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THE SALT JOURNAL

Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques Center at The University of Arizona

Maximizing Success for Students with Learning and Attention Challenges

Reframing

Learning



Success



Achievement



Engagement



Community



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From the Director

IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES BY ENHANCING OUR COMMUNITY

by **Jeff M. Orgera, Ph.D.**
Director



Jeff M. Orgera, Ph.D.

I sit down to write this article as the month of August nears its midpoint. The summer monsoons are upon us and the intense heat of June has been eased slightly by moisture in the desert air. The SALT Center along with the rest of the University of Arizona has been preparing for the arrival of students for the last few months; students are returning to the campus and the first day of classes is less than two weeks away.

The academic calendar is an amazing structure; a logical and orderly list of dates and activities that unfolds uniquely, and sometimes chaotically, for each member of our community. At the start of each academic year, students, staff, faculty, and administrators often feel a sense of rebirth and rejuvenation. By midterm, at the time of this publication, the campus community is striving to move through mounting responsibilities. Before we know it, the talk of year-end outcomes, final exams, and commencement springs from our mouths as we celebrate and bid farewell to newly minted UA and SALT alumni.

Our focus in the SALT Center is about improving the academic outcomes of students with learning and attention challenges. Throughout each academic year we are consistently working to make our program a more effective resource for our students. Over the past several months we have laid a critical foundation for the fall 2007 semester so that our incoming and returning students can achieve their goals.

Emphasis on Our Community

The SALT Center is a vibrant community that is made up of over 550 students, over one hundred tutors, a professional staff of twenty-seven, student employees, and several physical spaces designed to be conducive to learning. Our community is a place where students and staff collaborate to work toward mutual goals of academic achievement and personal growth. Although the SALT Center continues to reach multiple goals, my observations over the past year led me to make some critical additions to our community.

The strength of the SALT Center is the dedicated and talented staff; without them students would not have access to the high quality educational services offered within our department. The SALT team of professionals is much greater than the sum of its parts; while each individual brings a unique set of skills and expertise to our program, it is the collaboration among the staff that brings about some of our greatest outcomes.

The SALT Center has added two new members to the leadership team of the department as a vehicle for further enhancing the educational opportunities of our students. A new position was created to provide oversight to our Learning Support Services which include individual and group tutoring, the Writers Lab, and the

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(Improving Student Outcomes... continued from previous page)

Math & Science Lab. This position has been filled by a professional who managed academic support services for Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff and plans to have SALT's Tutor Training curriculum certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA). Becoming certified will increase the professionalism of our tutors and will ideally improve the effectiveness of tutoring sessions.

The second addition to the leadership team is building upon the SALT Center's strong brand identity while managing our admission and outreach efforts both within the state and nationally. Activities of this area include cultivating relationships with prospective students, high school counselors and other educators by visiting high schools, attending college fairs, and professional association meetings. This position has been filled by a professional who managed the application process for students in the Eller College of Management and most recently worked individually with students within University College. I know that more students with learning challenges, families, and high schools will know about the SALT Center's work as a result of this position.

Positioned for the Future

I am brimming with excitement and enthusiasm for the return of both new and continuing SALT students. As the Director, I am confident that the team we now have assembled is what will ensure that the SALT Center remains the premier academic support program for students with learning and attention challenges. Not only do we provide innovative and high quality educational services to students but we do it from within a community of shared values that is the foundation for the work that we do.

Our daily goal at the SALT Center is to commit ourselves to excellence in all that we do and to strive to ensure that every student interaction with the staff is a productive exchange and a learning experience. I firmly believe that what we provide to students through our people, programs, services, and interactions is what makes the difference between their success and failure. The SALT Center's success is built upon individualized relationships with our students, and the entire staff is dedicated to making each student's experience with our program a life changing circumstance, I can see it in their eyes and hearts throughout each day of the academic calendar.

Each year our current and former students say, "If it weren't for SALT, I would not be making these grades or I would have never graduated." As Director, my ongoing goal is to keep receiving this feedback from our students. The only way to keep these comments coming is to ensure that our community is positioned to provide innovative educational opportunities to students with learning and attention challenges. Due to the changing nature of student needs our organization needs to be adaptable and evolving. I can confidently say that the SALT Center is locked in on its target of positive student outcomes, and we are prepared to act according to the best interests of our students. We invite you to contact the SALT Center if you have any questions or would like more information about our premier academic support program, and I hope you enjoy the 2007 edition of the SALT Journal. ♦

Student Programs & Services

OUR DOORS OPEN TO OPPORTUNITIES



Rhonda Ormsby, M.Ed.

By Rhonda Ormsby, Assistant Director, Student Programs & Services

Each year the joy, students achieve their academic goals and mature in ways that they never imagined is truly one of the pleasures for all of us here at the SALT Center.

The relationship between students and their Strategic Learning Specialists is something very special and has been described at times as difficult even to put into words. The relationship is one part reassurance, one part coaching, and another part challenging students to stretch beyond their comfort zone. Although Strategic Learning Specialists are the primary relationship for students in the SALT Center, connections develop with staff in all areas of the department because being available and providing resources to students is a core value for the SALT Center. In our department, every door, space, and area is open to serve students.

Students and families begin their journey with the SALT Center by working with our admissions department, then meeting our Director and the rest of the staff at orientation. As each new fall semester begins, the students develop relationships with the tutoring staff and work with our systems analysts in the computer lab.

During each academic year many new doors open with opportunities to learn; SALT students learn new academic strategies, participate in activities, and grow as individuals. This year was another excellent example of the services, events, and programs available for our students' participation.

Because SALT is a community premised on making all of our students to feel welcome and also a place where they're known on a first name basis, we encourage students to get involved in all SALT programs and services. We started this fall '07 semester with a Semester Kick-Off to continue to build relationships and show students all that our community has to offer. At our Semester Kick-Off Event, held during the first week of school, we had food, balloons, games, and prizes as we welcomed new and continuing students back to campus. Students signed up for the many SALT activities we're doing in this coming year and met other SALT students.

In our SALT Outdoors program, we climb many mountains literally and figuratively as students hike the canyons of the Tucson area and experience the great outdoors around them. Because our students come to college with experience in community service they enjoy helping others. SALT students and staff helped the Tucson community and local schools through our volunteer program VAULT (Volunteer Activities Utilizing Learner's Talents) and the SALT / High School Connection. SALT students regularly act as mentors to encourage high school students with learning and attention challenges to consider going on to college.

Our community also provides opportunities for activity, involvement and leadership to students with our MENTOR Program and the LEAP Program (Learning to Excel Academically with Pride). Through monthly activities open to all SALT students, the MENTOR program sponsors events such as movie night in our classroom, a visit to the theater to see a play, and the chance to attend a sporting event. As SALT continues to recognize the whole student in all of our services and programs, students stayed

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(Our Doors Open... continued from previous page)

healthy through participation in our SALT Intramural program. We've participated in soccer, basketball, softball, and ultimate Frisbee. As you can see, becoming involved in the UA and Tucson community is valued by the SALT Center because it creates a positive interaction for students and this leads them feeling connected to their environment.

We accomplish many goals as a community of students and staff throughout each semester, so at the end of every semester everyone takes time to enjoy life at our End of Semester Events. We have food, music, and, because tutors are an essential part of our community as well, we recognize their efforts by giving our tutor awards at this event too.

The doors of the SALT Center are symbolically always open; each space, office, work station is spinning through each day with activity as students learn new skills and accomplish new goals. With any transition though, trials and tribulations will arise. However, we are confident and proud that SALT students feel this sense of community and turn to the SALT Center for guidance, support, and encouragement to achieve personal and academic success.



Targeting Unique Student Needs

FOSTERING STUDENTS' HEALTH AND WELLNESS

By Heather Peress, Strategic Learning Specialist and Rose Wilhite, Strategic Learning Specialist

The SALT Center recognizes that some students with learning and attention challenges also face psychological and emotional hurdles. Although the main role of the Strategic Learning Specialist is to support students academically through the development of learning strategies, we are aware that every student faces a number of other challenges that can not only impact their academic performance but also their physical and mental health.



Heather Peress



Rose Wilhite

In order to effectively support the overall health and wellness of our program's students the SALT Center has established several initiatives which provide resources to students needing psychological support. Our first resource was established in 2001 when through a collaboration with the Northern Arizona University – Tucson Campus we provided counseling services to support SALT students. Fall 2007 will mark the sixth year of this very successful partnership where second-year master's level counselors from NAU offer free, confidential counseling to SALT students each fall semester in the SALT building. Counseling sessions are offered on Wednesday evenings for students seeking assistance with short-term problems or issues. The types of presenting problems fall into the following categories: Social/Relationship, Stress/Anxiety and Life Changes/Coping issues. The counseling sessions are supervised by a licensed psychologist and offered for ten weeks. SALT students are referred to NAU counseling services by their strategic learning specialists and in the fall 2006 semester, the NAU counselors provided forty-four sessions to our students with the average number of sessions per student being three or four.

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(Fostering Students' Health... continued from page 7)

The next resource for SALT students' health and wellness was established in spring of 2005 when for the first time students had access to a licensed clinical psychologist. Students once again can get a referral to see the SALT Psychologist who delivers therapeutic services for fifteen hours each week right within the SALT Center. Last year over fifty students received approximately 350 hours of psychological support from this service that is now established permanently in the SALT Center. Thanks to the efforts of our Director of Development we recently established a Health and Wellness Endowment account which allows us to pay for some of the costs of this service without raising student fees. We hope to grow this endowment over the years to come so that more students can benefit from this valuable service.

