

Applied Developmental Psychology Student Group  
*Department of Psychology – George Mason University*

Issue 14 – Spring 2015

## Table of Contents

- Pg. 2 ADPSG Executive Officers
- Pg. 3 Tips for your first year!
- Pg. 4 Dr. Johannes Rojahn
- Pgs. 5-8 Individual Labs in the Applied Developmental Psychology Department
- Pgs. 9-10 Publications and Conference Presentations
- Pg. 11 Upcoming Conferences

## Welcome!

The overall mission of George Mason University's Applied Developmental Psychology Student Group is to serve the needs of the Applied Developmental Psychology (ADP) students at the University. We work to advance the understanding of the field of developmental psychology, promote our ADP program, provide funding for conference presentations, enhance collaboration between the developmental psychology laboratories, and host social and service activities. If you have any questions about our program, please visit us at [adpsyc.gmu.edu/](http://adpsyc.gmu.edu/) and [www.gmu.edu/org/adpsg/](http://www.gmu.edu/org/adpsg/) - or feel free to contact any student or professor!



# ADPSG Executive Officers



Danielle Meade  
*President*



Jordan Thibodeaux  
*Treasurer*



Nicole Fettig  
*Social Chair*



Alex Moffett  
*Website Manager*



Mandana Mohtasham



Tanya Tavassolie

*Faculty Representatives*

We want to hear from you!

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns that you would like to share with the faculty, contact your ADP student representatives, Mandana Mohtasham ([mmohtash@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:mmohtash@masonlive.gmu.edu)) and Tanya Tavassolie ([ttavasso@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:ttavasso@masonlive.gmu.edu)). The ADP faculty meets at least once per month, hope to hear from you!

*Welcome back Dr. Denham!*

Susanne Denham spent her Study Leave in Verona, Italy, where she collaborated with colleagues at the University of Verona to study how teachers socialize preschoolers' emotional competence. She observed 12 teachers and 44 children over a 2-month period and was accompanied by a colleague who gathered parallel qualitative information. Further interviews and self-report information will be gathered this semester, to result in several papers and become the springboard for an international edited volume. Susanne also presented twice at the University of Rome and at PSI World Conference in Bucharest, Romania, while in Europe.

