



A Tribute to Our Teachers of Hope

The diverse experiences, academic expertise and professional opinions of Hope Online teachers set them apart as individuals. Yet, the common thread that unites and fortifies their collective strength is an uncompromising passion and purpose to reenergize an underserved population of students with hope.

“Recently, it was pointed out to me that America needs teachers who are among the brightest and the best,” shares Hope Online Teacher Erin Smith, “While students in other countries dream of being teachers, our students dream of being performers. This insight refueled my passion to make a difference in the world as a teacher, especially at Hope Online.”

This year, Hope Online’s 27 unquestionably dedicated teaching professionals are ready to enthusiastically serve amidst the unique challenges and circumstances faced by their students. Their daily mission to provide academic instruction and hope to at-risk youth is centered on the Hope Online principles of self-paced learning, individualized curriculum, one-on-one attention and stable adult mentoring. These basics are vital to their students, many of whom, having struggled in other institutions, are in need of the confidence to believe that they can succeed.

Hope Online Teacher Candice Steele, a former Learning Center mentor, comments, “I believe that I can reach many lives as a Hope Online teacher. I love my job and the challenge and variety of it that keep me on my toes every minute. At Hope Online, we are in a position to make a real difference in the lives of our students.”

To accomplish this, the Hope Online teacher role is designed to support mentors and students across grade levels, via instruction, counsel, problem solving and an array of educational, developmental and community resources. Hope Online teachers’ commitment to advancing student academic progress calls upon their creativity to tailor support for Learning Centers to meet the needs of the targeted populations that they serve. These mobile professionals problem solve in mathematics, literacy, family crisis

and discipline in many grade levels and in several neighborhoods as a matter of routine.

“The challenges and opportunities of our work truly go hand in hand,” confirms Hope Online Teacher Trainer/Staff Developer Sandy Fritz. “We work hard to build relationships among the many individuals who comprise the Hope Online model, all of

whom make a specific contribution to support the best interests of our students. We get to work with students across grades K-12, which provides us with a unique perspective and experience that traditional classroom teachers do not often have.”

Brian Culhane, after his first year as a Hope Online teacher, notes, “High levels of collaboration make each Learning Center a safe and enriching place to learn and succeed in ways that, for whatever reason, our students did not achieve in another system.”

Along with their nontraditional roles, Hope Online teachers evaluate student work, monitor daily and quarterly student progress and implement learning measurement tools. Veteran teacher, Barb Pagano, sums up their complex role, “Hope Online continues to be a cutting edge program that blends established and effective educational theories with computer and Internet technology. The Hope Online model requires many skills of its teachers, including good time management, attention to many details, technology

skills, dedication to enforce compliance, expertise in assessment, sophisticated communication skills and... good tires!”

Still, the care for their students, and determination to help them succeed against the odds, is at the heart of motivation for Hope Online’s teachers. “Being a Hope Online teacher is not just a job for pay. We do our best for our students; we care about their futures and see every one of them as an individual,” points out Hope Online Teacher Aurora Gonzalez. “Serving our students, even on the most difficult days, is rewarding for us, and makes every day as a Hope Online teacher special.”

“
**At Hope Online,
we are in a
position to
make a real
difference in
the lives of our
students.**”

”
– Hope Online Teacher
Candice Steele.



Back row left to right: Brian Culhane, Jami Grier, Natasha Fortis, Lindsay Small, Melinda Hindley, Andrea Scott, Katie Cloyed, Kim Craig, Robyn Wright, Erin Smith, Candice Steele, Jessica Springs, Lisa Millin

Front row left to right: Giovanni Ciotti, Wendy Schuler, Jennifer Marchese, Ben Sattler, Donald Armstrong, Aurora Gonzalez, Lori Shruqa, Ed Gibson, Michael Udlock, Ben Davidson, Sandy Fritz, Barbara Pagano

Not Pictured: Patti Rasmussen, Don Westman



Greetings from the Chief Executive Officer

At the start of every school year, we welcome all of our Hope Online students, especially the youngest. They arrive on the doorsteps of formal education—a new horizon—full of vigor, having mastered the comfort zone of home. Only five years of age, they will, perhaps, never exhibit more courage or hope than when they take their initial steps on this new path of opportunity toward change, maturity, and graduation.

