

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

# THE EDUCATOR

2023

Monmouth University  
Distinguished Teacher

The Social Justice  
Academy

Faculty and Student  
Spotlights

Excellence. Access. Ambition.



MONMOUTH  
UNIVERSITY

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EDUCATION



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## Message From The Dean's Office

### Moving Forward

The School of Education's mission, to positively impact the lives of children and prepare our students for a lifetime of noble service to the community, is never finished. Our passion for bettering the world through our teaching, our scholarship, and our service is what makes Monmouth University's School of Education a standard in teacher preparation, educational leadership, educational counseling, and speech-language pathology. This year has been no exception, and this issue of *The Educator* celebrates the noteworthy accomplishments of both our students and our faculty.

We recognize and understand the challenges currently facing education at both the K–12 level and the college level. It is inevitable that even during a casual perusing of the daily news, you will find an article discussing the departure of teachers from the profession or highlighting the undeniable pressures felt by teachers currently in the field. We share those concerns and recognize the responsibility of the School of Education to not only face these challenges but also offer answers and guidance.

This year's *The Educator* shares the ways in which the School of Education has taken on this sacred responsibility to the community. By celebrating the accomplishments of our students and faculty, we contribute to the ongoing discourse on how education can positively impact students and their families. We are extremely proud to report that in the U.S. News & World Report of 2023 Rankings of Best Graduate Schools, our School of Education Graduate program and Speech-Language Pathology program were both included in the rankings.

Within this issue, you will read about a few of our highly regarded faculty. Professor Tina Paone received the Monmouth University Distinguished Teaching Award. Only one faculty member receives this prestigious honor after a rigorous peer review process. Additionally, Assistant Professor Jason Fitzgerald's research on participatory social studies is highlighted, and Associate Professor Stacy Lauderdale-Littin's focus on improving education for individuals with autism is discussed in this issue. You will also read about a recent Monmouth University Ed.D. graduate, adjunct professor, Angello Villarreal, who has been recognized by several national organizations as an emerging leader.

Also included in this issue is a very important initiative: The Social Justice Academy led by Associate Professor Nicole Pulliam and Assistant Professor Vernon Smith. This initiative has now been in existence for two years and continues to promote social justice advocacy and initiatives for Monmouth University's faculty and staff. The Social Justice Academy also serves professionals throughout many local school districts. Another School of Education initiative, Buddy and Me, is highlighted to focus on the partnership between the Long Branch School District and Monmouth University undergraduate students who engage in service-learning in schools during their first year of study. Finally, our focus on increasing our community's knowledge of sustainable practices continues through the School of Education Sustainability Committee's work to provide professional development for our community and school partners.

Another important story celebrates the academic journey of one of our graduate speech-language pathology students, Emily Maul, who has dedicated her work to veterans in the field. This issue concludes with a brief Year in Review, which highlights other significant events. Finally, we celebrate the retirement and career of our former dean, John Henning, Ph.D. Even though he has moved on to the next phase of his life, many of his important School of Education initiatives have continued and will guide the School into the future.

The School of Education wants to lead the important discussions which our world currently needs to engage in, and the individuals recognized on these pages are undoubtedly leaders. With our collective minds and hearts always looking to be better and to grow, we share this issue to reflect on our accomplishments, with the understanding that we are never finished.



Sincerely,  
**Wendy A. Harriott, Ph.D.**   **Alex Romagnoli, Ph.D.**  
Interim Dean   Interim Associate Dean





## Monmouth University Distinguished Teaching Award: **Tina Paone, Ph.D.**

Monmouth University's Distinguished Teaching Award has been bestowed upon exemplary faculty members since the Award's inception in 1975. The list of the recipients is a "Who's Who" of both teaching and scholarly excellence, reflecting the high standards that Monmouth University holds for both its faculty and students. As such, becoming a member of this exclusive group is a testament to the professional energy that the faculty of Monmouth University devotes to its students. Until this year, a female faculty member from the School of Education had never won this award in its 47-year history.

Tina Paone, Ph.D., Professor of Educational Counseling, is the first female faculty member in the School of Education to receive the Monmouth University Distinguished Teaching Award. Paone joined the faculty of Monmouth University as an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Counseling and Leadership in 2006 and was subsequently promoted to associate professor in 2012 and full professor in 2017. Paone also served as the Department Chair of Speech Pathology, Educational Counseling and Leadership (SPECL). She earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Tampa and her master's and doctorate from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Her research areas in which she has numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals include race, racism, Whiteness, multicultural counseling, and social justice. She has presented consistently at the local, state, regional, national, and international levels on topics related to multicultural counseling, race, racial identity development, and racism. Paone is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and a certified school counselor (K–12) in Pennsylvania, as well as a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC), a Nationally Certified School Counselor (NCSC), a Registered Play Therapist Supervisor (RPT-S), and an Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS).

Paone regularly teaches the courses Racial Bias in the Media, Introduction to Professional Counseling, and Advanced Topics in Race & Racism. In collaboration with her students, she developed the Antiracism Advocacy Project and the Learn to be Antiracist website. Paone's students are met with courses that challenge their sociocultural beliefs and perspectives as they relate to race, identity, and social justice. Student



engagement is the norm in Paone's classes, which include critical thinking, experiential activities, and readings that encourage students to reflect on their views. It is common to walk into the first-floor corridor of McAllan Hall and see Paone's students working on an elaborate activity. "I tell my students to put their laptops away because this will be a class unlike any other you have had," Paone noted. That style of pedagogy, which invites the sharing of ideas, has become the cornerstone of her educational philosophy.

Among her many areas of past and present service at Monmouth, Paone is most connected to her work as the coordinator for the Central Jersey Consortium for Excellence and Equity (CJCEE), a collaborative effort with numerous area school districts on the promotion of social justice and antiracism work in the K–12 setting for both adult educators and middle/high school students. Additionally, Paone was selected to develop the antiracism curriculum for the Social Justice Academy as well as serve as a lead instructor for the Social Justice Academy during its first two years. She is the past chair and current member of the School of Education Social Justice Advocacy Committee and a member of the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), and Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ).