# Tips for your first year in graduate school!

- ✓ **Stay organized.** Schedule out what assignments you are going to do every day of the week and try to stick to it. Use a hand-written planner or an electronic one (like Google calendar, or cool Aps like Wonderlist or Evernote) – whichever you prefer to keep you organized.
- ✓ **Meet with your advisor early and often.** Your relationship with your advisor, whether you're a Masters or Doctoral student, is the most important relationship of your graduate career. Make sure you're cultivating it early, and it will make the rest of your graduate career much easier. Set up weekly or bi-weekly meetings with your advisor, even if just to catch up on the things you have been working on.
- ✓ **Don't be afraid!** If you have a question, don't hesitate to ask anyone! Graduate students (especially in our department) are like a family, we help each other out and want to learn from each other's mistakes.
- ✓ **Don't procrastinate...** yes, let's all just admit it...we've been there, you've been there, and it always stinks! As graduate students, we are expected to balance many different responsibilities at once, and excel at all of them. This is an extremely difficult task on its own, so don't leave assignments for the last minute. This will ensure that you are able to complete all your responsibilities, and come out standing on the other end.
- ✓ **Stay healthy and active.** Graduate school can be one of the most fun, but also most stressful life experiences. Don't let yourself become victim to the severe negative consequences of stress. Make sure you schedule in some "you-time". Go for a run or a hike, bake cran-oat chocolate chip coconut muffins, play with puppies, make fish tacos, take a yoga class, go to Sweetgreen and get a deliciously overpriced salad...whatever it is that you like to do that relaxes you and keeps you mentally and physically healthy! Get out there and do it!
- ✓ **Make new friends...**join study groups, attend social events, don't be afraid to have a little fun in grad school. Set up study sessions at Panera with a buddy, go to ADPSG planned happy-hours, or just hang out in your lab and get to know your lab-mates. Making friends in graduate school is your first step to developing your social network of colleagues, so get out there and socialize!
- ✓ **Join professional organizations.** By joining professional organizations (like SRCD, APA, APS, etc.) you become eligible for discounts to attend conferences, receive journals subscriptions, and you can hear about the latest news in the field. Most of them have student rates too, so us poor-old grad students can afford the hefty bill.
- ✓ **Relatedly, start following your favorite professional organizations on social media.** Almost all professional organizations keep and maintain Facebook and Twitter accounts and constantly update them with the latest news, articles, research findings, and cool facts. It's an excellent way to get your favorite information, fast, simply by browsing your Facebook or Twitter accounts, which, let's face it, we would all be doing anyway.
- ✓ **Attend conferences.** Conferences are usually associated with a professional organization. This is where you can start to build your professional network of collaborators, friends, colleagues, and the like. You never know where these relationships will take you! Submit to them as often as you can, talk with your advisor about potential topics and research ideas that could get you towards a conference submission. There is always something out there that you can do!
- ✓ **Update your CV...OFTEN.** Any time you take on a new task or responsibility make sure you are updating your CV ASAP. Graduate school is about taking advantage of the many opportunities that are being thrown at you; make sure you're giving yourself credit for those opportunities on your professional Vita. Trust me, if you don't put it on your CV right away, you *WILL* forget, so update it many times throughout your career to ensure you always have the most up-to-date version. You never know when you're going to need to whip out your trusty CV and impress someone in an elevator...
- ✓ **Being a TA is important, but don't let it take over your life.** Some graduate students will be asked to be a teaching assistant (TA) for an undergraduate course. This is a very educational, but time-consuming assignment. You will learn A LOT, but it can easily take over all your time, so don't let it! Get it done, and make it good, but don't let it take over your life!

No clue what you want to do after you graduate? Visit [graduategirlblog.com](http://graduategirlblog.com) to find out your options!

# Dr. Johannes Rojahn

## A tribute to a legacy



Dr. Johannes Rojahn



Andrea Burchfield -Mascitelli



Melissa Mooney

Not pictured: Brittney Bettencourt

Prof. Johannes Rojahn is scheduled to retire at the end of the 2015 Spring Semester as a Professor Emeritus, which brings not only an end to his active academic career of almost 40 years, but also to the Behavior and Developmental Disabilities (BADD) Lab. As its name suggests, BADD lab has been dedicated to research on intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD), especially on topics related to concurrent behavior problems and other mental health concerns. Behavioral and mental health concerns are quite common in people with IDD and represent arguably the most common, serious obstacle to maximizing their individual potential and to leading a contented life integrated in their families and communities.

The lab currently consists of two second-year MA students (Brittney Betancourt and Melissa Mooney) and a fifth-year Ph.D. student (Andrea Burchfield-Mascitelli). Both Britney and Melissa are expected to graduate this spring. Melissa decided to go the practicum route while Brittney is finishing data analysis for her thesis (a longitudinal study of aggressive behavior in a group of adults with behavioral and mental health problems.) Andrea will finish her dissertation by the end of this calendar year. The title of her dissertation is "Reducing Caregiver Burden of Parents of Children with ASD with Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Therapy." In support of her project Andrea was awarded a small research grant from the Organization of Autism Research.

The BADD lab has produced a number of publications and conference presentations over the years and some of this work will continue even after Dr. Rojahn's retirement.

*We'll miss you Dr.  
Rojahn!*

# Development in School Context (DISC) Lab

*Dr. Curby*



Dr. Tim Curby

In the Development in School Contexts (DISC) lab, we are busily working on a variety of projects. For example, through a partnership with the American Psychological Association, Dr. Curby is going to be surveying 10,000 Kindergarten teachers to identify current kindergarten teachers' judgments about children's problems at kindergarten entry. We continue to analyze data examining the role of teachers in the development of children's social-emotional competence. In fact, we submitted a research proposal last summer to develop an observational measure of social-emotional teaching.

