanity's pendulum swing towards a more tolerant, altruistic, and loving world."



Rachel Witt in Normandy



(L-R) Jordan Frye, Lillie Seal, Scott Niswonger, Alex Smyth, Francisco Ochoa-Vargas and Chris Steadman

Bahamas

Celebration was the focus of the freshman Scholars' trip to the Bahamas. After completing their first year of college, this year's newest Scholars enjoyed the sun, surf and the attractions of Atlantis, while spending one-on-one and group time getting to know Mr. Niswonger. The trip also provided an excellent opportunity for these Scholars to become better acquainted with each other and start to develop lasting friendships. Jordan Frye, current sophomore at the University of Tennessee, describes the experience as follows:

"The boat trip was a defining point in my relationships with my Scholar class and Mr. Niswonger, because it gave us a chance to connect and bond with one another without distraction. After the trip, I believe my Scholar class felt like a part of the Niswonger Foundation family, and I realized that I was a part of something so much bigger than myself and my own ambitions."

New York City

This year's junior Scholars were treated to an incredible trip to New York City. Planned as a "big city learning adventure," their experiences included Broadway, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a Yankees game, the National September 11 Memorial, a helicopter ride over Manhattan, and a visit to Wall Street. A particularly fun challenge was taking a professional cooking class at the Institute for Culinary Education. Will Brummett, current senior at Elon University, shares his perspective on the trip:

"Going into our trip to the Big Apple, I was worried that maybe I had "bitten off more than I could chew" for a small-town boy like myself who had so many things to do, people to see, and places to experience in only a few days. However, upon leaving New York, I was more than "full" with the wonderful culture, people, and places I got to experience with my Niswonger family. From the beauty of the Met, to the powerful play Clybourne Park to lights and sounds of New York night life, New York provided me with the diversity of world with the feeling of home. In only a few days, I was able to see the world and all its possibility come alive before my eyes, but I was able to be reminded of and thankful for my roots as well as I walked into the bright lights of the year one more time with my fellow senior class."



Junior Scholars improve their culinary skills in New York
- Will Brummett (far right)

Internships



Jason Light

decisions regarding their intended majors. Importantly, internships provide an opportunity to build a resume and have, on more than one occasion, led to an offer of employment. Jason Light, University of

Niswonger Scholars have enjoyed great success in identifying internship opportunities. Scholars report that these experiences teach skills not learned in the classroom and provide an opportunity to develop strong work habits. It is also a defining time as Scholars have the opportunity to examine different careers, or to “sample” their chosen careers and solidify their

Tennessee senior shares his thoughts regarding the value of internships:

“After working as an intern at three different companies and being hired full-time by one of them, I now fully appreciate the importance of internships. Previous interns are preferred candidates for future full-time positions. Why? Employers want their full-time hires to hit the ground running from day one, so they invest in interns in hopes of reducing learning curve costs. Employers can teach interns the ways of the trade for less money than non-interns. If an intern happens to be hired full-time, the employer reaps the benefits of higher quality work from the new hire during their first days at work. Non-interns are less profitable to the employer because they must be paid full-time wages while they get up to speed.”

Campus Engagement

From the beginning, Niswonger Scholars understand that they are expected to seek opportunities to share their leadership skills on their college campuses. What better way to gain important skills for being leaders in the community than to find a position of service to their colleges and universities! Our Scholars are visible in many roles including student government, fraternities and sororities, service organizations, honor societies and organizing campus activities. Jordan Frye, University of Tennessee sophomore and Ivory Shelton, Wake Forest University freshman, share about their unique campus involvements:



Ivory Shelton

Ivory Shelton “hit the ground running” with on-campus involvement. *“When I received my Emergency Medical Responder license this past summer, I had no idea the opportunities it would afford me. Now, as a mid-status member of the Wake Forest Emergency Response Team, I realize just what a blessing it has been. Not only have I been able to serve and care for my fellow students here on campus through WFERT, I have also been able to challenge myself.*

When my pager sounded at 2:30 AM or when a call was not like the glamorous scenes from the movies, I found that I could handle the stress of those situations and my passion for medicine and

patient care became more evident to me than ever before. In the spring, I hope to continue my service with WFERT, earn my Emergency Medical Technician-Basic license, and gain full-membership to the squad.”