SALT is excited to continue all our efforts and collaborations related to supporting the health and wellness of our students. As more students come to college with a range of psychological, emotional, and learning challenges these types of resources will become even more critical in the years to come.

Below is a brief description from the National Institute of Mental Health of three of the most common mental health diagnoses that students struggle with along with strategies that we have found helpful in improving students' success at the university.

Anxiety Disorders: Feelings of stress and anxiety are normal parts of life, especially when facing challenges like transitioning to college. Unlike the brief and mild anxiety caused from a stressful event, individuals with an anxiety disorder can struggle with these issues for extended periods of time, and their symptoms may worsen over time if not treated.

Types of Anxiety Disorders:

- Panic Disorder
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Specific Phobias
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Treatment for these disorders can involve medication to decrease anxiety, psychotherapy to better understand the root of the problem, and cognitive-behavioral therapy to learn how to manage and decrease symptoms. Many people also find support groups, stress management, and meditation techniques helpful.

Quick tips to help decrease stress:

- Use breathing, visualization, or self-talk techniques to remain calm during a stressful event.
- Keep a journal to write down reoccurring thoughts or concerns.
- Find activities that help you relax such as reading, going for a walk, and talking to a friend.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: For individuals with ADHD, transitioning to college and learning how to manage responsibilities inside and outside of the classroom can be incredibly difficult. The characteristics of ADHD are inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity to the degree that they are negatively impacting the quality of life. Though symptoms vary greatly for each individual, a number of treatment options have been established as effective in reducing the symptoms of ADHD.

- Medication: A number of medications exist that can help individuals focus and control hyperactive or impulsive behavior.
- Behavioral Therapy: This approach focuses on finding behavioral solutions such as organizational strategies or learning to better self-monitor behavior to manage the symptoms of ADHD.
- Support Groups: Groups where participants can support and learn from

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SUPPORTING TRANSITIONS

**By Rhonda Ormsby, Assistant Director, Student Programs and Services and
Rose Wilhite, Strategic Learning Specialist**

The SALT Center is a community that is uniquely focused on the many types of transitions that students with learning and attention challenges face in the university environment. Because we get to support every class of students as they start college life as freshmen, move through declaring a major and then graduate, we understand transitions intimately. Because of our expertise in designing programs for students, the SALT Center has developed two workshops that support critical transitions for our students.

Steps to Success

The SALT Center is proud to share that our Steps to Success Workshop Series, which was piloted in the spring of 2004, has consistently supported the retention of 80% of SALT students who were on academic probation after their first semester at the University of Arizona.

Over the course of these 4 weekly workshops offered each spring semester, this program provides students with the opportunity to learn new study strategies, incorporate time management skills, review academic policies to increase their academic success and, ultimately, obtain a 2.0 or higher GPA.

Below is an example of the most recent results regarding those students who participated in our spring '07 Steps to Success Workshop Series:

54 students participated in this program; 43 or 80% were completely off of probation or continued to the fall semester; 11 were disqualified from their college or from the University of Arizona. As a result of the Steps Series 43 of the 54 students were able to return for their sophomore year. Many of these students will also go on to declare a major and persist to graduation. The most important aspect about this program is that the SALT Center supports students during the most critical time in their personal and academic career, as many students would not be retained by the University of Arizona without the program.

We look forward to continuing this program and to having the privilege of watching these students learn, grow, and reach success as they incorporate the steps and tools they've learned in this workshop series.

Next Steps

The Next Steps Workshop is for all SALT students with 75 units or more or, as we call them, rising juniors. The purpose is to help them assess where they are in the process of planning for their future. The goals of the workshop are all associated with providing useful information to our students about getting prepared for life after college. The presenters provide information on these topics: graduate school, preparing for a career (resumes, cover letters and interviewing) and succeeding in a career (disclosure, etiquette). Each semester, SALT invites two alumni to speak at the workshop. The SALT students enjoy personal accounts as related by the two speakers. In the fall, one speaker was an employed graduate, and the other was a current UA graduate student. Both provided interesting experiences, useful insights, and a verbal list of things to consider when job searching and/or looking into graduate school.



Enjoying the shade of the SALT Courtyard...

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Emphasis on Involvement

CONNECTING NATURE WITH ACADEMICS

By Laurel Grigg, Strategic Learning Specialist



Laurel Grigg

In its second year, SALT Outdoors successfully completed 6 outings. During fall 2006, students and staff hiked in the pines on Mt. Lemmon, built a section of The Arizona Trail, and hiked between three natural springs in Madera Canyon. During spring 2007, we hiked to Bridalwreath Falls in the Rincon mountains, toured Kartchner Caverns, and hiked in the Wilderness of Rocks on Mt. Lemmon.

The obvious benefits of exercise, fresh air, seeing new places, and meeting new people make this a very popular program. But did you know that outdoor recreation can also make you smarter? Many of our hikes and outings take us to locations and teach us knowledge that directly relates to UA courses and areas of study.

INTERNSHIP REFERRALS

The Internship Referral Service has been around since 1994. It started as a program with three options and has grown tremendously. Each internship opportunity included in the Internship Referral Service {IRS} has been evaluated by SALT to ensure it is an appropriate placement for our students. To be included in the IRS the placement must agree to have a direct contact person for the application process and must also provide information included in the book. The IRS is in a continual state of evolution – this past year we added 7 new opportunities. We are in the process of updating all the contact information for all the Internship options listed in the book and also adding more. Internships provide valuable learning in the field that can not be obtained except by direct experience. The wealth of experience has proven very helpful for many of our students and has directly impacted students' resumes. In the past there have been students who have had direct employment as a result of internships. All current opportunities are listed on the SALT webpage.

One obvious connection is with the field of science. Tier 1 and Tier 2 NATS courses include topics like geology, weather, wildlife, hydrology, botany, and astronomy. What better way to apply course information than to identify rocks, plants, wildlife, and mountains; assess the drainage patterns in our creeks and washes; observe different types of clouds; and even find constellations on a SALT Outdoors hike!

Our outings can benefit students in history and social science courses, too. We travel to many historically significant locations on our trips. Our state parks, national forests, and national monuments are dedicated to the preservation of Native American sites. Hohokam tribes inhabited the Tucson area long ago, and their settlements can be found in the Catalina Mountains and even in the middle of the city! Ancient petroglyphs can be seen along many hiking trails. The Apaches lived in various locations around southern Arizona, but famously made their last stand at Cochise Stronghold, a popular hiking and rock climbing area. Ghost towns and mines along many trails are reminders of the settling of the West, and the western-most battle of the Civil War took place at Picacho Peak just 30 miles north of Tucson.

Students in anthropology can discuss artifacts at the various archeological sites or cultural influences on participation in outdoor recreation. Political science and economics students can debate the set appropriations for national forests and parks or the establishment of user fees for public lands. Students studying nutrition can calculate the number of calories burned while hiking in different terrain or find the most nutritious trail foods with the lightest weight. Students in psychology can assess the impact of exercise and sunshine on symptoms of various mental health conditions. All of these issues relate directly to course material or can be excellent paper topics. I have personally witnessed students discussing their classes on the trail and learning from each other.

SALT Outdoors is an excellent example of a student program that accomplishes multiple goals with our students. We have many more wonderful outings planned for the '07-'08 academic year. Students who are interested in exploring southern Arizona should contact Laurel Grigg at lgrigg@email.arizona.edu or Jennifer Harper at jlharper@email.arizona.edu.



INTRAMURAL SPORTS BUILD COMMUNITY

By Michael Penn, Strategic Learning Specialist



Michael Penn

Intramural sports offer individuals the opportunity to participate in a variety of recreational and competitive sports. Here, at UA and especially in SALT, this philosophy is no different. During the 2006-07 year, the SALT Center participated in campus intramurals by organizing teams in four different sports and arguably enjoyed its most successful year ever. Between co-ed soccer, softball and men's basketball, we attracted more than 45 individuals, while combining for a greater number of victories than losses. In fall, Men's Basketball was our most competitive and successful team. We finished with a season record of 6-2 and made it to the league finals before losing. Meanwhile, our soccer and softball teams were solid, and though neither one matched the success of basketball, they both had winning seasons.

As interest in SALT intramural sports grows, we are striving to find new ways to keep new students aware and involved in these activities. We plan to keep teams in some sports but would be open to adding new ones as well. Some ideas might be co-ed basketball, volleyball or flag football.

Through involvement in SALT intramural sports, all individuals receive different benefits. Some relish the strong competition, while others want to relax and enjoy times being around friends and meeting new people. Whatever reasons people give, I see them as a great way to get involved and stay healthy while connecting socially to a new community that share common interests. ♦

SALT MENTOR PROGRAM

The SALT MENTOR Program has an exciting group of events for this upcoming year. The MENTOR Program supports students in their transition to the UA and provides students with leadership opportunities. These events afford students the opportunity to interact with other SALT students in a nonacademic setting and oftentimes to get 'off campus'. When the events are off campus transportation is provided by SALT staff. In addition to our more typical events, last year the MENTOR program in conjunction with the VAULT program assisted the Tucson community with the annual Day of Caring. The MENTOR Program hosted a night of singing, dancing, food and culture at the local Greek Festival last year, and it was such a success we will be attending again this year. As is typical in the fall, we will have our annual pumpkin carving event in October. Another upcoming opportunity is to attend a production of a play in the Tucson community. We have done this before. It not only is a fun evening; it also supports students in a few theater courses which require them to attend a play. Additionally, we will be hosting a movie night to provide a mini-break at the most stressful time of the year, about a week before the semester ends. The MENTOR program supports students in their growth as individuals. We remain open to student suggestions for activities as well. Hope to see you there!

