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CROSS CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS
As a computer scientist and a champion for accessibility, Dr. Guario Salivia works across campus to come up with tech solutions that work for all.

PARTNERS IN RESEARCH AND IN LIFE
Married Communication Studies professors team up to understand race, expression and what it means to belong.

SOCIAL ISSUES IN CLASS AND BEYOND
Whether in class or in the community, Sarah Epplen and Kristie Campana use their academic and professional skills to start conversations about race, immigration and identity.

GETTING AN EDUCATION IN CUBA
Ruth Dawley-Carr takes lessons learned from multiple trips to Cuba and applies them in her Minnesota State Mankato classroom.

A CONVERSATION WITH BYRON PIKE, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Byron Pike became the first representative from the College of Business to present his original research before colleagues and community members as part of the Douglas R. Moore Lecture Series.

A HINT OF SUCCESS
Angela Monson’s unique teaching tool is a boon for precision in dental hygiene instruction.
From the Associate Vice President of Research and Dean of Graduate Studies

I’m pleased to present the latest issue of FRONTIERS, a production of the College of Graduate Studies and Research that recognizes our Maverick faculty and students who are implementing their big ideas on campus, in the community and throughout the world.

As you read through this publication, you’ll find examples of collaborations happening on this campus that serve the common good. Through meaningful research, they are solving real-world problems with global applications.

For example, you’ll meet Angela Monson, who has invented a first-to-market, high-tech training tool for dental hygienists. And Guario Salivia, a computer scientist, working tirelessly to improve accessibility to technology for students with disabilities.

At Minnesota State Mankato, our big ideas also come in the form of important conversations around social issues like race, immigration, and identity. Read on to meet faculty members across disciplines working out what it means to live as 21st-century citizens of the world.

Our goal in the College of Graduate Studies and Research is to bolster these efforts by supporting faculty members in the development, funding and scholarly pursuit of their work, and ensuring they conduct their research in full compliance with the highest ethical and regulatory standards.

At Minnesota State Mankato, our doors are always open to community partners—like the American Thyroid Association, which you’ll read about on page 4. We welcome research and development ideas like these that can advance the shared values of our institution and your enterprise.

I am deeply proud of the scholarly and creative accomplishments of Minnesota State Mankato faculty, and students. I hope you enjoy reading about their collaborations and breakthroughs as much as I have.

We invite you to visit us in person or at grad.mnsu.edu to learn more about our big ideas—in and out of the classroom.

Dr. Barry J. Ries
• Undergraduate Research Symposium Highlights Student Work
Almost 200 Minnesota State Mankato undergraduate students presented their research as part of the 19th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium held on campus last April. Students gave oral and poster presentations on topics ranging from chemistry to dance.

• Business Faculty Highlight Research
The College of Business’ annual Research Day promotes and celebrates outstanding business research by COB faculty. Last year’s event, held in March, highlighted presentations by 2016-2017 award recipients, as well as brief overviews of research that will take place by 2018-2019 recipients.

• Minnesota State Mankato Awarded NIFA Grant
Minnesota State Mankato will team up with South Central College and Riverland Community College to make use of a $30,000 National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant. The funds will aid in establishing agriculture as an emerging area of distinction within the University and region.

• ACLU President Leads Discussion on Civil Liberties
Author and at grad.mnsu.edu national president Susan Herman delivered a lecture to students, faculty and community members last spring. The lecture and subsequent discussion focused on the continuing struggle for civil liberties in the United States.

• More Special Education Teachers
Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education, up to 50 new early childhood special education teachers will receive a Minnesota State Mankato education over the next five years. Minnesota State Mankato will partner with Mankato Area Public Schools, Bloomington Public Schools and St. Paul Public Schools to do its part in addressing the ECSE teacher shortage in the state and nationwide.

• Bush Foundation Grant Trains Mentor Teachers
Mentor teachers play a crucial role in teacher candidate development. A $150,000 Bush Foundation Grant will allow Minnesota State Mankato and its 10 partner schools to train 140 mentor teachers in school districts throughout the state.

• Minnesota State Mankato Hosts Mexican Leaders
Mexican leaders in higher education, business, industry and government spent three days in Mankato as part of a collaboration between Minnesota State Mankato and the Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES), the Consulate of Mexico in Saint Paul and the Minnesota Trade Office. Leaders met to discuss opportunities for the exchange of innovation, talent and economic development between Mexico and Minnesota.

