



**BUFFALO STATE**  
The State University of New York

Fall 2019

# EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION



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*Created by Laura Tingley, Graduate Assistant*



**Dr. Raquel J. Schmidt**  
*Chair of the Exceptional Education Department*



**Dr. Kathy Doody**  
*Associate Chair of Graduate Programs*



**Dr. Angela Patti**  
*Associate Chair of Undergraduate Programs*

## WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Fall 2019 edition of the Exceptional Education Department's newsletter. If you're reading this it's because you're a part of the EXE family in some way large or small. Thanks for showing up and thanks for being you. In this newsletter you'll read about many of the recent accomplishments of former & current EXE students, faculty, and staff. As always, we are proud of the role we each play in serving both the community and the profession in numerous ways.

As we wind down on the year 2019 and welcome the opportunities for growth a new year and a new decade bring, it's an also opportunity to reflect upon the many different types of shifts that have occurred in the past year. Here are a few random education factoids to ponder:

1. 77% of all public school teachers are female.
2. Students in China receive the most homework in the world. On average, teenagers do 14 hours of homework every week.
3. \$12,800 is the average annual amount spent educating a p-12 student in a U.S. public school.
4. The first public school in the U.S. was founded in 1635, in Boston, MA. It's still open today.
5. Kids ask an average of 300 questions a day. Adults average 25 per day, while teachers average over 400 questions per day. Whatever did we do B.G. (Before Google)?
6. In 2017-18, the number of students ages 3-21 who received special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was 7.0 million, or 14 percent of all public school students. Among students receiving special education services, 34 percent had specific learning disabilities.
7. At the age of 30, you will find quite a huge population of adult students in Greece still in college, seeking dissertation proposal writing help and enjoying life. It is because they enjoy benefits in medical care, learning fees, food, and receive travel discounts.
8. Attorneys and doctors each have an average of 15,000 words in their vocabulary. Skilled workers without a college education use about 5,000 to 7,000 words.
9. The Microsoft-designed School of the Future in Philadelphia is completely paperless and encourages children to learn with digital technology.
10. In fall 2016, the percentage of students who attended high-poverty schools was highest for Hispanic students (45 percent), followed by Black students (44 percent), American Indian/Alaska Native students (38 percent), Pacific Islander students (24 percent), students of two or more races (17 percent), Asian students (14 percent), and White students (8 percent).
11. Stephen Colbert humorously observed that Common Core testing "is preparing students for what they'll face as adults: pointless stress and confusion." Common Core is the largest-ever attempt in the U.S. to set unified national expectations in education.
12. Researchers note that teaching should be compared to those of other high stress jobs, such as air-traffic controllers, firefighters, or pilots.
13. In 2016, the United States, along with 15 other education systems, participated in the new ePIRLS assessment of students' comprehension of online information. The average online informational reading score for fourth-grade students in the United States (557) was higher than the ePIRLS scale centerpoint (500). Only three education systems (Singapore, Norway, and Ireland) scored higher than the United States.

A colleague recently shared the essay below with me and I found it to be an excellent reminder of what this time of the year is really about:

*"Let us remember the spirit of the season. It is not about giving the best gift or overindulging in holiday goodies. The spirit of this time of the year is about opening our hearts to one another. It is about loving and appreciating our family, friends and all of the abundance in our lives. It is about being a good person, being forgiving and compassionate, about sharing random good deeds with others to lift their spirits."*

As we head into the end of 2019 and begin to make our New Year's resolutions, let us choose to be in this spirit all year through! Let us enjoy one another every day. Let us be of service to others all year through. Choose to be a forgiving and compassionate person all the time. Share your gifts and talents with others and be in your light every day. Choose to focus on what is most important and all the abundance in your life, your family, friends, having a roof over your head, clothes on your back and food to eat. Step into happiness and joy and share the bliss with others this holiday season! (Rothwell, 2009).

