

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

# THE EDUCATOR

2024

**Special Services Academy**

**Multilingualism  
in Education**

**Virtual Animal-Assisted Therapy**

**Excellence. Access. Ambition.**



**MONMOUTH  
UNIVERSITY**

SCHOOL of  
EDUCATION

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## Message From The Dean's Office

### Leading Important Discussions

The School of Education at Monmouth University is a leader in preparing teachers, counselors, administrators, and speech-language pathologists for service to their communities. Recognizing and embracing that venerable duty is what distinguishes the School of Education among similar institutions. Since the first cohort of 364 teacher candidates graced the campus of then Monmouth College in the autumn of 1959, we have served as leaders in education in the state of New Jersey and throughout the country.

This past year has only enhanced the School of Education's presence in important discussions that impact the lives of children and professionals in schools. As the world continues to grapple with the current era's most pressing issues, including continued sociocultural inequalities and economic uncertainty, education plays an ever-increasing role in preparing children to prosper in a constantly evolving world.

The School of Education's faculty and students have continued to be leaders at Monmouth and beyond through their scholarship, their service, and their contributions to important discussions in education. As such, the School of Education continues to emerge as a leader in national ranking systems. We are proud to report that our School of Education's graduate school, which includes the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Speech-Language Pathology programs, was included in the U.S. News & World Report of 2024 Rankings of Best Graduate Schools.

Within this issue, you will read about a few of our notable faculty, students, and programs. We chose to highlight one of our signature programs, the Social Justice Academy, which is generously funded through the Grunin Foundation. This academy provides important national speakers for the Monmouth community and beyond. Additionally, the academy provides in-depth training for local professionals on anti-racism and educational equity. Further, in this issue, we include articles on several other important initiatives, including the Special Services Academy led by Lecturer Carol McArthur-Amedeo and Best Buddies led by Specialist Professor Danielle Frith. We also include an overview of our Ed.D. program, which continues to thrive and enroll important thought leaders each year.

Another important story focuses on one of our recent Ed.D. graduates, Jenni Tevlin, and her significant work to promote animal assisted therapy for K–12 students who need additional support. Additionally, one of our speech-language pathology students, Ella Zamir, is featured for her work in the field and as a recipient of the Marni Reisberg Recognition Award. Additionally, we celebrate Cassandra Runko as one of 15 graduates statewide who received the annual New Jersey Distinguished Clinical Intern award.

We feature one of our esteemed faculty, Associate Professor Chiu-Yin (Cathy) Wong, who specializes in TESOL and bilingual education at Monmouth. She is dedicated to mentoring teachers to recognize and embrace translanguaging, where students' home languages are recognized and valued as assets. Another faculty member, Professor Tina Paone, shares her story to advocate for and improve guardianship status through her testimony at the U.S. Senate. Finally, we share the news of the retirement of an important colleague, Christine Borlan.

It is the School of Education's solemn duty to be a source of progressive ideas and guidance that educators and students alike can utilize to make a positive difference in the world. The School of Education presents The Educator as both a light to guide current and future professionals in education/speech-language pathology and a forum to celebrate the significant accomplishments of the School of Education community. It is our hope that you will find inspiration in this issue.



Sincerely,

**Wendy A. Harriott, Ph.D.**

Interim Dean

**Alex Romagnoli, Ph.D.**

Interim Associate Dean

# Forging Ahead: The Social Justice Academy



The Social Justice Academy (SJA) has cultivated an environment where community and inclusivity thrive to propel education to new heights. Under the leadership of Inaugural Director Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., and Assistant Director Vernon Smith, Ph.D., the SJA, generously supported by the Grunin Foundation, offers direct training and funding support to K–12 schools across the state for their ongoing social justice education and curriculum development efforts.

Operating in three key areas, the SJA is dedicated to providing educators in K–12 environments with the training, support, and funding they need to increase equity in their schools. The first area focuses on the Professional Development Series held throughout the year for educators across New Jersey, with participants joining from all across the U.S. In spring 2023, educator and activist Alfred “Shiv” Brooks shared insights into activism and racial inequities in education, drawing from his experience as education chair for Georgia’s NAACP. In fall 2023, the academy welcomed Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Ph.D., to the distinguished speaker series. As a Professor of English education at Teachers College, Columbia University, Sealey-Ruiz is renowned for her work in advancing racial literacies in education.

Another component of the SJA is its summer workshop, where professionals engage in a two-week program to broaden their understanding about equity and inclusion. This workshop facilitates deep, self-reflective work that focuses on the personal growth of the individual, which translates into the work they undertake in their schools. Projects funded during this workshop evolve into a year-long curriculum implemented throughout the school year.

Finally, approved and funded ideas are featured in the Projects-in-Action Showcase. Dedicated SJA fellows receive ongoing support from coaches and instructors throughout the year to ensure the successful execution of their projects. With the goal of promoting equity in education, particularly for diverse and marginalized students, the SJA spotlights innovative projects in the field of education.



## Projects-in-Action Showcase

In its inaugural year in 2021, the SJA supported 14 fellows across eight school districts, funding and implementing nine social justice-based projects. During the summer of 2022, the SJA welcomed 63 educators and administrators from 11 counties in New Jersey, with a third cohort joining in July 2023. As a result, 54 unique projects were implemented during the 2022–2023 school year.

Reflecting on the impact of the academy, Smith emphasized, *“Everyone has biases. As a Black man, I have my own biases. Self-growth is tackling them, in any facet, to promote growth.”* In addition, he underscored the importance of the work of the individual to transform the system, stating, *“Challenging the system through challenging the self, that is the work of the academy.”* Smith passionately believes in the mission of SJA, asserting, *“We’re in the School of Education; we’re training educators, counselors, teachers to go out and do the work that needs to be done.”*

In Summer 2023, 43 funded projects were implemented in schools across New Jersey and presented. Notable initiatives include Alison Patterson’s “The Third Option: Social Justice Club,” which established a social justice club at South River High School, raising awareness of social injustices and racial inequality in the community. Sarah Glassman’s “Bulldog Big Buddies” program supported

newcomers and refugee students as they navigate school life in the U.S. and share their experiences. Michael Mangarelli’s “Efficacy of New U.S. History Curriculums” project addressed methods for teaching non-white history in schools and increased engagement with marginalized narratives. All projects presented in the SJA can be found on the Monmouth University website.

## Social Justice and Moving Forward

Combating the inequities in education faced by marginalized communities remains the primary objective of the SJA. Despite obstacles in the aftermath of COVID-19, the SJA persevered, hosting its first in-person Projects-in-Action showcase event on June 7, 2023, with a significant turnout exceeding that of the first showcase upon the program’s inception in 2021. Smith reflected, *“It was extremely exciting to be in that crowded room, to celebrate the successful work of those teachers, counselors, school administrators. Knowing the challenges our fellows went through made it all the more special to see them succeed. It gives me hope that the work we do is not in vain.”*

The SJA outreach efforts continue to expand, empowering educators, counselors, and administrators to address social justice issues in education. By amplifying marginalized voices and raising awareness of systemic injustices, the academy strives to effect meaningful change. Smith emphasized, *“We want to help them achieve and succeed, which will then create a better and a more just society in which we live.”* The goal of the SJA is to promote activism where apathy would reside, gather distinguished speakers, highlight curricula, and support projects that grant equitable opportunities where none would otherwise exist. It is through these significant efforts that individuals affected by not only social justice inequities, but also social apathy—the acceptance of the status quo—are empowered to enact change.