• Studying Songbirds and Alzheimer’s Disease
Rachel Cohen, an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, and three colleagues published a paper detailing how new neurons in songbirds are integrated into the existing circuit. The research could have positive implications for diseases like Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s, in which neurons die off and connections aren’t easy to reconstruct.

• Somali Artist on Campus
Somali singer and artist Nimco Yasin visited Minnesota State Mankato’s campus last spring as part of a grant aimed at increasing understanding and awareness of Muslim cultures through performing arts. Yasin collaborated with Minnesota State Mankato music students, as well as presenting her work to the University community.

• Boston University Professor of Chemistry on Campus
Boston University professor Malika Jeffries-El delivered two lectures at Minnesota State Mankato last fall, highlighting her work as a chemist, her passion for science and her path to academia.

• Athletic Training Professor Honored
Director of athletic training, Pat Sexton, was inducted into the National Athletic Trainer’s Hall of Fame in July 2016. The distinction comes on the heels of a number of awards and honors Sexton has earned during his 35-year career.

• Department of Automotive and Manufacturing Engineering Technology Students Complete Design/Race Challenge
Students from Minnesota State’s Formula SAE Team finished 17th out of 120 teams from around the world. The design competition tested students’ abilities to build a Formula One-style racecar.
Minnesota State Mankato’s success rate on grants and contracts has improved substantially, which means more money is being put to use for real-world research projects.

**FY17 Best Year**

$10.3 million AWARDS

Overall success rate of 75%

which means 3 out of 4 grants/contracts that were applied for were received

**Funding in FY 2017**

Total: $10,347,649.22

- College of Arts & Humanities: $184,844
- College of Social & Behavioral Science: $569,697
- College of Allied Health & Nursing: $1,132,562
- Strategic Business: $1,164,421
- College of Education: $1,393,559
- Institutional Diversity: $120,573
- College of Business: $25,000
- Other: $61,649
- Academic Affairs: $2,995,110
- College of Science, Engineering & Technology: $2,700,235

**Impact Statements**

**Faculty Research**

Improving Vertical Axis Wind Turbine (VAWT) Performance with Placement Strategies:

$546,691

Our Mechanical Engineering faculty are working with Xcel Energy on where to place wind turbines.

**Student Success**

DASH Emergency Grant Program:

$420,000

Students can apply for funding when an unexpected expense threatens their ability to stay in school.

**Community Collaboration**

APAP Building Bridges: Arts, Culture and Identity Program:

$125,850

This grant creates cultural understanding by bringing Somali musicians to Minnesota.
When Dr. Guarionex (Guario) Salivia, an assistant professor of Computer Information Sciences, talks about his work, you get the sense that, apart from teaching and advising, he’s not often holed up in his office.

“I am basically running around campus all the time,” he says.

In some ways, it’s the nature of Salivia’s specialty—human computer interaction, it’s a highly interdisciplinary branch of CIS that requires Salivia to seek out collaborations. His passion for making technology accessible to individuals with disabilities only feeds his eagerness to find solutions that work for students across campus.

“The good thing about Guario is that he has a very interdisciplinary mind,” says Dr. Jose-Javier Lopez, a Geography professor. “He has a very broad academic background. He can work very well with natural scientists, but he’s a humanist too, so that helps him work with people in areas of literature and technical writing. He’s a person who is well-versed in many areas.”

Salivia has participated in a number of interdisciplinary collaborations during his time at Minnesota State Mankato. Here’s a look at three that have had positive results both on campus and off.

Accessible Maps

One of Salivia’s most recent projects was born out of a conversation with Lopez.

Years ago, Lopez taught a visually impaired student who was a passionate learner and excelled in class. “He was able to master the theory quite well,” says Lopez. “But, whenever I showed a map he could not participate as actively. That’s something that stayed on my mind for several years.”

Lopez brought up the topic over lunch with Salivia, and the two began to brainstorm how they could create a map for the blind. The result, now in the prototype stage, is specially programmed tablets that use sounds, voice identification and vibration to allow students to explore geography without the use of sight.

Students use their hands to explore a map; the surface of the tablet vibrates in certain areas in response. The map also voices the names of locations, like mountain ranges, rivers and geographical landmarks.

