

FOCUS on Research

Newsletter of the



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President's Message

Coming Together as a Special Education Community

Wendy Oakes, PhD
Arizona State University

We have welcomed in another new year, and with it all of the promise and opportunity it holds. Special education researchers' contributions to the advancement of knowledge and impact on practice drive that promise and opportunity for the most effective instruction, services, and supports to improve outcomes of individuals with and at risk for disabilities, their families, and their educators. It is also nearing the time of year that we come together as a special education community to share, network, and collaborate at the annual Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Convention & Expo. Again, this year, there are two ways to participate in the special education community: in person March 1st–4th in the beautiful city of Louisville, Kentucky, as well as remotely beginning April 25th through the virtual convention event, offering live and on-demand opportunities. Please see <https://ceconvention.org/> for details and registration. We hope you can take advantage of one or both of these opportunities.

The Division for Research (DR) convention program sessions will share the most current advancements in science with sessions focused on Integrated-Multitiered System of Supports (i-MTSS) Network (<https://mtss.org/>), led by Dr. Michael Coyne; three sessions that share high quality mathematics instruction for students

with disabilities, facilitated by Dr. Paul Riccomini; findings from a recent meta-analysis of Orton Gillingham interventions, led by Dr. Elizabeth Stevens; academic and behavioral impacts of students with disabilities post pandemic recovery, led by Dr. Sarah Hurwitz; and three sessions that address advancing educational equity for students with disabilities, facilitated by Dr. Diane Ryndak. This year CEC-DR highlights also include the Showcase session, presented by Dr. Jessica Toste on the topic of graph interpretation for intensive intervention, and the 2022 Martin J. Kaufman Distinguished Early Career Research Award recipient session, led by Dr. Robin Ennis, on the topic of students with emotional and behavioral disorders in special education research.

Continuing in this year's themes of networking and collaboration, we invite you to attend the CEC-DR business meeting where the DR Doctoral Student Scholars will be recognized by Dr. Jean B. Crockett, Dr. Mary Theresa Kiely, and Dr. Kristen M. O'Brien, who led this program. To learn more about the Scholars program, which brings together an outstanding group of doctoral student scholars with distinguished researchers in the field, visit the [CEC-DR website](#) (Professional Development).

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CEC-DR Diversity Committee Spotlight

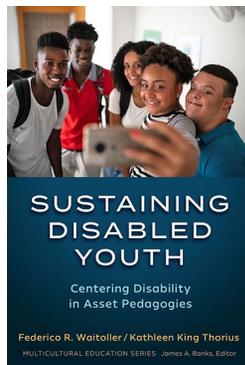
Sustaining Disabled Youth



Federico Waitoller, PhD
University of Illinois at Chicago

Students with disabilities enter schools with an array of cultural and linguistic repertoires. Drawing from culturally responsive practices, special education teachers, administrators, and researchers have attended to students' home languages and racial and ethnic identities to improve their learning experiences. Yet, there are important aspects of students' culture and identity that tend to be overlooked: those related to disability. *Sustaining Disabled Youth* is the first book to address this issue. It brings together a collection of work that situates disability as a key aspect of children's and youth's cultural identity construction. It explores how disability intersects with other markers of difference to create unique cultural repertoires to be valued, sustained, and utilized for learning.

Readers will hear from prominent and emerging scholars and activists in disability studies who engage with the following questions: Can disability be considered an identity and culture in the same ways that race and ethnicity are? How can disability be incorporated to develop and sustain asset-based pedagogies that attend to intersecting forms of marginalization? How can disability serve in inquiries on the use of asset-based pedagogies? Do all disability identities and embodiments merit sustaining? How can disability justice be incorporated into other efforts toward social justice? *Sustaining Disabled Youth* offers important recommendations for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers serving students with disabilities and their families. You can learn more about the book at <https://www.tepress.com/sustaining-disabled-youth-9780807767689>. ■



Student Spotlight

Making the Most of CEC as a Student



Katie S. Lane
Doctoral Student
University of Connecticut

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) annual convention is a great opportunity to learn more about topics of interest to you, connect with other professionals, and share your own work. This can be an especially valuable experience for you as a student as you find your own interests and begin building community. As fellow student members, we have compiled recommendations for how to make the most out of your CEC convention experience as a student member.