Learning Support Services

THE TUTOR/STUDENT EXPERIENCE...EFFECTIVE USE OF TUTORING



Dorothy Briggs

By Dorothy Briggs, Assistant Director, Learning Support Services

Tutoring at the SALT Center is a service designed to assist and support students on their path to success in the university setting. Effective use of tutoring requires students to approach tutors prepared and willing to actively participate in each session. The working relationship between the tutor and the student is very important. Through effective use of tutoring, students are not only able to process and review course content, but also to increase their confidence in their own skills and abilities.

The SALT tutors are well trained. Their training includes sessions on working with our population of students, the SALT philosophy, ethical issues, techniques for a successful tutoring session, and active listening. Tutors are encouraged to continue in their tutor training after the initial training is completed.

Tutors are trained to assist students in assessing course requirements as well as understanding faculty expectations. Learning how to do this early in the university experience helps students make the transition from high school, where study skills may not have been as critical, to the university. Knowing what to expect and then adequately preparing help the students feel more confident as they approach each assignment, quiz and exam.

Tutors are also trained to work with students in understanding how to apply study skills to each course. One key study skill tutors help students use is the ability to formulate and practice answering quiz and exam questions. Through review strategies, the tutors guide students through the process of determining potential questions on an exam. By formulating the answers to the questions, the student is actively involved in the review process. Students become better all-around learners by developing the types of skills that encourage them to continually review and interact with the course content. These skills can be applied in any class the student is taking and will become necessary for success in upper division courses where critical thinking is expected.

The relationship that develops between a tutor and student is an important one. Students who develop good working relationships with their tutors are taking another step to becoming that successful university student we all hope to see. Tutors become attached to their students and enjoy seeing them succeed. Students enjoy the support and encouragement of their tutors. Frequently the role of the tutor becomes that of a mentor. Tutors are able to give students a firsthand insight into how to be a successful college student. Students see successful students in the tutors and realize that by following the advice and preparing for class, taking good notes, using review strategies, and reading texts effectively, they can follow in their tutors' footsteps and become successful students themselves.

One of our SALT tutors, Sara Philips, tells us, *“Being a SALT tutor is a great opportunity to get to know individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds and learning styles. The position is very rewarding and is at times challenging. In order for effective tutoring to take place it is essential that students and tutors are honest with one another as to what they both need out of the tutoring*

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(The Tutor/Student Experience... continued from previous page)

relationship. Throughout the course of a semester, students and tutors begin to develop rapport that makes the tutoring experience all the more enriching. I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have spent tutoring and watching motivated and hardworking students reach their academic goals .”

Preparation and participation are critical elements in effectively using tutoring. Preparation may involve making a list of questions about an assignment or a reading. Students who have attempted assignments and know exactly where they are struggling can make the best use of the tutoring hour by focusing on that area. Students who have read the material are better able to discuss the concepts with the tutor.

When a student is actively involved in the tutoring session, the outcome is bound to be better comprehension. I love the Chinese proverb that states, “Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll understand.” The expectation at the university level is that students understand material, not just memorize facts that are then quickly forgotten. Discussion of the course material with the tutor is a good way to become involved and participate in the learning process.

Although tutoring can be used to assist a struggling student, much more frequently we see tutoring used to give a student the “edge” that comes with comprehending the material. By developing a good working relationship with a tutor, preparing for each tutoring session, and participating by becoming actively involved in the session, students are developing confidence in their abilities while becoming successful at the university. ♦

HOW CAN YOU TUTOR IDEAS?

By **Melissa Koosmann, Writing Skills Coordinator**



Melissa Koosmann

Many SALT students, especially new freshmen, are still in the process of learning the critical thinking skills that are required for writing college papers. These students often come to the SALT Writers Lab without adequate ideas for their essays. It is unethical for tutors to give students ideas; we must instead help students find and develop their own. When I tell people this, they often ask, “How can you tutor ideas?” In fact, tutors can do a great deal to help students with ideas, and the process is one of the most exciting aspects of tutoring.

Questions are the tutor’s most important tools for helping students generate thoughts. If a student is writing an analysis of a short story, we often begin by asking what happened in the story, who the characters were, and so on. Once we get the gist of the plot and are sure the student understands it, we can begin to help the student analyze the text. We ask why and how the events of the story happened, why the author chose to make them happen that way, and so on. These questions are more difficult to answer, so some students get a little frustrated. Different tutors handle this frustration in different ways, but most simply explain why they’re asking so many questions. After that, with a little encouragement, students usually produce good interpretations.

Not all students seek help at the beginning of the writing process. Many of them arrive in the Writers Lab worried because they’ve written two pages and need to fill five. When this happens, we usually need to help students develop the ideas they already have. Here, again, we ask questions, but the questions are directed more

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Hitting the books in the Math & Science Lab.

DID YOU KNOW...

SALT delivered over 13,135 hours of individual tutoring last academic year.

SALT students made 1,612 visits to the Writers Lab last academic year.

SALT students received tutoring support in over 230 unique courses last academic year.

SALT students made 786 visits to the Math & Science Lab last academic year.

THE “NEW” MATH AND SCIENCE LAB

By Dorothy Briggs, Assistant Director, Learning Support Services

The move of the Math and Science Lab is one of many changes taking place in the Tutoring services at SALT Center. The Math and Science Lab has moved to the second floor of the SALT Tutoring suite. The change in location will enable the drop-in nature of both the Writing Center and the Math and Science Lab to take place in one convenient location. It moves the activity and noise associated with drop-in tutoring, thereby leaving a quiet space on the first floor for individual tutoring to take place.

The Math and Science Lab supports SALT students taking lower division courses in mathematics, biology and chemistry. It is staffed by SALT tutors who undergo an intensive day of tutor training. Many of the tutors are upperclassmen or graduate students at UA and therefore are familiar with the course content and class expectations.

The Math and Science Lab can be used in a variety of ways. Students may drop in to have one question answered, spending only a few minutes at a time. Other students prefer to bring their homework and work on it in the Lab, secure in the knowledge that help is available when needed. Some SALT students use the Lab primarily to review prior to exams, whereas others visit the lab on a daily basis.

The Lab has purchased a new software package, MATLAB, specifically to support math tutoring. The software enables students and tutors to compute math problems. We are excited about this new way to support math learning. Both SALT tutors and students will be able to put the program into use this fall.

The Math and Science Lab is open from 9 a.m. -5 p.m., Monday through Thursday, with extended hours (5 p.m. -8 p.m.) on Wednesdays. The convenience and flexibility of the Math and Science Lab make it a real asset to the Tutoring program at SALT Center.



THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: MATH ANXIETY

By Jennifer Harper, Strategic Learning Specialist



Jennifer Harper

Do you have a fear of math? Do you believe that you cannot be successful in a math class? You could be suffering from math anxiety. Don't worry, you're not alone. Millions of learners all over the world, of all different ages, have math anxiety. Dr. Kogelman and Dr. Warren define math anxiety as an “intense emotional reaction to math based on past experiences” [Kogelman, S. & Warren, J. (1978). Mind Over Math. McGraw Hill, NY]

You probably weren't born with math anxiety, and at one time you may have even liked math; so, how did you get math anxiety? Think back into your past and identify the first time you remember not liking math. What was the situation? What happened that caused you to dislike math? It could be that at some point you had to make a decision between being popular or being good at math. Another possibility is that when you needed help, no one would help you, or the person helping you did not

show you the patience you needed. Once you identify the cause of your math anxiety, you can begin to move forward to overcome it.

Now let's dispel some myths about math.

- Men are better at math than women – *false*, there is no conclusive research to support this myth.
- Math requires logic, not intuition – *false*, intuition is part of math. Mathematicians often know the correct answer before they are able to prove it through the work.
- There is a best way to do a math problem – *false*, math is personal and there is more than one right way to solve problems.
- It's bad to count on your fingers – *false*, counting on your fingers indicates an understanding of arithmetic.
- Math requires a good memory – *false*, memorizing does not teach you math if you don't know how to use the concept.

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(The Elephant in the Room...continued from previous page)

- Some people have a “math” mind and some do not – *false*, most people are more capable than they believe they are. The key to math is self-confidence.

There is no one-step formula to overcoming math anxiety; however, there are some steps to lead you down the correct path.

1. Have positive thoughts. Give yourself pep talks and stop saying those negative things to yourself. This negativity pulls you down and deepens your anxiety.
2. Concentrate on ONE problem at a time when working through homework or tests. Keep yourself from becoming overwhelmed during an assignment by focusing only on the problem you are working on at the time, forget about the rest.
3. When you start struggling, take a mental break to regroup and look at the problem with “fresh eyes”.
4. Break larger problems into smaller parts. To keep yourself from becoming overwhelmed by multiple step problems, focus on one step at a time to complete the problem.
5. Mistakes are a good thing as long as you learn from them. Some of your best learning comes from mistakes. Rather than being upset at yourself for mistakes, congratulate yourself on the things you did correctly and learn from those things that were incorrect.
6. Build on small successes. Remember, self-confidence is the key, so recognize all the things you do correctly.
7. Be aware of your feelings toward math, recognize them, express them, and move on. As you start to become aware of the cause of your math anxiety, it’s a good idea to keep a math journal to record your feelings as you work through problems. You may notice a pattern of feelings that you were unaware you had, and once you acknowledge them, you’ll be able to start moving on.

