“Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.”

- Chinese proverb

Welcome to the First ECSE Newsletter!

We are very excited to present to you our first Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Newsletter! Our goal is to share with you information about our program, the field, and other ECSE community news.

In this issue, we highlight Dr. Marci Hanson, an ECSE Professor, and Mackenzie McLaughlin, a current ECSE student who have both found their passion in Special Education. We hear from them about why they chose the field and the impact the program has had on their lives! We’ll also delve into what Hilary Clinton has been doing in Oakland to promote early literacy and close the word gap.

Thank you for taking the time out to enjoy our newsletter, we welcome your feedback, and please feel free to share with your colleagues and friends!
MARCH 21ST, 2015
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE AT SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

We are excited to announce that the Early Childhood Special Education program at San Francisco State University is holding its first annual, student-run conference! This event will consist of:

- Presentations by alumni and current students, highlighting practical strategies to use in early childhood special education and early intervention settings.
- Booths for alumni, current students, and community partners to share job openings and other opportunities.
- Opportunities for alumni and current students to network and mingle.

More information, such as how to be a presenter, will be shared within the next few weeks. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out with any comments or questions. We hope that you will join us for this collaborative and fun-filled event!

**First Annual, Student-Run ECSE Conference - Interview with Kristan Stewart**

The Early Childhood Special Education program at SFSU will be presenting the First Annual, Student-Run ECSE conference in which there will be presentations by students and alumni, booths for local organizations, and a handful of well-respected speakers, including a keynote speech by Kathy Small. I was fortunate enough to speak with Kristan Stewart, Doctoral student in the ECSE program and conference coordinator, to get more information.

Can you tell us a bit about what conference attendees can expect to see?

“Attendees can expect to see presentations on effective practices, such as physical activities to implement in a classroom setting, ways to promote parent-professional relationships, and tips on how to strengthen working relationships with other staff members. There will also be opportunities to network with local organizations, including school districts, family support organizations, and behavioral agencies. Lastly, they can also expect to meet other students and alumni, Dean Judith Munter, and ECSE lecturers and professors.”

Who is the conference targeting?
This conference is geared toward students and alumni, but not just from the ECSE field. I opened the conference up to students in other special education graduate programs and undergraduate students minoring in special education. I feel that everyone in the special education field can benefit from collaborating with each other. Current students who have not yet entered the field professionally will gain a deeper understanding of why and how current professionals have implemented certain practices in their classroom. Alumni and students
Interview with Kristan Stewart Cont’d…

already in the field will be able to integrate new ideas into their current practice. There will also be time for questions in the presentations, which should allow for great conversation and collaboration.”

Wow, that’s awesome! How long did it take to put this together and who all was involved?
The planning process began in August, and since then my committee (ECSE alumni and students) and I have been hard at work coordinating different parts of the conference. All of this has been made possible with the support of Dr. Amber Friesen and Dr. Summer Hsia; they’ve been such a tremendous support system, and without them, this conference would not have been possible. Truly, great mentorship is priceless.”

How does it feel to have completed the conference planning? Would you do anything differently?
The conference has become such an integral part of my life, so it’s sad that it’s coming to an end. I’ve enjoyed the entire process, so it’s hard to say what I would do differently. However, One thing comes to mind, I would’ve liked to be able to reach out to as many alumni as possible. We’ve been working with the iLearn email list, which many alumni are no longer a part of. Other than that, I am incredibly pleased with how the planning process has progressed, and I am forever in debt to my committee: Laura Currier, Sheri Tiamiyu, Jennifer Chen, and Carolyn Taylor. And, of course, I am so grateful to have been supported by Dr. Friesen and Dr. Hsia along the way.”

Any last remarks?
Thank you to Dr. Friesen and Dr. Hsia for this opportunity! SFSU and the Dept. of Special Education and Communicative Disorders have provided me with yet another enriching learning experience that I will forever cherish. This dept. has become my second home, and I am so proud to say that I am an alumna of the ECSE program. Even more, I am incredibly blessed to say that I remain a part of the dept. as a student in the doctoral program. We hope you have a wonderful time at the conference, and hope to see you again next year! In the meantime, if you ever see me on campus, please do say hello! I’d love to talk special education with you ;)

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Student Spotlight
Mackenzie McLaughlin

CIRCLE Grant

• 5 year Grant awarded by the Department of Education to prepare more credentialed ECSE scholars

• Those who have completed their BA in any field are eligible to apply to CIRCLE for tuition stipend support

• Fall 2015 deadline - May 30, 2015

• Application and other additional information can be found on our website, www.ecse.sfsu.edu

Mackenzie, one of our current ECSE Masters and credential students, has been working with young children in preschools and infant toddler programs since 2008. Her passion for ECSE is evident when talking to her both in and outside of the classroom, and her enthusiasm is contagious!