Jordan Frye has found an important role for herself on her campus: *“I’ve always been a huge proponent of being involved in whatever community a person finds themselves in, and I have gained new perspective from involving myself in my campus community. My involvement with the Student Government Association and my job in the President’s office has taught me that being a leader means that you cannot be a complainer. I’ve learned that you must assess less than desirable situations with an open mind and then proceed with the necessary measures that will benefit the greatest amount of individuals. Also, through my experiences, I’ve observed many great leaders and people who are not leaders at all. My leadership skills have been affected by both groups because I’ve seen the results produced by selfless and selfish leaders. These observations have allowed me to realize which kind of leader I want to be. I hope to be as respected as I have respect for those who are selfless leaders.”*



Jordan Frye with Dr. Keith Carver, Assistant to the UT President

Study Abroad

International experiences open many doors for our Scholars, allowing them the opportunity to gain a new perspective as citizens of the world. Scholars are encouraged and financially supported to pursue study abroad experiences. Not only are these experiences culturally enriching, they provide personal growth experiences as Scholars learn to rely on their own instincts and human relation skills in a new and important way. There is also an opportunity for a Scholar to gain a broader perspective on his or her major field of study through classes taught in this different environment. Elizabeth Jones, Clemson University senior, shares about just such an experience studying mechanical engineering in Esslingen, Germany:

“As a Mechanical Engineering major at Clemson, I was thrilled to study automotive engineering in the heart of the German automotive industry. Coursework included mechanical and automotive engineering as well as German language, history, and culture. The experience abroad expanded

my skills and knowledge in ways that accelerated my personal and professional development. Since most companies are now increasingly global, experience abroad is a great professional advantage. Through my four-month stay I developed confidence and skills in traveling and navigating internationally, as well as communicating across language barriers. From a personal standpoint, I was able to learn about and experience different customs and cultures first-hand. In true Niswonger ‘Learn, Earn and Return’ fashion, upon my return to Clemson I was inspired to reach out to exchange students in my own university. I now participate in a Cultural Partners Program, where I meet weekly with an exchange student and help him in his study abroad experience in our country.”



Elizabeth Jones

Reflective Journaling

Niswonger Scholars are required to submit monthly journals. Using the process of reflective thought, the Scholars are challenged to use their experiences to gain a deeper understanding of their decision-making ability, and to consider what they have learned from both the positive and negative life experiences they face. As they write

about personal achievements and difficulties, they are asked to assess what worked and what didn't, and what they will change next time. For a glimpse into the process of reflective journaling, you are encouraged to read our newsletter story entitled "*A Niswonger Scholar's Journal: The Art and Science of Reflective Thought.*"

And, the Story Continues...

Consider these experiences, times four years! It is exciting to see the opportunities for the future of Northeast Tennessee as these outstanding Scholars prepare for their roles as professionals and community leaders. And, the story does, in fact, continue. While

you are doing the math, consider that there are currently 18 Scholars, 6 newly selected Scholars for 2013, and 44 Alumni of this program. This strong and growing network is destined to be a powerful force for change and growth for our region as they "*Learn, Earn and Return!*"

A Niswonger Scholar's Journal

The Art and Science of Reflective Thought

Through the process of submitting monthly journals, our Scholars learn the power of reflective thought. Reflection is an important tool for gaining understanding about their core ethical values, and for making judgments about their behavior and the actions of others. This insight is important to their leadership development and their problem solving skills as future professionals.

With permission of this Scholar, we are sharing the following example of reflective journaling and a lesson learned:

"You treat a disease, you win, you lose.

***You treat a person, I guarantee you, you'll win,
no matter what the outcome."***

— Patch Adams

10/5/12

My first "real" day of nursing clinical felt like an absolute failure. It was "real" because I had my first patient. The night before clinical, nursing students notoriously get very little sleep. I had to learn the details of every illness, medication, surgery, diagnosis, stubbed toe, family illnesses, and freckle on the pinky-toe of my patient. This would all be well and good if I had a week, but since I had less than twelve hours I found myself panicking more than learning. At 5:00 am, with "t minus 1 hour" until clinical, I found myself with half of a care plan made, no sleep to speak of, and a head-ache worthy of my emergency stash of extra strength Tylenol and coke zero.