On behalf of the entire Exceptional Education Department, we wish you a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoy reading about all of the interesting happenings in Fall 2019. To receive more up-to-date information & see more photos of ongoing events and activities, please follow us on both Facebook and Instagram.

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**Exceptional Education**  
Ketchum Hall 204  
Buffalo State College  
1300 Elmwood Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
Phone: 716-878-3038  
Fax: 716-878-5410

The mission of the Exceptional Education Department is to prepare teachers, scholars, and action researchers as exemplary leaders, and to advance the profession of special education through the science and art of teaching, learning, and collaborating. Our graduates will contribute to the community by serving the needs of persons with disabilities and by broadening the general population's understanding and appreciation of individuals with disabilities.

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## EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT FEATURES

Each semester, the Exceptional Education faculty chooses two students- one undergraduate and one graduate- to highlight for their outstanding accomplishments. This semester, the faculty chose to showcase undergraduate student Anastasia Arzaga, and graduate student Joseph Fisher. Congratulations, Bengals! Keep up the “exceptional” work!

### *Undergraduate Student: Anastasia Arzaga*

Anastasia Arzaga is a Senior in the Elementary Special Education and General Childhood Education Program



with a concentration in Social Studies at Buffalo State College. Anastasia has made her home here within the department and has found herself motivated and inspired by professors in the Exceptional Education De-

partment—particularly Dr. “Zag” or Dr. “Z” (Dr. Zagarrigo). She feels her support from Dr. Zagarrigo has helped her immensely as she progressed through the program. Anastasia has recently become a part of

Kappa Delta Pi National Honor Society for Education and is a member of the Future Teachers Club and the Council for Exceptional Children. She plans to continue her education in graduate school, studying Teaching English as a Second Language and completing the Generalist Exceptional Education Program. Her goal is certification expanding ages birth through 12th grade. Anastasia plans to stay in Buffalo and hopes to work in the Buffalo Public Schools in order to give back to the Buffalo community as well as continue supporting her favorite sports teams. (Let’s go, Buffalo!) While she does not currently have teaching experience, she currently works at WeeCan preschool and her hobbies include coaching swimming for Tri-Town Aquatics Club and Iroquois High School. She also enjoys walking her four dogs at the local hiking trails.

### *Graduate Student: Joseph Fisher*

Joseph Fisher is currently attending Buffalo State College for the 7-12 General Master’s in Education. Previously, he attended Ohio Northern University for a double major in History and Social Studies with a teaching education concentration. Joe currently teaches at the Tonawanda School District—7th & 11th grade U.S. History, Psychology, Sociology, as well as Global AIS & U.S. AIS. He recognizes Dr. Patti as being his inspiration at Buffalo State—feeling she recognized his potential and made him feel confident about taking on a teaching position. He credits Buffalo State for the majority of his education and feels grateful to have the opportunity to continue schooling here. Before beginning his teaching career, Joe was a substitute teacher in Detroit teaching Biology and Chemistry. He feels by being here he has been able to apply the strategies he has learned from all of his professors and has successfully implemented them in his own classroom, particularly Dr. Hashey’s teaching structure. Joe feels by being at Buffalo State, he has become a better teacher on the whole and has been better for it.



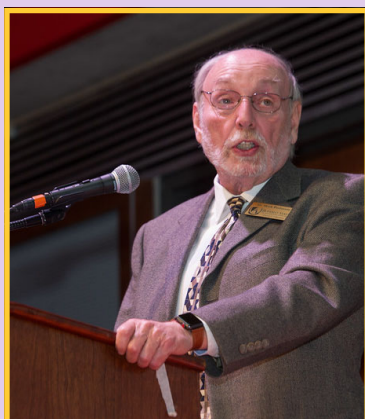
## THE 24TH ANNUAL RECOGNITION & AWARDS CEREMONY

The 24th Annual Recognition and Awards Ceremony for the Exceptional Education Department was held on Thursday, November 14th in the Campbell Student Union Social Hall. We honored our award recipients who were recognized for various outstanding accomplishments.