Paone resides in Lansdale, PA, with her husband, David, and three sons, Nicholas (Monmouth University '23), Christopher (Capitol

Technology University – junior), and Joe (North Penn School District – 9th Grade).

*"There are many institutions between my home and Monmouth, but what has been and continues to be the reason I travel so far to get to work is my Monmouth family. This institution, the School of Education, and in particular my friends and colleagues in the educational counseling program have made a phenomenal impact on me, allowing me to do the work I was meant to do—lifting me up and supporting me. My Monmouth family has truly allowed me to spread my wings and fly. My support system at home is incredible and that allows me to do what I love—here, in a place that I love."*

- Tina Paone, Ph.D., Professor of Educational Counseling



## FACULTY RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

# Researching Participatory Social Studies Strategies: Jason Fitzgerald, Ph.D.

Jason Fitzgerald, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Monmouth University and a former middle school social studies teacher in Montgomery County, MD. He has master's degrees in both secondary education and school administration. Additionally, he received his Ph.D. in instruction and learning from the University of Pittsburgh. Fitzgerald loves to hike with his wife and two children (Kennedy, 10, and Mark, 6) in his free time and also enjoys reading historical fiction books.

Fitzgerald loves to think about how educators use language to teach history and civic thinking. His research is based on social studies education, focusing on developing students' capacities to be good citizens. Specifically, his research explores ways to engage students in their local community and community building. Rather than teaching history and civics in traditional ways (though he admits that these ways are important as well), his research examines how educators can teach civics, history, and social studies by using more participatory strategies.

During his time working at Monmouth University, Fitzgerald has found support throughout the School of Education community, and he cites the overall feeling of collaboration within the school as motivational and influential in the success of his research. Fitzgerald noted that he doesn't feel alone in his work, especially with others conducting similar research. Each professor brings their own resources to the group, allowing others to flourish as well. In addition to the community of practice within the University, Monmouth also has established relationships with many partnership districts (such as the Long Branch Public Schools), which have also supported his work. Having these established relationships has helped further his research, especially those aspects that are most effectively explored within schools. Being able to build rapport with these districts from a position of trust has allowed Fitzgerald



to implement his studies in these schools, providing authentic context for the theories behind participatory social studies.

Participatory social studies is a move away from “teach the content and then test the students on dates, names, and places,” with a focus on inquiry and action. Through inquiry, students are taught how to think historically and civically, understanding that all information is not created equal and practicing disciplinary ways of interpreting sources. Using these skills, participatory social studies leads students to action, helping them to make connections between course content and their lives and learning how to use their skills to contribute to a better community.

In the last few years, Fitzgerald has been able to bring his research to the national level. Due to the success of his research, he has received larger grants to fund his endeavors and continue to bring his findings to an even larger audience.

Fitzgerald explained the research he was most proud of thus far: the work that was able to be performed during the pandemic. Fitzgerald and his team built strong connections with local communities, even though most interactions were virtual. During this time, Fitzgerald also facilitated a pen pal project, which enabled children across the U.S. to connect with children in Africa. The focus of this work was on youth civic development initiatives.

Currently, Fitzgerald serves as co-investigator on a study funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, called the “I-ACTED” Study. The goal of this national study is to explore the connections between action civics instruction and students' prosocial behaviors. He hopes to find that participatory civics education reduces youth risk-taking behaviors and improves students' academic engagement and mental health outcomes. This study is being conducted by using a randomized control trial design. Using pre-tests and post-tests of students' prosocial behaviors before and after action civics instruction (for those in the intervention group), the hope is to see an effect compared to the control group (who complete the same pre-tests and post-tests but are not exposed to action civics instruction). While this work is ongoing, his research team has also applied for a National Science Foundation grant to explore the different ways that civics education is taught across diverse communities with diverse learners.

### Relevant Recent Articles

Cohen, A. K., Fitzgerald, J. C., Ridley-Kerr, A., & Ballard, P. (2021). Investigating the impact of Generation Citizen's action civics education program on student academic engagement. *The Clearing House*, 94(2), 168–180.

Fitzgerald, J. C., Cohen, A. K., Maker Castro, E., & Pope, A. (2021). A systematic review of the last decade of civic education research in the USA. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 96(3), 235–246.





# Improving Education for Individuals with Autism: Stacy Lauderdale-Littin, Ph.D., BCBA-D

*“We really just want to make things better for individuals with autism and their families.”*

Stacy Lauderdale-Littin, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Stacy Lauderdale-Littin, Ph.D., BCBA-D, is a Monmouth University associate professor conducting research and working to improve autism programs across New Jersey. By sharing her research and resources to bring improvement to K–12 autism programs, Lauderdale-Littin is making a difference in many school districts and training future special educators in the Autism/Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program at Monmouth.

Since the inception of the Autism Program Improvement Project (APIP) in 2018, with funding from the nonprofit organization Autism MVP, Lauderdale-Littin has supported multiple school districts across New Jersey to increase the public school educational attainment of students diagnosed with autism. Through this program, Lauderdale-Littin worked closely with school districts to assess and refine the



autism programs currently implemented in the districts. Lauderdale-Littin assisted with effective professional development for educators and facilitated the implementation of new plans based on current evidence-based practices for their students with autism.

Lauderdale-Littin’s research has garnered attention from researchers, educators, and administrators in other states, including Alabama and South Carolina, as they seek to examine the effectiveness of their autism programs as well. The APIP has worked with five districts thus far and is planning to expand nationwide in the future. The APIP is a great benefit to schools because of its connection with faculty at different levels in a district. APIP allows Lauderdale-Littin, along with her collaborator Mary Haspel, Ed.D., BCBA-D, to look at strengths and improvements needed to help evaluate the needs of students and families in any autism program. Lauderdale-Littin is proud of the work APIP has done, and she also recognizes that Haspel is a significant factor in the program’s success.

