

# Awards and Honors

## Björk Selected as Fulbright Scholar



Lars G. Björk, professor and acting chair in the Department of Educational Leadership Studies, was selected as a Fulbright Scholar for the upcoming year. Björk will be working with a research team at the University of Jyväskylä Institute of Educational Leadership in Finland on several projects

funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education including conducting the first national study of superintendents in Finland, conducting a study of municipal government mergers, and publishing study findings in international scholarly journals.

“Receiving a Fulbright Scholar Award acknowledges my work as a scholar in the nation as well as internationally,” Björk said. “I am honored to be a part of the Fulbright Program and join the ranks of distinguished alumni who have become heads of state, judges, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, CEOs, university presidents, professors and Nobel Prize winners.”

For more information on the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, visit <http://fulbright.state.gov/>.

## DeYoung Conducts Research in Kyrgyzstan



Alan DeYoung, professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation, traveled to the former Soviet Republic of Kyrgyzstan during the Spring 2008 semester to conduct research under a United States Department of State-funded project.

DeYoung’s research, entitled “Making Market Choices in Higher Education: How Students Choose Universities and Specializations and How Universities Create New Specializations in Contemporary Kyrgyzstan,” examined student and parent aspirations and expectations about universities and major subject fields among cohorts

of secondary school graduates, entering university students and their parents in northern Kyrgyzstan.

DeYoung said his interest in this topic is a result of his earlier research which found skyrocketing demand for higher education by secondary school graduates, even though the national economy has limited employment opportunities. When the new republic was part of the Soviet Union, student enrollment in republican universities was about 14 percent, but since 1991 that figure has increased to about 70 percent.

“What makes these universities increasingly desirable when the schools are decreasingly utilitarian?” DeYoung asked. “The government has provided opportunities for more universities to be created, but the oversight of programs and quality is seemingly very weak. Who decides upon and what are the criteria for evaluating newly created academic specializations?”

DeYoung’s work is being funded through a Special Initiatives Research Fellowship administered by the American Councils for International Education: ACTRA/ACCELS courtesy of the U.S. Department of State’s Program for the Study of Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (Title VIII).

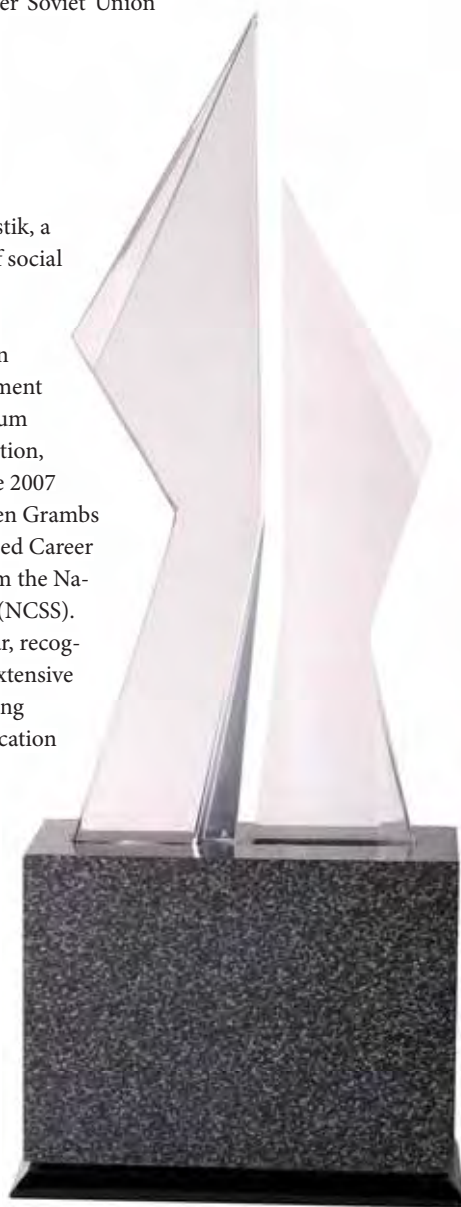
## Levstik Receives Career Research Award



Linda Levstik, a professor of social studies and humanities education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, received the 2007 Jean Dresden Grambs Distinguished Career

Research in Social Studies award from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). The award, presented every other year, recognizes professionals who have made extensive contributions to knowledge concerning significant areas of social studies education through meritorious research.

“On a personal level, I am delighted that my peers feel that I have made significant contributions and have generated quality research in my field,” Levstik said. “Professionally, it is an acknowledgement that my work is worthwhile, but my hope is that my lifelong work has made a difference in the classroom and in students’ understanding of history.”



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## Perry Wins Award From NRC for Literacy Research



Imagine being in a foreign country. You know the language, but you still have a difficult time getting along. While you know the words, you don't always understand their usage

Kristen Perry, assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, has researched

this scenario in respect to Sudanese refugees in the United States, work that helped her garner the J. Michael Parker Award from the National Reading Conference. The award is given to a graduate student or untenured faculty member for contributions to adult literacy research.

"It is not necessarily the meaning of the words that they aren't clear on, it is how to use that text," Perry said. "For example, they may know what a coupon is, but they may not know how to use it. We can't just teach basic reading and writing. We have to teach them how to use a text beyond just reading it."

## Thelin Honored



In the past year, John Thelin, University Research Professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation, has garnered the attention of a number of national organizations. In 2007, he was appointed to the advisory and editorial board for the National Collegiate Athletics

Association (NCAA) Scholarly Colloquium on College Sports which was developed to unite top scholars to study intercollegiate athletics' influence on both university and cultural life.

In March 2008, Thelin received a 2007 National Education Association Excellence in the Academy Award at the 2008 NEA Higher Education Conference for his article "Expectations and Reality in American Higher Education" which appeared in the Fall 2007 issue of the NEA's journal "Thought and Action." Then in April 2008, he was presented with the Eldridge W. Roark Meritorious Service Award from Omicron

Delta Kappa, which is presented to individuals who have shown varied and meritorious service to ODK.

## Towles-Reeves Earns TASH Award



Elizabeth Towles-Reeves, who received her Ph.D. in educational psychology from UK in May 2008, received the 2007 Alice H. Hayden Award at the annual TASH Conference last December. The award is presented to a doctoral student in education or a related field who demonstrates potential

for leadership in teaching, scholarship and service on behalf of people with significant disabilities.

"All students should be able to learn," said Towles-Reeves, Research Coordinator for the National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC), a project in UK's Human Development Institute. "They should have access to instruction because it helps them be productive members of society. All children are important."

## Cunningham Honored with AERA Research Award



*Jessica Cunningham (left) poses with her adviser, Associate Professor Kelly Bradley, after receiving the AERA Survey Research in Education SIG Graduate Student Award.*

Jessica Cunningham, a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation, received the AERA Survey Research in Education SIG Graduate Student Award at the 2008 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting for her manuscript "Balancing Content with Measurement Standards in Survey Development."

"It is an honor that the Survey SIG has recognized Jessica with this award," said Kelly Bradley, associate professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation and co-author of the winning manuscript. "As her adviser, I see Jessica's hard work and dedication on a daily basis. She is a rising star in the field of quantitative methods and has much to contribute to the area of survey research."