Overcoming math anxiety is a process that will not be completed overnight. Along the way, you’ll have some great successes, as well as a few setbacks. The important thing to remember is to believe in yourself, have positive thoughts, recognize your feelings, and move on. Eventually, your level of math anxiety will decrease and your performance will improve. ♦

READING STRATEGIES: YOU AND YOUR TEXT

By Meaghan Panzer, Strategic Learning Specialist



Meaghan Panzer

There are many advantages to continually developing literacy skills. The average number of pages assigned to college freshman can number over 200 each week. Clearly, reading is an integral part of college academic life, and reading strategies can help any reader accomplish goals, finish assignments and develop comprehension. This continual literacy development benefits not only students challenged by reading but all students faced with a pile of texts, articles and online reading assignments. As with most things in life, starting off with a plan is essential. In her presentation “Making Your Textbook Work For You” Jodi Patrick Holsuch, Assistant Professor in

Reading and Studying at the University of Georgia, coined this list of strategies for college readers.

Cozy Up
Keep Up
Take Charge
Write It Down
Know It All
Blending In

(http://www.etipsforgrades.com/usahome/index_yellow.html)

Let’s go into detail to better understand Dr. Holsuch’s list of strategies.

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(Reading Strategies.. continued from page 15)

Cozy Up: Choose a comfortable location free of distractions that supports your needs as you read and take notes. You will study best at a table or desk with a straight backed chair. Don't let yourself drift to your phone or Instant Messenger; this is time set aside to read.

Keep Up: Reading your assignments according to the syllabus is a strong strategy for staying on top of the material and not falling behind. Reading every day maintains the reading skills you already have and allows you the opportunity to continue developing new skills. Make a schedule of reading by listing which pages/assignments you will read each day.

Take Charge: Writing about what you are reading keeps your brain active and attentive. On the contrary simply highlighting the text is too passive to keep you engaged in the process. Write notes in the margin alongside the pictures and charts and use strategies such as RAP: Read, Ask Questions, Put It in Your Words or Text/Response note taking.

Write It Down: College courses may have fewer tests than your high school classes did. When you read your text and write down the pertinent information ,you remember it longer. This will benefit you as the course material needs to stay with you longer than it did in high school. The material also builds on itself, and you often need to understand the information in Chapter 1 in order to understand info in Chapter 9.

Know It All: Introduce yourself to your textbooks by previewing each one. How is the book broken down? Is there a glossary or appendix? Is this a UA publication, possibly written by your professor? Explore the structure and contents of each chapter by glancing at the pictures; note the terminology and how the vocabulary is presented (*italics*, **bold**).

Literacy is the understanding of the information presented. It goes beyond your ability to read the words and answer the review questions. Literacy brings the whole system of information together, so read the captions under the pictures and study each photo, diagram and sketch. Allow yourself to investigate the text before you even start reading.

Blending In: This strategy is summed up in four words: read, review, write and connect. Read the assigned pages before the class, review your notes from the previous class, write your own notes even if the professor provides note packs, and connect the information from the text to the information presented in the lecture.

These strategies come together to serve as a foundation for success in college courses. Good readers read every day whether they are absorbed in a novel, skimming the newspaper or maintaining a course reading schedule. For a successful connection with your courses keep these strategies in mind in order to maintain your connection with literacy. ♦

Spotlight on Success

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS...

The achievements of SALT students are what inspire the staff to continue developing innovative resources and to make each student interaction a learning experience. Over the years we have highlighted the successes of many students, and this year is no different. I encourage our readers to understand that each student finds an individualized approach to managing college with a learning or attention challenge. The students below come from public and private schools, have SAT scores above 1000 and below, and have a range of strengths and weaknesses. Some have strong verbal skills but weak visual processing and language based abilities; others struggle in math or process information slowly. While there is no one roadmap for students with challenges, the stories of these students will emphasize the importance of effort, engagement, and working smarter.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE CAMPUS FOSTERS SUCCESS

By Laurel Grigg, Strategic Learning Specialist

Miriam Thompson is getting the most out of her college experience. She is a hard worker who is dedicated to her studies, but she also understands the importance of work experience and extracurricular involvement. When she arrived on campus two years ago, she hit the ground running, making great strides to get involved and maximize her success.

Ambitiously pursuing a double major in Spanish and psychology, Miriam has had a difficult class schedule each semester. Despite this, she has always held a part-time job on campus. She worked at the U-Mart in the Student Union during her freshman year and for KUAT Public Television during her sophomore year. Even though these were just “jobs that paid the bills,” these commitments forced her to practice good time management skills in order to find time to go to class, study, visit office hours, volunteer as a research assistant, and meet with tutors. Miriam uses an impressive day planner with highlighted appointments and colorful post-it notes.

Miriam has a strong desire to help others, and while her past employment has been valuable, she really wanted to do something more meaningful. This coming year, Miriam will hold two positions through which she can help other students. First, I am happy to report that she will join the SALT tutoring staff! She brings a wealth of study techniques in a variety of subjects. In addition, Miriam was hired as a Peer Mentor at the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Along with three other students, she will work with new students with disabilities, helping them make a smoother transition from high school to the UA. She will have regular office hours in the DRC and will be available to any student who needs support from a peer. She will also develop social and educational programs with the other peer mentors.

A truly dedicated UA student in all aspects, Miriam is a delight to work with and an asset to the campus community. ♦



Miriam Thompson

PAVING THE WAY FOR OTHERS

By **Mary Beth Foster, Strategic Learning Specialist**



Beth Breininger

Highly dedicated to her studies and to SALT, Beth Breininger never leaves a page unturned or an assignment unfinished. She strives for 100% on everything she does. Beth possesses many strong qualities, including a diligent work ethic, perseverance, integrity, and an enthusiasm for education.

Beth aspires to work in Special Education and Rehabilitation, possibly as a teacher, although she has also taken great interest in administrative policy. Whether she takes the route of personally assisting disabled individuals or shaping public policy in this area, Beth will make a positive impact on society in the same manner that she has made positive contributions to the UA campus and the SALT community.

Beth devotes many volunteer hours to a Christian sorority on campus; she has been a speaker for SALT at freshmen orientations and at the New Student Experience programs. She also has participated in Shadow Days as part of the SALT High School Connection program, and starting this fall, she will be a peer mentor for the Disability Resource Center. ♦

SERVICE INSPIRES STUDENT'S PASSION

By **Rose Wilhite, Strategic Learning Specialist**



Maya Erman

Maya Erman is a junior and has been affiliated with SALT for the past two years. Maya is someone who always gives to others, and she started giving back to SALT her first semester! She was in the SALT Ambassador program, and she helped with the SALT Speaker Series. She has also been involved in the SALT High School Connection for the past two years. She has gone to the high school to present with staff members and has helped with tours when high school students have come to SALT. She also participated in Shadow Days and has taken high school students to several of her UA classes. Maya always asks to be involved in the SALT High School Connection.

Maya is completely devoted to her studies and to her goal of becoming a special education teacher. She was admitted to the College of Education this past spring in the Cross-Categorical Program. She puts forth exceptional effort and commitment in her studies. She is always striving to earn a good grade and utilize all the resources available to her.

Maya's future students will be very fortunate to have a teacher who is so compassionate. Maya has had many academic struggles and will have the patience needed to work with special populations. She will be a great role model for them, reflecting how someone can succeed if they just keep trying!

Recently, Maya responded to a brief interview about her experiences in SALT. Here is what she had to say:

Q. Why did you choose to apply to the SALT Center?

A. I chose to apply to the SALT Center because I not only wanted a home away from home but I also wanted a second family, a family who could support me in my every decision, and one who was willing to help me whenever needed.

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(Service Inspires... continued from previous page)

Q. What aspect of the SALT Center has been most helpful to you?

A. I think the Learning Specialist has been the most enjoyable experience in SALT for me. I look forward to my weekly appointments and enjoy every minute of not only the academic talk but also the fun and social talk.

Q. What have you learned about yourself during your enrollment at the SALT Center and the UA?

A. I think that I have learned a lot about myself as a person and the person that I want to become. SALT and the UA have helped me in my journey in discovering who I am.

Q. What are your goals for the future?

A. After I graduate I want to go on to do my Master's degree in either special education or educational psychology and eventually get my certificate in educational therapy. ♦

SEMESTER IN ITALY: A DEFINING EXPERIENCE

By Michael Penn, Strategic Learning Specialist

Kelley Kruke is a student I have worked with for three years. Now entering her senior year, the Phoenix, AZ resident is seen as a student holding many esteemed qualities.

This is quite evident in her approach to school. Although Kelley has learning and attention challenges, she has become a successful college student through motivation, determination, hard work and persistence,. During the same period, she has matured and grown into a student who I tremendously admire and respect. Recently, Kelley spent one semester studying abroad in Italy. This experience gave her the opportunity to learn about Italian life, customs and cultures, which she looks back at now as an amazing experience. If given the opportunity to do it again, knowing the level of enjoyment she had staying there originally, I believe Kelley would not hesitate in taking it.