Lauderdale-Littin also oversees the Monmouth University Master in Special Education–Autism/Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program. The program prepares students to utilize the principles of ABA to work with individuals with autism and their families. Graduates of this program meet the University coursework requirements to sit for the Board Certification in Behavior Analysis (BCBA) exam. The ABA program at Monmouth is online, but students still maintain personal connections with faculty. With the support of Haspel and Lauderdale-Littin, students can gain unique perspectives from people in the various roles who support positive student behavior: BCBA, paraprofessional, teacher, and other professional positions.

*“There is always a sense of urgency to learn and strive to be excellent in their classrooms, so the work does not feel like a chore; rather, it feels like a way to improve myself as a student and person. Words cannot do these professors the justice they deserve; rather, I need to demonstrate a high level of success in the field which attributes to their legacy of success as professors and BCBAs. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from them, and I hope that anyone else seeking a career in*



*ABA and autism comes to this University and seeks out their guidance.”*

**- Robert Viscomi, student**

*“They tailor their instruction to meet the needs of each student and understand that learning is not ‘one-size-fits-all.’ The knowledge and support they provide are unparalleled. They take the extra time to get to know each student and ensure their educational experience is meaningful, which allows each student to obtain the most success possible. Personally, I feel like I have lifelong mentors that will help me navigate through the field.”*

**- Irene Brooks, student**

*“We’ve really been in almost every position that you can be in working with individuals with autism. So, it gives us a unique perspective when people are coming into the program and also allows us to support them at all different levels, depending on where they are, in their journey, of working with individuals with special needs.”*

**- Mary Haspel, Assistant Professor of Special Education**

Lauderdale-Littin began her career in finance in Atlanta, after receiving her undergraduate degree from Clemson University. She eventually moved to California and started working as a paraprofessional in classrooms with students diagnosed with autism. She had never worked with students with autism before, but was inspired and began teaching, eventually receiving her master’s and doctorate in education. After seeing the training needed in the classrooms, she sought out advanced degrees in education in order to support other teachers who were working with students with autism.

The need for evidence-based practices informed the implementation of APIP. Immediately after APIP’s inception, additional research was conducted in schools to determine what programs needed to be more successful. This research has been utilized to help different districts, classrooms, teachers, and administrators determine what they really needed to meet the specific needs of individuals with autism in their classrooms.

*“We have really reworked a lot of our program, the autism program, and the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program, and some of our undergraduate classes to reflect the areas of need that we found in our research.”*

**- Stacy Lauderdale-Littin, Ph.D., BCBA-D**

In addition to research and teaching, Lauderdale-Littin enjoys spending time with her two children who both play travel soccer. She also enjoys being a soccer mom, being a member of a book club, exercising, and spending time outside.





# A Nationally Recognized Emerging PDS Leader:

Angello Villarreal, Monmouth University Ed.D. Graduate

Angello Villarreal '22, Ed.D., says he doesn't see himself as a leader, but the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) might disagree. Congratulations are extended to Villarreal as he has been recognized nationally as the 2022 Emerging PDS Leader. He received the National Emerging Leader Award from the NAPDS and was also recognized as an Emerging Leader by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Additionally, after receiving these two Emerging Leader awards, he was also recognized as an Emerging Leader by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE).

Villarreal is a Monmouth University Alumnus who graduated with a doctorate in educational leadership and administration in 2022. The Emerging Leader awards mean a great deal to Villarreal, and he has acknowledged that he is being recognized for his work in realizing the synergy between higher education and public school education.

*"People are seeing me as more of a leader rather than just a Spanish teacher."*

- Angello Villarreal '22, Ed.D.

Villarreal published an article, "Diversifying the Teaching Force in NJ" in DisruptED TV Magazine. He has also co-authored papers that have appeared in the Journal of the National Association for Professional Development Schools. Currently, Villarreal is working on research on ESL and special education students with Professor Danielle Frith, a specialist professor at Monmouth University. Villarreal is passionate about strengthening partnerships between K-12 and higher education settings to facilitate the creation of new ideas and effective programs. His goal is to be a leader in recruiting and mentoring more culturally diverse educators who understand the increasingly diverse demographics in today's schools.



Villarreal came to the United States in 2006 from Peru, where he received his initial training in education. In the summer of 2018, he met Dean of the School of Education John Henning, and he learned about the Teacher Residency program. Through the Teacher Residency program, Villarreal gained valuable experience in classroom management by applying the skills and theories he learned through his Monmouth University education courses. Additionally, Villarreal learned to be more compassionate with new teachers in the field since the transition from college classes into the public school classroom can be difficult. Villarreal shared that the ongoing support from the School of Education during his transition from student to teacher has been extremely helpful.

*"It's a responsibility that I need to advocate for my students, faculty, and educators, and we are working together to support students."*

- Angello Villarreal '22, Ed.D.

Since joining the Teacher Residency program in 2018, Villarreal has worked as a substitute teacher, an instructional assistant,



a long-term substitute teacher, a summer program teacher in English as a Second Language, and a clinical intern. These opportunities have helped shape him into the leader he is today. Currently, he also serves in two educational roles: he is an adjunct instructor of Spanish at Monmouth University in the World Languages and Cultures department and a Spanish teacher in the Freehold School District. Villarreal encourages his students to develop the mindset of making an impact as students and as future professionals.

*"You have a voice, even in a different language, and you are all empowered to do good in your communities."*

- Angello Villarreal '22, Ed.D.