Students in the DISC lab are working on a variety of their own projects. One student will be collecting data on classroom engagement among preschoolers to compare those with and without a disability. Another student is going to be doing a secondary data analysis of data examining peer relations in the preschool classroom. Yet another is examining how classroom emotional support consistency may benefit children who have depressed mothers.



Xiaozhu An



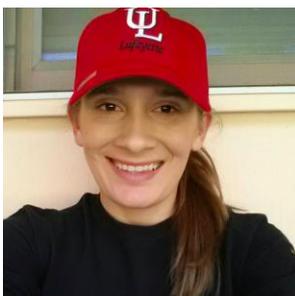
Becca Ulrich



Liz Berke



Krystal Thomas



Lydia Wattigny



Max Shear  
(also advised by Patrick McKnight)

# Cognitive Interventions Lab

*Dr. Pasnak*



Dr. Robert Pasnak

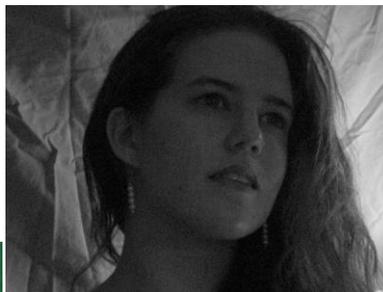
This year Allison Bock submitted her second study for publication and received approval of her dissertation proposal. Katrina Schmerold took her comprehensive examination – another milestone!

Chen Qiu, Melissa Fetterer and Sarah O'Brien graduated. Melissa has returned to the South to marry her fiancé and become Mrs. Robinson. Chen is with her fiancé in New Jersey. Sarah is working for organizations in the DC area. Sarah presented a paper about the patterning project at EPA and all three are coauthors of several submitted or published papers. Amber Shriver has been centrally involved in the patterning project and has been joined by new students Ally Patterson, Britney Leaf, and Kate Venngrund. We hope to find out why learning patterns of letters, numbers, and objects promotes reading and mathematics in primary school children.

“Patterning” instruction is commonplace in American schools – it is part of the Common Core of American education. But so far, only our team has shown that it actually improves school achievement, and is actively involved in discovering why it works!



Allison Bock



Amber Shriver



Ally Patterson



Katrina Schmerold



Brittny Leaf



Kate Venngrund

# Child Development Lab

*Dr. Denham*



Dr. Susanne Denham

Dr. Denham's Child Development Lab has had an on-going six-year grant from the NICHD for Assessing Social-Emotional Skills for School Readiness (ASESSR) and enhancing computer based versions of these assessments. With this grant, and the joint efforts of Dr. Curby's DISC lab, Dr. Denham and her students have continued two core research projects, teachers as socializers of social emotional learning (TASSEL) and computerized assessment of preschool social-emotional learning (CAPSEL).

TASSEL examines the preschool teacher's role in helping their students develop social and emotional competence as they prepare to move into kindergarten. For this project, both teachers and students are assessed on social and emotional measures. This project was completed in conjunction with Dr. Curby's lab.

CAPSEL is a study that adapted, via computerization, research-based Social-Emotional Learning assessment tools with strong empirical predictive validity for school adjustment and achievement. These computerized tools will be used in early childhood educational settings, instructional and outcome-based purposes.



