

Spotlight on Students



Ehi Edokhamhen

Ehi Edokhamhen is a doctoral student in the Department of Early Childhood Education. He is from Benin City, Nigeria. Ehi has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Ambrose Alli University, Nigeria. He came to ETSU in the Fall of 2015 as a graduate student in the Early Childhood Master's program. He decided to pursue a PhD degree in Early Childhood Education upon completion of his master's degree. He chose ETSU for his PhD program because he appreciated the faculty in the Department of Early Childhood Education who are very interested in his educational outcomes.

Ehi's research interest focuses on working with families of children at risk and the families of children experiencing trauma. He is focusing on children in the Head Start program, particularly studying how their families are coping in terms of resiliency and the risk factors that made them resilient in dealing with their children in the Head Start program. He plans to graduate by the end of the year 2021.

Ehi has presented several times at the ETSU Early Childhood Education annual conference, and he is aspiring to attend the upcoming National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators conferences.

When asked about what he would like to share with upcoming Ph.D. students, he advised that they take things one step at a time.

Student Resources

- **Boot Camp:** Thesis and Dissertation writing and editing support, workshops, time to write. Four weekend sessions per semester at Sherrod Library. Emily Frances Redd; REDD@mail.etsu.edu
- **Graduate Student Success:** Assistance with setting and maintaining personal and academic goals when experiencing stress. Ivy Buerkle; Sherrod Library, Room 462; 423-439-7062; gradsuccess@etsu.edu; <http://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/successservice.aspx>
- **Sherrod Library**
 - **Graduate Student Support:** <http://sherrod.etsu.edu/patron/grad>
 - Dr. Wendy Doucette, Graduate Services Librarian, doucettew@etsu.edu
 - **Workshops:** http://sherrod.etsu.edu/sites/default/files/2015_grad_workshop_dates.pdf

Dissertation Scholarships: For final semester: <http://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/gscholarships/thesisdissertationscholarship.aspx>

Admission Process

Applicants for the PhD in Early Childhood Education Program are evaluated once each year for admission in the fall semester. Application information deadline is March 15th. This deadline is flexible until enrollment is filled. The program has a number of fellowships to support full time doctoral students that are awarded on a competitive basis. Admission to the program has the same requirements as existing graduate school requirements plus additional specific requirements:

- Application form
- Application fee (\$35 USA or \$45 International)
- One official transcript from each institution attended (undergraduate and graduate)
- Personal resumé
- Personal essay including a written statement of career and ethical goals, professional experience, and area of interest for a dissertation
- Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores taken within the past five years. Preferred scores are 50th percentile or higher
- Four letters of recommendation
- Master's Degree in Early Childhood or a related field from a regionally accredited university
- An interview with the admissions committee

Early Childhood Education PhD Program

Spring-Summer 2020 Newsletter



Dr. Atil had a manuscript accepted for publication. It is about early childhood teacher responses to COVID-19. This summer she and co-researchers interviewed (talked with) private and public sector early childhood teachers in various American countries (USA, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic...) and wrote based on their stories. Some of the teachers have been extremely innovative in responding to the challenges that accompanied the mandate to teach young children remotely. She is super proud to have Maria Dias, doctoral fellow, as the first author.

Dias, M. J. A., Atil, J. T., Almodóvar, M., Chavarría Vargas, A., & Zúñiga León, I. (in press). Innovative early childhood teachers rise to the challenges brought about by COVID -19. *Childhood Education: Innovations*.

Early Childhood Education Department

Vision

The vision of the early childhood program is to engage in and encourage lifelong learning and produce teachers, researchers and leaders who advocate for and create quality early childhood experiences in early care and education.

NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards

- STANDARD 1.** Promoting Child Development and Learning
- STANDARD 2.** Building Family and Community Relationships
- STANDARD 3.** Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families
- STANDARD 4.** Using Developmentally Effective Approaches
- STANDARD 5.** Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum
- STANDARD 6.** Becoming a Professional
- STANDARD 7.** Early Childhood Field Experiences

Honors & Awards



Dr. Sharp was presented with the *Clemmer Award for Outstanding Service 2020*.