Applications for the SJA open annually in March to K–12 educators, counselors, and school administrators. The program’s success is attributed to the unwavering support of Pulliam, Smith, the Grunin Foundation, instructors, coaches, and program fellows/participants.



*“All I can hope for is that teachers continue to encourage and recognize those who are putting their best foot forward.”*

**- Cassondra Runko**



## Distinguished

Clinical Intern

## Award

# Cassondra Runko

Since the establishment of the prestigious Distinguished Clinical Intern Award in 1985, institutions across New Jersey have carefully selected exceptional candidates for this recognition. For the 2022–2023 academic year, the candidates comprised 62 clinical interns and 71 cooperating teachers, with 15 of the top graduating interns awarded with a recognition of distinction, as determined by a panel of recognized New Jersey educators. Determinations were based on the graduating interns' outstanding work and mentorship during the 2022–2023 academic year.

Cassondra Runko, '23M, an elementary education and teacher of students with disabilities graduate of Monmouth University, was among the 15 distinguished recipients of the award. Runko, a recent graduate with a Master of Arts in Teaching in August of 2023, demonstrated exceptional diligence. At the age of 24, she completed her master's degree in a commendable 14 months, from May 2022 to August 2023. Prior to this, Runko earned her bachelor's degree in forensic science from the University of New Haven.

Like many students, Runko had a turbulent educational journey in determining her goals after high school and, during her younger and

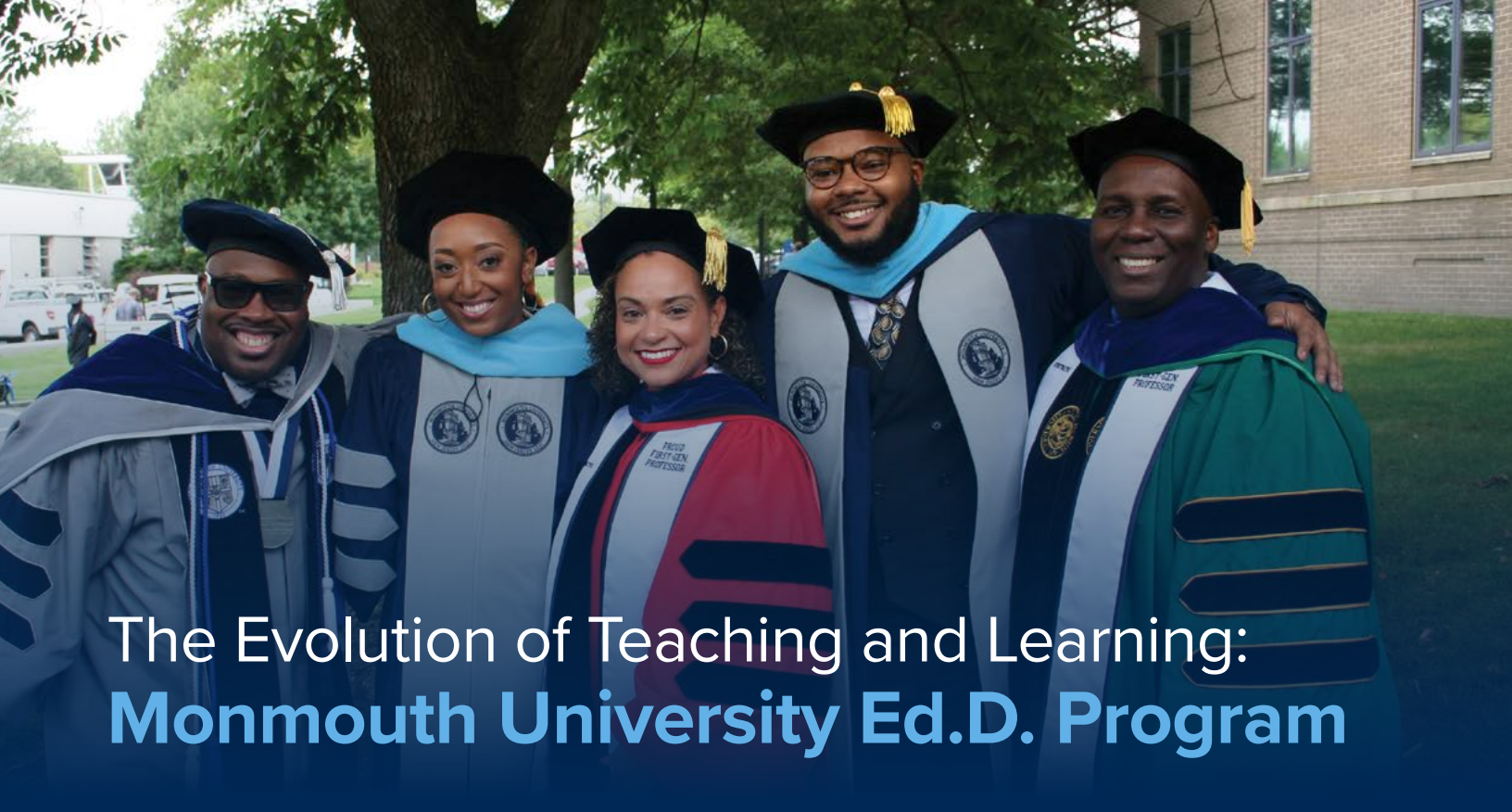
aspirational years, she believed she wanted to pursue a career in a science-related field. During her undergraduate years at the University of New Haven, she actively participated in student committees, including serving as Vice President and then President of Programming Events. During her undergraduate education, Runko came to blend her interest in the sciences with her passion for teaching. Upon her undergraduate graduation, she turned to student teaching in science as a different avenue to pursue.

It was Runko's work ethic that caught the attention of Clinical Supervisor Susan Kuper at Monmouth. Runko's clinical field experiences included placements in both Eatontown and Howell Township Public Schools while pursuing her Master of Arts degree; she demonstrated excellence both in and out of school. As she worked as a part-time graduate assistant in Student Life, Runko's dedication did not go unnoticed. She appreciated the supportive atmosphere at Monmouth, which helped alleviate the pressure associated with the graduate program. Kuper, providing constructive criticism, played a pivotal role in Runko's professional development as she navigated her career in the student teaching phase. As a graduate level adjunct professor at Monmouth, Kuper also served as the advisor who recommended Runko for the Distinguished Clinical Intern Award.