“Guario was also able to link different locations on the map with sounds, so for example, the visually impaired student touches a lake then the tablet will emit a sound similar to waves or water,” Lopez says.

American Thyroid Association Calculator

The American Thyroid Association was seeking a mobile update to an online calculator that allows doctors to calculate Calcitonin and Carcinoembryonic Antigen (CEA) Doubling Time; Change in Thyroid Nodule Volume; and Thyroid Cancer Staging. They turned to Professor of Biology and thyroid specialist Dr. David Sharlin and Salivia to develop the mobile app.

Through the process of developing the app, Salivia and another colleague, Dr. Saeed Moaveni, discovered a gross underestimation of tumor volume based on the tumor’s current volume and were able to point it out to the ATA.

“This clearly indicates that Guario was not just passively developing the mobile application, but fully engaged in its science,” Sharlin says. “He is one the best collaborators I have ever worked with and because of this, I will find reasons to work with him in the future.”

The iOS version of the ATA Calculator was released in 2014, and Salivia is currently at work building the Android app.

The UX Lab

User Experience (or UX) gauges a person’s overall ease or enjoyment when using a product or website. Measuring it can give companies and web designers an idea of the efficacy of their products and messages.

“I can prove very simply with a couple of math equations that there’s a big economic benefit to testing things early and testing things often,” Salivia says.

Thanks to Salivia, Minnesota State Mankato has its own UX Lab, which opened in the fall of 2015 with three primary goals: to act as a classroom resource for teaching user experience and usability; to foster a usability culture University-wide; and to provide testing facilities for local industry professionals.

Salivia set up the lab as a joint venture between CIS, Technical Communications and Information Technology Solutions (ITS)
using Strategic Priority Funding. When that ended, he took on a new partner: the student-run consulting firm, Bureau 507.

It’s a mutually beneficial partnership in that B507 maintains the space and can offer University and external clients high-level UX testing.

“We can train students. We can foster the usability culture, and we can enhance our products by means of conducting research-based testing methodologies,” says Salivia. “The hope is that in time people will realize the benefits you can get from doing UX testing and that it would be ingrained in [future] developments.”

Salivia is a natural collaborator. This is likely because of his area of specialization, his personality or some combination of factors. However, it is clear that he has found the spirit of partnership is reciprocated among his Minnesota State Mankato colleagues.

“It is the people I have interacted with at Minnesota State Mankato who have fostered and supported the collaborations,” he says. “People see the importance of technology being accessible and easy to interact with, which I guess helps them prioritize the type of work I do, thus enabling many projects to come my way.”
Chris Brown and Sachi Sekimoto come from different worlds.

Brown grew up in inner city Chicago, Sekimoto in Tokyo, Japan. They met at the University of New Mexico while working toward doctoral degrees in Intercultural Communication, fell in love and began life together as spouses. Now, as professors in Minnesota State Mankato’s Department of Communication Studies, they’re partners in life and in work.

Sekimoto arrived at Minnesota State Mankato in 2010; she is currently an associate professor. Brown followed a year later and is now an associate professor and the department’s director of graduate studies.

Both focus their research, in part, on race and cultural identity—though as expected, they come at the topics from different angles. “I take more of an empirical approach,” says Brown, “where Sachi might take more of a philosophical approach.”

“In how,” Sekimoto explains, “the external world interacts with the internal self.”

Exploring Common Ground

Although their cultural identities were formed on different continents, Brown and Sekimoto began to see similarities in the way they related to speaking Standard American English and found common ground in the way they both learned to approach speaking and communicating as “outsiders.”

“For him as an African-American person there is that history that says, Black English or Ebonics is not an educated form of English expression,” says Sekimoto. “And for me as a foreigner, the marker of my foreignness comes down not only to my physical appearance as an Asian person, but also my accent. So for both of us, speaking English is always an experience of race at the same time.”

In their recent paper titled “A Phenomenology of the Racialized Tongue: Embodiment, Language, and the Bodies that Speak,” Brown and Sekimoto use their own personal experiences to explore the “performative effects of disciplining our bodies to speak Standard American English as a second language and dialect.”

“It’s based on a phenomenology of speaking,” says Brown. “It has to do not just with the act of speaking and the use of words, but how we physically engage the process of speaking: how we use our tongues, how wide we open our mouths, how we use our lips.”