There are parallels between these young learners and our own journey at Hope Online. We, too, have reached a five year milestone that brings us to the threshold of our future. Having grown and learned along the way, we celebrate long enough to acknowledge progress, while brimming with greater anticipation of the future than ever before.

Please read our celebratory article and accept my sincere thanks for joining us on this rewarding path.

In this issue, noting their tremendous contributions as we have grown, it is our pleasure to pay tribute to our dedicated teachers. Congratulations to all of you. Your hard work has garnered considerable gains in the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and CSAP scores of our students. For details on our students' gains in the most recent CSAPs, please refer again to our five year celebratory article.

May our steadfast commitment to academic achievement continue to lead the way to success for Hope Online students. Our legacy of dedication will allow them, in turn, to lead others in the years ahead. The 2009-10 academic year promises to challenge and change us even further, as we move past obstacles and milestones, on to the next horizon of hope.

Sincerely,

Heather O'Mara
Chief Executive Officer



Hope Online Marks Five Years of Service, Partnership, and Accomplishment

On the occasion of its fifth anniversary, Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op stands strong, bound by the spirit of expectation and cooperation for which it is named.

Since its formation in 2004, Hope Online has maintained a vital vision of community partnership and risen to the challenges of change amidst public scrutiny, conveying a true commitment to organizational accountability and student achievement.

Hope Online CEO Heather O'Mara, in 2006, promised, "We're going to continue improving our policies and procedures; there are things that need to be improved and done differently, and we will do that."

Reflecting on Hope Online's definitive progress in five years, Ms. O'Mara recently shared, "May Hope Online never rest on the status quo. Rather, may we all continue to learn together—community leaders, public school representatives, teachers, parents, and legislators—pushing forward to make a quality education attainable and accessible to all students."

"We are proud of our improvements," confirms Hope Online Chief Compliance Officer Michael Cooke, "We are excited that we can forge ahead at full force, cultivating academic excellence among our students."

Citing recent CSAP results, which validate Hope Online's perseverance, Chief Academic Officer Sherida Peterson announced, "Our students improved in reading at every grade level during the 2008-09 school year. In grades 9 and 10, gains

(Continued on page 6)

Hope Online Five Year Anniversary Mile Markers

- Over 300 students, most of whom reported that they considered dropping out of high school, have graduated.
- Hope Online graduation standards, 24 credits and successful ACT or Accuplacer achievement, are among the most rigorous in the state.
- 98% of Hope Online's 3rd-10th grade students participate in CSAP.
- Over 140 courses are offered to Hope Online students.
- Hope Online has collaborated with over 100 community organizations to operate neighborhood Learning Centers across the Front Range.
- The Douglas County School District Board of Education voted unanimously (7-0) to approve Hope Online's charter in February 2007.
- Having satisfied the state's 16 quality standards, in 2008, the State Board of Education voted unanimously (7-0) to approve Hope Online as a certified online program.
- Hope Online established Memorandums of Understanding with 15 school districts, including some of the state's largest—Denver Public Schools and Jefferson County Public Schools—as well as small, rural school districts—Eagle County Schools and Moffat Country School District.
- Hope Online is implementing a Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program for all its students, the first online program in the country to do so.

Recognizing Student Success

2009 Hope Online Graduates



Kendra Monique Benton
Life Preparatory Academy

Kendra attended the summer freshman orientation at Oklahoma State University and looks forward to her studies in nursing this fall. She is pursuing a longtime dream of being an OSU student, a dream she has hung on to since she was a little girl. Success in her science and math studies has encouraged Kendra's interest in the field of nursing.

Good Luck, Kendra!



Keya Leshay Lewis
A Brand New Start

Keya will join the Air Force in March 2010; until then, this ambitious graduate will continue saving her earnings from her food service job. Still, keeping her mind on academics, Keya is registered for fall semester classes at Concord College, where she will attend classes that are part of her training to become a medical assistant.

Good Luck, Keya!



Nathaniel Roston IV
Hillcrest Academy

As he begins his freshman year at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama, Nathan is excited for the opportunity to meet new people from different walks of life. He hopes to develop and use his leadership skills to help others more, as he matures spiritually and academically. Nathan is grateful that three Hope Online classmates, **Tasharee Ross Abram, K-Lee Bettis and Molly Martinez**, will be joining him in his studies at Oakwood College.

Good Luck, Nathan, Tasharee, K-Lee and Molly!