The awards ceremony for the Distinguished Clinical Interns took place at Rider University on June 7, 2023. Runko expressed her amazement and honor at being recognized alongside other aspiring teachers. The award committee, comprised of independent panelists from the New Jersey Department of Education and universities, selected her as one of the 15 awardees with distinction. Runko sees this recognition as a culmination of her hard work, and she emphasized the importance of acknowledging aspiring students and educators to foster growth and motivation: *“I think the idea behind the Distinguished Clinical Intern Award is to put a spotlight on those who truly try. They don't hear it enough.”*

Even as a recognized Distinguished Clinical Intern, Runko has encountered some challenges. Runko's persistence as a student and hard worker allowed opportunities to come her way, despite the hurdle of full-time teaching throughout the day and attending night classes, a common struggle for many graduate students. While her efforts were recognized, Runko acknowledges that not everyone is as fortunate, and she hopes that graduate programs will continue to support and recognize those who are putting forth their best efforts. *“All I can hope for is that teachers continue to encourage and recognize those who are putting their best foot forward,”* she shared.

In her spare time, Runko indulges in outdoor leisure activities, such as hiking in nature and taking her dogs for walks in parks. Presently, Runko's career path has led her to working as an educator in the Oceanport School District. Like many, Runko has experienced a career journey as more of a winding slope than a straight path. Cassondra Runko stands out as one of the recognized students for her exceptional efforts, securing her position as an educator in New Jersey's school system. She aspires to continue to climb the career ladder and positively impact the lives of as many students as possible.



# The Evolution of Teaching and Learning: Monmouth University Ed.D. Program

The Educational Doctorate Program (Ed.D.) program at Monmouth University has experienced a remarkable transformation over the past five years, shaping students into influential leaders within the field of education. Established at Monmouth in 2017, the Ed.D. program has engaged an ever-growing cohort of educational practitioners, transformed graduates into masters of their discipline, and fostered a community where professionals' personalized goals in education take precedence.

The Ed.D. program is designed to cultivate leaders capable of making progressive change within school districts through transformational leadership. Offering two distinct tracks, P-12 and Higher Education, the program empowers professionals to embark on a 54-credit cohort-based journey, fostering collaboration and growth among peers. Utilizing flexible and synchronous learning, participants can pursue their doctorate through a combination of on-site and remote course delivery, facilitating interactions with instructors and peers in the manner that suits them best.

*"The program is focused ultimately on student success. We hope to provide the opportunity to give resources to our doctoral students, so they, in turn, can help more people. That's what it's about,"* asserted Assistant Professor and Program Director, William O. George III, summarizing the program's primary objective. Emphasizing the fusion of practice and research, he remarked, *"This is where practice and practitioners meet research with the goal of innovation, the evolution of teaching and learning."* Indeed, the heart of the Ed.D. program lies in its dedication to personalized growth and academic excellence.

In alignment with the program's student-centered approach, doctoral candidates focus their studies and research on their discipline, such as mathematics, English, special education, or counseling. Beginning in summer or fall, students develop projects and complete coursework under the guidance of top minds in educational leadership.



## P-12 and Higher Education

Students interested in P-12 prepare to lead initiatives and implement transformational change within elementary and secondary schools. The curriculum offers opportunities for students to cultivate critical leadership as well as the analytical and decision-making skills that are essential to effecting positive transformations. Positions in this area include program directors, counselors, principals, or superintendents across various sectors of P-12 education.

Students specializing in higher education are equipped with the innovative problem-solving skills required to improve various collegiate systems and policies in diverse areas such as student affairs, enrollment management, athletics, and beyond. The curriculum offers opportunities for students to delve into subjects such as leadership, law, finance, history, and governance, preparing them for careers as chairs, deans, provosts, or university presidents.

The program culminates in the Transformative Leadership Project, during which students undergo rigorous assessment to finalize a dissertation for their degree. Through this process, doctoral candidates develop projects aimed at enhancing their home school district's or institution of higher education's programs.

*"Our research stems from equity,"* emphasized George, highlighting the program's commitment to fostering inclusive educational practices. *"Allowing the students the opportunity to thrive and get the education they need, whether it's local or international,"* he added, is key to the program's success.

## The Journey and Goals

While nationally, retention and completion rates pose significant challenges for doctoral programs, the Ed.D. program at Monmouth has consistently achieved a completion rate above 90% since the program's inception in 2017. The program is tailored to meet students' individual needs and supported by an academy cohort fostering growth within their disciplines. With an inaugural graduating class of seven students, and a graduating class of 23 graduates in 2023, the doctoral program has witnessed remarkable growth.

Graduates of the program proceed to enact change and innovation within their respective fields, both in their home districts and in higher-level positions. Many pursue roles as adjunct professors in universities after receiving their doctoral degree. Some alumni, such as Angello Villarreal, Ed.D., who teaches world languages, and Thomas Farrell, Ed.D., who teaches educational leadership, are currently adjunct instructors at Monmouth.

Citing the Ed.D. program's steady growth over the years, George anticipates having 30 graduates in future cohorts. Being a passionate advocate for lifelong learning, student success, and career advancement, George actively engages with his students, teaching classes in education at Monmouth. In addition to his role as the program's director, George brings over three decades of experience in public education and currently serves as the Interim Superintendent for Monmouth Ocean Educational Services Commission.

## Applications

Applications for the Ed.D. program are open annually in summer and fall, inviting professionals to submit their portfolios and embark on a transformative educational journey. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 is required. Under the leadership of George, the Ed.D. program continues to be a beacon of innovation and excellence in the field of education, where practitioners converge to explore the latest research and drive educational innovation toward maximizing teacher and, ultimately, student success.





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

# Changing the Daily Classroom Experience, One Wagging Tail at a Time: Jenni Tevlin, Monmouth University Ed.D. Graduate

Monmouth University alumna Jenni Tevlin '23 Ed.D., has been an animal lover for as long as she can remember. Through her own love of dogs, Tevlin realized that her passion for dogs can create a crucial emotional connection for others, too. This insight inspired Tevlin to cultivate relationships within her community and with the Monmouth County SPCA. Despite the world “throwing her a bone,” her persistent and inquisitive nature motivated Tevlin to create an engaging dissertation titled “Virtual Animal-Assisted Intervention Curriculum Design and Delivery in K–12 and Higher Education.” Through the loyal service of her pup, Sweet Pea, Tevlin initiated a six-week animal-assisted therapy intervention program to address the challenges of hybrid learning and provide a new approach for supporting students with specific needs. She hopes that schools

will consider integrating animal-assisted therapy curricula in the near future. In March 2020, the world as we knew it drastically changed overnight, and we were forced into a “new normal.” While experiencing such dramatic shifts in the education system, teachers navigated the unknown and transitioned to creating successful hybrid and remote classrooms. This new reality for students globally meant being deprived of an in-person learning experience. Thus, the snowball effect began. Post-COVID statistics reveal that students experienced significant negative impacts on their academic performance, including in reading, writing, and mathematics. Tevlin also discovered that due to COVID and virtual learning, students’ positive support systems were directly impacted. Tevlin noted in her dissertation -

*“Positive support systems are paramount to realizing learning outcomes and continuing to influence a child’s ability to form and maintain healthy relationships, as well as to develop effective social-emotional competencies, and coping strategies into adulthood.”*

**- Jenni Tevlin**

Throughout the pandemic, Tevlin recognized that children’s mental health took center stage as the world became filled with uncertainty. Children, teens, and young adults suffered from a wide array of social-emotional issues, including isolation, anxiety, depression, grief, and increased levels of self-harm and suicidal ideation.