- 1. Review the session offerings in advance.** Each year, CEC offers hundreds of sessions across lots of different categories, including ones tailored to specific age ranges, audiences, and disability categories. All of these options ensure that there is something for everyone from the pre-service teacher to the future researcher. The full program has already been released, so you can begin looking for sessions of interest to you on the [convention website](#). You can utilize filters and search for keywords or presenters to find sessions that align with your interests. You can even add these to your calendar so you have a plan before you arrive at the conference.
- 2. Engage with your special interest divisions.** CEC has 18 special interest divisions that help build community amongst individuals with common interests. Most divisions host specific sessions, a business meeting, and/or a social gathering. All of these meetings are a great opportunity to connect with other students and professionals with shared interests. If you have not yet joined a division, you can learn more about the different options on the CEC website and join one [online](#) or at the membership center at the conference.

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Making the Most of CEC as a Student (continued from page 2)

3. **Get inspired: attend the keynotes and Yes I Can Awards.** The largest events at CEC are the general sessions and Yes I Can Awards. CEC crafts the general sessions to meet the current needs of the field. The Yes I Can Awards are always an exciting event as CEC honors students with exceptionalities for their accomplishments in different aspects of life. Learn about these sessions on the [convention website](#) and add them to your calendar now!
4. **Plan ahead for professional development hours.** CEC offers professional development hours for attending conference sessions. If your program or license requires ongoing hours, you can begin reviewing the process for claiming these hours now to ensure you get the documentation you need. Information about professional development hours is available on the [convention website](#).
5. **Get familiar with the Whova app.** CEC currently utilizes the Whova app for all conference schedule information. You should download this

app and log in prior to the conference to ensure you will have access to all the information you need before you arrive in Louisville. The conference organizers do a great job of keeping this app up to date with room information and any other plan changes that may happen. There are also options to message other conference participants and create group messages for others from your program, state, or special interest divisions.

6. **Reach out!** CEC members are a wonderful community, and most presenters are excited to speak with attendees after their sessions. If there is a presenter you are hoping to meet at the conference, check the schedule specifically for their sessions. Attend their talks and be prepared to introduce yourself afterwards. If the person you are hoping to meet is not listed as a presenter, consider emailing them in advance of the convention to see if they will be in attendance and if they have time to meet. As a student, this can be intimidating, but incredibly rewarding as you build your community in the field. ■



President's Message *(continued from page 1)*

A highlight of the annual convention is the opportunity to recognize special education researchers for their exceptional contributions to the advancement of knowledge. Five student research awards will be presented at the CEC-DR business meeting and six professional awards will be presented at the CEC-DR reception. Two prestigious awards—the Distinguished Researcher Award for Underrepresented Groups; and the Research Improving the Educational Access, Experiences, and Outcomes of the BIOPIC Students with Disabilities—will be presented for the first time in 2023. A special thank you to Dr. Erica McCray, chair of the Awards Committee, and all of the committee members for making these very difficult decisions. Please visit the [CEC-DR website](#) to learn more about these award winners. I am certain you will be inspired and encouraged by their contributions.

In closing, we cannot think of all the advancements in special education research and the impact of educational practices without acknowledging the commitment and investments by the many funding agencies, private foundations, and university internal award programs. This year, in particular, the Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) which, as we were ringing in the new year, was transitioning into new leadership with the retirement of Dr. Joan McLaughlin, the longest serving commissioner. She has been a mindful steward of NCSER programs with unwavering high standards and a classically professional and approachable style, garnering the respect of all who have the fortunate opportunity to know her. CEC-DR looks forward to welcoming the next NCSER commissioner as the research to improve outcomes for individuals with and at risk for disabilities, their families, and their educators continues.