“Not only just speaking English, but in that struggle to speak ‘properly,’ we kind of experience how we are viewed as racial minorities,” Sekimoto adds. “We had those kinds of mutual experiences of struggling to adapt to the dominant culture.”

Expanding the Research

Brown and Sekimoto will spend the 2017-2018 academic year on sabbatical in Tokyo pursuing individual research interests and collaborating to expand their paper into a book based on their own personal narratives.

“This project is very much informed by what we do,” says Brown. “We want to write a book that focuses on race as a sensory experience—race in terms of how we touch, feel, see and heat.”

The couple will build off the work they’ve already done, and include an exploration of autobiographical writings and film.

“So tapping into cross-disciplinary discussions on race, but really focusing on how racial identity gets constructed through various sensory experiences,” says Brown.

“I think it is about how we feel race and how we feel about race,” says Sekimoto.

The concept is still in its early stages, but Brown and Sekimoto are used to developing things in tandem, through conversations at work (“our offices are next to each other,” Brown says) or amid the busyness of home life, which now includes their two-year-old son, Taisei.

“In our case, as partners we can fill in each other’s gaps in knowledge,” Brown says.

“As colleagues in the same field, you are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of your partner, and we can point out things and contribute to each other,” Sekimoto adds. “That way we gain way more than what we would if we worked individually.”
Whether in class or in the community, Sarah Epplen and Kristie Campana use their academic and professional skills to start conversations about race, immigration and identity.

Sarah Epplen:  
Teaching Race When No One Wants to Talk

It’s a pretty standard pedagogical concept: When students are allowed to come to conclusions on their own, rather than being told what and how to think, the information sticks better. This is especially true when it comes to topics and conversations that are hard to have—like those involving race and racism.

“As a grad student, I was learning so much about race and I was also teaching,” says Epplen, who now serves as assistant professor of sociology at Minnesota State Mankato. “I would try to come up with some creative ways to get students to talk about race and I kept finding that students did not want to talk. The day we were going to talk about race my otherwise chatty class would clam up.”

After standing in front of multiple classrooms of students and hearing crickets, Epplen decided to employ some pedagogical tools to help her students open up. One of the most effective activities, which she still uses in her classes, was asking students to free write about why they feel it’s hard to talk about race. Then she asks them to share.

“We start the conversation about race talking about why it’s hard to talk about race,” she says. “Then guess what we’re doing? We’re talking about race. It is going in the side door to get them to talk about it.”

Deepening Understanding Through Writing

Recently, Epplen teamed up with her former graduate school classmate, sociologist Kendra Jason, to put some of her teaching techniques in writing. The article “Interrogating Ourselves in a Racialized World: Using Personal Experience to Improve Students’ Understanding of Racism,” was published in the ASAs “Sociology of Race and Ethnicity” in 2016. The paper outlines strategies for teachers who do not teach race and ethnicity courses to “create learning opportunities for students to analyze their social environments and interrogate how their beliefs, feelings and actions concerning race and racism are shaped by their social worlds.”

The two professors—both of whom teach at majority-white institutions—proposed pedagogical approaches, including free writing, journaling and reflection, and saw learning outcomes that included the ability to distinguish between individual racism and institutional racism; identifying
hegemonic racist ideas; grappling with consequences of racism; and a shift in race-related mental models.

“Only when students are pushed to acknowledge the social sources of their ‘individual’ perspectives will they be equipped to examine society through racialized lenses,” they write.

This is especially true, Epplen has found, for white students.

“There’s a misconception that racial issues only have to do with minorities,” she says. “A lot of white people have the privilege and freedom to walk around the world and never think about race, never think their experiences have anything to do with race. I [try] to shake that up and get students to understand and think about how their lives are shaped by race and a racist system.”

Epplen joined the Minnesota State Mankato Sociology faculty in 2013 and, in addition to teaching, she coordinates the teaching sociology internship program for sociology graduate students.

Kristie Campana: Making Cross-Cultural Connections

An associate professor of Psychology, Campana has been paying attention to conversations about immigrants and refugees over the last few years. Like many of us, she felt inspired to take action.

“I [wanted] to actually do something more substantive than posting angry things on Facebook,” she says.

Campana decided to put her professional and academic training to use in the community. As an industrial/organizational psychologist, Campana is adept at helping companies increase productivity and keep employees happy, safe and motivated.