### AWARD RECIPIENTS

Kittiya Pichejkulbordee  
 Julia Stadelmaier  
 Kathryn Jean-Baptiste  
 Kaeley Biondo  
 Anastasia Arzaga  
 Kyla Langstaff  
 Barrett Whitmore  
 Deborah Eaton  
 Rebecca Andujar  
 Kassia Balus  
 ShaMara Mackey-Holmes  
 Nicholas Smith  
 Christine Garas  
 Allison Gunkler  
 Juliane Stachowski  
 Sydney Ratcliff  
 Yovana Maldonado  
 Serenette Palmer  
 Noah Grinage  
 Alex Hammett  
 Marisa Clark  
 Lori Simmons  
 Mrs. Melanie Lesswing  
 Maya Fox  
 Jessica Kubik  
 Lara Reece  
 Ashley Bohne  
 Presley Bryant  
 Kameelah Green  
 Megan Buseck  
 Jessica Kubik  
 Madison O'Brien  
 Tiffany Dingeldey  
 Alissa Synder  
 Abigail Donegan



*Congratulations to all awardees!  
 We are proud of you and all of  
 your hard work and dedication!*



## BEST BUDDIES AND CEC IN FALL 2019



**Best Buddies-** The Fall semester was in full swing for the new and returning members of Best Buddies alike! They participated in many campus activities such as the annual Buddy Match Party, the homecoming parade, a haunted house and Friends-giving. Additionally, members enjoyed getting out into the Buffalo Community going to the Buffalo Explore & More Museum, bowling at Kenmore Lanes, The Best Buddies Leadership Conference and participating in the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Buffalo Polar Plunge that supports the NYS Special Olympics. For more information on Best Buddies, please email [bestbuddiesbsc@gmail.com](mailto:bestbuddiesbsc@gmail.com).



**CEC-** Members of the Council for Exceptional Children have been busy volunteering in the Buffalo community. For more information on the Council for Exceptional Children, please email:

[buffalostatescec@gmail.com](mailto:buffalostatescec@gmail.com).



**Orange Crushers Raise Thousands for Special Olympics**  
For the thirteenth straight year, the Exceptional Education Department, the Buffalo State Best Buddies, and the Student Council for Exceptional Children were “Freezin’ for a Reason” to raise money for the New York State Special Olympics. This year’s Polar Plunge was held at Woodlawn Beach State Park in Hamburg, NY on December 7th, 2019. The Buffalo State Orange Crushers exceeded their goal by raising more than \$3,700 in donations at the 2019 Special Olympics Polar Plunge and were recognized with the Best College Team Award. Awesome job, everyone!!



## EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION'S LEARNING COMMUNITY

In the Exceptional Education Department's Learning Community, our students spent their first semester taking courses together. This fall, those courses included SPF 203: School & Society and EXE 100. Our committed professors teaching this learning community not only gave phenomenal instruction but also provided a guiding hand to our students. Thank you for your impact: Joey Nicoletti, Judi Harris, and Nyundusi Nyechae!



## DR. KATHY DOODY EARNS CARING BENGAL AWARD OCTOBER 2019

Kathy is a tireless advocate for children with special needs. She sits on the board of directors for several community organizations that serve children and their families including the Buffalo State Child Care Center and the Child Care Resource Network. She is also instrumental in the offering of "Au-Some Evenings at Explore and More Children's Museum" to children with autism spectrum and sensory disorders and their families. She is a member of the Commissioner's Advisory Panel for Special Education at the New York State Education Department and serves numerous other community agencies including HelpMeGrow WNY, Gerard Place, the Local Early

Intervention Coordination Council in Erie County, and the Summit Center in a variety of ways.