Happy and healthy 2023 to all! ■

2022–2023 CEC-DR Award Recipients

The Division for Research is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2022–2023 research awards. Awards will be made to the following outstanding recipients.

2023 Kaufman–Hallahan–Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award: Dr. Sam Odom

Dr. Samuel L. Odom has been named the 2023 recipient of the Kauffman-Hallahan Distinguished Researcher Award. This award recognizes individuals and/or teams with an established research base with a meaningful impact on the field of special education. It honors individuals whose research has translated into practice to provide effective services and/or education for individuals with exceptionalities. Dr. Odom is a senior research scientist at the University of North Carolina (UNC) Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute and research professor emeritus at the UNC School of Education. His distinguished career has been dedicated to improving educational services for students with disabilities across the age range, with a focus on early childhood special education and evidence-based practices for individuals with autism. His impact on the field is visible through his plethora of books, chapters, manuscripts, presentations, and online resources. His leadership in special education research is still evident today as he was part of a team that identified quality indicators for group, single-subject, correlational, and qualitative research in education. Over the decades, he has worked tirelessly to ensure that his work is translated into meaningful resources for practitioners, families, and youth with disabilities.

2023 Martin J. Kaufman Distinguished Early Career Research Award: Drs. Matthew Brock and Elizabeth Bettini

Dr. Matthew Brock has been named a recipient of the 2023 Division of Research Martin J. Kauffman Distinguished Early Career Research Award. Dr. Brock received his doctorate in 2014 in special education from Vanderbilt

University and is currently an associate professor in the Department of Educational Studies at Ohio State University. Dr. Brock is one of the top young scholars in the field of improving outcomes for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and he was recognized in 2021 in Stanford University's *World's Top 2% Scientists* list. His work focuses on two intersecting themes: inclusion and peer-mediated intervention, and preparing teachers and paraprofessionals to implement evidence-based practices for students with significant disabilities. He has published extensively in top tier journals such as *Exceptional Children*, *The Journal of Special Education*, and *Teacher Education and Special Education*. He has also published one book, written multiple book chapters, and presented at multiple national conferences and webinars. Additionally, Dr. Brock has secured highly competitive grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Brock's scholarly accomplishments are impressive considering the extensive training he has provided to teachers and paraprofessionals. Dr. Brock has received multiple awards for his research, including the 2021 Research Award (Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities, CEC) and the 2020 TASH Early Career Researcher Award.

Dr. Elizabeth Bettini has been named a recipient of the 2023 Division of Research Martin J. Kauffman Distinguished Early Career Research Award. Dr. Bettini received her doctorate in 2015 in special education from the University of Florida and is currently an associate professor in the Special Education Program at Boston University. Dr. Bettini is one of the top young scholars in the field of special education teacher preparation. Her research focuses on five interrelated themes: teachers' working conditions; association of working conditions and teachers' instruction; association of working conditions and commitment to continue teaching; leaders' conceptualization and responsibility in providing supportive working conditions; and the nature of inequities in students' access to skilled special educators. Dr. Bettini has published extensively in top tier journals, including *Exceptional Children*, *The Journal of Special*

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2022–2023 CEC-DR Award Recipients (continued from page 4)

Education, and Review of Educational Research. Additionally, Dr. Bettini has secured highly competitive grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Bettini’s scholarly accomplishments are impressive considering her numerous national presentations, service to the CEC Teacher Education Division, and editorial service. Dr. Bettini has received multiple awards for her research, including the Outstanding Review Awards in 2019, 2020, and 2021 (Teacher Education and Special Education and Review of Educational Research), the 2018 Lives of Teachers Best Paper Award (AERA Lives of Teacher SIG), and the 2016 Division of Research (CEC) Quantitative Dissertation Award.

