

MSEI Newsletter

VOL. 2, ISSUE 3
October-November, 2024



Here’s what has happened in the last month and what’s to come!

Welcome to the October-November edition of the MSEI Newsletter! It’s been a busy and exciting few months for MSEI students and faculty alike, and we’re excited to share updates on recent events and what’s on the horizon.

First, I want to highlight the DEC Conference, held from September 17-20 in New Orleans. The conference was a great success, with professionals from across the country coming together to share their expertise and innovations in early childhood intervention. Dr. Parker and I were in attendance to present our latest research and evidence-based practices. In addition to the DEC Conference, one of our faculty, Dr. Sonnier, received a very prestigious award in September (you can read all about this on p. 2)!

I also encourage you to mark your calendars for National Family Engagement Month in

November. Family Engagement Month is dedicated to recognizing the critical role families play in the education and development of their children. It emphasizes the importance of strong, collaborative partnerships between families and professionals. During this month, schools, early intervention programs, and community organizations across the country host various activities and events aimed at increasing family involvement and empowering families to be active participants in their children's learning and development.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the field of early intervention. We’re looking forward to another month of growth, learning, and collaboration!

Enjoy this month’s newsletter!

-Dr. Pansé-Barone

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MSEI Program Updates

Advising is right around the corner and will begin in mid-October! Be sure to keep an eye on your inbox over the next few weeks for an advising link where you can sign up for an appointment. This is a great opportunity to review your academic progress, discuss your course selections for the upcoming spring semester, and ask any questions you may have.

Along those lines, if you are planning to graduate this fall, be sure to submit your

graduation application by Nov. 26th. Contact your advisor if you need assistance with the application process or have any questions about graduation requirements.

We're excited to announce a course that will be offered to MSEI students through the College of Special Education for the spring semester! Stay tuned for details on the class, which will cover topics in addressing challenging behavior. More information will be shared in your upcoming advising session.



Faculty Spotlight: Libbie Sonnier

Dr. Libbie Sonnier, Executive Director of the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children and a Clinical Assistant Professor in the MSEI program, was recently honored with the Advocate of the Year Award by Women in Government Relations (WGR). This prestigious award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary advocacy efforts in government relations, working to improve policies, programs, and outcomes that benefit the public. WGR's Excellence in Advocacy Awards celebrates women and allies who make a significant impact in areas such as lobbying, grassroots organizing, and coalition building.

Dr. Sonnier has had an incredible career dedicated to advancing policies that support young children and families. Under her leadership, the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children has successfully secured millions in funding for early care and education and advocated for sustainable revenue streams to ensure continued access to quality services for young children. Her achievements in driving state-wide initiatives and leveraging research to inform policy have made a lasting difference in Louisiana and beyond.

Dr. Sonnier's contributions are a testament to her dedication to improving outcomes for children and families, and her recognition by WGR further solidifies her role as a leading voice in early childhood advocacy. Be sure to tell Dr. Sonnier congratulations on this well-deserved honor!

Updates from the Field

DEC Position Statement on Special Instructors

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) revised their position statement on the role of special instructors in September. The position statement describes the role of special instructors, the training required, as well as what services they provide to children and families. This highlights the pivotal role you can all take on in Part C to ensure that children receive the support they need. For more details, you can read the full position statement [here](#).

DEC Membership Discount

For anyone who joins the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) between now and the end of the year, DEC dues can be waived! CEC is paying for DEC dues for all new members of CEC. Enroll in DEC at the same time and use promo code DEC24FREE. The promo is available now through December 31st, 2024. Discounted CEC student membership rates for as low as \$40-\$55 are currently available, which makes this the most affordable time to join!

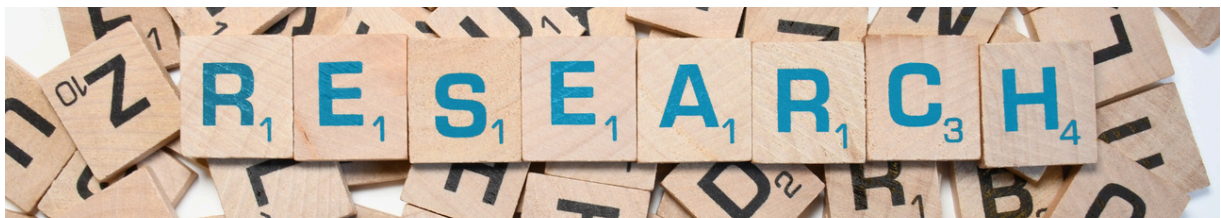


Research Corner: Factors Impacting Provider Retention

In the study titled "Perspectives of Early Intervention Program Directors on Provider Retention Efforts" by Yeager, Argus-Calvo, Mangadu, Thimbriel, and Chaib Lozano (2023), researchers investigated the ongoing national shortage of early intervention providers for children with disabilities and developmental delays. The researchers were interested in understanding factors that affect early intervention providers' retention, which refers to minimizing turnover and the ability to keep qualified workers in their roles.

The study involved in-depth interviews with 27 program directors and identified twelve themes across four main categories affecting provider retention: compensation and financial incentives, program management and organization, positive climate and culture, and training and mentoring. The findings emphasize the need for effective strategies to improve retention efforts, which are essential for maintaining quality services in early intervention programs. This research contributes to the understanding of factors influencing provider turnover and offers implications for enhancing the workforce in early intervention settings.

Additional research on this topic will be forthcoming to provide further insights into improving provider retention strategies in early intervention and reducing burnout. If you'd like to check out this open access article, you can read it here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/02711214231182019>.





Career-Building Opportunities

Fellowships & Assistantships

TrestleLink Trainee Program

- **About:** The TrestleLink Trainee program offers a unique opportunity for graduate students to engage in advocacy and policy efforts and training. Applicants begin as interns, volunteering approximately 10 hours each week for a semester, after which they may be eligible for promotion to a fellowship position.
- **Location:** Remote
- **Apply:** <https://trestlelink.org/get-involved/trainees/>

Job Openings

- Jackson Public Schools is hiring a Certified Interventionist in Pre-K. Applications are due by October 30th. Check out the position posting here: <https://jps.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=4001>
- The National Research and Training Center (NRTC) on Blindness and Low Vision at MS State University is hiring a variety of Research Associate positions. Remote work is considered. Apply here: <https://explore.msujobs.msstate.edu/en-us/job/508188/research-associate-iiii-lps>

Upcoming Conferences

NAEYC Annual Conference

- **Location:** Anaheim, CA
- **When:** Nov. 6-9, 2024
- **To register:** <https://www.naeyc.org/events/annual/registration>

National Training Institute on Effective Practices: Addressing Challenging Behavior

- **Location:** Tampa, FL
- **When:** April 21-25, 2025
- **To register:** Registration opens this fall - stay tuned!

Professional Development

National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) Virtual Learning Series

- **Location:** Online
- **Cost:** Free
- **To view** recordings on a variety of topics, go to: <https://www.nbcdi.org/virtual-event-resources/>

In Pursuit of Equity Webinar Series

- To access this free DEC and ECTA webinar series, click here: <https://www.dec-sped.org/equity-series>