Tevlin further explained in her study that social-emotional learning (SEL) strategies

were de-emphasized, as schools’ core curriculum underwent adjustments due to the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, SEL personnel incorporated various methods to cater to the needs of individuals, including cognitive behavioral therapy alongside traditional counseling techniques. However, by the end of the 2019–2020 school year, many students were left behind not only academically, but also socially and emotionally, as they were stranded with little to no action plan in place. It was at this point that Tevlin saw a challenge and transformed it into a purpose.

Unlike emotional support dogs, which are not required to undergo training, therapy dogs are trained to provide comfort and support to people, often in group settings. Tevlin and Sweet Pea became certified as a therapy dog and handler team when Sweet Pea was just two years old. Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) is one form of animal-assisted intervention (AAI). AAI promotes positive interactions between humans and animals while patients or therapy clients undergo mental or physical health services under the care of a licensed provider. AAI can take on various forms, including reading to a therapy dog; art therapy; and therapy dog petting sessions, where patients can interact and pet the animals.



Tevlin bid farewell to her time as a Monmouth Hawk, but she continues her efforts to improve mental health for individuals. She designed and taught the first graduate course on animal-assisted therapy in counseling in the University’s Department of Professional Counseling and has served as an adjunct instructor at both Monmouth and Rutgers Universities for many years. Additionally, she currently serves as the Director of Global Project and Alliance Management at the pharmaceutical company Merck. In this role, she supports late-stage oncology product development teams.

She is particularly passionate about advocating for those with cancer, as she lost her own mother to pancreatic cancer in 2022. This past September, Tevlin participated in a global mental health panel, discussing mental health issues within the LGBTQIA+ community. She encourages individuals interested in animal, alternative, or adjunct forms of therapy to explore AAI and its benefits. She also emphasizes the importance of prioritizing both mental and physical health, recognizing their interconnectedness. As individuals strive for emotional well-being, Tevlin believes it’s crucial to care for oneself holistically, addressing all aspects to nurture oneself as a “whole person.”

Looking into the depths of an uncertain time and with extensive knowledge and real-world experience, Tevlin embarked on creating a Transformative Leadership Project (TLP) as part of the Monmouth Ed.D. program. With the project’s inception, Tevlin set out to research and address the lack of accessibility to emotional learning support systems in virtual learning environments. After conducting extensive research coupled with determination to support students’ emotional needs, the program “Socializing with Sweet Pea and Friends” was created. Tevlin conducted six online sessions weekly in partnership with a fourth-grade classroom in a Central Jersey school district.

Although further research is warranted, a post-intervention open-ended survey revealed that staff members reported observing various positive social-emotional changes in the students who participated in “Socializing with Sweet Pea and Friends.” Some students exhibited increased levels of respect toward one another and higher school attendance rates, and many students displayed enhanced empathy skills. These results indicate that this project, if integrated throughout other classes and grade levels, could potentially benefit other schools. Furthermore, it serves as a launchpad toward having school districts statewide view AAI as another curriculum avenue for students to reach their full academic and emotional potential.



## Faculty Spotlight: Carol McArthur-Amedeo, Ed.D., and the Special Services Academy

Carol McArthur-Amedeo, Ed.D., has nurtured a deep love for teaching children since her adolescence, spending her years volunteering at the Community Center and Presbyterian Church in Cranford, New Jersey. This early passion for working with children laid the foundation for her eventual career as a Monmouth University faculty member. While McArthur-Amedeo's research interests include children's disabilities, her primary focus lies in providing resources beyond the standard curriculum to address children's diverse needs. McArthur-Amedeo's research aims to bridge the gap for individuals with special needs and their communities, preparing teachers to effectively teach students with disabilities.

Throughout her teaching career, McArthur-Amedeo sought a supportive educational community that matches her passion for teaching. She found this community at Monmouth University, where she became an adjunct professor in 2009 after a period of retirement. Prior to that, she taught for several years at an educational center for boys classified as emotionally and behaviorally disturbed. McArthur-Amedeo found the University's environment welcoming to fostering innovation in special education and transitioned to a full-time position in 2010. She has remained an integral part of the University's faculty ever since, teaching three to four courses per semester in special education and community engagement.



The establishment of a dedicated department for special education at Monmouth came with the intervention of John E. Henning, Ph.D., who served as Dean of the School of Education from 2015 to 2022. McArthur-Amedeo was later elevated to Program Director and Assistant Chair in Special Education. In addition to her passion for teaching, McArthur-Amedeo is driven by a desire to connect local professionals with resources and professional development opportunities to better support individuals with disabilities. Her effort in facilitating and supporting the Special Services Academy (SSA) enables her to connect diverse professionals to engage in discussions on various topics related to special education services. The SSA comprises a series of developmental sessions held at Monmouth in collaboration with partner school districts, aiming to enhance teaching practices in special services, learning disabilities, speech-language pathology, and youth behavior management. Through professional learning communities, the academy offers opportunities for growth, promoting reflective practice and enhancing student and teacher learning. The SSA also establishes a supportive network and provides resources for developing new experiences in education.

The establishment of the SSA encountered formidable challenges, which were effectively addressed through the collaborative effort of its steering committee, which includes the following stakeholders, in addition to McArthur-Amedeo: Joseph Bond, Lacey Township; Danielle Frith, M.A., LDT-C/NCED, Monmouth University; Natalie Gricko, Woodbridge Township School District; Mary Haspel Ed.D., BCBA-D, Monmouth University; Ai Kamei, Ph.D., Monmouth University; Stacy Lauderdale-Littin, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Monmouth University; KC Lubniewski, Ph.D., Monmouth University; Bettyann Monteleone, The Shore Center; Erick Nunez, Woodbridge Township School District; Jennifer Steffich, Manasquan Public Schools; Lorissa Voorhees, West Long Branch School District; and Kerri Walsifer, Tinton Falls School District. The SSA also encountered difficulties with its programs during the COVID-19 pandemic years. McArthur-Amedeo recalls the necessity of canceling workshops and transitioning to virtual meetings until 2022, when in-person meetings resumed. Despite these challenges, she was pleased that participant numbers did not diminish during these years, with attendees eagerly returning to in-person meetings. This reaffirmed her belief in school districts' and educators' unwavering commitment to enhancing special education, regardless of the format in which the academy operated. *"We work together, we do research together, we present together, we help co-teach, we present in other classrooms, that is really what my time at Monmouth has been about. Working with amazing people,"* she reflected.

