The fact that I was terrified going into the intern-ship, Martin quickly learned was key to her success. “I remember I worried about all of the kids like me. I didn’t want to be that teacher that all the kids complained about. The kids, though, didn’t start getting a bit tired of me. It was such a relief to them and revolutionize my classroom management skills because I was so focused on having students like me. She did “swoosh up” and began to focus on keep- ing students on task and maintaining control of her classes. In fact, she went on to have a successful and meaningful year teaching subjects that, for many stu-dents, can be a struggle. The ability to take challenging subjects like chemistry and biology and make them meaningful and interesting to students, she credits to the teacher preparation program. “MSU prepared me very well,” she said. “Almost in every class I took, there was a stress on how to teach different learning styles. When I came into the intern-ship with that knowledge and realization, it was huge. Help. When I went to school, it was all pretty much lec-ture. But I learned at MSU that in order to reach more students I have to change and adjust the way I teach, something to help the students connect with the mater-ial.” And that’s what I did.”

There were challenges, to be sure. In October, for example, a student from Iraq was assigned to one of her classes. The student knew some English but the lan-guage barrier was substantial nonetheless. Martin took it upon herself to reach out to the student and work with him as much as possible. To see the student thrive despite the cultural adjustment and language barrier was one of the high points of Martin’s year. “It was hard to communicate because science is difficult to explain some of the terms to someone who has never heard them before. But we worked through it and she wound up being a straight-A student. I’d stay after school and help her and that was really worthwhile. She was such a hard worker and an amazing student.”
the personal struggles of some of her students. And she did make the best of her internship in a big way. The Michigan Association for Colleges of Teacher Education selected her to receive its MATC Scholarship, making her one of the top interns in the state in 2008.

For Willson, receiving the $1,000 scholarship was completely unexpected. She credits MSU and its focus on meeting the needs of students and building on their prior knowledge. She taught in Maria Rumonova’s second-grade classroom at Riddle Elementary School, where 90 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch and many have limited English skills. It would always learn how to pronounce the word peace in the language of the country they had traveled. By spring, the lessons she had taught them took hold.

For Willson, the internship was a profound experience as it was for his students in a year of learning about students and teaching. Mitch Fowler

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itch Fowler has always loved sports and teaching. So when the NCAA Basketball Tournament came around in the spring, he was ready. Drawing on a lesson that he had come across the year before, he turned the tournament into a learning activity for students at Glencairn Elementary School in East Lansing.

The idea was simple. The students could follow the games with him and do some learning at the same time. Fowler’s goal was to build on the students’ interest in the tournament; to promote the learning of such things as statistics and geography. “They started to think about the tournament in terms of the content, but also with two other teachers who specialized in teaching math and science. The team teaching situation also meant that he got to lead lessons earlier than normal. Typically, teaching lead starts after the winter break. Fowler, however, was lead teaching in science by November. For Willson, the internship was a profound experience as it was for his students in a year of learning about students and teaching.