2022 Division for Research Early Career Publication Award:

Dr. Amber B. Ray

The Division for Research of the Council for Exceptional Children is pleased to announce that Dr. Amber B. Ray is the 2022 recipient of the Early Career Publication Award for her paper, “A College Entrance Essay Exam Intervention for Students with High-Incidence Disabilities and Struggling Writers.” This award recognizes an outstanding research publication by an individual within five years after completing their doctorate. Dr. Ray’s paper describes her research in preparing high school students with and at risk for high-incidence disabilities to be successful on college entrance writing exams (ACT) using the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) instructional approach through a randomized controlled trial. Her findings showed that all treatment students made meaningful improvements in planning, writing quality, inclusion of argumentative elements, and use of transitions. Moreover, all but one of the treatment students scored above the ACT writing national average of 6.5 (ACT, Inc., 2017), with the one student earning a score of 6. These results provide support for the contention that specialized instruction can improve students’ performance on college entrance writing exams, even with students not in Grade 12.

2023 Distinguished Researcher from Underrepresented Groups Award: **Dr. Aydin Bal**

Dr. Aydin Bal has been named the recipient of the Distinguished Researcher from Underrepresented Groups Award. This award recognizes special education researchers from underrepresented groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities as well as researchers with disabilities) whose work has substantially contributed to (a) special education research and (b) improving the educational experiences and outcomes of students with disabilities. Dr. Bal received his doctorate in special education from Arizona State University and is currently a professor at the Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education at The University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Bal examines social justice issues in education, family–school–community–university collaboration, and systemic transformation. He has developed a Culturally Responsive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports framework and the Learning Lab methodology. In Learning Labs, local stakeholders (students, families, educators, policy makers, and community representatives), especially those from historically marginalized communities, collectively design and implement culturally responsive behavioral support systems. Dr. Bal was the recipient of the 2019 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Scholars of Color Early Career Contribution Award.

2023 Research Improving the Educational Access, Experiences, and Outcomes of BIPOC Students with Disabilities Award:

Dr. Jamie Pearson

Dr. Jamie N. Pearson has been named the recipient of DR’s Research Improving the Educational Access, Experiences, and Outcomes of BIPOC Students with Disabilities Award. This award identifies a researcher whose work recognizes historical and multiple forms of structural oppression that students with disabilities

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2022–2023 CEC-DR Award Recipients (continued from page 5)

from Black, Indigenous, and communities of color have experienced. Dr. Pearson received her doctorate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2017 and is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Teacher Education and Learning Sciences at North Carolina State University. Dr. Pearson has gained a national reputation as an autism researcher who investigates disparities in, designs culturally responsive interventions for, and maintains ongoing relationships with Black autistic youth and their families. In a notable outcome of her initial work, Dr. Pearson developed and piloted the FACES (Fostering Advocacy, Communication, Empowerment, and Support) intervention, a parent advocacy and empowerment intervention specifically designed to address the needs of Black families raising autistic children. To support this work, Dr. Pearson has procured more than \$2 million dollars in internal and external funding since 2017, including two active federal grants. Dr. Pearson’s research has been published in notable journals, including *Exceptionality*, *Exceptional Children*, and *The Journal of Special Education*. Dr. Pearson partners regularly with community-based organizations as part of her work. CEC’s Division for Research recognizes Dr. Pearson for this impactful work to improve educational access and outcomes for BIPOC students with disabilities and their families.

2023 DR Student Research Awards

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. For 2023, CEC-DR is pleased to announce the following awards:

Student Research Award: Mixed Methods Design

Student Awardee: Stacy McGuire, PhD

Advisor: Hedda Meadan, PhD, BCBA, Margaret Valpey Professor, University of Illinois

Title: *Preservice General Educators’ Behavior Management Needs and Training: A Mixed Methods Study*

Student Research Award: Qualitative Research Design

Student Awardee: Courtney O’Grady, PhD

Advisor: Michaelene M. Ostrosky, PhD, Grayce Wicall Gauthier Professor of Education, University of Illinois

