

# FOCUS on Research

Newsletter of the Division for Research (CEC-DR)

## President's Message A Way of Thinking

Kristen McMaster, *University of Minnesota*

*"Science is a way of thinking much more than it is a body of knowledge." ~ Carl Sagan*

By the time you read this issue of *Focus on Research*, the 2018 CEC annual convention will almost be upon us! I am really looking forward to seeing everyone in Florida (and thawing out from the Minnesota winter). It will be an exciting time to share the most up-to-date knowledge being generated in the field, and to discuss with administrators and teachers how this knowledge might best be applied in practice. And it's another opportunity to share stories that illustrate that RESEARCH MATTERS in the lives and learning of children and youth with exceptional needs.

There's nothing like a good story to relay important knowledge, but I also wonder, is there a way to weave in Carl Sagan's message as we share our work: That there's "a way of thinking" that might help us all (faculty, researchers, families, students, practitioners, and policymakers) as we sift through the volumes of knowledge and ideas presented at the conference to identify best practices for individuals with exceptional needs? That this "way of thinking" includes being open to new ideas, but also viewing those ideas with skepticism and a demand for empirical evidence? In an era of fake news, fads, and misconceptions, it seems critical to advance this way of thinking. I'd love to hear ideas

about how to elevate science as part of our efforts to bridge research and practice.

In that same vein, I want to give a shout out to our Single Case Design workgroup (with subgroups led by Jennifer Ledbetter and Wendy Rogers), which is putting the final touches on two documents intended to provide guidance to schools and districts in using single-case research to identify promising practices for children with significant behavioral and learning needs. These documents (a policy statement and a how-to guide) elucidate a scientific "way of thinking" to help educators distinguish reliable evidence from the jumble of fads and pseudo-scientific practices that claim to be "research-based." Many thanks to Jennifer and Wendy, along with Tim Lewis, Sam Odom, Rob O'Neill, Ilene Schwartz, Kimberly Vannest, and Katie Zimmerman for their thoughtful work on these materials. We envision other dissemination opportunities (e.g., conference presentations, webinars) to follow their release.

Thank you, as always, for all that you do, and see you in Tampa!



We're live tweeting at the CEC 2018 conference in TAMPA! Follow @CECDResearch and join in the conversation using #CECDR2018 ■

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## 2018 CEC-DR Research Awards

### 2018 Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award

Dr. Naomi Zigmond, Distinguished Professor of Special Education in the Department of Instruction and Learning at the University of Pittsburgh, has been selected as the 2018 recipient of the Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award from the Division for Research of the Council for Exceptional Children.

The Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award recognizes the critical importance of research in special education that has a meaningful impact on the field. It honors individuals or research teams whose creation of a research base as well as the work done to translate the research into practice has resulted in more effective services or education for exceptional individuals.

The multifaceted impact of Dr. Zigmond's research and service over a more than 50-year career in special education was a major factor in her selection for the award. As her nominators stated, Dr. Zigmond asked "the tough questions that others do not know how to ask or do not want to ask" as she showed "sustained allegiance to evidence, not ideology" throughout her career. Her research investigated a wide range of topics, such as: the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education, with emphases on teachers' instructional practices and modifications and the attitudes and perspectives of students with and without disabilities about the experience; early reading education programs; high-school dropouts; and teacher education. She fostered collaborations with and mentored many scholars in the field. Dr. Zigmond's contributions to special education research also include a six-year tenure as Editor of the special education journal, *Exceptional Children*, and establishing the Pacific Coast Research Conference in 1992.

The Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award is funded through earnings of the *Handbook of Special Education*, edited by James Kauffman, Daniel Hallahan, and Paige Pullen and Published by Routledge. The award, co-sponsored by Routledge Press, includes \$1,000.

### 2018 Early Career Research Award

Dr. Sarah Powell has been named the recipient of the Division for Research 2018 Distinguished Early Career Research Award. This award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding scientific contributions in basic and/or applied research in special education within the first 10 years after receiving the doctoral degree.

Dr. Powell received her doctorate in 2009 in special education from Vanderbilt University, Peabody College of Education, and is currently an Assistant Professor of Special Education at the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Powell is one of, if not the, most promising young scholars in the area of mathematics education and high incidence disabilities. Her mathematics intervention work is theoretically based and gaining considerable recognition in the United States and internationally. She has published extensively in top tier journals, such as the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Exceptional Children*, *Learning and Individual Differences*, and *Elementary School Journal*. She has also published multiple book chapters and a textbook, and makes numerous presentations yearly at national conferences. Additionally, she has been able to secure highly competitive grants from the Institute for Education Sciences, National Science Foundation, and Spencer Foundation to support her research. Dr. Powell's scholarly accomplishments are particularly impressive in light of the service she provides to the fields of special and general education.

### 2018 Early Career Publication Award

The CEC Division for Research is pleased to announce that Dr. Justin Garwood, faculty member at Appalachian State University, is the recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Early Career Publication Award. This award recognizes an outstanding research publication by an individual within the first five years of receipt of the doctoral degree. Dr. Garwood is recognized for his paper in *Exceptional Children*, "Classroom management affects literacy development of students with emotional and behavioral disorders" (Garwood, Vernon-Feagans, & the Family Life Project Key Investigators, 2017).

