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Dr. Mary Hollowell Awarded Fulbright Scholarship

Morrow, Ga., May 7, 2012 – Clayton State University Associate Professor of Education Dr. Mary Hollowell will be returning to the People’s Republic of China... as the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship.

Hollowell’s grant, a Fulbright Teaching Scholarship, is for the spring and summer of 2013. She will be teaching American Educational Policy and American Children’s Literature in English to Chinese college students at a location still to be determined. Clayton State faculty members have previously earned a half dozen short-term Fulbright-Hays Grants, but this is the University’s first Fulbright Teaching Scholarship.

Journeying to China from Peachtree City with Hollowell will be daughters Kate and Sophie Mei. Husband Scott Hollowell, who has business commitments in the spring, will join the rest of the family later. The Hollowells have previously journeyed to China to adopt daughter Sophie Mei.

“In essence, we’ll be an ambassador family,” says Clayton State’s newest Fulbright Scholar.

Hollowell’s award comes from the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB), the presidentially appointed 12-member board that is responsible for establishing worldwide policies for the Fulbright Program and for selection of Fulbright recipients. Hollowell’s grant is made possible through funds that are appropriated annually by the U.S. Congress and, in many cases, by contributions from partner countries and/or the private sector.

“The U.S. Department of State describes the Fulbright program as, ‘...the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the United States Government,’” says Clayton State President Dr. Thomas J. Hynes. “Professor Hollowell’s award recognizes her contributions as teacher and scholar, and brings praise for her and Clayton State University. We are honored that she is our colleague.”

In his recommendation for Hollowell’s Fulbright, Dr. Nasser Momayezi, dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Clayton State, had this to say about her professional efforts:

"Her work is excellent and stands neck-to-neck with her peers. She has taught various education courses with distinction and provided excellent service and leadership for the Department of Teacher Education, College of Arts and Sciences, and Clayton State University as a whole. She is a top-notch teacher, researcher and superb colleague who is admired by faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Hollowell will no doubt be an excellent ambassador of and wonderful addition to your internationally recognized program."

A well-known and respected children’s advocate, Hollowell published *The Forgotten Room*, a book covering ethnographic case study of a public alternative school which highlights solitary confinement, in 2009.

Following the publication of *The Forgotten Room*, Hollowell became an advocate against solitary confinement cells in public schools, and her efforts, along with those of other child advocates, led the Georgia Department of Education to ban the practice of school seclusion on July 8, 2010.

“*The Forgotten Room* is a unique and somber story of students on parole, and it reveals what happens to them and their hardworking teachers when they are put in crumbling school buildings and overcrowded conditions,” explains Hollowell. “It’s dark and gritty. I saw students threaten and assault teachers. We had lockdowns, SWAT team visits, gang fighting, drug dealing, and students on rampages, but we also had oases of peace in the classrooms of exemplary teachers.”

A former public school science teacher and museum director of education, and a member of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, Hollowell was awarded the 2010 Equity & Social Justice Advocacy Award from the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), on the nomination by fellow Clayton State faculty member, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education Dr. Mari Roberts. In her nomination of Hollowell, Roberts wrote:

“Hollowell’s successful advocacy efforts against an egregious human rights violation include blogging against solitary confinement on her publisher’s website, the distribution of flyers urging constituents to lobby legislators to support *The Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act*, and presentations of her powerful cell photographs at Georgia NAME conferences, National Youth At-Risk conferences, and the National Archives at Atlanta. She created a personal website at www.theforgottenroom.com, and her advocacy efforts have been broadcasted in university press releases and Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) newsletters.”

A unit of the University System of Georgia, Clayton State University is an outstanding comprehensive metropolitan university located 15 miles southeast of downtown Atlanta.

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