In fall 2023, McArthur-Amedeo attended the annual Teacher Education Division meeting of the Council for Exceptional Children in Long Beach, California. Collaborating with Kamei, the Chair of the Department of Special Education at Monmouth, she actively



supported teacher education initiatives for students with exceptional needs and their families. Throughout the five-day event, McArthur-Amedeo engaged in professional development opportunities with the goal of enhancing student education within Monmouth's programs, including the SSA.

Monmouth University presents four sessions of the SSA throughout the year, in February, May, October, and December. Each session invites professionals to serve as guest speakers, covering a range of topics relevant to special education. In the latter half of 2023, the SSA hosted a workshop on youth services and program planning led by Toni Scott, M.S.W., L.S.W., C.R.L., and a session on behavior threat assessment conducted by Thomas Toohey, Ed.D.

McArthur-Amedeo's long-term goals include addressing the shortage of educators in New Jersey, particularly in the field of special education, which experiences high demand and significant workloads compared to many other areas. Recognizing the challenges associated with teacher retention in this field, McArthur-Amedeo has made it her mission to support and retain educators. She understands that the shortage of teachers who are trained to address the unique needs of students with disabilities can be detrimental to students' long-term development. As part of her lifelong commitment to teaching children, McArthur-Amedeo views her work with the SSA as a valuable contribution to tackling the teacher shortage. McArthur-Amedeo is dedicated to fostering a nurturing learning environment for students in special education and continuing to support Monmouth alumni even after they leave the program. She noted that the Special Education program must remain responsive to the needs of teacher candidates entering the program, so that they will be best prepared to serve their own future students:

*"We evolved to suit their needs, we're still evolving, we're constantly looking to see how we can support our current students and attract new students."*

**- Dr. Carol McArthur-Amedeo**





## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Hard Work Comes with Great Rewards: Ella Zamir's Journey from Grad Student to Award Recipient and Speech-Language Pathologist

Monumental success comes with dedication, hard work, and perseverance in the face of adversity. These values are at the core of Ella Zamir's daily life, guiding her journey from graduate student to recipient of the prestigious Marni Reisberg Recognition Award. Beyond her professional achievements, her main goal is to teach her children to "always work hard even when it's hard."

The Marni Reisberg Recognition Award pays tribute to the life and dedication of Marni Reisberg, a distinguished speech-language pathologist who achieved remarkable milestones, showcasing a commitment to excellence in her field. Reisberg served as the president-elect of the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Simultaneously, she held the position of Director of Speech-Language Pathology at the Community Medical Center in Toms River, New Jersey, where she spearheaded Landmark Total Quality management initiatives. Additionally, Reisberg actively participated in the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), contributing as a member of the Quality Improvement Committee and frequently presenting at ASHA regional and state conferences.

Beyond her notable career accomplishments, Reisberg was an advocate for quality education and positive practical learning experiences for speech-language pathologists entering the field. Her dedication to fostering a supportive learning environment reflected her commitment to the future of the profession. Tragically, Reisberg passed away in May of 1996 after battling cancer. Reisberg's legacy is honored annually by the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association through a monetary award presented to outstanding graduates from New Jersey university speech pathology programs. Additionally, an annual convention held in Long Branch, New Jersey, commemorates Reisberg's commitment to quality education and practical learning experiences for aspiring speech-language pathologists.

Zamir '23M, a Russian-Israeli immigrant residing in the U.S. for 15 years, derives inspiration from her unique journey. Originally from Russia, she moved to Israel at the age of five and later met her husband during a trip to Brooklyn, New York. Zamir's interest in speech-language pathology was sparked by the development of her prematurely born twin girls, who required various therapies, including speech therapy. Witnessing the transformative impact these therapies had on her children fueled Zamir's determination to pursue a career in the field.



Before enrolling at Monmouth University, Zamir earned a bachelor's degree in literature and music and a master's degree in media communications. Despite numerous opportunities in the media industry, her heart was set on a career in speech-language pathology. Embarking on her "yellow brick road" toward a new profession, she faced numerous challenges during her post-baccalaureate program. Juggling academic responsibilities with motherhood and a full-time job, she often contemplated giving up. However, her resilient spirit prevailed.

During her journey as a student at Monmouth, Zamir initially aspired to work with early intervention clients but later found comfort in working with adult clients during her clinical experience. Volunteering at the Adler Aphasia Center further broadened her perspective, exposing her to the challenges of individuals with aphasia, a communication disorder resulting from stroke or traumatic brain injury.

During her selection process for externships, based on her clinical and volunteering experiences, Zamir targeted adult externships, which are more challenging to secure. She commenced her externship journey at JFK University Medical Center in Edison, New Jersey, where she apprenticed under the supervision of the staff of the outpatient center, which is known for its quality of care. Throughout her initial externship, Zamir was immersed in an environment where she gained valuable experience working with patients afflicted by Parkinson's disease and dysarthria, a motor speech disorder affecting communication intelligibility. She found this exposure to be a game changer in her career trajectory, as it demonstrated how therapists in this field can significantly impact individuals seeking assistance for these conditions. She explained that this setting allowed her to "see the real impact [she had] made." Subsequently, Zamir transitioned to acute care at Bayshore Medical Center in Holmdel, New Jersey, focusing primarily on evaluating and assisting patients with swallowing difficulties.

When discussing the Marni Reisberg Recognition Award, Zamir admitted to having no prior knowledge of its significance. However, her lack of awareness transformed into joy upon receiving the notice about her honor in the mail. This prestigious opportunity included a full day of learning and lectures followed by an evening of celebration hosted by the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Reflecting on her journey after receiving this remarkable honor, Zamir exclaimed that her "motivation only increased." Considering

her life and history as an immigrant, she felt a constant pressure to excel in everything she pursued; otherwise, she would fall short of achieving the success she aimed for. She also expressed profound gratitude to the University and her mentors who played instrumental roles in shaping who she is today, including Lisa Leonard, M.S., CCC-SLP, CBIS; Cathleen Givney, M.S., CCC-SLP; Kathleen Scaler Scott, Ph.D.; and Eric X. Raj, Ph.D., CCC-SLP.

After graduating from Monmouth in spring 2023, Zamir swiftly embarked on her professional career as a speech-language pathologist. Starting in a skilled nursing and subacute rehab facility, she transitioned to the inpatient Johnson Rehabilitation Institute at Ocean University Medical Center. Her primary clinical focus is on evaluating and assisting individuals with dysphagia, a swallowing disorder, in addition to speech, language, and cognition therapy.

