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Karen Swan is Research Professor in the Research Center for Educational Technology at Kent State University. Dr. Swan's research has been focused mainly in the general area of media and learning on which she has published and presented nationally and internationally. Her current research focuses on online learning, and on student learning in ubiquitous computing environments. Dr. Swan has also authored several hypermedia programs, co-edited a book on Social Learning from Broadcast Television and is currently working on a co-edited book on ubiquitous computing. She served as a project director on several large scale grants including work for the US Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, and the NYC Board of Education. She is an Effective Practices Editor for the Sloan Consortium, the Special Issues Editor for the Journal of Educational Computing Research, and Editor of the Journal of the Research Center for Educational Technology.



Mark van't Hooft provides technical support in the SBC Ameritech Classroom, conducts research in various RCET studies, and is a founding member and current chair of the Special Interest Group for Handheld Computing (SIGHC) for the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). His current research focus is on ubiquitous computing and the use of mobile technology in K-12 education. Prior to his work at RCET, Mark taught middle school and high school social studies and language arts. He holds a B.A. in American Studies from the Catholic University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands, and an M.A. in History from Southwest Texas State. He recently received his doctoral degree with a dual major in Curriculum and Instruction, and Evaluation and Measurement. His dissertation focused on pre-service teacher attitudes toward handheld computer use in secondary social studies education.



Annette Kratcoski is a Researcher in the Research Center for Educational Technology at Kent State University. Since joining



Teaching and Learning with Mobile Computing Devices: Closing the Gap

This presentation will report on an ongoing study of the use of mobile computing devices by elementary and middle school students in northeast Ohio. The study employs mixed methodologies to explore students' use of mobile computing devices and its effects on their motivation to learn, engagement in learning activities, and support for learning processes, with a special focus on mainstreamed special needs students. Preliminary data was collected from students in four elementary and two 7th grade science classes in Northeast Ohio. It included usage logs, student work samples, student and teacher interviews, and classroom observations. Findings highlight the personalization of learning afforded by such devices both in terms of individuals and individual classroom cultures, as well as their usefulness in extending learning beyond the classroom, and suggest that increased motivation due to mobile device use leads to increases in the quality and quantity of student work. Findings also indicate that the use of mobile computing devices may help lessen the gap in academic achievement between special needs and regular students.

RCET in Fall 2000, Dr. Kratcoski has been involved in research focused on the impact of ubiquitous technologies on teaching and learning. Prior to joining RCET, Annette worked as a speech-language pathologist in clinical and school settings and also in special education and curriculum coordination in the public schools. She holds a bachelors and masters degrees in special education and earned her Ph.D. from Kent State University in Speech-Language Pathology.

Darlene Unger is an assistant professor of special education and disability policy at Virginia Commonwealth University where she also serves as a Research Associate within the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports. Dr. Unger's research activities have focused on employment of people with disabilities and the use of handheld technology to improve the educational and transitional outcomes of students with disabilities. She has previously coordinated federally funded grant projects that focused on the school-to-work transition of youth with disabilities and has collaborated with faculty at the Research Center on Educational Technology at Kent State University to investigate the use of handheld technology with students receiving special education services, including the AlphaSmart project. Dr. Unger has presented at state and national conferences, and has published numerous book chapters and journal articles on a variety of topics related to the employment of individuals with disabilities and the use of handheld technology in special education and rehabilitation services. Dr. Unger received her Ph.D. in education from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