She also shares her passion for serving children and their families in the community with her students by incorporating service-learning into all of her courses. In this way, Kathy is able to serve as a role model to her students by demonstrating the positive influence that civically-engaged educators can have on their communities. I am sure that this influence is being paid forward by many of Kathy's current and former students. – Dr. Pamela Schuezte-Pizarro



Dr. Kathy Doody



## DR. HORACE MANN RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM DEEMED A SUCCESS

The Buffalo State Exceptional Education Department hosted the Winter 2019 Dr. Horace Mann Graduate Research Symposium on December 7th in the Donald Savage building on campus. Dr. Shannon Budin's EXE 690 students proudly shared their Master's projects with their colleagues, fellow teachers, and other members of the community.



At this semester's Symposium, Dr. Gregory Fabiano delivered the keynote presentation. Gregory A. Fabiano, Ph.D. is a professor of Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology, and Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Research in the Graduate School of Education at the University at Buffalo. He was trained in the clinical psychology doctoral program at the University at Buffalo, graduating in 2005, and is a licensed psychologist in New York state since 2007. He is fellow of the American Psychological Association Division 16 and 53. Currently he serves as an associate editor for School Mental Health and is a principal member of the Institute of Education Sciences Special Education review panel. His interests are in

the area of evidence-based assessments and treatments for children with ADHD. He is author or co-author of over 100 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters, and he has written two books on effective school-based interventions. After the students presented their Master's research, Dr. Budin presented each student with a certificate of recognition for their hard work and successful completion of their Master's research projects.

We invite you to join us for the Dr. Horace Mann Research Symposium in the Spring!

*Congratulations to all of the graduate students on your outstanding achievements. We wish you the best of luck in the future!*

**Presenters**

**Tiffany Dingeldey  
Nicole Gaston  
Jordan Hobba  
Lacey Gennamore  
Shanice Johnson  
Christina Maynard  
Caryn Porretta  
Jared Russell  
Nicholas Smith  
Abigail Malczewski**



## EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AT FALL OPEN HOUSE



Dr. Patti speaking with students at the fall open house.

Exceptional Education Department faculty were very busy at our Fall Undergraduate Open Houses. We were thrilled to have many potential students interested in our major. With the job market opening up and the critical shortage of special education teachers both locally and nationally, it is a great time to pursue dual certification through our Special Education and Childhood Education program. If you are interested in the program, please reach out to Dr. Angela Patti, Associate Chairperson of Undergraduate Programs, at [pattial@buffalostate.edu](mailto:pattial@buffalostate.edu) and/or plan to attend the Spring Undergraduate Open House on Saturday, April 4th.



Dr. Vince Garland and Dr. Colón



## URBAN TEACHER ACADEMY AND ANNE FRANK PROJECT FESTIVAL

This semester, the Department of Exceptional Education worked in conjunction with McKinley High School and the Urban Teacher Academy initiative. This diverse group of students work to learn how to become teachers committed to teaching in the Buffalo City School District. These students take four college-level courses, which, upon successful completion, count as 12 credits toward their teaching degree at Buffalo State College. This semester, these students also had the opportunity to participate in the Anne Frank Project Festival with Exceptional Education Faculty members.



## EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT NOTETAKERS

Peer notetakers are volunteers who have met standards of quality and excellence to assist us with ensuring equal access to education for students who receive the note-taking accommodation. Peer notetaker duties extend beyond simply making copies of their notes. Notetakers make sure that their notes are tailored to suit the needs of the student(s) they support. This is not an easy task, for some of our students have very specific needs. Taking notes can involve rephrasing content, typing notes in a specific font, enlarging notes to a specific size, or meeting with the student receiving the notes to ensure that all notes are up to quality and accessibility standards.

Two of our own students from the Exceptional Education Department have displayed a high degree of integrity, responsibility, and care in making sure that the students they were supporting had the opportunity to succeed. Please join us in thanking Alyssa Klaffka and Christina Stoessel for helping us keep Buffalo State College a civil and caring academic community! Great job—we are so proud of you!

## BUFFALO STATE HOMECOMING 2019