Zamir would like to share with Monmouth Hawks the wisdom she gained through her journey. First, always persevere, even when faced with challenges. With regard to learning class concepts, students should strive to comprehend the meanings of underlying terms, theories, and practices so that during exams or in clinical settings, it will be easier to establish those vital connections and ultimately piece together the puzzle of their education. Another crucial piece of advice from Zamir is to establish connections with professors and appreciate the wisdom and guidance they impart. Zamir emphasizes that university professors "are not from the moon" and provide significant advice, knowledge, and support to their students. Moreover, students can glean crucial insights from the experiences they share in the classroom.







Design  
s/Participants  
Hypo

**FACULTY RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT:**

**Normalizing Multilingualism in Education through Translanguaging with Cathy Wong, Ph.D.**

Each academic year, the education system continually implements new ways of educating students. One area of persistent concern is students reaching developmental milestones while having English as their second language.

Chiu-Yin (Cathy) Wong, Ph.D., specializing in TESOL and bilingual education at Monmouth University, is passionately dedicated to guiding teachers into a world where students' home languages are recognized and valued as assets. This concept is known as translanguaging.

In American schools, a clear distinction exists between first language (L1) and second language (L2) classrooms. L1 classrooms emphasize English as the primary language, fostering native-speaking students' literacy skills and appreciation of literature through novel studies in different genres. Conversely, L2 classrooms aim to develop students' abilities to communicate in

English across various social contexts through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Wong co-authored several groundbreaking articles that were published in 2023. In their award-winning article, "Empowering Students Through the Construction of a Translanguaging Space in an English as a First Language Classroom," Wong and her co-author, Dr. Kevin Tai, address the constraints of conventional English language learning methodologies. They underscore the discord between these methodologies and policies governing standard English, an issue that many scholars have identified. Furthermore, the article's innovative insights have earned it a research output award, highlighting its significant contribution to the field. Translanguaging promotes students' appreciation of global, cultural, and linguistic diversity, fostering a personal understanding of the world.



In another article co-authored by Wong and her graduate student Christine Donatello, they discuss how the prospect of change brings about hesitation, fear, and disbelief among educators. The reaction is particularly notable among teachers like Donatello, who were accustomed to an "English only" mentality within the school system. The article delves into the challenges of shifting toward more inclusive pedagogies that embrace linguistic diversity, highlighting the common resistance encountered from educators accustomed to being entrenched in traditional approaches. As such, teachers may control what is said in the classroom. Through the exposure to and implementation of translanguaging, some teachers have begun to realize that the goal of translanguaging is not to produce two monolinguals. Instead, bilingualism is fluid and dynamic. In other words, our languages become part of who we are and how we identify, and translanguaging aims to empower students' identities as bilinguals.

For those new to this concept, it's important to note that teachers do not need to speak their students' native languages to implement translanguaging effectively. Translanguaging utilizes various communicative resources and encourages co-learning, where teachers and students collaborate to achieve learning goals. Wong has facilitated a co-learning environment, allowing students to showcase their languages, cultures, and identities. Additionally, students can ask questions and discuss their experiences with learning about translanguaging.

Teachers can implement translanguaging in various ways, enabling students to acquire content and knowledge using their full linguistic repertoire. In Wong's writings, two featured teachers, Donatello and Miss T., exemplify effective translanguaging practices.

Donatello is a featured teacher in the article "Translanguaging: An Inexperienced Teacher's Guide to Implementation." Donatello began her translanguaging journey by omitting the requirement to complete assignments in English. By doing so, Donatello opened two avenues. One was an academic avenue where students submitted assignments on time and showed enjoyment in doing so. That second avenue was a social-emotional connection. While looking at their work, she could identify words that were cognates and had students identify those cognates in English. Through establishing that connection, Donatello was furthering her students' linguistic awareness.

Secondly, Miss T., a featured teacher in Wong's article "Empowering Students Through the Construction of a Translanguaging Space

in an English as a First Language Classroom," implements translanguaging creatively for her students. To enrich their linguistic repertoire, she teaches "goal" words in the Spanish language, such as "abuela" and "lindo." Before reading an interactive story to her students, she has them attempt to guess the meaning of the goal words in English, which is successful. While reading the story, she maintains a steady pace and points to each word so students can follow along. Once a goal word is identified, Miss T. first translates it into English and then uses it in a sentence from the story. Once the students grasp the vocabulary, they quickly understand the word and its meaning throughout the remainder of the interactive story.

Wong's overarching goal is to normalize multilingualism by fostering continued exposure, education, and implementation. She envisions a future where all teachers and districts recognize students' language practices as an asset, helping create a strong bond not only between teachers and students but also between students and the broader world.



Advocacy in Action:

# Tina Paone, Ph.D., and Her Testimony Against Guardianship Exploitation

Tina Paone, Ph.D., has devoted both her personal and professional life to fighting social and systemic injustices in all of their damaging forms. At Monmouth, her interactive teaching style, which has students reflect upon and challenge their personal values and beliefs on both marginalized and privileged populations, informs the areas in which Paone works to make a positive impact. Through her teaching, she encourages counseling students to become advocates for their future students recognizing societal injustice. She teaches through a social justice lens with an emphasis on advocacy.

Paone has led by example, especially when it comes to advocacy. As quoted by a former counseling student, *“she doesn’t just talk the talk, she walks the walk.”* Although Paone’s primary area of focus is on race and racism, she is not blind to other intersectional identities that encounter systemic injustice.



An unfortunate personal event led to her understanding the injustices within the legal system in regards to ageism, persons with disabilities, and incapacitated people. In 2015, Paone’s mother experienced a debilitating stroke which left her incapacitated. Immediately following the stroke, Paone and her brother would gain emergency guardianship in order to make financial and medical decisions on behalf of their mother. Within a year however, it was clearly evident that a much more sinister dismissal of basic human rights would occur. Permanent guardianship would be granted to a court-appointed attorney and court-appointed guardian rather than family members.

For years, Paone and her brother navigated the horrific guardianship situation that their mother was forced into by the court without the ability to vocalize concerns where it mattered. Through extensive research, Paone learned that her mother’s situation was not isolated and was recognized as guardianship exploitation. Guardianship exploitation refers to the medical, financial, and/or physical abuse of incapacitated individuals. While the spirit of guardianship is grounded in assisting those who cannot necessarily care for themselves, it can unfortunately be distorted into something darker.

Paone realized that while guardianship was intended to support those who could not protect themselves, the laws surrounding it could be unfairly leveraged by the courts to disproportionately benefit court-appointed attorneys and court-appointed guardians through financial gain. In other words, many entities were taking advantage of incapacitated people and using the law to justify their behaviors.

By chance, Paone was presented with a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of millions of people and simultaneously model for her students how to be a powerful advocate in a public sphere. In 2023, a call to action from the United States Senate Committee on Aging was made asking individuals to share their stories centering on



guardianship exploitation. Out of hundreds of individuals who wrote in to share their stories of the horrors of guardianship abuse, Paone was selected to be interviewed and vetted by staff members of Senators Bob Casey (Pennsylvania – D) and Mike Braun (Indiana – R). Based on her experience, expertise, and interviews, Paone was invited to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. She was asked to testify in front of the United States Senate as a representative for the millions of individuals worldwide under guardianship care. Both her written and verbal testimony will have a permanent home in the National Archives (28:20).