Janeth Valdez
New Hope Academy

Janeth will run her mom's business for the next few months, as she and her family await the birth of her new sister. She will save money in hopes of beginning college during the spring semester. This talented graduate is considering alternatives at Front Range Community College and Aims Community College to earn an associate's degree in nursing, with a goal of advancing to the position of registered nurse.

Good Luck, Janeth!

John M. Jaeger Academy: Poised to Prepare Leaders

John M. Jaeger Academy (JMJA) is a first-year Learning Center founded on a firm vision of instilling in young people—of every background, education level, and culture—that there is more than one way to succeed. The unwavering commitment of John and Shannon Jaeger to live out this dream has already been a journey toward the productivity and success of tomorrow's leaders. It is a journey on which they hope to be joined by many learners.

"There are students who have not done well in their previous learning environments but are still determined to try again. Perhaps the lecture format did not work for a student, or, for some reason, he has had a break in his education. At JMJA, we want to reach out to those students. The Hope Online model promotes learning structured around the student's specific needs," explains Learning Center Director John Jaeger. "We are very excited about what we can do through this innovative educational approach."

Success, as defined by JMJA, is more than passing academic tests. The JMJA ideology also promotes a thorough understanding of economics, government, and critical thinking so that graduates are highly informed and productive citizens. With these tenets established, the Jaegers emphasize writing skills, encouraging students to reflect and consider opportunities and information before making choices.

The Jaegers intend to maximize the benefits of one-on-one instruction. Mr. Jaeger testifies, "I was disheartened when I read that some traditional students never speak with their teacher. I am convicted that we can do something about that and, at the same time, help liberate students who feel trapped and limited. Shannon and I desire to avert some of the social damage that so many students are currently experiencing, which only further delays their success and productivity in life."

As the Jaegers continue laboring on behalf of at-risk youth, they are focused and undaunted, celebrating every achievement. "'It's not where you start, it's where you finish.' This is the outlook we share with students; this is what we believe as a Learning Center," asserts Shannon Jaeger.

John M. Jaeger Academy

2160 W. Drake Rd, Unit A-1, Fort Collins, Colorado
(970) 599-2274

Opening Doors to Reading

Girl Scout Provides 1600 Books to Hope Online Students

Reading is a gift. It should be enjoyed by children of all ages. Shannan Williams, a spirited Englewood Girl Scout, has logged many hours and miles toward that end. Through her noteworthy efforts collecting and sorting 1600 books over the past year, many at-risk youth served by Hope Online will have an expanded mobile library. The mobile library will be shared by Hope Online's 50 Learning Centers throughout the state of Colorado.

A seasoned community volunteer, Shannan selected Hope Online as the recipient of the 1600 books that she collected in her pursuit of the prestigious Girl Scout Gold Award, the organization's highest honor. The merit award requires a Girl Scout to design and complete a project that benefits her community.

Shannan's passion to help others read is the product of her own struggle. "Because of my cerebral palsy, I really know where they are coming from," she shared during her visit to Hope Online, referring to students who need encouragement and help to become good readers.



Shannan Williams surrounded by the boxes of books she donated to Hope Online students.

On the day that the carefully counted and sorted books were delivered to Hope Online, Shannan was enthusiastically assisted by her Girl Scout Troop 8 Dandelion Service Unit Leader, Sherrie Akin, her Gold Award Liaison, Erica Oakley, and her parents, Judson Williams and Julie Allen. In overseeing all phases of book collection, classifying, and distribution, Shannan enlisted the help of teachers to assign an appropriate grade level to each book, prior to assembling the books into mobile library bags for reading by Hope Online students.



Hope Online's Reading Specialist Debra Morris, CEO Heather O'Mara and Director of Education Services Susan McAlonan present a Hope Online Certificate of Appreciation to Shannan Williams.

These 1600 books, the largest single book donation to Hope Online, will encourage Hope Online students of all ages to read, and will also add substantially to the 600-Book-Kid Project which targets elementary school students. This program, administered by Hope Online Reading Specialist Debra Morris, supports the goal of reading aloud three books per day in each classroom in order to increase student vocabulary and word comprehension.

To honor Shannan's significant contribution to the education of Hope Online students, Hope Online CEO Heather O'Mara presented the dedicated teen volunteer with a Certificate of Appreciation. In May 2010, Shannan will accept the Girl Scouts Gold Award, earned by only 5% of all Girl Scouts nationwide, for demonstrating, through this literacy-building project, her commitment to a lifetime of active citizenship. Thank you, Shannan!