I showed up at clinical frazzled and feeling defeated. My teacher looked over what I had of my care-plan with a confused expression and asked what evidence led me to my primary nursing dx. I told her I reviewed the patient history and found the nursing diagnosis in our clinical handbook. She told me that if I felt I could defend it with the text, then I could carry out my nursing interventions.

As the day went on I was perplexed at how different my nursing diagnosis and intervention was from everyone else's. Maybe my patient was just different? Maybe I just did everything wrong? Maybe I'm not cut out for this? Maybe I should have done social work?

So, here was my plan...

–Patient: Jane Doe

–Nursing DX: Risk for loneliness associated with contact precautions secondary to MRSA.

Nursing Interventions:

- Encourage pt to discuss any feelings of loneliness or hopelessness.
- Identify sources of positive social interaction for the pt.
- Encourage positive social interaction.
- Accommodate the pt. with easily accessible technology to contact his/her social network.
- Educate the family or visitors on proper use of PPE (personal protective equipment) when visiting the pt.

After clinical we had our round table discussion. The nursing dx of my classmates were pretty much the same. Prevent bed sores and increase circulation. So for the 456,344,345th time in my life I was the odd ball. Loneliness. My patient had bed sores, poor nutrition, nausea, vomiting, poor circulation, and 3 pages full of other medical dx and I chose "risk for loneliness" as my primary nursing dx. I shared with my classmates the details of my day and how I had intervened with nursing skills to prevent my patient from experiencing loneliness.

My primary diagnosis was wrong, but my primary focus wasn't. On the first page of our care planning instructions I missed the part that told us to pick a nursing diagnosis centered around the patient's primary medical diagnosis. My classmates were performing nursing interventions appropriate to their patient's needs. If I had been the only person taking care of my patient that day many of her physical needs might have gone unmet. I learned something with my mistake though; I do not yet have the skills or knowledge to treat all of the physical needs of my patients, but I have a heart that is fully willing to treat the spirit. While I am not "clinically competent", I am a human loving people to the fullest of my ability. Treating the spirit is about being willing, treating the body is about being competent. To be a good nurse I need both of these elements, but it is comforting to know that I am halfway there.

My patient ended her morning with family and friends closer to her than they had been in weeks. They knew that the facial masks and protective gowns would keep them safe; they were assured by the little girl from Northeast Tennessee giving their mom a bath. Even though a layer of latex separated them my patient held hands with her granddaughter, that was worth making the wrong primary diagnosis.

10-15

So, the page above was at least one day/moment of my nursing school journey I've been able to stop and reflect on so far. Things are moving so fast. I feel like three years from now when this is all over I'll probably go sit at a coffee shop and have a latte just to think about things that are happening now that I don't have time to process. Overall, I just feel happy. I feel really, really happy. Knowing you're in the right place at the right time is priceless. Knowing you're impacting the people you were destined to impact is priceless. Making an 80 on a test sucks still. I'm not going to lie. I want to study my heart out and make A's, but A's will never make my heart jump like the lady I was able to have the honor of serving my first day of clinical.

(Note: Information regarding this patient was modified to maintain confidentiality.)



OUR MISSION:

To create opportunities for individual and community growth through education and other sustainable projects.

For more information regarding our Foundation, contact:

The Niswonger Foundation
Tusculum College
P.O. Box 5112
Greeneville, TN 37743
423.798.7837
www.niswongerfoundation.org

BOARD OFFICERS AND FOUNDATION STAFF

SCOTT M. NISWONGER
President and Founder

NIKKI L. NISWONGER
Secretary

LINDA IRWIN
Vice President

NANCY DISHNER
Vice President

KATHY O'DELL
Office Manager

BARBARA BATES
Executive Assistant

Recent Alumni Scholar News



KATIE BAKER
(Class of 2007)
was featured in media for having been published in three professional journals in the same week. A doctoral candidate

in Public Health at East Tennessee State University, Katie's research focuses on skin cancer prevention. She won first place in the social and behavioral sciences division of the Appalachian Student Research Forum, and was awarded the T.J. Wu Memorial Student Research Scholarship.