This paper reports the results of a longitudinal study in which the overall quality of classroom management children experienced in kindergarten through third grade was examined as a potential predictor of literacy development in a sample of 235 students identified with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Garwood and colleagues used the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) as an indicator of overall classroom management quality, and both Passage Comprehension (PC) and Letter-Word Identification (LW) subtests of the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement as indicators of literacy achievement. They also assessed a number of potential moderator variables, including race, gender, and SES. According to Garwood et al., their major finding was that "overall higher quality of classroom management

experienced across the first 4 years in school was significantly related to higher scores on standardized measures of reading achievement in third grade for boys with and at risk for EBD, but girls appeared unaffected by the quality of teachers' classroom management during this same time" (p. 134). The study is important in several ways, including that it is the first study of its kind to document the variability in and potential impact of classroom management quality on academic outcomes for students with or at risk for EBD.

Garwood, J. D., Vernon-Feagans, L., & the Family Life Project Key Investigators. (2017). Classroom management affects literacy development of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Exceptional Children*, 83, 123-142. doi: 10.1177/0014402916651846

### 2018 Student Research Award Recipients

Through its student research awards program, the CEC Division for Research recognizes high-quality research conducted by students in the course of their undergraduate or graduate special education training program. CEC-DR invites nominations for research in the following categories: qualitative, quantitative, single subject, and mixed methods design. Awards were made this year in three of those four categories: quantitative, qualitative, and single subject designs. Please see [www.cecdr.org](http://www.cecdr.org) for the research project abstract.

#### QUALITATIVE DESIGN – Sarah Hart, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Special Education, University of Hartford

*Advisor:* Janet S. Gaffney, PhD

Professor, University of Auckland, New Zealand

*Title:* Possibilities for a Transition with Dignity: Silos and Trialling in Aotearoa New Zealand

#### QUANTITATIVE DESIGN – Allison F. Gilmour, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Special Education, Temple University

*Advisor:* Joseph Wehby

Associate Professor and Chair, Vanderbilt University

*Title:* Teaching Students with Disabilities and General Education, Special Education, and Dual Certified Teacher Turnover

#### SINGLE-SUBJECT DESIGN – Tosha Owens, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, East Carolina University

*Advisor:* Ya-yu Lo, Ph.D.

Professor, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

*Title:* Tiered Teacher Coaching on the Implementation of A Self-Monitoring Strategy with Students At Risk for Emotional and Behavioral Disorders ■

## 2017–2018 DR Doctoral Student Scholars

The Division for Research of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC-DR) is pleased to announce the 10th cohort of scholars selected through an internationally competitive process to participate in the **2017–2018 DR Doctoral Student Seminars in Special Education Research (DRDSS)**. The Division commends all of the students who applied this year and their nominators for upholding a high standard of scholarship. We would also like to thank the panel of reviewers who participated in the selection process and our seminar leaders.

### The 2017–2018 Cohort of DR Doctoral Student Scholars in Special Education Research

Scholar	Nominator	Institution
Brian Gearin	Edward J. Kame'enui	University of Oregon
Chung eun Lee	Meghan Burke	University of Illinois
Colin Gasamis	Roxanne Hudson	University of Washington
Derek Rodgers	Shawn Datchuk	University of Iowa
Elizabeth Stevens	Sharon Vaughn	University of Texas at Austin
Kathy Ewoldt	Joseph Morgan	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Kelly Williams	Sharon Vaughn	University of Texas at Austin
Michael Mahoney	Carol Ann Davis	University of Washington
Scott Dueker	Matthew Brock	The Ohio State University
Rebecca Cruz	Janelle Lawson	San Francisco State University

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## Diversity Spotlight

DR's Diversity Committee has charged itself with identifying empirical studies and resources that represent the recommendations made in our 2015 white paper titled "Increasing the Involvement of Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Students in Special Education Research". For this issue, our Spotlight includes the following paper:

*Multicultural Guidelines: An Ecological Approach to Context, Identity, and Intersectionality, 2017*

Prepared by the Task Force on Re-envisioning the Multicultural Guidelines for the 21st Century, American Psychological Association

The purpose of this publication was to supplement and update the American Psychological Association's 2002 Multicultural Guidelines. Specifically the 2017 guidelines provide a framework for supporting multi-culturally competent services including practice in the field, research, consultation, and education for individuals, families, couples, groups, research participants, organizations, and communities from diverse backgrounds.

The guidelines make numerous recommendations related to conducting research with diverse populations including but not limited to: adapting evidence-based treatments to the needs of participants; using culture-centered interventions and measures with culturally appropriate and sound psychometric properties; recognizing the similarities and differences within and across specific groups; and collaborating with community partners to provide group specific knowledge, expertise and insight to improve procedures, protocols, and the interpretation of findings ■

## Doctoral Student Scholars *(continued from page 3)*

DRDSS is an online seminar and discussion series designed to foster connections among students at different universities and contribute to raising the standard of research in the field through sustained inquiry into the question, "What makes for excellence in special education research?"

Seminars will be led this year by noted scholars recognized for their outstanding research contributions including: Karen Harris, Arizona State University, past president of DR; and Erin Barton and Christopher Lemons, Vanderbilt University, who were both recipients of the 2017 DR Distinguished Early Career Research Award.

All graduate students and interested faculty attending CEC's national convention in Tampa are invited to attend the culminating colloquium dedicated to graduate student development on Friday afternoon, February 9th. Please see the CEC program for details.

Following the colloquium, all are welcome to attend DR's Business meeting and reception in Tampa. For more information on the convention and session locations, see the conference website.

*Jean B. Crockett, Ph.D., University of Florida*

*Mary Theresa Kiely, Ph.D., CUNY Queens College*

*Kristen Merrill O'Brien, Ph.D., George Mason University*

*Co-Chairs, DR Doctoral Student Scholars Program ■*



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