The College of Education and Social Services prepares outstanding professionals in education, social work, and human services. We are passionate and deeply committed to student engagement and success within a culture of academic excellence, innovation, experiential learning, and social justice.

Through ongoing faculty-student mentoring and scholarship, diverse field experiences and meaningful service-learning opportunities, students are uniquely positioned to make a profound impact on the world by improving lives, strengthening communities, and effecting societal change.
Years of experience—before you graduate.

Teaching first graders at Burlington’s Edmunds Elementary, part of her senior practicum, is Taylor Farnsworth’s fourth field experience of her college years. Getting into real classrooms early and often is a defining characteristic of the UVM education curriculum.

Farnsworth enrolled at the university with a strong sense that a helping profession was the right fit for her. Working with a diverse range of children in a variety of local schools has deepened that commitment, teaching skills, and sense of self.

“Having had this exposure, I feel as though I have become more accepting and thoughtful of each person as a whole, rather than what I just see on the outside,” she says. “Hanging out with elementary school students all day—where they look up to you and depend on you—boosts my confidence and makes me feel ready for the next step after graduation.”

“I have been an incredible experience to work with Saran. We have a mutual respect for each other and just enjoy working together. It’s powerful to know that it could have a direct impact on his life if he gets citizenship.”

Eric Venezia ’17, who, via an education service-learning course, tutored Bhutanese immigrant Saran Chhetri in preparation for the U.S. citizenship test.

Dayle Sargeant ’17 and her fellow majors in early childhood education benefit greatly from their experiences working in the innovative Campus Children’s School, located in UVM’s Living/Learning Center.

With many seminar-style classes of fewer than 25 students, undergrads in the college build strong relationships with faculty and their fellow students.

UVM’s internationally acclaimed campus lab school is an invaluable resource for student fieldwork in early childhood education.

Social work courses are structured around interaction—actively engaging through case studies, simulated exercises, role-plays, presentations, and more.

Working with UVM faculty on research projects enriches the learning experience and adds another dimension to our graduates’ resumes.

College-specific study abroad programs include New Zealand, Thailand, and Finland. Hundreds more are offered via UVM International Education.

Dual Certification in general and special education gives graduates an edge in the job market.
Can students Electric Slide their way toward a better understanding of X- and Y-axes? Yes, says Carmen Petrick Smith, who’s researching an observation she made back in her days of teaching high school: that students learn geometric principles more easily when physical movements are in the lesson plan.

Now a UVM assistant professor of mathematics education, she and her team — which includes both graduate and undergraduate students — have published research showing significant gains in elementary kids’ understanding of angles when they used their bodies to interact with a Kinect for Windows mathematics program.

“Maybe they don’t know the words quite yet,” she says, “but they have a way to express it using their bodies that they didn’t have before when they were sitting in a row of desks looking up at the teacher and searching for an answer.” It’s work that could point the way toward more effective — and active — math classrooms everywhere.

Designing the math class of the future.

1 Bernice Garnett, a public health prevention scientist and assistant professor in the Department of Education, has established her “Bullying and Youth Violence Prevention” course as a must-enroll for undergrads. She is also an influential voice in Vermont’s statehouse, sharing her expertise on bullying, childhood obesity, food access, and other issues critical to children and families.

2 Leon Walls, associate professor of education, is striving to change the way science is taught in elementary schools. He focuses on enhancing the experiences of young science students of color and developing ways to incorporate sustainability and stewardship into the curriculum as early as kindergarten. Walls’ commitment is inspired and informed by a decade as a Milwaukee middle school science teacher.

3 Jessica Strolin, associate professor of social work, has focused on the well-being of children in foster care throughout her career as practitioner, teacher, and scholar. With the backing of significant federal funding, and working collaboratively with UVM colleagues and state agencies, she’s strengthening methods for evidence-supported child welfare interventions.
Societal change starts here.

VOICES OF NEW AMERICANS

Diverse refugee communities—6,000 people and growing—are changing the face of Vermont. Susan Comerford, professor of social work, has deep ties within this population of new Americans, a concern that traces to her years of experience working on the ground in refugee camps and as an advocate in the halls of power. She shares that expertise in her service-learning course, “Working with Refugees,” giving students direct contact with the global social issue of our times. “If you leave this class with only an intellectual understanding, then I have not done my job,” she tells students early in the semester. “You need to understand this on a personal level.”

Medina Serdarevic is pictured working in an after-school program at Burlington’s King Street Center, part of her fieldwork for the course.

Will Halby ’94 earned his degree in elementary and special education. Teaming with his brother Pete ’99, the brothers founded Zeno Mountain Farm, a creative community erasing boundaries between the “abled” and “disabled.”

Each year, UVM students in the college perform 190,000 hours of service through internship experiences.

High school teacher Zachary Wright ’05, Philadelphia Teacher of the Year in 2013, created a scholarship that boosts college aspiration among his students and puts enrolling at UVM within reach.

Burlington’s Sarah Holbrook Center, founded in 1937 by a UVM professor, serves more than 1,400 at-risk people each year with educational programming and other services.

Voices of New Americans

Professor Cynthia Gerstl-Pepin, a Fulbright Scholar who spent a year at Beijing Normal University, has published extensively on higher education and social justice issues.

Scott Thomas, dean of the College of Education and Social Services is also editor-in-chief of the prestigious Journal of Higher Education.

Professors Kieran Killeen and Katharine Shepherd, with backing from a U.S. Department of Education grant, are working to transform special education leadership in Vermont and nationwide.

Professor Alan Tinkler has been honored nationally for his innovative, service-learning-based education courses.

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At UVM, you’ll learn from some of the top teachers—and researchers—in the world, enjoying all the perks of the #1 college town in America.

The deeply experiential curriculum of the College of Education and Social Services prepares our students for traditional paths and different directions.

From this incredible launching pad, you’ll be prepared to go anywhere and to do anything, like these alumni before you:

**ALUMNI**

**Ryan Fletcher**, principal of Oakland, California’s Piedmont Middle School, ranked the #1 public middle school in the country in 2015.

**Jennifer Hauptman**, a social worker at Northwestern Medical Center in St. Albans, Vermont, included in a Social Work Today list of ten top social workers.

**Leo Lambert**, president of Elon University since 1999, a period of great transformation for the school.

**Cyma Zarghami**, president of Nickelodeon Network since 2006.

**Kathryn Maitland**, Peace Corps volunteer currently working in the Caribbean.

**Michele Forman**, winner of the 2001 National Teacher of the Year Award for her work at Middlebury Union High School.

**Charlie Dan Sheffy ’14**, Fulbright Scholar, Bavaria, Germany

**Jackie Reno ’10**, 2016 Vermont Early Educator of the Year Award.