LAUREN WILLIAMS BIBLE
(Class of 2011) and **MATTHEW BIBLE**
(Class of 2011) were married on April 20, 2012. Matthew is a chemical engineer at Eastman Chemical Company and Lauren is an executive team leader for human resources for Target Stores. Lauren is pursuing a Master's in Business Administration through Tennessee Technological University.



TYLER BOYD
(Class of 2011)
completed a dairy genetics internship with Genex Cooperative, Inc., and received the Klussendorf Scholarship from the National Dairy Shrine. He was elected 3rd vice president on the national board of the American Dairy Science Association student affiliate. Tyler is completing a second undergraduate degree in genetics and dairy science at Virginia Tech.



PATRICK BROWN
(Class of 2011)
is employed by Hedstrom Design in Knoxville. Patrick is a 2011 graduate of Purdue University's bachelor of science program in landscape architecture.



LUCAS DELOACH
(Class of 2010)
will be studying French public law in a study abroad program in Paris, France. Lucas has also accepted a clerkship with the U.S. District Court in Abingdon, Virginia for summer 2013. He will be working with Judge James P. Jones.



TAYLOR ASHBY GRINDSTAFF
(Class of 2012)
is beginning a master's program in school counseling at Carson Newman College, in January 2013.



LAW LOVING
(Class of 2012)
is employed with the market research firm, Smarty Pants, as a quantitative research analyst.



IAN SAMS
(Class of 2010)
was promoted to the position of Press Secretary to Senator Tom Carper, Delaware.



KATIE WILLIAMS
(Class of 2008)
has accepted a position with Donorschoose. This not-for-profit connects donors with the needs of classroom teachers.



RACHEL WITT
(Class of 2012)
was published in the Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Journal with her research entitled "The Painted Programs of Alexandrian Tombs." She recently completed an assignment as an assistant field school instructor with PIARA, an archaeological field school in the north-central Andes of Peru.

Niswonger Scholars Shine!

Recent Awards, Honors and Leadership Roles



WILL BRUMMETT
(Elon University, Senior)

was the Elon University nominee for the Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell, and Fulbright Scholars programs.



JORDAN FRYE
(University of Tennessee, Sophomore)

was selected for a position in the office of the President Joe DiPietro.



ELIZABETH JONES
(Clemson University, Senior)

has accepted an engineering position with Eastman Chemical Company. She was elected president of the Clemson Unity Project annual day of service.



JASON LIGHT
(University of Tennessee, Senior)

has been elected president of Eta Kappa Nu, the honor society for electrical engineers.



FRANCISCO OCHOA-VARGAS
(Vanderbilt University, Sophomore)

joined Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity.



LILLIE SEAL
(Lincoln Memorial University, Sophomore)

received the Rector Greene Memorial Endowed Scholarship. Her literary skills led to her selection for advanced writing class and to present at the Appalachian College Association.



IVORY SHELTON
(Wake Forest University, Freshman)

was selected for the Wake Forest Club Basketball Team. As a certified emergency medical professional, she is working for the campus EMS.



MATTHEW SHEPPARD
(Clemson University, Freshman)

was elected Governor of his residence hall.



ALEX SMYTH
(East Tennessee State University, Sophomore)

has been selected to serve as a student representative on the Board of Directors of the One Acre Café, a not-for-profit organization committed to addressing the issues of poverty in Johnson City.



CHRISTOPHER STEADMAN
(University of Tennessee, Sophomore)

was initiated into the honor society of Phi Eta Sigma.



SCOTT WHITE
(University of Tennessee, Junior)

was selected as chair of the Homecoming parade, chair of Philanthropy Week for the student philanthropy group, and was named a Silver Level Associate with the Student Alumni Associates.