Naomi  
Watanabe



Kristina  
Herndon



Sammi Plourde



NiLa  
Austin



Hideko Hamada Bassett  
Research Assistant  
Professor



Nicole Fettig



Dave Ferrier



Mandana Mohtasham

# WinsLab

## Dr. Winsler



Dr. Adam Winsler

WinsLab has been very busy this year! We submitted a grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Arts using Miami School Readiness Project (MSRP) data to examine who takes elective arts-related courses (i.e., dance, art, music, drama) in middle school and do they appear to benefit from such experiences with the arts. We have new survey data collection currently going on for Devon LaMay Wellington's project on language practices in the families of adult children of deaf parents, pilot testing going on for Jordan Thibodeaux's dissertation on the self reported and observed private speech among youth tennis athletes, and data coding and analysis going on for Danielle Mead's dissertation on the narrative and executive functioning skills of monolingual and bilingual children. Plus numerous other undergraduate honor's theses, MA theses, and dissertations are in various stages of proposal/completion.



Caitlin Hines



Danielle Mead



Jordan Thibodeaux



Jameela  
Conway-Turner



Taylor Gara



Devon Wellington



Allison Haag



Alex Moffett



Tanya Tavassolie

# Recent ADP Publications

Ansari, A., & Winsler, A. (2014). Montessori public school pre-K programs and the school readiness of low-income Black and Latino children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. Advance online. Doi: 10.1037/a0036799

D'Lima, G., Winsler, A., & Kitsantas, A. (2014). Gender and ethnic differences in first-year college students' goal orientation, academic self-efficacy, and intrinsic/extrinsic motivation. *Journal of Education Research*, 107, 341-356. Doi: 10.1080/00220671.2013.823366

Curby, T. W., Downer, J. T., & Booren, L. (2014). Behavioral exchanges between teachers and children over the course of a typical preschool day: Testing bi-directional associations. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 29, 193-204. doi:10.1016/j.ecresq.2014.01.002

Huie, F., Winsler, A., & Kitsantas, A. (2014). Employment and first-year college achievement: The role of self-regulation and motivation. *Journal of Education and Work*, 27, 110-135. Doi:10.1080/13639080.2012.718746

Medeiros, K., & Winsler, A. (2014). Parent-child gesture use during problem solving in autistic spectrum disorder. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 44, 1946-1958. Doi: 10.1007/s10803-014-2069-y

Morrissey, T.W., Hutchison, L., & Winsler, A. (2014). Family income, school attendance, and academic achievement in elementary school. *Developmental Psychology*, 50, 741-753. Doi: 10.1037/a0033848

Perloe, A., Esposito-Smythers, C., Curby, T. W., & Renshaw, K. (2014). Concurrent trajectories of change in adolescent and maternal depression in the TOREDIA study. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 43, 612-628. doi:10.1007/s10964-013-9999-0

Qiu, C., & Winsler, A. (in press). Language use in a "One Parent One-Language" Mandarin-English bilingual family: Noun vs. verb use and language mixing compared to maternal perception. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*.

Verdon, S., McLeod, S., & Winsler, A. (in press). Linguistic diversity among Australian children in the first five years of life. *Speech, Language, and Hearing*. Advance online. Doi: dx.doi.org/10.1179/2050572814Y.0000000038

Verdon, S., McLeod, S., & Winsler, A. (2014). Language maintenance and loss in a population study of young Australian children. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 29, 168-181. Doi: 10.1016/j.ecresq.2013.12.003

Winsler, A., Deutsch, A., Vorona, R., Payne, P. A., & Szklo-Coxe, M. (in press). Sleepless in Fairfax: The difference one more hour of sleep can make for teen hopelessness, suicidal ideation, and substance use. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. Doi: 10.1007/s10964-014-0170-3

Zinsser, K.\*, Shewark, E., Denham, S. A., & Curby, T. W. (2014). A mixed-method examination of preschool teacher beliefs about social emotional learning and relations to observed emotional support. *Infant and Child Development*, 23, 471-493. doi:10.1002/icd.1843

Zinsser, K., & Curby, T. W. (2014). Understanding preschool teachers' emotional support as a function of center climate. *SAGE Open*, 4(4), 1-9. doi:10.1177/2158244014560728

Zinsser, K., Curby, T. W., & Ullrich, R. S.\* (in press). Head Start directors' perceptions of job responsibilities and approaches to social-emotional learning. *Early Childhood Research & Practice*.