A Growing Experience in Building Beloved Community:

# The Social Justice Academy

The Social Justice Academy (SJA) has made great strides in helping the local community with professional development through equity and inclusion training during the last two years. Since its inception, the SJA has had the goal of creating new and progressive learning environments that promote equity and inclusion in schools across the state, with a particular emphasis on Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

The SJA was created to provide social justice-focused professional development in local school districts. It has given P–12 professionals the opportunity to participate in social justice training and in the creation of capstone projects that are implemented in their schools. The journey starts in the summer with a two-week Social Justice Summer Workshop, where participants learn more about social justice and how to implement equity and inclusion in their schools.

The first week’s workshop focuses on personal development and addressing biases. Educators and administrators are trained by Monmouth University faculty in social justice advocacy and provided with techniques for disrupting inequities in their schools. During the second week, participants begin to develop capstone projects that are implemented throughout the school year.

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*“We’ve laid a strong foundation for the Academy during its pilot year. Now that we have a solid infrastructure and consistent program evaluation data, we can refine the program to effectively meet the needs of our P–12 partners.”*

**- Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., Director, Social Justice Academy, Department Chair, and Associate Professor of Educational Counseling and Leadership**

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*“Just to see the passion of our partners doing great work in building our communities is great!”*

**- Vernon S. Smith, Ph.D., Assistant Director of the Social Justice Academy, and Assistant Professor**



## Implementation

The SJA supported 14 fellows across eight school districts during its pilot year in summer 2021. Nine unique social justice-based projects were funded and implemented within these districts, including projects where fellows led school staff and faculty through implicit bias training or taught students about racial wealth gaps.

During the summer of 2022, the SJA expanded throughout New Jersey and into some areas of New York. The SJA welcomed 63 educators and administrators from 11 counties in New Jersey. With increased participation, the SJA held three Summer Academy sessions in person and virtually, with 2022 being the first year the Academy provided an in-person session. As a result, 58 unique projects were funded and implemented during the 2022–2023 school year. The SJA will see the results of the Summer Academy 2022 cohort projects during May 2023. This year, the goal is to expand the number of participants across more school districts.

*“Given the benefits of the Academy, we believed districts across the entire state could benefit, so we decided to expand our outreach.”*

**- Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., Director, Social Justice Academy, Department Chair, and Associate Professor of Educational Counseling**

Each Academy cohort will be engaged in vibrant discussions that foster professional growth on social justice issues in education. Upon completing the Academy, fellows will be positioned to serve as social justice leaders within their schools and districts while implementing the core curriculum and key practices gained during the Academy. The goal is to infuse new practices, thinking, and dispositions into the interactions between students and school professionals to create a more equitable experience for all students.

*“The end goal is to make sure that the fellows are able to leave the Academy not only with new knowledge and insights, but also to put that into practice in their schools.”*

**- Vernon S. Smith, Ph.D., Assistant Director of the Social Justice Academy, and Assistant Professor**

## Combating Racial Injustice Through Education Professional Development Series

The professional development series was an unplanned addition to the

SJA. The series started in May 2021 to garner more support for the SJA, and was open to all. The professional development series took place once a month, with various sessions of virtual and in-person events with guest speakers.

The first guest speaker was Nikole Hannah Jones, the Pulitzer Prize-winning creator of the 1619 Project and a staff writer at *The New York Times Magazine*. In September 2021, Jones spoke during a phenomenal virtual session on “Combating Racial Injustice Through Education.” The series has welcomed nine great speakers since 2021 to speak on social justice in education.

In November 2021, the SJA hosted Robert (Bob) Kim: a writer, consultant, and leading expert on education law and policy in the U.S. who delivered the presentation “Demystifying Critical Race Theory in Schools: Let’s Talk Law & Policy.” In April 2022, Dena Simmons, Ed.D., founder of LiberatED and former Assistant Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, presented “From Surviving to Thriving: Creating Equitable Environments Through Emotional Intelligence & Culturally Relevant Practices.” This session was moderated by Yessika Garcia-Guzman, Ph.D., from Ocean County College. During Fall 2022, the SJA welcomed Dr. Bernice King as the distinguished speaker for the professional development series.

## Looking Ahead

The Academy begins its yearly application process in mid-March, and it is open to any P–12 teachers, counselors, and administrators interested in doing social justice work. The SJA also looks forward to continued networking with its current partners and schools. The 2023–2024 cohort will kick off in July 2023. More information on the application process is available at [monmouth.edu/sjaapply](http://monmouth.edu/sjaapply).

The participants from the Summer 2022 sessions will be back in Spring 2023 to showcase the results of the projects implemented in their schools. The participants also have the opportunity to become instructors for the incoming Academy session in the following year. In efforts to pay it forward, this keeps the cycle of social change going within the community.

The success of the SJA is based on the generous support of the Grunin Foundation and is under the direction of Associate Professor Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., Chair of Educational Counseling and Leadership, and Assistant Professor Vernon S. Smith, Ph.D., Assistant Director of the SJA. The SJA also is supported through partnerships with Brookdale Community College, Georgian Court University, and Ocean County College.





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

# Connecting with Veterans:

## EMILY MAUL - SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY PROGRAM

During the Spring of 2021, Emily Maul made the pivotal decision to enroll in the Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) master's program at Monmouth University. Graduating with an undergraduate degree in health sciences with a concentration in pre-communication disorders, Maul knew early on that she wanted to pursue the master's program in SLP and focus on working with veterans. Before her final commitment to Monmouth, Maul had conversations with students enrolled in the program and was encouraged to attend based on the excellent reputation of the professors and the important professional connections that previous students made throughout the program. For these reasons, coupled with seeking a fast-paced environment, she

decided that attending Monmouth as a graduate student was the best option for her.

Maul's decision to work with veterans was rooted in her long-standing family history of service in the military with both the Navy and the Marines. After she had witnessed what veterans had gone through in the military and the struggles they faced, she felt compelled to be an active voice for veterans, especially those veterans who suffered from PTSD and other traumatic experiences while serving. Many veterans returned to the states diagnosed with PTSD, the loss of a limb, or the loss of close friends during combat. Committing herself to the SLP program with the intention to serve veterans became her clear choice even before she began attending Monmouth.

