

# Writing for Education

By Travis Timmons, English '01

**Leslie Walker Wilson**, psychology '74 and '77, is dedicated to her children, all 45,000 of them. As the supervisor of testing for Howard County Public Schools, Wilson is responsible for the administration and reporting of all state-mandated tests in the county's 67 schools. Although they keep her busy, she manages to find time to work on a new book for the publishing company Eye on Education.

The book helps teachers understand measurement concepts to effectively utilize their students' assessment results to plan instruction and meet the needs of each student. "I believe that all of the testing we do in schools is worthless unless teachers can use results to make sure all students are learning," says Wilson. "A colleague referred Eye on Education to me and after much encouragement from my husband, family and friends, I agreed to write the book." It should be out late this winter or early spring 2002.

Beyond her immediate family, Wilson's success is supported by an extended community as well. "The UMBC psychology department is very dedicated to its students," says Wilson. "The faculty and my graduate school class were like a family - we really stuck together - and they really made us work." **Jonathan Finkelstein**, associate dean and director of Judaic studies, was vital to Wilson's academic growth. It was in Finkelstein's class that Wilson gained a knowledge of experimental psychology, statistics and a stronger ability to write. Finkelstein also served as Wilson's advisor and convinced her to schedule several practice interviews to gain experience. "Imagine everyone's surprise when I got the job on my first 'practice' interview at the University of Maryland School of Medicine," says Wilson.

During her time at UMBC, she says it was clear that the faculty was committed to the broad education of the students. And even now, as she serves on UMBC's Alumni Association Board of Directors, she says "the commitment to the whole student is still alive and well."

Wilson attributes much of her success to her time spent at UMBC. "I really appreciated the strength of my UMBC education when I began my Ph.D. program at the University of Maryland, College Park," says Wilson. "I was well prepared for the rigor of the courses and had been exposed to many of the concepts I needed. Choosing to attend UMBC was one of the best decisions I made for my future."

*Travis Timmons is the poetry editor of UMBC's literary magazine Bartleby and writes for the **Retriever Weekly**.*