Zinsser, K. M., Denham, S. A., & Curby, T. W. (in press). Being a social-emotional teacher. *Young Children*.



# Recent ADP Conference Presentations

Conway-Turner, J., Tavassolie, T., & Winsler, A. (2015, June). *Resilience among low-income, ethnically diverse children: Early predictors of later academic success in elementary school students*. Poster session presented at the meeting of the Resilience Research Centre, Halifax, Canada.

Conway-Turner, J., Visconti, K. C., & Winsler, A. (2015, April). *Gang involvement is a protective factor for depression among those who experience victimization*. Poster submitted for presentation at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Hutchison, L.A., Mead, D., & Winsler, A. (2015, April). Relations between executive functioning, second language fluency, and externalizing behavior problems in early childhood. In Daneri, P., & Blair, C. (Co-Chairs), *Executive functioning among dual language learners*. Symposium submitted for presentation at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Moffett, A., & Winsler, A. (2015, April). *Cyberbullying, depression, and substance abuse in adolescence: Variation by sexual orientation, gender, and age*. Poster submitted for presentation at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Menzer, M., & Winsler, A. (Co-Chairs). (2015, April). *Arts participation and early childhood social and emotional development*. Symposium submitted for presentation at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Qiu, C., & Winsler, A. (2015, April). *Language use in a "One-Parent One-Language" bilingual family: Maternal perception, noun/verb use, and code switching*. Poster submitted for presentation at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Tavassolie, T., & Winsler, A. (2015, April). *Long-term academic outcomes for low-income, ethnically diverse children retained from third-grade high-stakes tests*. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Tavassolie, T., López, C., De Feyter, J.J., Hartman, S., & Winsler, A. (2015). *Migrant preschool children's school readiness and early elementary school performance through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade*. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Thibodeaux, C., Bock, A., & Winsler, A. (2015, April). *Singing to the self: The role of singing and private speech in executive function*. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

Thibodeaux, J., Curby, T., & Winsler, A. (2014, October). *Are college students feeling motivated? Growth in goal orientation and GPA*. Poster presented at the American Educational Psychology Conference, Fairfax, VA.

Fettig, N., Howarth, G., Curby, T. W., Denham, & Watanabe, N. (2015, March). ♦The importance of early childhood temperament and parenting: Bi-directional models of parenting and child externalizing behaviors. In M. Barnett (Chair), *Longitudinal parent-child behavioral transactions: Moderation by family, mother and child characteristics*. Paper symposium presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Bailey C. S., Zinsser K. M., Fettig, N. B.\*, Howarth, G. Z., Bassett, H. H., Denham S. A., Garner, P. W., & Curby T. W. (2014, April). *Enhancing teacher-child interactions: Teachers as socializers of children's emotional competence*. Education Workshop presented at the 41st Annual National Head Start Association Conference and Expo, Long Beach, CA.



# Upcoming Conferences



Society for Research  
in Child Development

**2015 Biennial SRCD Meeting**

**March 19-21, 2015**

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

**NYC 2015** **aps** **May 21-24**  
New York, NY, USA



ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE | 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention

*Pathways to Resilience III:*  
BEYOND NATURE vs. NURTURE

**JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> - 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2015**

**2015 CONVENTION**  
Aug. 6-9, 2015 • TORONTO, ONTARIO



8 - 12 September 2015

University of Minho, Braga, Portugal

**17<sup>th</sup> European Conference  
on Developmental Psychology**

**"50 YEARS OF OPPORTUNITY"**

42nd Annual Head Start Conference and Expo  
March 29 - April 2, 2015  
Washington, D.C.



## Need help with funding?

Contact ADPSG's Treasurer, Jordan Thibodeaux, and ask about travel funds for conferences at which you are presenting.