Her testimony represents a monumental moment of her tireless efforts in research and the ongoing discourse around guardianship exploitation. Channeling her social justice advocacy spirit, Paone petitioned Senators serving on the committee to create change: *“I call on you, our Senators, to create change. You have the ability to implement meaningful reform. From my perspective, we need federal standards that regulate the appointment and oversight of judges, court-appointed attorneys, and court-appointed guardians. Additionally, families like mine must have a recourse to prevent devastating medical and financial exploitation.”*

At the conclusion of the verbal testimonies

of all witnesses, the bipartisan bill S.1448 (the Guardianship Bill of Rights Act) was introduced by the Majority and Minority Senate leaders [Casey (D); Braun (R)] to protect Americans from guardianship abuse. Currently in the Introduction Stage, this bill needs to be passed by the Senate, the House, and signed by the President of the United States before it becomes law. At the hearing, Paone was specifically questioned about the implications of this bill for her family as well as others with similar guardianship exploitation experiences.

After leaving this experience, Paone was not finished with her local advocacy work. Through repeated efforts to make a small systemic change, she was able to highlight the nefarious actions of her mother’s court-appointed guardian. With consistency, in July 2023, Paone received word that her mother’s

previous court-appointed guardian had left her practice, relinquished all guardianship cases that she was appointed to, and had left law entirely. Though this action was small in nature, it subsequently protected the hundreds of guardianship cases this attorney was working on—all showing similar patterns of exploitation, through court records.

Our actions can initiate change. *“If you think you’re too small to be effective, you’ve never been in bed with a mosquito.”* – Betty Reese. Leading by example and being an active agent for change, Paone embodies the spirit of the School of Education at Monmouth University. Through her words and actions, she created change. Paone is a prime example of Lao Tzu’s quote: *“A journey of one thousand miles begins with a single step.”* When you reflect on your journey and the many others that lie ahead, never lose sight of the fact that your voice and actions can initiate change.





# Best Buddies: Friendships and Partnerships with Local Schools

Best Buddies is an international organization dedicated to creating opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The IDD community served by Best Buddies encompasses people with various conditions such as Down syndrome, autism, fragile X, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, and other undiagnosed disabilities.

The Best Buddies chapter at Monmouth University is dedicated to promoting inclusion by cultivating lasting friendships between students with and without

disabilities, both on campus and in the broader community.

The Best Buddies chapter originated in 2021, when Danielle Frith, M.A., LDT-C/ NCED, a Specialist Professor for the Department of Special Education and Monmouth alumna, was introduced to this international organization by one of her graduate students. She and David Fasolino '22 launched the chapter, with Fasolino serving as its first president. When asked about his tenure as president, Fasolino expressed, *"Being involved in Best Buddies at Monmouth University was both exciting and inspiring. Serving as the first chapter president, it was exciting to see the chapter grow from its humble beginnings to joining*

*other New Jersey college chapters at the annual Friendship Walk. I am excited for what the Best Buddies chapter at Monmouth University is able to accomplish, and I hope that our chapter can serve as a beacon of inclusion and lead to the development and growth of Best Buddies Chapters not only in New Jersey, but also across the United States."*

Following Fasolino's graduation in 2022, Lauren Karabin assumed the presidency until her graduation in 2023, after which sophomore Keira Yablonsky assumed leadership. In addition to a chapter president, the chapter operates with an executive board including positions such as a buddy director, secretary, treasurer, and a social media liaison, with an Instagram page maintained by the executive board.

Aside from the chapter's mission of fostering inclusion, self-confidence, and self-esteem, which are the foundations for building authentic friendships, Frith emphasizes the leadership roles within the chapter as crucial to preparing Monmouth students for post-college life. *"They are learning leadership skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and important collaboration skills,"* Frith shared.

At the core of the chapter's success are the partnerships with local school districts and their students. Jennifer Steffich, Director of Special Services in

the Matawan-Aberdeen School District, has played an important role in establishing these partnerships. Steffich explained, *"As more public schools initiate their transition programs for 18–21-year-olds, there's an increasing demand for students to have opportunities to interact with their typical peers. Best Buddies fulfills that need for the 18–21-year-old population. Incorporating the Best Buddies program into these school programs provides students with a glimpse into real-life socializing experiences, such as shopping at the mall or having lunch at the food court. The smiles on everyone's faces when the Best Buddies visit make this program priceless. It warms everyone's heart to watch them interacting and enjoying each other's company."*

Feedback from Linda Turnbach, a parent of one of the Best Buddies members, sheds light on how this chapter positively impacts the lives of individuals with disabilities. Turnbach shared, *"As a parent with a daughter with autism, I am always seeking a peer for my daughter to spend time with. She wants to engage in the same activities as other kids her age but often lacks the opportunities due to her limitations. Best Buddies has proven to be a wonderful group that has opened doors for her to socialize with peers her age. I appreciate how they take the time to get to know her and the other kids in her class at their school, and then offer events at the college for them to participate in. She always looks forward to these gatherings, and we are very grateful she has this opportunity!"*

Throughout the semester, Best Buddies friendships are cultivated through various means. These include Monmouth students accompanying district students during community-based instruction outings and classroom-based activities, organizing on-campus

events such as holiday parties and bingo night, and participating in Monmouth athletic events. To enhance the organization's visibility on campus, the Best Buddies executive board members attend open houses for prospective students, participate in fall and spring involvement fairs, and disseminate information about inclusion through tabling events at the student center.

The annual Friendship Walk held at The College of New Jersey stands as the organization's most significant event, and Frith and numerous chapter students attend each year. This event offers members the chance to raise funds while enjoying activities throughout the day. *"Our goal is to host a Friendship Walk at Monmouth University in the near future,"* said Frith.

While the Monmouth chapter is just three years old, its impact on both Monmouth students and individuals with IDD is undeniable. Ideally, the chapter will continue to expand, forging additional partnerships with local districts in the future.



# Faculty Publications and Presentations: 2022-2023

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**Fitzgerald, J. C.** (2023). The learner's pathway to argumentation: An analysis of social studies inquiry design. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 18(3), 198–217. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SSRP-05-2023-0035>

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## **Ai Kamei**

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Zambak, V. S., Kamei, A., & Sorochka, K. (2023). Noticing elementary students' mathematical reasoning and diverse needs: Investigating the impact of different noticing tasks. *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020739X.2022.2150903>

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**Lubniewski, K.**, Halliwell, N., Raj, E., & Zambak, S. (2023). *Understanding assistive technology (AT): Exploring the design and implementation of teaching AT within special education, speech pathology, occupational therapy, and curriculum & instruction programs*. Creativity Grant. Monmouth University.