What sparked your interest in ECSE?
Since working with young children since 2008 in a variety of different positions, “I’ve most enjoyed being a primary caregiver in an infant/toddler program and being a paraprofessional in a preschool inclusive classroom”. After carefully observing, “a few children that I suspected had developmental delays as well as children who had some sensory needs, I immediately took an interest in helping to support their development further and in the children's sensory needs.”

What do you love most about your job?
“What I love most about my job is playing with children everyday. I love watching what they will be interested in so that I can plan activities according to their interests and planning emergent curriculum. I also love experimenting with [them] and enjoy making, (and having the children help too!), different sensory materials for [them] to explore.”

How has the ECSE program helped you in your endeavors?
“The ECSE program has fabulous classes, instructors, and professors that thoughtfully discuss theories and practices of the ECSE field. I feel like I have broadened my skills and learned several strategies in how to support young children's development and learning. [This program] has made me even more passionate about working with young children. I feel like I have become an advocate for the children I work with.”
Faculty Spotlight
Dr. Marci J. Hanson

Dr. Marci Hanson has been a Professor in the Special Education Dept. at SFSU for over 35 years! She is currently on several Boards of Directors and the SFSU Director of the Joint Doctoral Program in Special Education between UC Berkeley and SF State. She is widely known for her published groundbreaking research, and vast contributions to the field! Join me in discovering how this pioneer’s journey began, what brought her to SF from Idaho, and what advice she has for ECSE students and enthusiasts!

Can you tell me a little about yourself? Maybe even something that most people don’t know about you?
“A little about myself... I grew up on a farm in Idaho, I have lived in Austria and on the east coast, and I have two daughters. I started at SFSU in 1979. Most people don’t know that I was doing research on early intervention in Princeton, New Jersey, and I was hired here at San Francisco State to develop the ECSE masters program. Over the years, of course, we developed the masters, the credential, the certificate, and the specialization in the doctoral program. I’ve had over ten million dollars in grants in early childhood that had helped develop the whole program and support students. We started with the atypical infant development course and added courses over the years.”

How did you get started in the ECSE field? Was there a defining moment?
“I was hired at the University of Oregon in 1974 to develop an early intervention program for infants with Down syndrome and their families. At that time, it was recommended that those babies be institutionalized. It was really before the field of early intervention. It was a research project to see if we could do early intervention, and if it would make a difference. I was able to travel around the US and meet people that were beginning the field of early intervention and be a part of a new field. As a result of that research project, I wrote a book on infants with Down syndrome. When I started working with little kids, I just loved it and I found a profession that I wanted for the rest of my life. I particularly loved the aspect of working with families and supporting children within their families.”

You’ve written and published several books. How did you first get into writing?
“Well the first book I wrote was part of this Down syndrome research project. It was the curriculum that came out of that work. Then I was encouraged by publishers to do more writing. I have had a number of really wonderful writing colleagues over the years. Eleanor Lynch was one of them; we’ve been successful collaborators on a number of books.
Interview with Dr. Marci Hanson, cont’d.

You mentioned Eleanor Lynch, are there any others in the field that have been really influential to you?
“I started in this field when early intervention was just beginning. Alice Hayden, Bill and Diane Bricker and Rebecca Fewell were influential; they were some of the pioneers of early intervention in early childhood.”

Yourself, included!
“I’ve been fortunate to be there when the field was just developing. It’s been exciting to be a part of policy development and personnel preparation activities, and to do a lot of work nationally and internationally.”

Do you have any advice for those who are interested in consulting, teaching, and getting into research?
“I think the main thing is to be a volunteer and/or get hired on a project and work with somebody who can be your mentor, and really learn how the process works. The best way to do that is by working with someone that already has an ongoing research or teaching trajectory to help and support you. A mentorship apprentice model works well. Sometimes that means volunteering. I know I got started by doing lots of volunteer work and just taking advantage of opportunities to observe and see what fit for me and what I enjoyed doing. I think ECSE is a wonderful field. I feel like throughout all these years I keep learning, particularly from the families with whom I have worked. I’ve also always loved working with ECSE students in this area because I think they’re just a nice bunch of people; they are committed to serving a diverse range of families and that sense of heart and soul in the work has always come through for me. It’s been wonderful lifetime profession.”