“Primarily, my background allows me to use my expertise about the workplace to teach other people,” she says. “I can help people write resumes, interview, build professional skills, etc. I can also speak to the value of diversity—when we have more diverse workplaces, we make better decisions.”

It wasn’t a stretch, then, to apply some of those same principles to helping foster mutually beneficial relationships between refugees and local businesses.
Conflict increases when you have a more diverse workplace because you have to work harder to understand and get along with people who are different than you—but this benefits businesses in the long run.

Last year, Campana reached out to the Minnesota Council of Churches’ (MCC) Refugee Services to see how she could help. Refugee Services, a religiously unaffiliated nonprofit, works to support refugees as they resettle in new communities.

Campana has worked on several projects with the organization, but has best leveraged her skills as an IO Psychologist while serving on the Refugee Employer Advisory Committee. She wrote about her experiences in an article for “The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist”:

The goal of this committee is to find community partners who would be willing to hire and mentor new immigrants as they transition into U.S. jobs. … One major problem among employers in our area is that there is a great need for cultural competency. Our workforce is becoming more diverse and global, and many managers continue to hold outdated notions of other cultures. This has led to a number of conflicts and problems within local workplaces where having a better understanding of diversity and its advantages would be helpful.

Bringing the Real World into the Classroom

Back at her day job, Campana has seen a natural inclination in her students to do good in the world.

“One thing that I see in my young students is that they just care about other people, they care about the world around them,” she says. “They’re much more interested in paying attention to diversity, being inclusive and welcoming towards other people.”

As a teacher and advisor, and in her role as faculty administrator of Minnesota State Mankato’s Organizational Effectiveness Research Group, Campana has been able to encourage students to combine the IO skills they are learning with their desire to make a difference.

Looking forward, she hopes to find more ways to use her own IO skills to continue her work connecting business owners and the local refugee community.

“It’s about listening more than talking, and finding commonalities in goals and missions to help people connect on something they agree on, and believe they can mutually benefit one another,” she says.

Teaming Up for Team-Based Learning

In addition to their work around social issues, Epplen and Campana are proponents of innovative teaching styles. The two are teaming up to conduct a study comparing learning outcomes based on the structure and layout of the classroom.

Epplen will deliver a section of Intro to Sociology in a room with auditorium seating, and another in a more flexible room with tables and moveable chairs. They hypothesize that students will be able to better engage in discussions in the flexible classroom.

Based on the fact that team and project-based learning have already proven beneficial for minority students, if the hypothesis holds, it may be one more way to address achievement gaps within those groups, Campana notes.

“Likewise, it builds community when instructors use this approach,” Campana says. “This might be an important way for faculty to retain students after their first year in school, as well as helping traditionally underserved groups to be more successful in college.”
All told, over the last two decades, J. Ruth Dawley-Carr has spent more than a full year in Cuba. It was an undergraduate study abroad trip to Ecuador that initially piqued her interest.

“My host brother was writing his thesis about the Cuban revolution,” says Dawley-Carr, an assistant professor of education studies. “That entire year I lived with him and his family, I learned about important historical and political figures in Cuba, I learned about the revolution, I learned about imperialism. It developed this curiosity in me: What else is going on that I just didn't learn about in any of my education?”

Her first trip to the country was in 1999 as a graduate student. In the subsequent years she's interviewed citizens across the age spectrum and has come to understand and respect a nation that's been largely closed off to average American citizens.

Dawley-Carr's latest research project, conducted over 10 days in early 2016, is a follow-up to her 2015 doctoral dissertation and focuses on the changing landscape of Cuba and the impact that's having on citizens.

“What is new about the research is in large part what has changed between Cuba and the U.S.,” she says. “Now we're looking at a third type of relationship [and] my research is continuing to look at this larger question: What does it mean to be a citizen? And then from there, how do people express citizenship?”

For Cubans, she's found, one of the most important parts of citizenship is taking care of each other.

“Folks in Cuba will say, ‘If you see someone on the road [in trouble], you stop,’” she says. “In Cuba, the perception is they take care of one another, they take that social responsibility [seriously].”

That social responsibility is something, as a second-year faculty member, that she is weaving into the way she educates students at Minnesota State Mankato. She asks her pre-service teachers to work together on teams, sharing talents and abilities, and truly supporting each other as they work through lessons. In doing so, she hopes they'll develop a sense of camaraderie and collectivity that will serve them well in their careers as teachers.