Kelley enters this fall with a "B" average and is majoring in studio art while doing a thematic minor in Spanish and classics. Based on where she is in her degree program, Kelley is scheduled to graduate in early Summer '08. It was Kelley's goal from the beginning to finish in four years. However, along the way, she changed her major, and this slightly derailed her plans. Although Kelley will fall slightly short in meeting this goal, I am very proud of her accomplishments at UA and SALT. She is a wonderful student who has benefited from taking advantage of our services in order to maximize her own academic success. At the moment, Kelley is not clear on what her plans are after graduation. She might attend graduate school or pursue a career or even possibly do both simultaneously. No matter what she decides, I know Kelley's run of success will continue. ♦

DID YOU KNOW...

The SALT Center has 552 enrolled students for the fall 2007 semester.

56% male

44% female

72% are freshmen and sophomores

28% are juniors and seniors

43% are from CA

12% are from AZ

8% are from NJ

7% are from NY

4% are from TX

9% are minority students

86% of SALT students are in good academic standing with cumulative grade point averages above 2.0

22% of SALT students have cumulative grade point averages above 3.0

LANGUAGE, WRITING, AND LEADERSHIP: MAKING OF A GLOBAL CITIZEN

By Mary Beth Foster, Strategic Learning Specialist



Joseph Robbins

Highly devoted to his studies, Joseph Robbins is a model student. Not only has he achieved a strong GPA, he plans to finish college a semester early, graduating in December '07 with a double major in creative writing and Judaic studies. Early graduation is always a remarkable accomplishment, but especially impressive in Joseph's case considering he had to withdraw from his first semester here at the UA due to mononucleosis. As soon as he recovered, Joseph set on a fervent course to catch up. His first course of action involved earning 15 credits by taking Hebrew exams. Since then, he's earned 15 additional credits in summer school.

After completing his Bachelor's degree, Joseph plans to attend graduate school. Currently, he is favoring the idea of pursuing a Master's in secondary education followed by obtaining a position as an English teacher. Having been greatly inspired by his experiences at the SALT Center, he hopes to assist high school students in their preparation for college.

Always willing to become involved, Joseph has been a leader at SALT. He has spoken at numerous freshmen orientations to both incoming students and their parents. Eager to share his experiences on how to succeed in college, he has also participated in the SALT High School Connection Shadow days. Another notable example of Joseph's desire to help others can be seen in the spring of 2004 when he volunteered as a First Responder or EMT with an Israeli ambulance service for over four months. Returning to Israel last summer, he gained writing experience as a sports reporter for *The Jerusalem Post*, Israel's largest English language newspaper.

Joseph is caring, insightful, and analytical, a combination that makes him an ideal student and global citizen. His many discussions of literature and its application to current events reveal him to be a student who wishes to understand human relations from multiple perspectives. He also articulates his insights clearly through academic papers as well as fictional stories. Joseph's talents and dedication will contribute greatly to his future success as a graduate student and as a future leader in education.



Success Tips for High School Students Preparing for College:

1. Go to class, EVERY class
2. Take time for yourself each day to eat well and exercise
3. Seek involvement opportunities on or off campus
4. Get to class a few minutes early to review your notes
5. Find balance between academic and social time
6. Maintain regular contact with your family at home
7. Find a quiet, consistent place to study
8. Get to know your professors in office hours
9. Take short breaks while studying
10. Sit towards the front in each class

SALT Admissions

SALT CENTER ADMISSIONS - CELEBRATING OUR PRESENT & MOVING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

By **Scott Berren, Assistant Director, Admissions & Outreach**

The SALT Center admissions team wrapped up a very successful 2006/2007 school year with the admission of an outstanding class of brand new students. The unique skills, talents, and academic interests of our new students are truly impressive and equally fascinating. Geographically, the SALT Center continues to attract students from across the entire country. The students of the 2007 SALT class represent 26 states. The largest percentage of our new students comes from the states of California (40.8%), New Jersey (10.9%), New York (8.7%), Arizona (7.1%), and Illinois (5.4%).



Scott Berren

As is consistent with the general university population, the academic credentials of our incoming class cover a wide range. The average high school GPA of our incoming class is 2.89 with 68% of students between a 2.54 and 3.24. The average SAT score of our incoming class is 971 with 68% of students earning a score between 833 and 1109. In addition to academics, students from our newest SALT class excel in areas ranging from performance arts, to athletics, to leadership and community initiatives. The geographic range and academic potential of our new class, combined with the wide range of talents of these students, will no doubt contribute greatly to the overall diversity of The SALT Center. We eagerly anticipate the academic and social development of our newest class.

Now that the new school year has officially begun, it is time to begin preparing for enrollment of the 2008 SALT Center class. In the new school year, the SALT Center strives to continue developing relationships with those families and students who have traditionally applied for enrollment into SALT. At the same time the center strives to reach qualified groups of students who have not previously applied to the SALT Center in the greatest numbers. The specific strategies the center will implement over the next year in order to reach as many students as possible are as follows:

Internal University Outreach:

The great majority of students in SALT officially enroll in our program in the first semester of their freshman year. This is incredibly beneficial to the ultimate success of these students as they are able to begin work with our Strategic Learning Specialists and tutors from the first day of their college experience. At the same time, there are many students at the University of Arizona who are outstanding candidates for services through the SALT Center yet they do not apply for first semester SALT enrollment. We know that qualified continuing UA students who enroll in SALT at some point after their first semester have an excellent opportunity for ultimate academic success even if they have not been previously successful at the UA. The question becomes: How do we reach the continuing UA students who are eligible for SALT services?

In the 2007/2008 school years, the center plans to purposely extend outreach to the academic colleges, cultural centers, and UA community at large in order to reach

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reach our continuing UA students who may be good candidates for services through SALT. Some of the finest student candidates for enrollment into SALT are simply not taking part in our programs because they may not realize all SALT has to offer. Thus, making a concerted effort to reach these students and to have them enroll in our program will ultimately pay dividends for the student, the SALT Center, and the UA community.

Arizona High School Outreach:

We are fortunate at the SALT Center to attract a diverse population of students from across the entire country. The geographic mix of our students enables our entire community to learn about a variety of backgrounds and upbringings. In the new year, in an effort to enhance the experience of our community, the SALT Center plans to more intentionally recruit qualified Arizona residents in addition to our great mix of non-Arizona residents.

The effort to reach qualified Arizona residents for enrollment in the SALT Center as incoming freshmen will no doubt start with intentional communication with Arizona high schools. It is important that high school counselors, administrators, and families of incoming UA students understand the mission of the SALT Center and how we effectively work with students who will benefit from our programs. Effectively communicating with these constituencies during students' junior and senior years of high school will ideally enable many qualified students to enroll in SALT upon beginning their first year at the University.

Community, State, & National Outreach:

The University of Arizona has countless colleges, departments, and programs that are well known locally, nationally, and even internationally. Illustrations of this recognition are demonstrated every day through the university's national leadership in Mars exploration; the university's top 10 national ranking in a dozen academic programs; and the university's 18 national team championships in NCAA athletics competition. The SALT Center is included in this terrific mix, and we are proud to share our accomplishments both on a national and local level.

In the coming year, the center plans to dedicate focus on educating the Tucson community and the state in general about everything we do at the SALT Center. We plan to deliver our message through local media outlets, involvement in community groups, and parent associations. SALT will also be heavily involved with state-wide college fairs. We have a premier, nationally recognized program known for the work we do with students who have learning and/or attention challenges. The Tucson community, which has surpassed a population of 1,000,000, is proud of the UA and we want to make sure that they know about the SALT Center as well.

We also recognize the importance of continuing our national outreach programs in order to attract out-of-state students to the UA and the SALT Center. The SALT Center is excited to be represented at several prestigious national conferences in the near future. In the fall semester we will be at the annual conference for the *National Association for College Admission Counselors* in Texas. We also plan on attending the *LD and ADHD College & Post-Secondary Opportunities Fair* in Minnesota. While at these conferences and fairs, our SALT representatives will make a point to visit with local high schools in order to spread the SALT message.

Programmatic Updates

As one of our valued stakeholders in the SALT Center you deserve to be updated on enhancements to our program. Effectively running our program and ultimately working with our students would not be possible without the support of our entire SALT community. To this end, we plan to implement the following over the next year:

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DID YOU KNOW...

The incoming class for fall 2007 was 203 students - one of our largest ever.

9% of the incoming class is from Arizona.

7% of the incoming class is minority students.

SALT awarded over \$40,000 in scholarships this year.

Close to 66% of our incoming students chose to attend the University of Arizona because of the SALT Center.

(SALT Center Admissions... continued from previous page)

Enhanced Web Site Utility- Over the next year, SALT plans to update the current web site in order to make it as functional as possible for all users. Included in our website updates will be an online application for SALT admission. We are confident that having an online application for SALT services in addition to our current hard copy application will allow us to reach as many eligible students as possible.

Admission Interviews- Beginning with applicants for the new SALT class of 2008, every applicant to SALT will be required to participate in an admissions interview. In the past we have had great success with students who have chosen to take part in our optional admissions interview program. The interviews help us get to know each student and, even more importantly, to help each student understand the mission and goals of the SALT Center. Applicants can complete their interview in person if they are visiting the UA or over the phone if they are calling from home.

The SALT Center Admissions Team certainly has a busy upcoming year. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you at any time should you have questions or comments. ◆

(Supporting Transitions... continued from page 9)

In the spring, we invited a SALT graduate who was employed by the University of Arizona and a current SALT/UA graduate student in Special Education. The students were given an opportunity to hear about their academic struggles, jobs after college and graduate school experiences. The students responded well to the openness of being able to ask questions of those who faced similar challenges as students and future graduates.