Board Member Jennifer Sobanet Helps Clear a Path to Opportunity

Jennifer Sobanet, Vice President of Finance and Administration for Front Range Community College (FRCC), joined the Hope Online Board of Directors last fall. Her extensive background in finance, compliance and educational administration, combined with a passion for education among non-traditional students, has been pivotal to the support of Hope Online's ongoing priority of administrative accountability.

"The opportunity to affect the academic accomplishments of students who are struggling is an honor," shares Ms. Sobanet. "Hope Online is focused on the success and achievement needs of its students. The prospects for our students seem truly boundless."

Ms. Sobanet points to the recent hiring of a director of student achievement (see Student Achievement article) as one of many means of serving Hope Online's at-risk students. "We understand the needs of the underserved much more clearly with each passing year, and we can respond in an increasingly proactive manner. As we examine the implications of concurrent enrollment legislation, for example, we are anxious to partner with community colleges to provide a clear path for our students to begin their college degree while they are in high school."

Positive indicators that Hope Online is reaching the most vulnerable students keep this board member highly motivated.

"Hope Online not only targets those who are the most at-risk students, but our recent assessment results confirm that we are making a difference. As we help them achieve fluency, students who are not native English speakers are demonstrating gains, especially in the area of reading. This is just one of several affirming indicators (see Five Year Celebratory article) that make this a very exciting time to be part of a dedicated and dynamic leadership team."

Ms. Sobanet currently oversees college-wide budgeting efforts as well as fiscal services, institutional research, human resources, IT services, business services, capital construction and controlled maintenance at FRCC. As the former Director of Strategic Planning for Colorado State University's Global Campus and Division of Continuing Education, she facilitated the efforts of non-traditional students pursuing bachelor's and master's degrees online. Ms. Sobanet's multi-faceted contributions to advancing educational expectations among the underserved are definitive assets to Hope Online.



Hope Online Board Member
Jennifer Sobanet



Hope Online's Class of 2009

Graduation 2009: The Legacy of Hope Continues

Nearly 140 graduates, each representing a journey of hope, filled the Metropolitan State College Event Center on June 11, 2009 amidst scores of family and friends, as the Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op Class of 2009 received their high school diplomas.

Colorado's Speaker of the House, Terrance Carroll, raised in a rough Washington, D.C. neighborhood, praised the cap-and-gown clad crowd for overcoming the odds against them and taking the first step toward success. He reminded them, "Your success validates support for an educational system that provides learning opportunities that serve the needs of all students."

The new graduates, many of whom thought that they would drop out, found a learning sanctuary at Hope Online. Struggling with drugs, gangs or isolation in traditional schools, their lives and futures changed for the better under the guidance of their Learning Center directors and mentors, and teachers at Hope Online.

Energizing the crowd of 1800, Dr. Jim Christensen, Superintendent of Douglas County School

District, accepted Hope Online's Class of 2009, after graciously recognizing everyone, from parents and grandparents to siblings and cousins, for their commitment to the graduates.

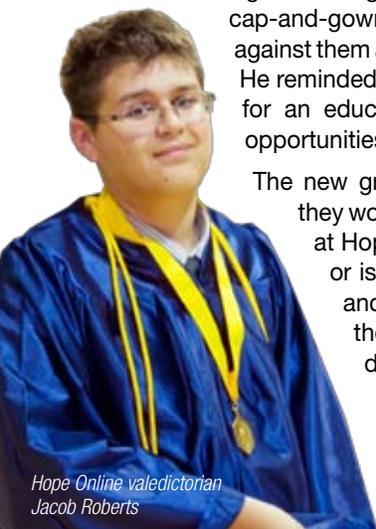
Jacob Roberts, one of Hope Online's youngest graduates, was honored as Hope Online's valedictorian. After three years of hard work and a perfect high school GPA of 4.0, Jacob is anxious to pursue a Ph.D. in animal behavior at a Colorado university.

Susana Briones, now an academic superstar, was among those headed for a life of violence and poverty until she found new life at Hope Online. The one-time tough girl became Hope Online's first-ever prom queen.

Also among the proud diploma recipients was Andres Magaña, whose inspiration to excel academically was to provide a better life for his unborn son.

