



UC Distance Learner Graduates as a Teacher Prepared to Serve Hispanic Children

The graduate will march at UC's All-University Commencement after graduating from a program awarded \$1.2 million in federal funding to prepare Ohio teachers who work with large populations of Hispanic children.

Date: 6/3/2009

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The UC College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services (CECH) is celebrating the achievements of a distance learner who will march at the University of Cincinnati's All-University Commencement during the 9 a.m. ceremony on Saturday, June 13, in Fifth Third Arena at Shoemaker Center. Alissa Vanderpool, of Willard, Ohio, is earning her bachelor's degree in early childhood education through the distance-learning Early Childhood Learning Community (ECLC).

Alissa is one of two women who are UC's first to graduate through an initiative awarded \$1.2 million in 2007 from the Office of Head Start. The partnership, "*Todos Listos*," (Everyone is Ready) is supporting 39 Head Start teachers working with large populations of Hispanic children in four Head Start programs around Ohio. The program pays for the teachers' tuition, books and laptop computers as they earn an associate's or bachelor's degree through the ECLC.

Ms. Vanderpool, is an infant teacher at TMC - Teaching and Mentoring Communities (TMC), formerly known as the Texas Migrant Council. She previously earned her associate's degree in early childhood education from North Central State College in Mansfield, and started pursuing her bachelor's degree through the ECLC at UC in 2006. She says her employer in the five-year *Todos Listos* partnership informed her about the program. "It was a challenge, taking classes while working full time," she says. "Some classes required observations of children, which I had to do after work at another center. "Still, I'll miss taking classes and meeting other students through (online) discussion boards," Vanderpool says. "On the other hand, it feels great to be done. Now, I get a raise!"



Alissa Vanderpool

UC's *Todos Listos* evolved from a statewide survey of Ohio's Head Start programs that found a critical need for resources to address the challenges of young dual-language learners. This spring, the program supported 17 teachers while pursuing their associate's degree as well as 22 students earning a bachelor's degree. The end of spring quarter also marks the completion of a pilot program of coursework to provide preparation for teachers of Latino children. Next year, *Todos Listos* will expand the coursework beyond the Ohio partnership, offering courses to ECLC learners throughout the United States who are interested in pursuing those special skills and strategies to prepare Hispanic children for kindergarten.

For more information on UC's Distance Learning Program visit <http://www.eclc.uc.edu/>.