The committee members for the workshops included Laurel Grigg and Rose Wilhite. Both workshops were held in the SALT classroom. SALT will continue to offer these workshops and focus on preparing students for the workforce and graduate school. It is important to prepare students for their future careers, job searches and how and when to apply to graduate school. In addition, it is beneficial for former SALT students to come back and share their stories on how they prepared for the “next steps” in their lives. ◆

(Tutor Ideas... continued from page 13)

toward the students’ thinking process. We ask why and how the students came up with the thoughts they have written. We may also suggest places where students can provide better facts or examples to back up their ideas.

Occasionally, a student begins writing a paper on an idea that doesn’t fulfill the instructor’s expectations. When this happens, we gently tell students they’re on the wrong track. After the student understands what is wrong and why, we discuss whether it’s better to start over completely or to make large alterations to the work the student has already done. For both tutors and students, these are some of the hardest sessions, but students who are open to suggestions often go home knowing a great deal more about how to approach college writing assignments.

Helping students think for themselves is more difficult than telling them what to think, but it is also more beneficial to students and more rewarding for tutors. After walking through the thinking process with tutors a few times, many students can begin asking questions of themselves, coming up with more and more ideas on their own. When students do that, we know we’ve succeeded. ◆

SALT Technology

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTS LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS

By **Kring Fernando, Support Systems Analyst**



Kring Fernando

The Computer Resource Lab (CRL) staff provides individual and group training on a range of topics, and this year is no different. SALT students will have easy access to interactive demonstrations on assistive technology software tools, and this year we are presenting new workshops on email account management.

The number one tool that is widely available for our students and will assist them with organization and content management is their University of Arizona email account. Every student has an email account, which brings up the question: What can this email account do for our students other than just send messages? Many features of the UA email accounts are underutilized because our students might not know about them, especially if the students are incoming freshmen or transfer students. For example, students will learn how to establish rules to filter email directly into individual class folders and how to retrieve email from other accounts such as yahoo or hotmail so all their email is in one centralized location. This is a critical function since at the UA email is considered an official form of communication, and students are held responsible for what information comes to them through email.

In the upcoming year, we also plan to install an announcement screen to be located in the lobby. The announcement screen will allow us to publish workshop schedules, announcements of upcoming events, group tutoring schedules, exam reviews, and a virtual tour of our facility and services.

We are also exploring the idea of using our website as a means to provide anytime anywhere tutorials to our students. Using the flash movie technology we are creating demonstrations of assistive technology and tutorials on mastering time management, combating stress, and other strategies for our students to be able to access anytime. This technology will supplement personal assistance offered at the SALT Center, as students will be able to review the tutorials and learning strategies at their convenience. As you can see, the SALT Center is using technology as another medium to reach our program students in new and innovative ways!

SALT WEBSITE TO GET NEW LOOK AND FUNCTIONALITY

By **Kring Fernando, Support Systems Analyst**

The SALT Center is in the process of updating our website to make it more interactive and easier to navigate. Currently, the website is primarily used by prospective SALT students, parents and professionals. We intend to add features for our current student population such as easy access to workshop information and learning strategies while also offering podcasts as a new way of delivering information.

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(SALT Website... continued from previous page)

Over the upcoming year, our initial focus will be on improving navigation, updating the content and creating a look and feel that aligns with the University's branding campaign. The next phase will be to implement a new web content management system that will assist in moving our website from static to dynamic, which would allow us to create online applications, design dynamic calendars of events, and maintain up-to-date area specific web content.

Behind the scenes, we will be implementing software that will enable us to view hits per day, visitor statistics, and broken links. The statistical analysis will help the SALT center to improve our content as well as our presence online. We are hoping to unveil our new and improved website by the end of the calendar year. ♦

SALTCASTS: DISTANCE LEARNING USING NEW MEDIA

By Rudy Molina, Strategic Learning Specialist, Coordinator

Institutions and student support services are well equipped to support traditional teaching methodologies, but as times change and technology evolves, students are mediating technology in ways never imagined. New devices, more robust software applications, and not to mention viral, massive communication networks are all reasons why traditional learning environments are supplemented by the growing use of technology. Wait a minute. If you think "viral" only refers to the diagnosis of a medical condition, think again. You may be one of the many adults, professionals, or even educators who are behind the curve of educational technology. Just in case you are not already familiar; "viral" refers to the rate and scope of how information can be passed on from one person or machine to the next.



Rudy Molina

The SALT Center has a long history of providing innovative services to all learners, specifically those with learning and attention challenges. The SALT Center has embarked on an exciting journey to find new ways to incorporate technology into the academic lives of students.

In alignment with the literature published in the area New Media Studies, distance learning is being redefined. In the recent past, distance learning has been defined as providing access to educational courses or programs for students who are separated by time and physical location from a teacher by using various types of materials, including, but not limited to, copies of notes, exercises, assignments, and examinations packaged in the form of either a binder, a set of cassette tapes or CD-ROMs, or a set of video tapes that an institution ships out to a distance student. The future of distance learning is much more interactive in nature. Rich virtual learning environments are places where students can learn not only from their instructors, but also from other students. In these environments students also have the opportunity to learn from other expert instructors who they would not have access to otherwise.

Podcasts and More

The University of Arizona (UA) is moving forward with its campaign to have a presence on iTunes U, an Apple product giving higher education institutions a way to provide audio and video content to their students (i.e., presentations, performances, lectures, demonstrations, debates, tours, archival footage). Podcasting has a range of incredible educational uses for all pockets of the campus. For faculty, lectures, break-out sections, and supplemental course material can be offered to students and

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(SALTCasts... continued from page 25)

other constituents twenty-four hours per day. The UA plans to deploy a number of new podcasts highlighting a Faculty Fellow and an Artists' Speaker series in fall 2007.

As an attempt to explore educational uses of this technology for departments within student support services, the UALearning Technologies Center has invited the SALT Center to be part of this initiative.

The SALT Center will soon be launching their new formatted website:

<http://www.salt.arizona.edu>

that will include a new series of podcasts that highlight department announcements, student success stories, academic strategies, and modified versions of academic workshops on topics such as time management, test taking, memory techniques, and stress management.

In addition to SALTCasts, success strategy materials will also be available on interactive web pages. Students will select a topic from a menu containing categories such as study skills, organization, reading, writing, foreign language, etc. Once they have selected a topic they will be able to chart a customized path through a virtual workshop by indicating areas that challenge them the most, taking online quizzes, engaging in relevant activities, and viewing videos of interest. The scope of this virtual workshop website is a vast undertaking, and it will take extensive development to fulfill the vision of full interactivity. At a minimum, partial interactivity offered alongside informational tips on each topic should be accessible by the end of the fall semester of 2007.

Future Direction

The question is not whether there is a future with this new notation of redefined distance learning. Rather the question should be how technology redefines learning. There should not be any doubt that technology will continue to change the face of education. There will be many new, very exciting ways that learners will engage in rich learning virtual environments, and one of them is already in full swing. The UA plans to continue to look into the future of educational technology, and part of this may include the potential use of how three-dimensional, multi-user virtual environments (MUVE), such as Second Life, can be explored as the next frontier for interactive distance learning. Maybe, in the not-too-distant future, the SALT Center may have a place in the virtual world too.

To learn more about distance education and instructional technology for students with learning and attention challenges, or if you would like to support in the development of these endeavors, contact the SALT Center. ◆

Education & Outreach

UA DEPARTMENTS BENEFIT FROM THE SALT MODEL OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT

By Lupe Thompson, Strategic Learning Specialist, Coordinator

The SALT Center provides support to many departments on the campus, and our appeal continues to grow each year. Some of the collaborations, such as those with Undergraduate Admissions, result out of necessity because we share a common goal or program such as New Student Orientation. Other partnerships arise because of needs or situations campus professionals experience when working with unique populations of students.



Lupe Thompson

An exciting collaboration is currently in progress with Fraternity and Sorority Programs in the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership. The goals of the *Greek Life Legacy Project* are to infuse the Greek community with new resources, tools, and opportunities by providing specific programming to individual members. The SALT Center is managing the Aristotle component, which focuses on academic skill building. In many ways the overarching purpose of this collaboration is to change the culture of the Greek community by supporting academic excellence. The SALT Center was honored to be involved in this program by the Dean of Students Office and is currently delivering a pilot program that incorporates strategy intervention and individualized learning support to selected members of the Greek community. We look forward to reporting the outcomes from this pilot in the next academic year.

The SALT Center is again partnering with the School Psychology Program at University of Arizona College of Education. The project offers UA and Pima Community College students and community members an opportunity to receive a diagnostic assessment of their skills free of charge. The assessment is given by doctoral students under the supervision of their professor and may include academic achievement, cognitive processing, and IQ testing. The SALT Center began its collaboration during the Fall 2005 semester. Together, we were able to provide school psychology graduate students in the SERP 679 class, Educational and Psychological Assessment, with the opportunity to work with young adults with learning challenges.

For the last several years, the SALT Center has developed a strong relationship with the Department of Residence Life by presenting at Hall Director training for the past two years. Strategic Learning Specialists have presented on the SALT Center's structure and programs, defined learning and attention challenges, and the characteristics of specific learning challenges such as Asperger's Syndrome and Traumatic Brain Injuries. We also routinely meet with Hall Directors for additional information and support on students we have in common.