*“It is truly an honor for me to be able to build relationships with the veterans I come in contact with. They have put their life on the line because of how much they love this country and want to protect the American people.”*

Emily Maul, Speech-Language Pathology Student '23

During her second semester working at Monmouth University's Center for Speech and Language Disorders, Maul worked closely with a nonverbal veteran whose only access to communication was through an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device. The device is used to assist people who cannot speak and is tailored for each individual client. An AAC device can have pictures or simple words that the client can tap to communicate. For example, a child's AAC may contain pictures and simple words, while an adult may use a device with more complex sentences. This experience during Maul's clinic hours crystallized her interest in working with other veterans as she began her coursework at Monmouth.

During her experiences at the SLP on-campus clinic, Maul was able to build strong rapport with her clients. She attributed her ability to connect with clients to being cognizant of the patients' needs and constantly observing and discovering ways she could assist at the clinic. Establishing rapport not only helps with professional interactions with colleagues but is also an important skill to use with clients. The clinic also allowed Maul to create activities relating to the clients' military experience. In the case of one veteran client, she built activities based on locations that the client had traveled to during his time of service.

In one such case, Maul worked with a veteran using auditory feedback. The strategy of using auditory feedback is when a client records him/herself saying a word aloud and then playing the recording back so the client can hear him/herself speak. Using this strategy accomplished three main things: the veteran could hear himself pronouncing the word, the veteran could identify where he saw an error to correct, and the veteran could share stories about the places he had traveled during his active duty. Not only was he able to reach his milestones in speech therapy, but he was able to do so while talking about something that was meaningful to him.

Ultimately, these words were programmed into his AAC device to allow him to communicate with others about these monumental parts of his life. Through the Monmouth Cares (a nonprofit care management organization located in Monmouth County) experience, Maul learned the immeasurable value of patience while working with veterans. Many veteran clients suffer from PTSD and hearing loss due to traumatizing experiences. Being patient and developing a strong rapport with them is crucial to fostering positive development in their healing process.

Recently, Maul was awarded an externship at the Veterans Affairs (VA) Office in East Orange. Through this externship, she plans to gain more hands-on experience working with veterans. She is also planning to create strong connections, improve her interpersonal skills, and remain open-minded throughout the experience. Additionally, Maul has had other experiential

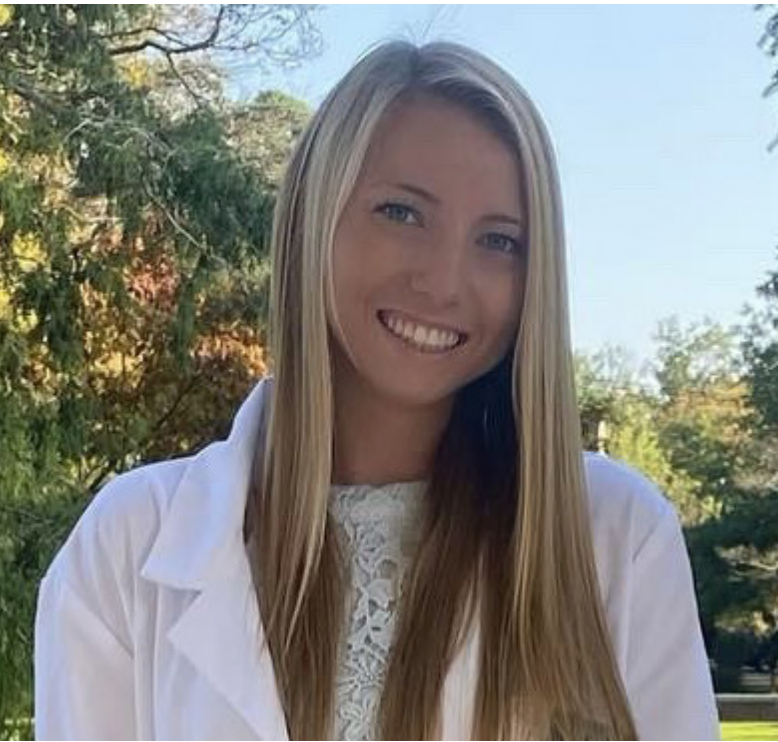
opportunities during her time in Monmouth's graduate program, such as interning in a middle school located in Middletown.

Maul has felt that through the graduate program at Monmouth University she has grown in many different ways: through her coursework, during the SLP clinic, and in her externships. With guidance and constructive feedback from her professors, she feels as though she has grown tremendously during the SLP program.

After her graduation in May 2023, Maul plans to begin her job application process, hopefully working for the VA in the future. She is hoping that through her externship at the VA, she will develop more professional experience which will translate into a career within the VA. Within five years, Maul aspires to open her own practice which specifically works with veterans.

*“Something that I will always remember that has stuck with me is when my brother entered the service and I had asked why, and he responded that he felt this was his calling and he wanted to protect the American people, along with knowing he is keeping his family safe.”*

- Emily Maul, Speech-Language Pathology Student '23







# The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Monmouth University Sustainability Education Week

## Sustainable Practices for Our Community and Schools

The Second Annual Sustainability Education Week was an exciting celebration filled with impactful guest speakers, panel discussions, and a student summit event. From March 21 through March 25, 2022, University faculty and students, community members, K–12 educators, administrators, parents, and students across New Jersey participated in sustainability workshops and seminars via Zoom to learn about sustainable practices they can use in their schools and their local communities.

The sustainability event was kicked off by a dynamic presentation titled Being in a Situation: The Art and Science of Resilience, by guest speaker Merrie Koester, Ph.D., who is a veteran science teacher and educational researcher. Koester works to develop partnerships with institutions of higher education, schools, community programs, and civic leaders to inspire change in historically underserved schools and communities.

