

# From the Editor

**T**his issue emphasizes students' stories—from the stories of students based on their perceptions of different classes (Gentry and Owen), to the stories of two students learning mathematics in different ways (Hekimoglu). We hear the story of one very special student who has a gift and a learning disability and how he found a way to award-winning achievement (Neu, Baum, and Cooper). Finally, we have the story, found unpublished in the archives of E. Paul Torrance's work, of two groups of adults who were predicted to be creative from childhood.

All of the articles in this issue compare characteristics of gifted students with characteristics and experiences of nongifted students. Throughout this issue, we are reminded of the need for special curricula and environments for exceptional students. Each study seems to echo the notion, stated clearly in Torrance's study, that high ability combined with extraordinary domain-related skills are not enough in and of themselves for an individual to reach his or her full potential. The idea is reinforced that high-ability students need an appropriate environment, which is different from what may be appropriate for the majority of students. They also need a clear vision, or crystallizing moment, that brings an internal vision and drive in order to live up to their full potential.

Each comparative study approaches this prospect from a different angle. In "Creative Achievements of the Sociometric Stars in a 30-Year Study," Torrance compares "sociometric stars," people whose high school peers thought they would achieve, with those he called "the beyonders" to discover what made the difference between their levels of creative fulfillment. He found both internal and external forces that could drive a person to greatness or could limit that person's life's work.

Both Hekimoglu's and Gentry and Owen's studies compare gifted students with regular students in the school setting. In "Conducting a Teaching Experiment With a Gifted Student," Hekimoglu compares "gifted" and "average" students in an isolated setting to explore relative characteristics, determining that the needs of the two kinds of students are as dif-

ferent as their abilities. In exploring the interactions between two types of students, Hekimoglu found vast differences in their basic ability and desire to move beyond the minimum instruction. The two students would clearly not be learning effectively in the same environment. In "Secondary Student Perceptions of Classroom Quality: Instrumentation and Differences Between Advanced/Honors and Nonhonors Classes," Gentry and Owen compare student perceptions of various classes and come to a similar conclusion—that exceptional students have needs that match their abilities. Not only are the students different, but their perceptions about school and their classes are extremely different from their peers'.

Finally, in "Talent Development in Science: A Unique Tale of One Student's Journey," Neu, Baum, and Cooper follow the journey of a twice-exceptional student to show the importance of a person-environment fit. This story illustrates how a single student can thrive or fail depending on the support and appropriateness of his or her environment, whether the environmental changes are informal changes in instruction instigated by an insightful teacher or formal changes resulting from a structural shift such as moving from a lecture-oriented high school chemistry class to a lab-based college one. The authors also explore the student's inner experiences and reinforce Torrance's insight that the creator must find meaning in the work in order to excel.

Many elements go into success within the classroom, the individual, and the world beyond. Ability can very easily be overshadowed by a misunderstanding world, whether that world is internal or external. Exceptional students have both extra abilities and extra needs. In some cases, even "average" abilities may be missed if the exceptionalities are not addressed. Through the stories of gifted students—in groups, pairs, or alone—we are reminded that our students are individuals whose needs we have an obligation to recognize and meet.

Kyung Hee Kim  
Editorial Assistant