KAYLA WILLIAMS
(University of Tennessee, Senior)

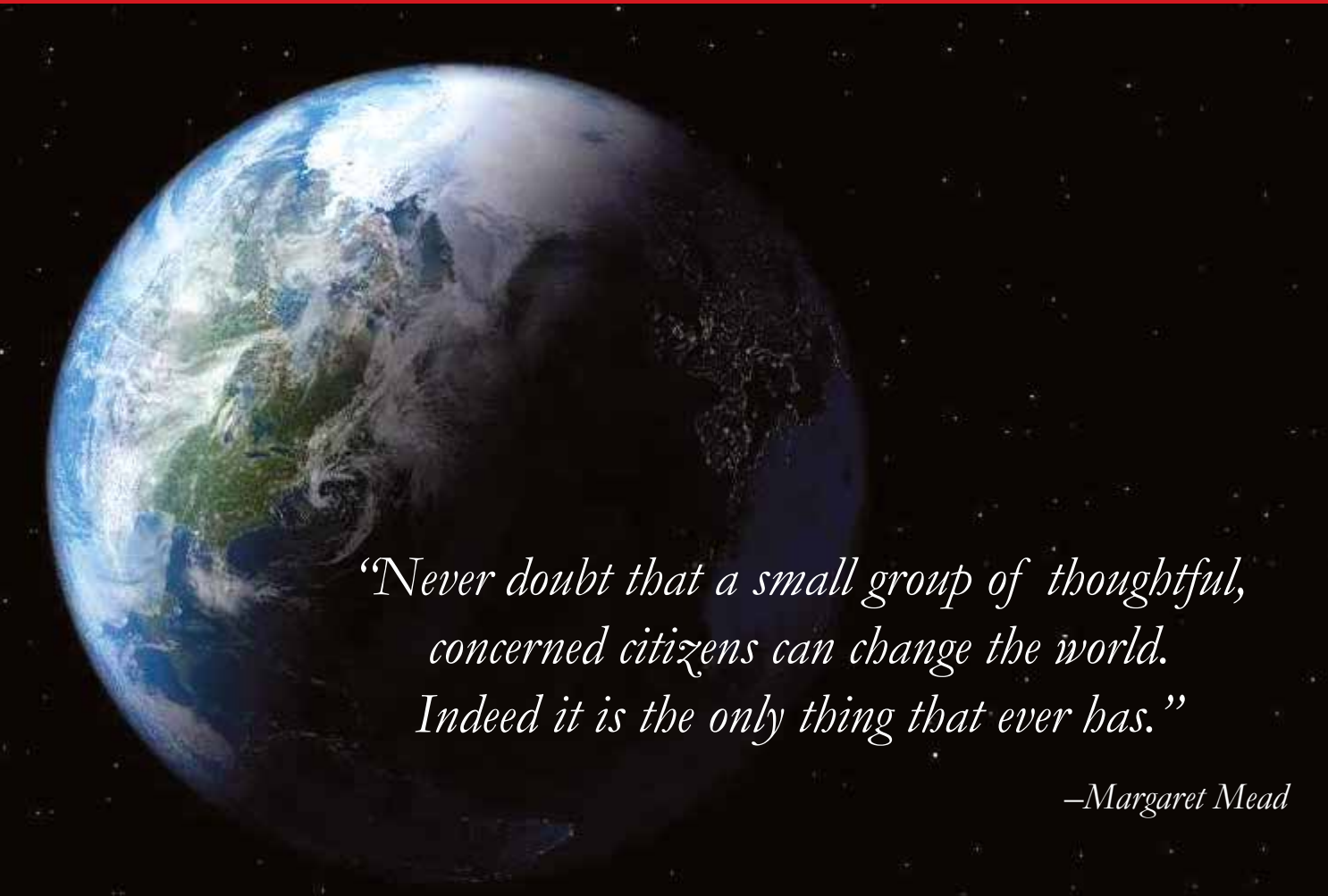
received the Artie Ruth Reilly Scholarship for academic excellence and demonstration of good citizenship. She was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi honor society.

Niswonger Foundation
Tusculum College
P.O. Box 5112
Greeneville, TN 37743

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PuLP

Niswonger Foundation

2012 Fall Newsletter

A large, high-resolution photograph of the Earth as seen from space, showing the curvature of the planet, blue oceans, green landmasses, and white clouds. The background is the dark, star-speckled void of space.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,
concerned citizens can change the world.
Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”*

—Margaret Mead