Sustainability Education Week’s second day was devoted to the student summit. Students from across New Jersey’s K–12 schools were eligible to participate by submitting an essay or video addressing what steps they personally took to promote environmental sustainability. The finalists were judged by Monmouth University’s students and faculty:

- Kerry Carley Rizzuto, Ed.D., Associate Professor, School of Education - Curriculum and Instruction
- Scott A. Jeffrey, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Leon Hess Business School - Management and Leadership
- Catherine N. Duckett, Ph.D., Associate Dean, School of Science
- Angello Villarreal, Ed.D., Freehold Township High School teacher and Monmouth University Adjunct Instructor
- Anna Gwiazda, School of Social Work student

- Alessandra M. Conte, School of Education and Department of History and Anthropology student

**High school student winners:**

- Ava Witschel, Academy of Allied Health and Science
- Danielle Lee, Biotechnology High School
- Ishar Singh, Middlesex County Academy for Allied Health and Biomedical Sciences

**Middle school student winners:**

- Kashika Manakand, Bordentown Regional Middle School
- Hasini Nandyala, Bordentown Regional Middle School

**Elementary school student winners:**

- Jazlynn A. Jimenez, Middle Road School
- Alexis Applegate, George L. Catrambone School
- Gurdaas Singe, Applegarth Elementary School

A collection of the student summit essays and video presentations can be found on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sustainability Education Week website: [www.monmouth.edu/school-of-education/sustainability](http://www.monmouth.edu/school-of-education/sustainability).

*“It is inspiring to hear the students’ ideas and visions for actions to protect the environment.”*

**- Carol McArthur-Amedeo, Sustainability Education team member**

The third evening of Sustainability Week featured two presentations specifically designed for New Jersey educators and administrators. Brynn Mosello, director of sustainability and communications at Mazza Recycling Services, guided participants through the sorting process that takes place in recycling facilities.

Mosello discussed the benefits of recycling along with ways to involve and educate younger students in the process. Mazza Recycling offers classroom visits, on-site field trips, and remote virtual tours through their Greener Tomorrow environmental education program.

*“I love sharing the positive message and the positive side of recycling, which has been really increasingly making huge changes over the past couple of years.”*

**- Brynn Mosello, Director of Sustainability and Communications, Mazza Recycling Services**

Véronique Lambert, program coordinator of Sustainable Jersey for Schools, then provided an overview of the free certification program that supports schools to become more sustainable and recognizes accomplishments and progress during the process.

Dean of the School of Education John Henning, who was instrumental in planning Sustainability Education Week, shared that he was impressed by the variety of issues the presenters addressed, the conversations they opened up, and the solutions they offered: “It has a lot of dimensions; a lot of different aspects of sustainability are being tackled, and I think that’s really interesting. [It] looks like you give a lot of choice, too, and I think it allows a lot of levels of engagement.”

Day four focused on professional development as participants virtually traveled with Jeff Hoagland, education director of The Watershed Institute, on a virtual tour of The Watershed Institute in Hopewell Township. Hoagland shared details about the Institute’s environmentally sustainable and efficient building. After the tour, Hoagland discussed how educators can encourage their students to create sustainable school designs. The Watershed Institute provides workshops to educate students and schools about environmental education.

On the final day of Sustainability Education Week, a panel discussion was virtually presented, with various authors discussing

their environmentally-themed literature. The panel was moderated by Ruth Morris, Ed.D. and featured authors Deborah Hopkinson, Monmouth University Journalism Professor John Morano, and Miranda Paul (pictured below left to right). These authors were joined by Long Branch Free Public Library’s Family Service Manager Nekesha Marshall. The panelists spoke about their interests in raising environmental awareness through children’s literature. They shared some of their works with attendees and provided book recommendations for promoting environmental sustainability in the classroom.

*“We cannot solve sustainability and environmental problems without addressing issues of justice and equity.”*

**- Miranda Paul**

The week of events was insightful and impactful due to the hard work of the organizing committee: Carol McArthur-Amedeo, Ed.D., Ruth Morris, Ed.D., Danielle Frith, M.A., LDT-C/NCED, Jiwon Kim, Ph.D., and Michelle Schpakow, Ed.D. Even after the event was concluded, participants continued to share and collaborate about implementing sustainability practices within their schools. The School of Education’s Sustainability Education team continues to grow in membership, generating new ideas and perspectives. The team engaged in planning for events that were hosted in March of 2023.

*“Seeing the vision of our sustainability organizing committee come to fruition by bringing together University faculty and students, community members, K-12 educators, administrators, parents, and students across New Jersey was very fulfilling. We take pride in promoting sustainability practices and look forward to the important work we continue to engage in.”*

**- Danielle Frith, Sustainability Education team member**







# A Service-Learning Partnership in Long Branch: **Buddy and Me**

Buddy and Me is a longstanding partnership formed in 2017 between Ruth Morris, Ed.D., of Monmouth University’s School of Education, and Markus W. Rodriguez, the director of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Long Branch Public Schools. The partnership was formed to create a service-learning project for incoming first-year education students at Monmouth University during their second semester. This service-learning project immerses future teachers in a local classroom with public school students in order to gain real-life experience. In 2017, Anastasia Elementary School in Long Branch was in the process of implementing Moby Max, a new computer program for students to increase their reading and math scores. The partnership between Monmouth University and Long Branch Public Schools not only led to higher academic performance scores attained by these students, but also formed invaluable connections between future teachers and their young buddies. For Monmouth University students, this was an experience to solidify their desires to become teachers in the future.

Jessica Lyons, a 36-year-old teacher candidate in the School of Education, is a retired law enforcement officer who decided to return to school to finish her teaching degree. As an officer, Lyons worked with the Cops in Schools Program and interacted with many children during her time as a police officer. The Cops in

Schools program is grant funded and works to put School Resource Officers in primary and secondary schools to engage in local community policing. After responding to several heartbreaking calls during her law enforcement career, Lyons realized that returning to school to obtain her teaching certification would provide her with the opportunity to foster positive, meaningful connections with children in hopes of preventing the violent incidents she had witnessed during her time as a police officer.