Spotlight on Students



Ruth Copeland

Ruth Copeland is currently a doctoral student in the Department of Early Childhood Education. She has a bachelor's degree from ETSU in K-12 special education and a master's from ETSU in K-8 general education. For several years she taught special education for children Pre-K through 12th grade. She started teaching in a special education preschool program four years ago. Teaching special education in preschool encouraged her look into some specific early childhood classes, which led her to pursue a PhD in early childhood education.

Ruth chose ETSU because of the excellent education she got during her previous degrees. Another reason she chose ETSU was the convenience of being able to take classes in her home county through the PhD hybrid cohort program.

She is currently working on a study about trauma informed care with peers in her PhD cohort. She is considering a focus group design for her dissertation asking teachers to discuss strategies they can use in the classroom that are effective in dealing with the behavior of children who had been impacted by trauma. She is looking to graduate in the year 2022 or 2023.

Ruth has participated in several online conferences this summer: A Conscious Discipline Conference that was trauma-related, and a Fairy Dust conference focusing on early childhood education in general with some elements of trauma included. She usually attends the Literacy Association of Tennessee Conference each Fall.

Her advice for incoming PhD students is to look at the big picture but focus on the small steps and take time for "you."



Jennifer Bilbrey

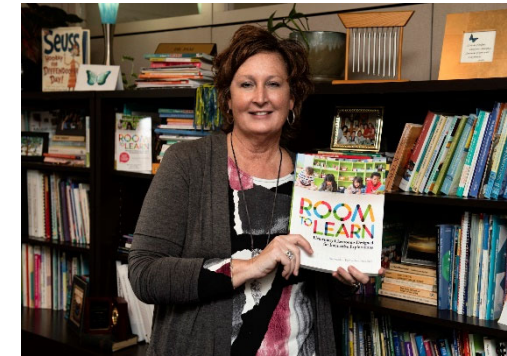
Jennifer Bilbrey obtained a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from ETSU. She worked for Kingsport City Schools for two years and then came back to ETSU for her master's degree in Early Childhood Education with a cohort that met in Bristol. She is currently a doctoral student in the ETSU Early Childhood Education doctoral program. She has always chosen ETSU over other institutions because it is affordable, close to her home, and has a lot of opportunities for outdoor activities such as hiking, which she so much enjoys. She is also drawn to the trees and all the natural elements on the ETSU campus. She came back to ETSU for her master's and her PhD degree because she felt such a connection with her professors and the interest they showed in her education. She felt they were really invested in her education.

She is interested in trauma-informed care strategies for young children and classroom teachers. Her dissertation is likely to be centered around implementing trauma-informed care. She may design her study around a book club or training for pre-service teachers who are in the undergraduate program. She is interested to learn if pre-service teachers' self-efficacy in relation to trauma-informed care can be increased by either a book club or training and the differences between the two. Her goal is to graduate in the Spring of 2022.

Jennifer is currently involved in an apprenticeship for teaching. She is assisting a professor in teaching a literacy class for students. Her goal is to teach at a community college. She recently attended some virtual conferences. "Beyond Consequences" was a notable conference on trauma-informed care. Another was a boot camp organized around a book called "Classroom 180," that focuses on how to create a trauma-informed care classroom.

Her advice to upcoming PhD students is to build relationships with people in their cohorts and outside the classroom as well. This will serve as a support system throughout the PhD journey, which could turn into a professional network later on in life. Also, take life one day at a time.

Faculty Scholarly Highlights



Congratulations to Dr. Pamela Evanshen on her recent publication!