Title: *Early Educators’ Perceptions of Behavior*

Student Research Award: Meta-analysis and Meta-synthesis

Student Awardee: Aimee J. Hackney

Advisor: Kristine Jolivette, PhD, Paul W. and Mary Harmon Bryant Endowed Professor, The University of Alabama

Title: *The Effects of Trauma-Informed Check-in, Check-out for Youth with EBD in a Children’s Residential Treatment Facility*

Student Research Award: Single Case Research Design

Student Awardee: Gretchen Scheibel, PhD

Advisor: Kathleen Zimmerman, PhD, BCBA-D, Assistant Professor, University of Kansas

Title: *Translating Evidence-Based Practices into Usable Interventions: Self-Management Interventions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder* ■

2022–2023 DR Doctoral Student Scholars

Jean B. Crockett, PhD, *University of Florida* | Mary Theresa Kiely, PhD, *CUNY Queens College*

Kristen Merrill O’Brien, PhD, *George Mason University*

Co-Chairs, DR Doctoral Student Scholars Program

CEC-DR is pleased to announce the 15th cohort of scholars selected through an internationally competitive process to participate in the **2022–2023 DR Doctoral Student Seminars in Special Education Research (DRDSS)**. The Division commends all the students who applied and their nominators for upholding a high standard of scholarship, especially considering the continuing challenges presented by the pandemic. We would also like to thank the panel of reviewers, who participated in the selection process, and our seminar leaders.

The 2022–2023 Cohort of DR Doctoral Student Scholars in Special Education Research

Scholar	Nominator	Institution
Susan Aigiotti	Stephanie Morano	University of Virginia
Jesse Fleming	Bryan Cook	University of Virginia
Helen Flores	Michelle Cumming	Florida International University
Catherine Gaspar	Laudan Jahromi	Teachers College, Columbia
Martha Hernandez	Michelle Cumming	Florida International University
Sarah King	Sarah Powell	University of Texas at Austin
Lindsey Mirielli	Chad Rose	University of Missouri
Katherine O’Donnell	Nathan Clemens	University of Texas at Austin
Allyson Pitzel	Kristine Jolivette	University of Alabama
Elizabeth Ruiz	Sarup Mathur	Arizona State University
Emma Shanahan	Kristen McMaster	University of Minnesota
Melissa Stoffers	Tia Barnes	University of Delaware

The Division is very grateful to the **Hammill Institute on Disabilities** for its generous sponsorship of the DRDSS program—an online seminar and discussion series designed to foster connections among students at different universities and contribute toward 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 Dr. Robin Parks Ennis (University of Alabama), recipient of the 2022

Martin J. Kaufman Distinguished Early Career Award; Dr. Karen Harris (Arizona State University); and Drs. John W. Lloyd and William J. Therrien (University of Virginia).

All graduate students attending the CEC 2023 convention in Louisville, Kentucky, are invited to attend the DR Colloquium on Friday, March 3, 2023, from 11:45 am–12:45 pm, dedicated to graduate student development. For more information, see the conference website. ■