You mentioned mentorship as being one of the more valuable things for someone who’s interested in the field. As one of the early pioneers, where did you get that mentorship?
“That’s a good question. I think it was hard, especially being a woman, starting out; most of the people directing programs at the time were men. I was lucky to work at a university that gave lots of encouragement and lots of resources. My boss encouraged us to work largely on our own. He had a good management model; it was like ‘go out there and do good work, and as long as you do good work, I’ll continue to support you.’ That sense of independence worked for me and I met a lot of other young dynamic people at that time. I think we really supported each other. Mentorship, to a large degree, at that time was from my peers. I was fortunate to be at a great university with a lot of smart people, and we were excited about the field of special education. Peer support was important for me. We were very collaborative with one another and we would bounce ideas off of each other.”

Thank you so much for taking the time out to speak with me. Is there anything else you’d like our readers to know?
“I would just say that I have always loved having the opportunity to work with students at SF State. I think they’re a special group of people who are strongly motivated to serve families in the community and that means a lot to me. I feel very privileged to have been able to do that all these years. It’s been a great profession, as I reflect back on it now. I’m thankful that I have been in this field of ECSE. When I started it wasn’t really a field. Now it’s satisfying to see how it’s developed and grown.”
Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing
Hilary Clinton and the national campaign to close the word gap

Summer of 2014, Hillary Clinton joined forces with UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital, Kaiser Permanantae, the Bay Area Council, and the Bill, Hillary, and Chelsea Clinton Foundation's, "Too Small to Fail," initiative to create a new campaign called, "Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing." In hopes of sending home the message that if you read to your young children, talk to them, or even sing to them; they will grow up to be smarter! Research shows that the moment babies are born they begin learning the world around them and it is their early years that are the most important in brain development.

Shockingly, children in low-income areas typically hear 30 million fewer words being said to them by age 4 than those children in higher income areas, which inevitably leads to a word gap and down the line causes an achievement gap. Surveys that were given in March 2014 found that only half of low-income parents and grandparents in Oakland read to their children every day and fewer than half reported telling stories to their children every day. These findings were soon followed by the Urban Strategies Council’s research showing that less than 40% of low-income Kindergartners were “school ready.”

The Oakland based pilot project was created to help parents stimulate their growing babies mind and improve development and pre literacy outcomes. The talking is teaching coalition plans to start by distributing books, music, and information about early learning and pre literacy to parents who give birth at their (Kaiser and UCSF) hospitals and advertising materials created by Goodby Silverstein and partners on city billboards and media outlets.

Their website, talkingisteaching.org, offers resources to both parents and educators, in English and Spanish. You can download the sesame street family guide, storybooks, and even a community provider guide for those who work with families in their community. According to their website, "Sesame Workshop and Too Small to Fail created this guide to help you fill each day with words, stories, songs ... and love. Inside are tips and activities around talking, reading and singing with your children.”

Closing the word gap is not going to be achieved overnight but with initiatives like talking is teaching and too small to fail we can help ensure that every child, every family, every community has the resources, support, and tools that it needs to be successful in the early years and beyond.
Upcoming Events

August 8 - Preschool Curriculum Day with Kathy Small.

Join Kathy and other preschool teachers in getting ready for the school year. Ideas about preschool curriculum themes and activities will be shared. Details to come regarding time and room location at SFSU.

August 21 - New Student Orientation, 4-5pm.

Our new cohort of ECSE students are invited to join together to learn more about the program. SFSU room location to be announced soon!

August 21 - ECSE Fall Picnic, 5-7pm.

All ECSE students and their families are invited to our first Fall Picnic. Weather permitting, this will be held outside at SFSU and be a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow students and faculty. More details to come.

Surprising ECE facts...

Derived from & originally written, “http://thinkprogress.org”

1. ECE has a better return on investment than the stock market
   • The estimated return on investment for high quality ECE is 10% compared to the avg. return on investment in the stock market, 7.2%

2. The U.S. is behind several countries when it comes to preschool, including Mexico, Chile, and Russia.
   • Each of these countries enroll a greater proportion of 4 yr. olds in preschool and invest more in ECE relative to the size of their economies. (2013)

3. Preschool can save families thousands of dollars in childcare costs each year.
   • Sub par center based childcare can cost upwards of $12k/ year, State Pre K programs have mandated quality standards, certified teachers, and developmentally appropriate curriculums in high quality settings.
Information about our ECSE programs

The Early Childhood Special Education program at SFSU is committed to preparing students to teach and lead in a variety of ECSE service delivery settings that serve children between the ages of birth – 5.

We offer many different program options such as:
• Masters of Arts in Special Education with an emphasis in ECSE
• Preliminary and Professional Clear Education Specialist Credentials with an emphasis in ECSE
• Add-on ECSE Authorization
• ECSE Graduate Certificate
• Doctorate in Special Education with a specialization in ECSE

Contact us!

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