Lyons was determined to use her experiences to reach young children while providing a safe and accepting learning environment within the classroom. Prior to beginning her placement, Lyons felt nervous and anxious since she was inexperienced in the role of a teacher. She knew that she wanted to work with younger students and was placed in a kindergarten English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom with 14 students. One thing she found fascinating about these students was their commitment to learning in the classroom, even though they were often having to work harder than their English-speaking peers. Additionally, Lyons felt that social-emotional learning (SEL) in the classroom was of the utmost importance, since SEL promotes a welcoming classroom environment that fosters academic success. She was able to draw from personal experiences as well; being open and sharing experiences with students allowed

her to build trust with them and, in return, allowed those students to open up with her. The students at Anastasia Elementary School were excited to learn and work with Lyons, and she reflected on several ways she grew throughout this partnership:

*“Returning to school has not been an easy feat; aside from being older than my peers, it has been a challenge juggling class assignments while being a single mother raising two young boys. However, it has been a longtime goal of mine to return to college and finish my degree. I am so thankful and appreciative to have this opportunity to impact students’ lives. Ultimately, the best part of the experience was realizing how much connections truly matter in the classroom.”*

- Jessica Lyons

Amanda Dice, another Monmouth University student who participated in the Buddy and Me program, was placed in a fourth grade classroom at Morris Avenue Elementary School. Although Dice was admittedly nervous about working with elementary students for the first time, she quickly became comfortable in the Long Branch classroom and loved her time there. She already knew that teaching was her professional goal, and Buddy and Me only fueled that passion. Dice was also placed in an ESL classroom, and she knew that she was going to make the most out of this opportunity. She worked with a small group of students and submitted her

students’ writing to a poetry contest. During this experience, Dice felt as though she acquired important skills by learning how to work with a new group of children.

Dice noted her extensive experience with younger students, specifically preschool aged children. She was aware of the many food allergies within the student population, and it was her responsibility to prepare the children for lunch time. She had duties such as making sure one student with an allergy was separated from the other students. Dice also wanted to make sure that friends were sitting with each other and to ensure that there were two boys and two girls seated at every table. These may appear to be simple tasks, but lunch preparation for a classroom of young students can be a significant task for new, pre-service teachers.

Overall, Buddy and Me gave Dice the opportunity to grow in several new areas, such as working with other professionals, lesson planning, and creating relationships with students. In addition to working with younger students, she also began to learn new classroom techniques from her classroom teacher. Dice, like Lyons, also said that a rewarding part of this experience was building relationships with students. The students created “good-bye” cards on the last day to express appreciation of Dice’s contribution to their personal learning experiences.

The importance of the Buddy and Me program is highlighted through the personal testimonies of not just these two Monmouth School of Education students, but many more. The relationships created between the Monmouth students and the Long Branch students and teachers can be viewed as invaluable life lessons.

In addition to the outstanding relationships with students that transform Monmouth’s future teachers, there are other ways in which Monmouth students grow. One area is lesson planning throughout their time with Buddy and Me. The students are responsible for creating various lessons used to teach their small groups. Producing these lesson plans not only includes the actual logistics of preparing a lesson, but it also highlights the important responsibility of the teacher to provide meaningful learning experiences for students. The behind-the-scenes work that teachers do on a daily basis to prepare for children each day is vital to student success. Even though lesson planning is a focus of the clinical practice semester (i.e., student teaching), Buddy and Me is another way that Monmouth students have opportunities to develop skills in lesson planning and implementation prior to full-time clinical practice.

A final way young teachers grow through Buddy and Me is through

establishing relationships with faculty members in the professional setting. For some future educators, Buddy and Me may be the first true professional setting in which they can practice their skills. It is a valuable opportunity to learn how to foster positive relationships with the other staff in the school and build professional networks.

The Buddy and Me program has fostered outstanding relationships for both Monmouth University students and the young elementary students. Monmouth students have also been able to learn how to create professional relationships along with the relationships with their students and lesson planning. Buddy and Me has recently extended the partnership in five schools in the Long Branch District: Amerigo A. Anastasia Elementary, Morris Avenue Elementary, Gregory Elementary, George L. Catrambone Elementary, and the Long Branch Middle School. Over 500 Monmouth University teacher candidates have served as Buddies in ED-250. One of the early Buddies is now employed as a teacher at Morris Avenue Elementary School. The elementary Buddies that participated in Buddy and Me in the Spring of 2017 will be graduating from high school this year. Buddy and Me conducted a Culture Walk with the community of Long Branch in the spring of 2020 and 2023. Overall, Buddy and Me is an opportunity for Monmouth School of Education students to grow personally and academically together through meaningful relationships and through involvement in the local community.





# YEAR IN REVIEW

2021

2022

Sept. 2021



## Academic Welcome

First-year education students and transfers gathered for the Academic Welcome on McAllan Lawn.

Oct. 2021



## Social-Emotional Learning

Nicole Bevere '22, Ed.D., spoke to the Principals' Academy, making a presentation titled Empowering and Motivating Students, Post-Pandemic, by Implementing Mindfulness Through Integration with Social-Emotional Learning.

Nov. 2021



## In-Person Events

Campus opened back up for in-person events! Our first-year students were excited to come to a social event hosted by the Deans' Undergraduate Advisory Council.

March 2022



## Empowering Young Black Males Program

Current Monmouth University students served as mentors to Neptune High School students who came to campus twice each month for the Empowering Young Black Males program, led by Vernon S. Smith, Ph.D., of Educational Counseling and Leadership.