Overall, the collaborations with our campus colleagues benefit students directly but then also give our peers an opportunity to learn about the quality work we do and, give us a chance to better understand their work. Lastly, these partnerships help to further define our mission and purpose while also dispelling any myths or misunderstandings about the SALT Center and our students. ♦

COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL GAINS MOMENTUM

By Mary Beth Foster, Strategic Learning Specialist and Rose Wilhite, Strategic Learning Specialist



Mary Beth Foster

The SALT High School Connection program, now entering its third year, continues to provide a transitional stepping stone between a local Tucson high school, Catalina Magnet School, and the University of Arizona SALT Center. In alignment with the University of Arizona's crucial missions to share its expertise with the surrounding community, the SALT Center has frequently endeavored to conduct outreach programs with local schools. In support of this concept, the SALT High School Connection program was established to offer high school students with learning challenges organizational strategies, academic support, assistive technology expertise, and peer mentoring.

Throughout the spring semesters of 2006 and 2007, SALT staff and students visited Catalina High School on a regular basis. The staff presented success strategies while SALT students shared their personal experiences of using these same strategies in the college environment. Presentations covered the following topics: preparation for college, using assistive technology, and study skills covering reading, writing, math, and test taking. Catalina students heard first-hand from SALT students about their own struggles and successes. Having the opportunity to meet college students who have overcome similar academic challenges, the high school students realized that college could be an attainable, realistic goal for their future.

The SALT students excelled in their role as mentors, openly sharing their stories, offering valuable tips, and modeling how students can succeed through determination, hard work, and enthusiasm. At each event where SALT students assisted with presentations, our students heightened their public speaking skills and their level of community involvement while gaining further self-awareness as to which methods have best assisted them throughout their own education.

Each semester, the culminating event of the SALT High School Connection has been a Shadow Day, which serves to hallmark the program's efforts to prepare students for college. These Shadow Days enable Catalina students to attend classes with SALT students at the UA. Many Catalina students remarked afterwards that they could now see themselves attending college when they had previously thought the goal to be impossible. In turn, many SALT students commented on the fulfillment they received from helping students with struggles that they themselves have faced. These students now found themselves in a mentorship role where they could offer expertise and encouragement after a lifetime of being the recipient of such support.

The peer leadership the SALT students provided has proven instrumental in inspiring the high school students to aspirations of higher education. In the end of the year evaluations, conducted via video and written format, the Catalina students indicated major increases in standardized test scores, grades, and interest in school. They were eager to continue participating in the program and excited about the prospect of attending college. Some students reported that they had been close to giving up, even considering dropping out of school, and now they were on track to graduate high school early with plans to attend college.

These outcomes from the SALT High School Connection project are a good example of how the University of Arizona can help its community with the ongoing issue of high school graduation rates. In fact, this program has received overwhelming support from the Tucson City Council, Tucson Unified School District, and the Division of Student Affairs. The hope is to institutionalize this program model at Catalina Magnet School and then take it down to both the middle and elementary school systems.

(continued on next page)

(Collaboration... continued from previous page)

Most of the students who worked through the program had previously considered college to be out of their realm of possibilities. Seeing other students who had faced similar obstacles in their education but were now doing well in college provided the impetus for the students to view college as an option that they too could experience. The partnership between Catalina High School and the SALT Center, while designed to offer high school students academic and technological support, also offers our own SALT students a way to shine. Through our efforts of outreach, we have strived to improve our larger community while preparing young students for college. The Catalina students who benefit from the learning strategies and mentoring they receive today are in fact prospective college students who might otherwise dismiss any notion of attending a post-secondary institution. Not only will these students be better prepared academically to face the challenges of learning in a university, they may also emulate the SALT students who have shared their wisdom, taken them to some of their own classes, and assured them that determination paves the way to their future success. ◆

(Fostering Students' Health... continued from page 8)

others can be an effective way to develop coping skills and manage the symptoms of ADHD.

- Diet: Some people believe that ADHD is caused by food additives and that limiting exposure to preservatives and dyes can help reduce symptoms.

Quick tips to help get organized:

- Keep the same routine every day. Place a schedule somewhere visible and include all activities for the day including class and homework time.
- Have a place for commonly used items so they won't be misplaced and lost.
- Use a planner to write down all assignments and responsibilities.

Depression: Unlike the normal ups and downs in life, individuals that have diagnosable depression suffer from symptoms that dramatically impact their life for periods of weeks, months or years. Depression can take many forms, but the most common depressive disorders are:

- Major Depression: This consists of symptoms such as feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, guilt, and worthlessness, along with a loss of interest in previously enjoyed hobbies and activities, decreased energy, difficulty concentrating, insomnia, weight loss or gain, thoughts of death or suicide, irritability, and persistent physical symptoms such as headaches or upset stomach.
- Dysthymia: Dysthymia involves similar symptoms to major depression but involves long term chronic symptoms.
- Bipolar Disorder: This illness involves cycling mood changes from a depressive state to a manic state which is characterized by decreased need for sleep, grandiose notions, increased talking, racing thoughts, increased energy, and poor judgment.

The most common treatments for depression are psychotherapy and medication, often used in combination.

Tips to help yourself if you start feeling depressed and to use while getting treatment:

- Let your family and friends help. Avoid the urge to isolate yourself.
- Participate in activities that make you feel better such as exercising, going to a movie or sports event, or participating in religious or social group activities.
- Talk to someone you can trust about how you are feeling.
- Break large tasks into small ones and set realistic goals.
- Postpone significant decisions until after the depression has lifted.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for help!** Talk to your family doctor, mental health center, or campus health center if you are feeling depressed.

Where to go: The SALT Center provides free psychological services through our in house psychologist, and through a partnership with the NAU counseling program. Students can also seek support at the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) program through Campus Health.

National Institute of Mental Health: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/index.cfm> ◆

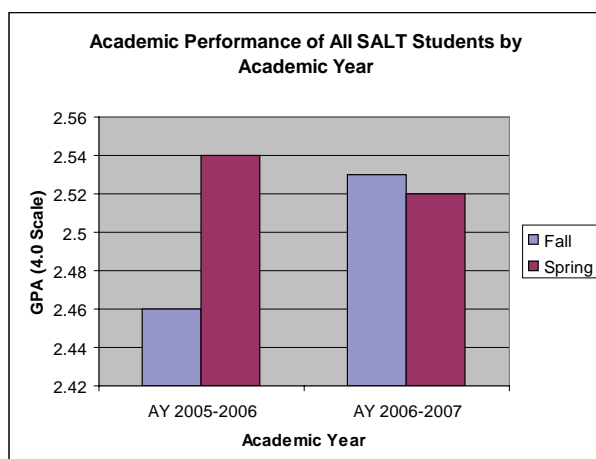
RESEARCH & ASSESSMENT

DATA ANALYSIS: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

By Rudy Molina, Strategic Learning Specialist, Coordinator

Academic Performance: Historical

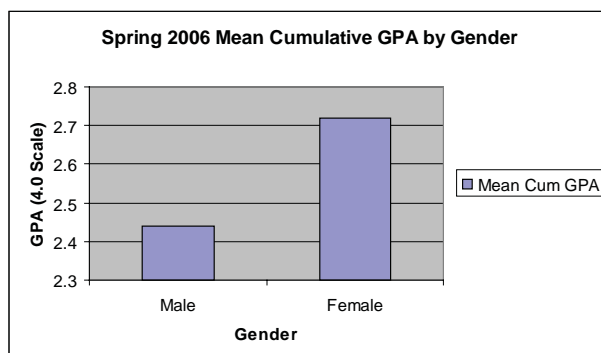
The SALT Center prides itself on the many highly qualified professionals who work at the center for the primary goal to promote student success. There are a range of both academic and social learning opportunities that foster success at the University of Arizona. The SALT Center believes these support services impact student learning and academic performance.



Source: Based on cumulative GPAs of SALT students who enrolled between fall 2005 and spring 2007.

Academic Performance: By Gender

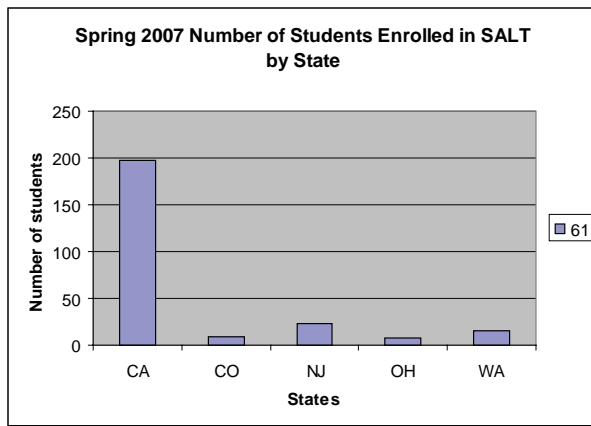
The SALT Center has found that females are outperforming their male peers. This is in alignment with a similar nationwide trend of academic performance at the post-secondary level.



Source: Based on cumulative GPAs of 506 SALT students who enrolled in the spring 2006.

