

Nationally recognized ULM program to partner with four non-profits

On behalf of the College of Education and Human Development, the University of Louisiana at Monroe will sign an agreement with four local and not-for-profit groups at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 7 seeking to provide additional leadership and service learning opportunities for ULM's teacher candidates. The signing will take place in the Media Room, located on the sixth floor of the Library

ULM will sign the Memorandum of Understanding agreement with The Wellspring Alliance for Families, Northeast Louisiana United Way, YMCA of Northeast Louisiana, and Children's Coalition of Northeast Louisiana. The collaborative program, *Professional and Community Service Learning*, is designed to provide an opportunity for the boards of these respective organizations to mentor teacher education candidates.

"Curriculum and Instruction students, in both elementary education and secondary education, have a Learning Service Project component in their block classes," explained Assistant Dean of Education Thilla Sivakumaran. "These partnerships were established as a special and unique opportunity to help students meet that class requirement."

The four organizations will select 14 teacher education candidates each semester for mentoring. In return, the candidates must research the mission, policies, and guidelines of the board for which they are chosen, prepare a written proposal to address a defined issue on that board's agenda, and attend a minimum of three board meetings during the semester.

In addition, the students will discuss with other teacher candidates the learned experiences of attending board meetings and deliver a presentation of project proposal to the Professional Block candidates and the board's response to the proposal.

This latest agreement parallels last year's agreement between ULM teacher candidates and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Louisiana and is part of the reason that ULM's College of Education and Human Development continues to earn accolades for its teacher preparation

programs. It was recently recognized on a nationwide broadcast of American Public Media's Marketplace program and in 2008 received recognition in a *New York Times* editorial.

"ULM is producing excellent teachers who are among the best in the state and the nation in terms of preparation," said College of Education and Human Development Dean Sandra Lemoine. "This program provides our students just one more opportunity to significantly impact northeast Louisiana's children in a positive way."

New ULM President Nick Bruno and other key dignitaries will be present for the event.

"This agreement provides our students with expanded learning opportunities that will continue to build upon our excellent reputation of teacher preparation," said Bruno. "As president of The University of Louisiana at Monroe, I will support and encourage collaborative initiatives such as this that will advance the mission and goals of our institution."