



# COE Bear Tracks



*COE Bears Make an Impact and "Leave Our Mark"*

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## **Welcome to our new Outreach section in Bear Tracks**

The purpose of this section is to highlight COE endeavors in the areas of recruitment, retention, and partnerships. The exciting news is that faculty and staff are designing and implementing successful outreach efforts, however, sometimes their efforts are not always known outside their programs.

For instance, this month we learn that [Brandon Aigner](#), [Dennis Rudnick](#), and [Stacie Finley](#) volunteered as judges for the Educators Rising Competition early in March. The National Education Association hosts this event for high school students interested in becoming teachers. Brandon, Dennis, and Stacie were able to give feedback to the competitors to help them prepare for the next level and engage with other faculty around the state. During this event, they were able to give a presentation to the students about MSU's education programs.

To address the issue of teacher retention, [Sarah Jean Baker](#) shared that monthly mentoring/support meetings for ECE alum will begin April 6. Current ECE students are also encouraged to attend the meetings with the plan to create mentors between alum and current students. [Chloe Bolyard](#) and [Jennice Wright](#) are planning similar events with ELE alum and students. In addition, many of the faculty in CEFS are in the process of planning a listening circle/healing space with their students to mark a year of pandemic living.

Pathways designed to help paraprofessionals become certified teachers is a topic garnering attention in higher education. The COE has such a program in CLSE known as Pathways for Paraprofessionals that allows a para seeking a BSED in K-12 Special Education to complete a degree while continuing to work as a para. To qualify, paras must be employed by a school district in a K-12 mild/moderate cross-categorical special

education classroom, have principal approval, and have a minimum of 60 hours of college credit with a 2.5 GPA. There is also a provision for paras who already have a bachelor's degree. You will find more information on the program website.

There will be highlights next month of other activities, programs, or plans taking place in the COE. Please let me know if you are involved in any type of outreach, so we can give your program the recognition it deserves. [CathyPearman@MissouriState.edu](mailto:CathyPearman@MissouriState.edu)