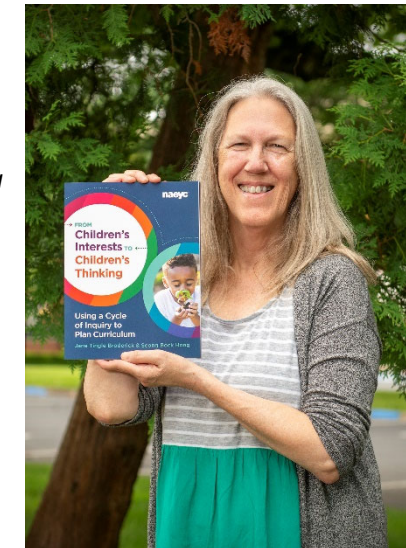
Evanshen, P. and Falk, J. (2019). *Room to learn: Elementary classrooms designed for interactive explorations*. Gryphon House. Silver Spring, MD.

Room to Learn presents the Assessing the Pillars of the Physical Environment for Academic Learning (APPEAL) environmental rating scale, a valid and reliable tool developed by Pamela Evanshen, EdD and Janet Faulk, EdD, to show you how to get the most out of your classroom environment.

Congratulations to Dr. Jane Broderick on her recent publication!

Broderick, J. T. & Hong, S. B (2020). *From children's interests to children's thinking: Using a cycle of inquiry to plan curriculum*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Written primarily for preschool and early childhood teachers as well as preschool directors, *From Children's Interests to Children's Thinking: Using a Cycle of Inquiry to Plan Curriculum* focuses on the emergent inquiry approach in education that encourages teachers to build educational experiences based on their observations of their students.



Congratulations to Dr. Kathryn Sharp on her recent publication with our PhD graduate, Rebekah Taylor!

Taylor, R. K. & Sharp, L. K. (August, 2020). A critical time for virtual critical literacy. *Journal of Education and Social Policy*. 7(3).

In the article Dr. Sharp and Dr. Taylor speak about the role of critical literacy in early childhood and how it helps children explore difficult topics.

Conferences of Interest to Students and Faculty

Appalachian Association for the Education of Young Children (AAEYC): Spring Conference. Contact Beth Huber, Little Bucs Program Coordinator.

Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI): Dr. Sharp is a member of ACEI and serves in a leadership position. ACEI website: <http://acei.org/programs-events/summit.html>

The TN ACEI site: <https://www.tacei.org/>

Association for Constructivist Teaching (ACT): October conference each year. Proposals are due late spring, early summer. Dr. Broderick is a past board member of ACT and newsletter editor. ACT's online journal, *The Constructivist*, is now a proceedings journal that also accepts outside submissions. Kelly A. Russell is the editor for the 2020 journal. krussell@bsc.edu ACT website: <http://www.constructivistassociation.org/>

Association for Teacher Educators (ATE): There is an annual meeting in the spring and an annual conference in the summer. ATE website: <https://ate1.org/annual-events>

Division for Early Childhood: DEC: Conference will be held on January 21-29, 2021. DEC website: <https://www.deconference.org/>

National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE): This conference is always held in conjunction with NAEYC. Fall 2020 Online conference taking place on November 3-4. Summer 2021 Conference will be in conjunction with NAEYC on June 14. Contact Dr. Evanshen for more information on NAECTE. NAECTE website: <http://naecte.org/>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): This year's conference will be held November 17-20, 2021, in Orlando FL. The Professional Learning Institute is running from June 13-16 2021 in Philadelphia, PA. <https://www.naeyc.org/events/future-dates>

Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) <http://www.srebo.org/>

Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA): This conference is held in the spring. SECA website: <http://www.southernearlychildhood.org/>

Tennessee Association for the Education of Young Children (TAEYC): This conference is held in the fall. TAEYC website: <http://taeyc.00family.com/join.html>

ETSU Early Childhood Conference: This conference is planned for July 8-10, 2021. All ECED faculty are contacts for this conference. <http://www.etsu.edu/coe/child/programs/conference/default.php>

Early Childhood PhD Program Co-Coordinators:

Dr. Broderick, broderic@etsu.edu and Dr. Evanshen, evanshep@etsu.edu

Website: <http://www.etsu.edu/coe/eced/>

Apply to the Program: <http://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/>