2023 CEC Convention DR Schedule

Date and Time*	Session Name	Presenter(s)	Format/Location
Wednesday, 3/1, 2:15 pm–3:15 pm	MTSS Research Network: Integrating Academic and Behavior Supports Across Tiers	Michael Coyne; Brandi Simonsen; Nathan Clemens; Kathleen Lane; Allison Gandhi; Erica Lembke	Concurrent session/M101/M102
Wednesday, 3/1, 3:30 pm–4:30 pm	Recommendations for Navigating Requests for Independent Educational Evaluations (IEE)	Mertie Gomez; William Blackwell	Collaborative session/L026
Thursday, 3/2, 8:00 am–9:00 am	Improving Access to High Quality Mathematics Instruction for Students with Disabilities	Paul Riccomini	Multi-Presentation/L011/L012
Thursday, 3/2, 8:00 am–9:00 am	Multiplicative Reasoning With Visual Representations: Struggling Third-Graders ‘Get the Math!’	Barbara Dougherty; Victoria Sanchez	Sub-Presentation/L011/L012
Thursday, 3/2, 8:00 am–9:00 am	Enhancing Geometry Problem Solving via Virtual–Representational–Abstract and Metacognitive Instruction	Divya Deshpande; Paul Riccomini	Sub-Presentation/L011/L012
Thursday, 3/2, 8:00 am–9:00 am	Mathematics Curricular Reform: Considering Students With Disabilities	Erica Mason; Camille Griffin	Sub-Presentation/L011/L012
Thursday, 3/2, 9:15 am–10:15 am	CEC-DR Showcase: Graph Out Loud: Importance of Graph Interpretation for Intensive Intervention	Jessica Toste; Corey Peltier; Erica Fry	Concurrent session/L011/L012
Thursday, 3/2, 10:30 am–11:30 am	Students with EBD in Special Education Research: Who Are We Serving?	Robin Parks Ennis; Ashley Shaw	Concurrent session/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 8:00 am–9:00 am	Understanding the Recent Meta-Analysis on Orton Gillingham Interventions: Q&A	Elizabeth Stevens; Christy Austin; Colby Hall; Emily Solari	Concurrent session/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 11:45 am–12:45 pm	Graduate Student Research Colloquium: Exploring the Hallmarks of Excellent Special Education Research	Mary Theresa Kiely; Kristen M. O'Brien; Jean B. Crockett	Concurrent session/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 1:00 pm–2:00 pm	Post-Pandemic Recovery? Academic and Behavioral Impacts on Students With Disabilities	Sarah Hurwitz; Tina O'Neal	Concurrent session/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 2:15 pm–3:15 pm	Advancing Educational Equity for Students with Disabilities	Diane Ryndak	Multi-Presentation/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 2:15 pm–3:15 pm	Academic Outcomes of Students With Disabilities in Inclusive Settings	Sandi Cole; Hardy Murphy	Sub-Presentation/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 2:15 pm–3:15 pm	Inequities in Educational Opportunities for Students in Different Educational Settings	Debbie Taub; Diane Ryndak	Sub-Presentation/L011/L012
Friday, 3/3, 2:15 pm–3:15 pm	Inclusive Teacher Education: Developing Well-Prepared Special Educators of Mathematics	Kate Marin; Elizabeth Stringer Keefe	Sub-Presentation/L011/L012

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*Local time (Eastern)

Please be sure to check the conference schedule website for any updates/changes to session times and locations.

2023 CEC Convention DR Schedule (continued from page 8)

Date and Time*	Session Name	Presenter(s)	Format/Location
Saturday, 3/4, 9:15 AM–10:15 AM	Teacher Well-Being	Dusty Columbia Embury	Multi-Presentation/ M108
Saturday, 3/4, 9:15 am–10:15 am	Mindful Teachers	Laura Clarke; Jennifer Blakeman; Kim Puckett; Dusty Columbia Embury	Sub-Presentation/ M108
Saturday, 3/4, 9:15 am–10:15 am	Understanding Well-Being for Teachers Experiencing Secondary Trauma	Adam Jordan; Kasey Jordan	Sub-Presentation/ M108
Saturday, 3/4, 9:15 am–10:15 am	Supporting Teacher Retention Through a Trauma-Informed Lens	Nicole Reddig; Janet VanLone	Sub-Presentation/ M108

DR Events

Date and Time*	Event	Location	Format
Wednesday, 3/1, 9:00 am–12:00 pm	CEC-DR Executive Board Meeting	TBD	In person
Thursday, 3/2, 6:00 pm–8:00 pm	CEC-DR Reception (with DLD and DEBH)	Belle of Louisville Riverboats	In person
Friday, 3/3, 5:00 pm–6:00 pm	CEC-DR Business Meeting	TBD	In person

*Local time (Eastern)