Enrollment: By State

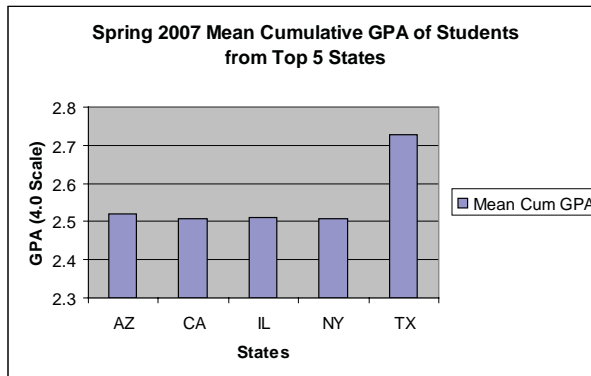
Students come from a wide variety of regions of the country, representing over 280 high schools from across the country. Students have a many reasons for enrolling in The SALT Center, but it is not uncommon that students enroll because they feel it is the best match between their academic needs and the services the SALT Center provides.



Source: Based on 472 SALT students who enrolled in the spring 2007.

Academic Performance: By States

Of the top five states students come from, Texas has the highest mean cumulative GPA when compared to Arizona, California, Illinois, and New York.

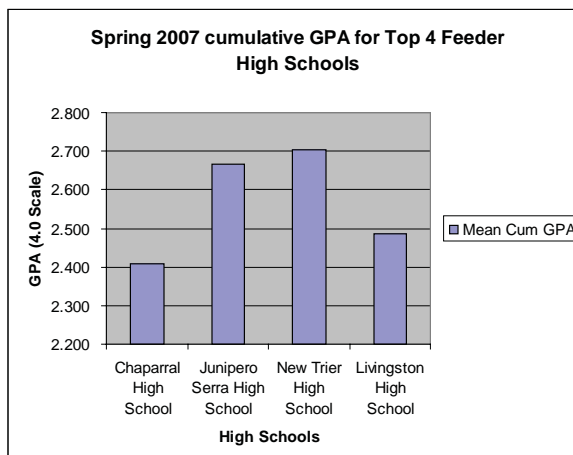


Source: Based on cumulative GPAs of 472 SALT students who enrolled in the spring 2007.

Academic Performance: By High Schools

The graph below demonstrates the academic achievement for the most recent class from identified top four feeder high schools representing four major regions across the US (Central Arizona, California Bay Area, Houston, Texas, and the Greater New Jersey Area).

Other major feeder high schools include: Brophy College Prep, St. Francis High School, Alexander-Smith Academy, Memorial Senior High School, Highland Park High School.



Source: Based on cumulative GPAs of 472 SALT students who enrolled in the spring 2007.



DEFINING LEARNING OUTCOMES OF SALT STUDENTS

By Laurel Grigg, Strategic Learning Specialist

The SALT Center is committed to refining our practice and improving our quality of service. Our efforts over the past six months have focused on developing specific outcomes by which to measure student learning. A committee within our Education and Learning Support unit has worked carefully to define a set of outcomes we hope all students will achieve during their time with the SALT Center. These outcomes reflect the longstanding mission and goals of the department and help renew our focus and guide our practice. They are listed as follows:

Objective #1: Understand Strengths and Weaknesses

- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Explain how s/he compensates for weaknesses
- Engage others and utilize problem solving skills for self-advocacy

Objective #2: Utilize Academic Strategies

- Demonstrate knowledge of multiple academic strategies
 - Ex: Time management, organization, reading, writing, memory, test preparation, test taking, goal setting
- Select an appropriate strategy for a given situation independently
- Adapt or modify strategies to fit individual needs

Our many years of experience working with students illustrate that mastery of these skills leads to increased success inside and outside of academics. It is the university and the SALT Center's goal to play a part in students' development. We hope that, through the guidance of the entire staff, students will be able to perform these skills with increasing levels of complexity and mastery. Assessing these learning outcomes will also allow us to gauge the efficacy of our programs and services and ensure that we continue to provide top-notch academic support to students with learning and attention challenges. ♦

DID YOU KNOW...

Thanks to our generous donors we raised \$ 297,000 last year to support our work with students.

The SALT Center has the largest professional staff of any academic support program for students with learning and attention challenges.

Our professional staff hails from all over the US and two countries.

Our professional staff has 174 years of combined experience at the University of Arizona.

Within our professional staff we have 10 people with Master's degrees, two with Doctoral degrees, and several more pursuing advanced graduate degrees.

Over 50% of the staff at the SALT Center attended or is currently attending the University of Arizona.

The SALT Center has one of the largest facilities in the country for students with learning and attention challenges with over 16,000 square feet of space used to deliver innovative programs and services.

Development & Fundraising

MAKING A COMMITMENT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE - BOB AND PERRIN ZAMARRIPA

by Diane Quinn, Director of Development

If you wanted to make a difference in the life of a young person struggling with learning challenges, what would you do? For Bob and Perrin Zamarripa of Rancho Santa Fe, California, it was an easy choice. In early 2007, they established the Rayburn E. Orr SALT Scholarship Endowment with a gift of \$100,000 to the University of Arizona Foundation. Named in memory of Perrin's father, the fund was created to provide scholarship assistance for students who experience learning and attention challenges and who do not have the financial resources to pay for SALT services but wish to benefit from SALT Center programs.



Diane Quinn

When asked what motivated their philanthropy, both Bob and Perrin point to their good fortune. "It is our opportunity to help those that don't have the resources themselves. We are fortunate; we have been lucky and have the means to afford the SALT Center and make it available for our son. Not everyone is this fortunate and we realize that we can help kids from getting lost," mentions Bob. "Everyone needs a little help along the way and we realize this is our chance to give back for those that helped us," added Perrin. The Zamarripas have always wanted to focus on education, particularly for minority students, by providing scholarships.

Bob points to two defining moments resulting in their decision to establish this scholarship endowment. The first came when they attended the SALT Center's 25th Anniversary Gala dinner. They were moved by the number of SALT students and alumni in attendance. Seeing the participants in the program, as well as the many community supporters in attendance, made an impact. Keynote remarks made that evening by Dr. Ned Hallowell, author of *Driven to Distraction* and founder of the Hallowell Centers, further impressed upon them just how important the SALT Center was and the unique role it played in the success of people who are challenged to learn in traditional ways.

The second motivating factor resulted from conversations with members of the SALT staff when it was pointed out just how many people with learning issues fail to succeed in school, often because they are not exposed to the resources that could help them most. Bob and Perrin knew their own son had been fortunate to be able to participate in SALT. They wanted to make sure other students would have that same opportunity. Further, they knew that Perrin's father, Rayburn Orr, a successful businessman who spent much of his life in Scottsdale, AZ, had experienced his own learning challenges. Coming from a well educated family, Orr had been unable to finish his college degree while struggling with challenges his school was unprepared to meet.

"SALT gives aid to students so that they can see 'you are bright, you can be a success, and you can be productive.' It gives people confidence," said Bob. Pointing to what she believes is the program's uniqueness; Perrin adds "it is a program that should be perpetuated throughout education." Asked what suggestion they would make to others considering a gift to support the SALT Center, the Zamarripas respond simply, "What better way to look out for the future of our youth than to support this world class program?"

In Appreciation

The SALT Center gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions of the following friends from September 2006 through August 2007. We feel fortunate to receive these expressions of respect and appreciation for our program and will use these gifts in support of both programming and scholarships.

Albert H. Cohn Foundation
David Cone

Ms. Mary Jo Alderson
Dr. & Ms. Kyriekos Aleck

Ms. Donna Alvarado
American Orthopedic & Sports Medicine

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Mr. & Mrs. Michael Armstrong

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Kathleen Beck

Bernie & Cindy Benson
Mr. & Mrs. Luciano Benvin

Mr. Robert Bernel
Ms. Karen Bloom

Dr. Kris Bosworth
Linda Bowers

(continued on page 34)

(In Appreciation... continued from page 33)

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Dr. Thomas & Roberta Brown
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Scottsdale Pediatric Center
Dr. Kathryn Schaefer
Mr. & Mrs. John Shepherd Jr.
Ms. Kathy Shook
Daniel & Leslee Shooster

(continued on page 35)

Graduates & Alumni

SALT HOSTS AN EVENT IN NEW YORK CITY

by Jeff Orgera, Director

The SALT Center is very interested in staying connected to its growing group of alumni who reside all over the country. In addition, we encourage our alumni to serve as ambassadors for the program by sharing their experiences at the University of Arizona and with the SALT Center. A special event took place in early May 2007 that created multiple opportunities for staff members, parents of incoming students, current parents, and alumni to get together and share information.

Thanks to Joel Levy, a current member of the SALT Advisory Board and a parent of a SALT/UA alumnus, we had a terrific space to host the event on the west side of Manhattan. Over forty people attended and enjoyed refreshments while mingling with alumni of our program, asking questions about the UA and SALT, and sharing their experiences as a parent of a child with learning and attention challenges.

What was unique about this event was that the parents of incoming freshman were able to ask questions of current parents of SALT students, our alumni, and the professional staff. Overall, the event was a terrific success and we look forward to hosting similar programs in the coming year.

In case you were wondering about what some of our current alumni are doing now we have one working on Wall Street as a stockbroker, another a Master's degree in Rabbinical Studies, another selling ad space for a real estate development trade magazine, and another teaching English to high school students in Japan! ♦

SALT ALUMNI - WE NEED YOU

Let us know what you are up to! Go to the SALT website and complete the online form to let us know what you are doing. SALT wants to hear from you. Please contact Jeff Orgera at saltctr@email.arizona.edu if you are willing to be a resource to current and prospective SALT students by sharing your experiences.

(In Appreciation... continued from page 34)

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Ms. Trudy Sloane-Farrell
Ms. Amanda Smith
Mrs. Donna Smith
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