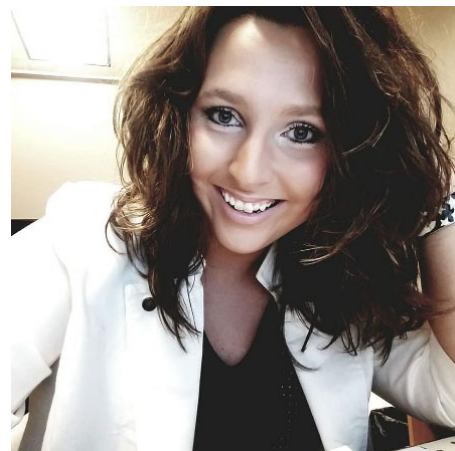
ETSU is an AA/EEO employer. ETSU-COE-0005-20 75

Student Presentations and Creative Activity

** Doctoral Students noted in bold font.

Publication

ECED faculty and student co-authors recently published a peer-reviewed journal article on a preschool math games intervention and evaluation. Co-authors are Dr. Alissa A. Lange (ECED faculty), **Narges Sareh** (ECED doctoral student), and colleague, Dr. Kim Brenneman. The authors acknowledge the Heising-Simons Foundation (grant number 2012-33), which supported implementation of the project. They also acknowledge National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University, where the bulk of the project took place, Clemmer College at East Tennessee State University for an SRA grant that supported writing of the article, and Dr. Ryan Nivens, CUAL faculty at ETSU, for a reviewing an earlier draft of our paper.



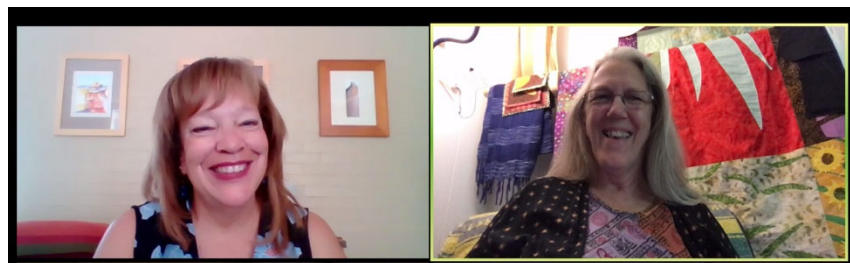
Congratulations to 2020 PhD graduate Dr. Randa Dunlap on her new position as Assistant Professor at the University of South Carolina, Aiken



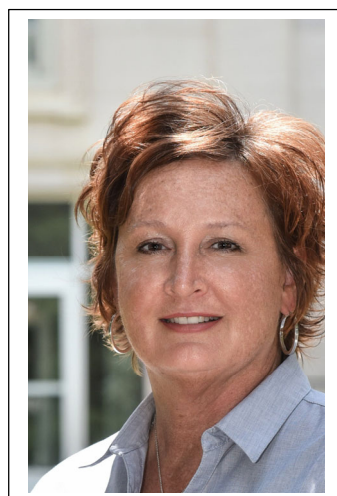
Congratulations to Summer 2020 PhD graduate Dr. Tara Voit. Dr. Voit is the Head Start Director at Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico.



Dr. Randa Dunlap and her Committee Chair, Dr. Malkus



Dr. Tara Terry Voit and her Committee Chair, Dr. Broderick



Dr. Evanshen and Dr. Karin Keith were awarded Clemmer College's Distinguished Innovation Award 2020 for the design and implementation of the KAT Academy for the Early Childhood and Elementary teacher residency candidates.

Faculty Presentations and Creative Activity

Dr. Broderick

Broderick, J. & Hong, S.B. (2020). From children's interests to children's thinking: Using a cycle of inquiry to plan curriculum. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Hong, S. B., Broderick, J. T., & McAuliffe, C. M. (2020). Drawing to learn: A classroom case study. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, (v48 n4), 1-11.

Dr. Evanshen

Isik-Ercan, Z., Parnell, W., Nyabando, T., Evanshen, P., Williams, R., McMurray-Schwarz, P., Casey, E., Taylor, L. (June 2020). *Integrating systems for young children: Community engagement, cross-sector partnership and education of practitioners*. National Association for Early Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Conference, Virtual.