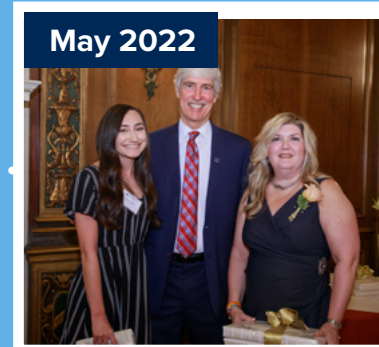
April 2022



## Spring Student Academic Awards Ceremony

Alex Romagnoli, Ph.D., presented the Susan Young Scholarship to Victoria Delia at the Spring Student Academic Awards Ceremony.

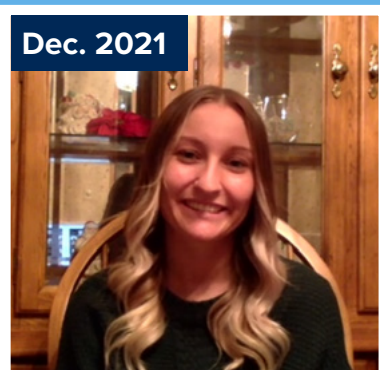
May 2022



## Outstanding Teaching Award

Dean John Henning posed with Janine Arciero, one of three recipients of the Roberts Outstanding Teaching Award, and the student who nominated her.

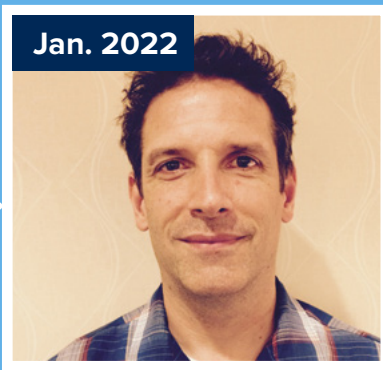
Dec. 2021



## Excellence in Research

Jennifer Stolte earned two Excellence in Research awards at the Fall Student Academic Awards Ceremony for her poster submission: Shifts in Identity Position as a Result of Translanguaging.

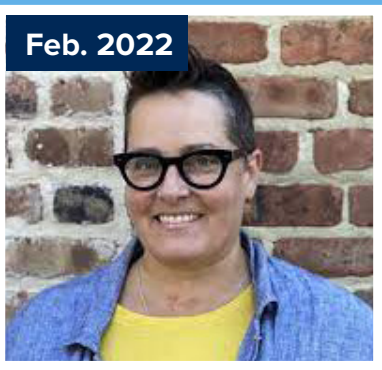
Jan. 2022



## Challenging Racial Inequity

Paul Gorski, founder of the Equity Literacy Institute and EdChange, served as the featured speaker for the Central Jersey Consortium for Excellence and Equity for the 2021–2022 school year on the topic Embracing a Transformative Approach: Challenging Racial Inequity.

Feb. 2022



## Special Services Academy

Kate Okeson was the featured speaker for the Special Services Academy on the topic "Strategies & Approaches for LGBTQ+ Inclusive Curriculum." Okeson is the co-founder and program director of Make it Better for Youth, the Monmouth County Consortium for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Questioning Youth.

June 2022



## Virtual Rett Symposium

Professor Cathleen Givney, M.S., CCC-SLP, spoke at the Virtual Rett Symposium on the topic International Clinical Guidelines for the Management of Communication in Individuals with Rett Syndrome.

July 2022



## Write On Sports Camp

Middle school students from Sisters Academy in Asbury Park came to campus for a two-week Write On Sports camp.

Aug. 2022



## Summer Commencement Ceremonies

Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., celebrated with a doctoral graduate Daniqua Williams, EdD '22 after Summer Commencement ceremonies.



CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF

# JOHN E. HENNING, PH.D.

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, 2015–2022



John Henning served as dean of the School of Education from 2015–2022. He led the Monmouth University School of Education to its first U.S. News ranking among best graduate schools. During Henning's leadership, the School of Education enjoyed many notable achievements. We acknowledged his many accomplishments at his retirement celebration in June 2022. The following is a list of a few highlights:

**2017 Exemplary Partnership Award from the National Association of Professional Development Schools**

**Designed, piloted, and implemented a Year-Long Clinical Experience** for teacher candidates.

**Educational Leadership Ed.D. Program:** Led the design and implementation of the first School of Education doctoral program.

**Dissertation Chair or Committee Member** for 23 doctoral students since 2015.

**The Teacher Residency Program:** Extended clinical experience through a

volunteer pilot program that expanded the current number of required clinical hours by paying teacher candidates for their work in schools.

**Curriculum Reform in Teacher Preparation:** Collaborated across campus to reduce the number of total required credits to 120, raised the number of elementary education credits from 36 to 42, and embedded Special Education certification into the degree. Also established two new early childhood degrees: one with endorsements in early childhood and special education and the other with early childhood, special education, and elementary education.

**The Educator:** Led the development of the School of Education's first annual magazine, which has been published and distributed nationally.

**School of Education Strategic Plan:** Led a collaborative, school-wide effort to establish the first School of Education Strategic Plan. The plan is organized

into six primary areas: Continuous Improvement, Program Development, Social Justice, Clinical Experiences, Leadership, and National and State Recognition.

**Accreditation** was achieved in all three accredited areas, including the Council of Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP); Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP); and the American Speech-Language, Hearing Association. The School of Education was one of nine institutions to receive the **Frank Murray Recognition from CAEP** to recognize that not one Area for Improvement (AFI) was identified. Similarly, the Speech-Language Pathology program did not receive any recommendations for improvement in its accreditation review.

**Leader** at a national and state level, as a member of the AACTE Board of Directors and as NJACTE President (2019–2021).

# 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, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

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A very special thanks to Dean's Advisory Council member **Stephen Bray** whose donation made this annual review possible.





# We Make a Difference



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EDUCATION



A special thanks to Rebecca Hanly, Julia Krampah, Alex Romagnoli, and Alexa Steensen  
for their work in the preparation of *The Educator*.

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