Ryan Mattocks, another Hope Online graduate, set himself along the right path after his best friend committed suicide. Leaving his old school and starting afresh at Hope Online kept him away from old friends who negatively influenced choices.

"Hope Online offers students a second chance, which is, often, their last chance to graduate," affirms Hope Online CEO, Heather O'Mara.



Hope Online valedictorian
Jacob Roberts

A Commitment to Student Achievement

Signifying Hope Online's ongoing commitment to learning and the academic progress of students, Dr. Janet Filbin recently joined the Hope Online team as the Director of Student Achievement. In this new role, Dr. Filbin will ensure the effective utilization of critical student assessment data.

Hope Online Chief Academic Officer Sherida Peterson affirms, "Dr. Filbin's analysis of our student achievement research will be a key factor in guiding instruction that addresses our students' critical needs."

Dr. Filbin will develop ways to channel existing data directly into the classroom. "Part of my role will be to translate research and assessment data into a friendly format, thereby assisting executive leadership and teaching staff with targeted instructional goals for Hope Online students," the new director

explains. "Our purpose is to foster a simple and applicable understanding of complex progress indicators, the building blocks of learning, in order to promote progress among all our students, wherever they fall on the achievement continuum."

Recognizing Hope Online's leadership as an innovative online program for at-risk students, Dr. Filbin will also explore alternative evaluation models that will help to gauge how Hope Online students benefit from their educational experiences. She attests, "The bottom line is to exhaust every venue and method for maximizing the success of our students."



Dr. Janet Filbin, Hope Online's
Director of Student Achievement

Hope Online Marks Five Years of Service, Partnership, and Accomplishment

(Continued from page 2)

13.6 and 25.3 percentage points were shown, respectively. The percentage of students proficient or advanced in math increased in five out of eight grade levels. Positive gains in writing for five out of eight grade levels, as well as for grades 5 and 10 in the area of science, were also demonstrated.”

In its short history, Hope Online has established itself as a significant contributor to public education in Colorado. Hope Online was the first, and remains the only, online school uniquely designed to serve at-risk students through Learning Centers.

On its way to becoming an educational mainstay, Hope Online celebrates not only its recent CSAP progress, but the evidence of its strengthening partnerships to comprehensively satisfy students’ diverse needs, all of which no single educational system can exclusively address.

Dr. Jim Christensen, Superintendent of Douglas County School District, emphasizes, “I am proud of our district’s partnership with Hope Online. Through focus on continuous quality improvement, Hope Online has made marked progress toward serving students. Last year’s academic gains by Hope Online students only support the case that all students can learn; they just need the right tools and support to help them achieve.”



367 Inverness Parkway, Suite 225
Englewood, CO 80112

Hope Online Learning Centers

Below is a list of all 2009-2010 Hope Online Learning Centers. Learning Center visits are a hands-on way to learn about Hope Online’s unique model, allowing community members to see first-hand how online learning is helping Colorado’s at-risk student population. To arrange a Learning Center tour, please call 303-989-3539.

A Brand New Start
Action Learning Center
All Peoples Learning Center
Alvarado Place
Aurora Tech Academy
Bridges of Silence
Center of Hope Academy
Cherry Creek Learning Center
Common Ground Learning Center
Cornerstone Learning Center
Crescent View Academy
Dinosaur Community Learning Center
Eastwind Academy
E-cademy
El Shaddai - Alameda
El Shaddai - Jason
Faith Prep Learning Academy
Front Range Academy - Arvada

Front Range Academy – Boulder
Front Range Academy - Broomfield
Front Range Academy - Westminster
Front Range Academy - Lakewood
Harrison Street Academy
Healing Waters Learning Center
Hillcrest Academy
IBG Learning Center
JMJA Learning Center
La Academia
LARASA Central Learning Center
LARASA Learning Center at
Westminster
Life Preparatory Academy
Little Debbie’s Dream Learning Center
Love Educational Center
Marantha Learning Center
New Beginnings Learning Center

New Heights Academy
New Hope Academy
Pathway Learning Center
Redeemer 1-8 Learning Center
Redeemer K Learning Center
Revolution Global Academy
Roca Fuerte Learning Academy
Rock Creek Academy
Rocky Mountain SDA Academy
Solid Rock Academy
Tetra Academy
Tubman Hilliard Global Academy
Urban League Child
Development Center
Vision Academy
Westside Learning Center
Worldwide Academy