Dr. Lange

Lange, A. A. (2020). Math and Science Story Time (MASST): Spanish-English bilingual library-based curriculum for preschoolers and their families (activity plans). EC STEM Lab. www.masstprogram.com.

Robertson, L., Nivens, R.A., Lange, A., & Prince, J. (2020). Innovative collaboration for curriculum integration. Poster presentation at the 14th Annual STEM Education Research Conference. February 16-17, 2020. Cookeville, TN.

Dr. Sharp

Taylor, R.K. & Sharp, L. K. (August 2020). A critical time for virtual critical literacy. *Journal of Education and Social Policy*. 7(3).



Dr. Trivette



Dr. Evanshen



Kristy Castanon



Jennifer Bilbrey



Ruth Copeland

PhD Students and Professors Design and Implement a Study on Trauma-Informed Care

A research team with two early childhood professors was created as a part of an independent study with three doctoral students who each had a passion for learning more about trauma-informed practices within the early childhood setting. After much collaboration and reading, the team designed a study with a focus on "Teachers' Training and Knowledge of Trauma-Informed Care in Early Childhood Public School Settings." An online survey was created to collect data from multiple school districts within East Tennessee and Virginia. The study collected data from teachers working in preschool through third-grade public school classrooms.

The survey focused on teachers' knowledge of different aspects of early childhood trauma and their self-confidence supporting children who experienced trauma within their classrooms. Questions were asked about their knowledge of trauma-informed care, how much training in this area they had received and their interest in more training in this area. The onset of the COVID Pandemic increased the importance of research in this area.

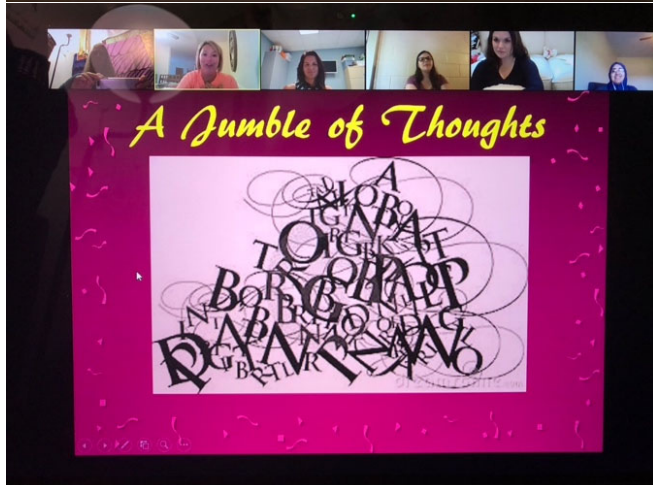
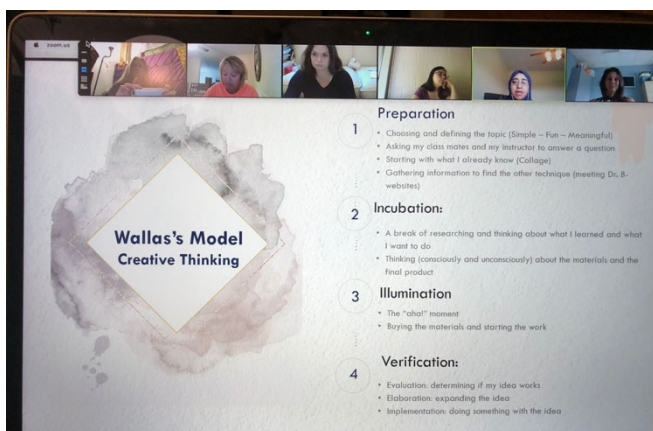
The team is currently analyzing the data from the 218 respondents.



Dr. Lange was awarded Clemmer College's Distinguished Faculty Research Award



Dr. Ruth Facun-Granadozo has been elected as the vice-president for membership of the NAECTE, her term starts November 2020.



New experiences of learning online using Zoom. Doctoral students enjoy a presentation in the *Brain Research & Creativity Theory* Course with Dr. Broderick.