

Nominee: *Dr. Elizabeth Sandell: Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education*

Nominator: *Samantha J. Tupy samantha.tupy@mnsu.edu*

Fall 2010-Spring 2011 was my first experience on a research team. I was fortunate to have Dr. Sandell as my mentor. Dr. Sandell was approachable and available whenever we needed her guidance. She guided us through our research experience flawlessly. Dr. Sandell kept an eye out for any opportunity for us to succeed in our research. It is because of Dr. Sandell that we are presenting at the NCUR and the URC. She molded us into critical thinkers and broadened our knowledge base. Dr. Sandell is serious about teaching and that is what makes her amazing. She cares that we learn and that we know how to apply the new knowledge. Dr. Sandell not only taught us more than we could have expected to learn, but she did it with a grace and excitement.

Dr. Sandell enjoys research and education. This is why we worked together seamlessly. She promoted opportunities for our success, notifying us of scholarships, grants, and opportunities to share our research project. She promoted our independence while remaining available and guiding us as needed. Dr. Sandell assisted us with our IRB proposal, Grant Application, and the URC and NCUR applications. She also helped us with the application to a Fellowship in New Orleans and invited us to participate in a Panel at MSU with fellow researchers and professors. The Panel was a great opportunity that I was glad to partake in. It let my research partner and I know how interested others are with what we did our research on. To see the interest and excitement encouraged us to promote our research and prepare for the conferences.

With Dr. Sandell's guidance we applied for and received a \$2,000 dollar grant from the Mankato Foundation at Minnesota State University. We also applied for and received a travel grant to go to Ithaca, New York for the NCUR. This would not have been a possible opportunity without the assistance for funding.

Dr. Sandell helped mold my abilities to become a better student, leader, and researcher. I have also learned from her how to work on a team productively. I learned things about power point, computers, and successful speaking styles from her. She taught us what is important in research and how to multitask with research, work, and our education.

I am very proud of our research project "Change in Cultural Competency among Undergraduate students during an Intentional Human Relations Experience". I never thought that I would be presenting at a conference about our research, but Dr. Sandell made that possible. Dr. Sandell was a great support system for my research partner and me in more ways than one. Our research meetings were productive and fun. If you heard laughter from her office, it just meant that it was another productive and fun day working on the research project. We were lucky to have a mentor that was not only a great leader, but has become a friend of ours. She is always ready to help and eager to make a difference. I am sad to say that our year of working together is almost over; however I hope to stay in touch with Dr. Sandell and my research partner. We all have grown so much because of one another. Dr. Sandell deserves recognition for everything that she has done for us.