“That connection, that collective power, I think is very much linked to a mindset from Cuba,” she says.
In April, Byron Pike became the first representative from the College of Business to present his original research before colleagues and community members as part of the Douglas R. Moore Lecture Series.

Pike, who has been a member of the faculty of Minnesota State Mankato’s Accounting and Business Law department since 2010, outlined findings from his study, “How Does an Audit or a Forensic Mindset Influence Auditors’ Fraud Risk Assessment and Subsequent Risk Response?”

In the study, Pike primed financial statement auditors to adopt a forensic mindset when completing a fraud detection task. He found auditors using a forensic specialist mindset assessed fraud risk at a higher level and proposed more fraud detection procedures in high risk situations, as compared to auditors and forensic specialists using their typical mindsets. We asked Pike about his research, as well as how he draws on his academic and professional experience in the classroom.

Yours is the first study to look at mindset in an auditing context. How have your findings lived up to the Douglas R. Moore Lectureship criteria to “expand the boundaries of scholarly activity in your field?”

We live in a world where you have to do more with less; expectations are increasing regardless of the discipline. Auditors are more abundant and cheaper than forensic specialists. With a simple mindset manipulation, we were able to improve auditors’ fraud decision performance, so much so, that auditors primed with a forensic mindset outperformed both typical auditors and forensic specialists performing the same task. This superior performance was the result of the primed auditors taking on attributes from both the financial auditing and forensic domains. We identified a low-cost method of achieving the most efficient results.

You have experience as a CPA and an academic concentration in psychology. How does your background enhance your teaching and research at Minnesota State Mankato?

I find it difficult to explain or teach something I haven’t done. The benefit of having practice experience is that I not only can articulate the standards and rules but also provide context through real-world examples and experiences. This combination of background, application and contextual examples help solidify students’ understanding and learning.

On the psychology side, we identify deficiencies or biases that influence accountants’ decision performance. I try to make my students aware of these judgment deficiencies to help prepare them to handle the challenges faced by the profession. … In some respects, I’m a psychology researcher who is using an accounting context.
Imagine hiring a carpenter to build a house, but instead of a level, you just ask him to eyeball it. That’s a little bit what it’s like instructing dental hygiene students on proper technique and instrumentation, according to Angela Monson, chair of Minnesota State Mankato’s Dental Hygiene department.

Textbooks make recommendations for the correct angles at which to hold instruments—70 degrees, adapted at 1 to 2 millimeters—but there is currently no way to objectively ensure that students (or instructors, for that matter) are hitting those ideals.

Currently, students rely on one-on-one time with instructors for feedback on technique. Once the instructor leaves and students are practicing on their own, “if they can’t hold on to what we discussed, they’ll practice it incorrectly and create negative habits,” says Monson.

What’s more, she says, there’s no way to know if faculty members are consistent across the board. “The way I hold my instruments may be slightly different from the way coworkers hold their instruments,” she explains. “Because there’s never been any independent feedback—you just have to eyeball it.”

About three years ago, Monson started to think there must be a better way. She recruited her dad, a retiring electronic engineer, to put together a plan and a prototype for the Hygiene INstrument Tutor (HINT). The patent-pending product uses Electromagnetic Tracking technology and 3D modeling to accurately measure and display angulation and adaptation of dental hygiene instruments. Sophisticated software allows for a variety of lesson plans and teaching modes, as well as remote monitoring for instructors.

The tool will never replace faculty training and mentorship, Monson notes, but “HINT is actually providing the students with a level,” she says. “They’re finally able to see something concrete regarding feedback about how they’re doing, and it’s going to be exactly the same every single time.”

In March 2017, Monson presented her prototype at the American Dental Educators Association annual conference; her professional colleagues were enthusiastic about HINT.

The encouragement has given Monson the momentum to move forward. She’ll continue to self-fund HINT’s development, with the goal that eventually she’ll be able to sell it to a company for mass production. But without the support from her Minnesota State Mankato colleagues, the process may not have made it this far.

“I feel very blessed that I’m at an institution that supports faculty in their independent endeavors,” she says. “I have this great opportunity to conduct research with the faculty and eventually with the students to prove it’s effective, and start to prove there should be a strong demand.”

Visit DentalHint.com to learn more about HINT, and follow its progress from prototype to product.