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## **Tracy Mulvaney**

**Mulvaney, T.**, Lubniewski, K., & Morales, W. (2023, January 27). Preparing culturally competent teachers through clinical practices abroad. *PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice*.

## **Alyson Pompeo-Fargnoli**

**Pompeo-Fargnoli, A.**, Boettger, S. & Lyons, S. (2023, in press). Self-Regulation model. In W. Owenby (Ed.), *Counseling modalities encyclopedia*.

**Pompeo-Fargnoli, A.**, & Persky, B. (2023, in press). Havening therapy. In W. Owenby (Ed.), *Counseling modalities encyclopedia*.

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## **Erik Raj**

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## **Alex Romagnoli**

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## **Lilly Steiner**

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**Steiner, L. M.**, & Rizzuto, K. C., Zambak, V. S. (2023). Parents as partners: Supporting children's mathematical problem solving through literacy strategies. *Proceedings of the 2023 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*.

Zambak, V. S., Steiner, L. M., & Rizzuto, K. (2023). Parents learning mathematics: Facilitating parental scaffolding and students' mathematical skills through a literacy-focused program. *Proceedings of the 2023 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*.

## **Cathy Wong**

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2023.2205839>

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## **Serbay Zambak**

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**Zambak, V. S.**, & Tyminski, A. M. (2023). Connections between prospective middle-grades mathematics teachers' technology-enhanced specialized content knowledge and beliefs: A case study. *RMLE Online*, 46(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19404476.2022.2151681>

# YEAR IN REVIEW

2022

2023



Sept. 2022

## White Coat Ceremony

New Speech-Language Pathology students participate in the White Coat Ceremony as the academic year begins.



Oct. 2022

## Building the Beloved Community

Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., (left) and Vernon Smith, Ph.D., (right) stand with Dr. Bernice King, daughter of Martin Luther King Jr., after the Social Justice Academy's fall 2022 Distinguished Lecture, "A Conversation with Bernice King on Building the Beloved Community."



Nov. 2022

## Buddy and Me

President Patrick F. Leahy reads to elementary students participating in the Buddy and Me Program, an early field experience that matches Monmouth teacher candidates with students in Long Branch Public Schools. At the end of the semester, the students were treated to a visit to campus, complete with breakfast and storytime.



March 2023

## Empowering Young Black Males Program

Vernon Smith, Ph.D., Director of the Empowering Young Black Males (EYBM) program, assists three high school students with the steps of tying a necktie at the EYBM Summit.



April 2023

## Spring Awards Ceremony

Serbay Zambak, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, presents the Dean's Award of Excellence in Completed Research or Research in Progress to Brianne Brown (left) and Aja Perez (right).



May 2023

## Roberts Award Dinner

Interim Dean Wendy Harriott, Ph.D., (left) and Provost Pamela Scott-Johnson, Ph.D., (right) pose with Nemeil Navarro, Kelsey Falkowski, and Shannon McIntosh-Brownstein, winners of the 2023 Monmouth University-Roberts Charitable Foundation Outstanding Teaching Award.



Dec. 2022

## Fall Awards Ceremony

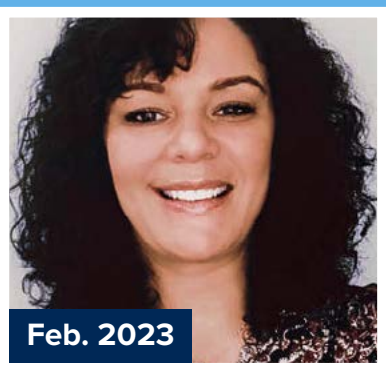
Kerry Carley-Rizzuto, Ed.D., (right) Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, presents Kayla Ecke (left) with the Excellence in Early Childhood Education Award.



Jan. 2023

## ACUE Honor

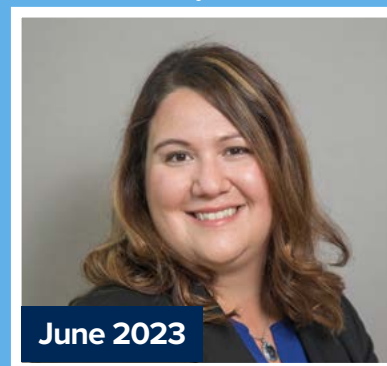
Special Education faculty member Carol McArthur-Amedeo, Ed.D., (left) and Danielle Frith, M.A., LDT-C/NCED, (right) are honored by Interim Dean Wendy Harriott, Ph.D., for their dedication to teaching. Frith and McArthur-Amedeo were among just 20 faculty across the University to complete the 25-week course "Effective Teaching Practice Framework" offered by the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE).



Feb. 2023

## CJCEE Speaker

Leadership development, equity, and strategic planning expert Marceline DuBose, keynote speaker for the Central Jersey Consortium for Excellence and Equity (CJCEE) for the 2022–2023 school year, hosted by the School of Education, trained K–12 educators and administrators in equity leadership development and strategic planning, working with districts to improve systems for creating equitable schools and classrooms.



June 2023

## Partnership with Jackson Public Schools

Alyson Pompeo-Fargnoli, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Educational Counseling, began work with Jackson Township School District on an NJDOE Mental Health Training Grant as the Institution of Higher Education coordinator.



July 2023

## SJA Instructor

KC Lubniewski, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Special Education, served as an instructor for the Social Justice Academy (SJA) professional development for K–12 teachers at Ocean County Community College.



Aug. 2023

## Summer Commencement

Newly minted Ed.D. graduate Pericles Scaranni reacts with joy during the August commencement ceremony.

**CREDENTIAL  
OFFICER RETIREMENT:**

**CHRISTINE  
BORLAN**

The School of Education takes great pride in honoring the distinguished career of Christine “Chris” Borlan, our recently retired credentials officer. Nearly every student passing through Monmouth University’s School of Education had the privilege of working with Borlan during their academic journey. With her 20 years of expertise as an educational credentials specialist, Borlan became an integral part of the School of Education’s commitment to enrich the world by preparing educators to work with children.

Over the years, countless students benefited from Borlan’s guidance as they pursued careers as teachers, counselors, principals, superintendents, and supervisors in New Jersey and beyond. Each student encountered a unique experience marked by Borlan’s blend of empathy, approachability, and professionalism—qualities that

the School of Education values in its effort to equip students for a constantly evolving world.

Borlan’s colleagues also felt the impact of her genuine dedication to assisting others and her remarkable patience in navigating the complexities of certifications and credentials. Whether advising students, managing administrative tasks, or liaising with the New Jersey Department of Education, Borlan could be found in her office, diligently addressing matters that shaped important issues affecting both our students in the School of Education and the broader educational field.

As she embarks on a well-deserved retirement, the School of Education acknowledges the void Borlan’s departure will leave. As a credential officer, educator, colleague, and friend, Borlan established a standard that inspires us all. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to her, and we offer congratulations on her retirement.

**Thank You to Our Donors**

The following donors have made or pledged gifts of support to the School of Education during the University’s previous fiscal year, from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

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