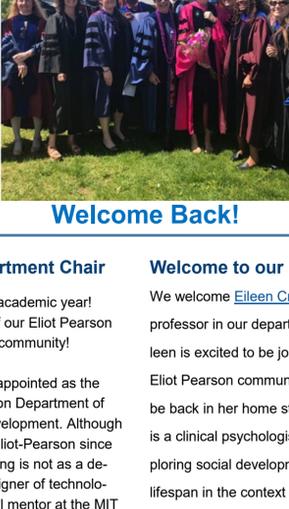


# Eliot-Pearson Newsletter

Department of Child Study and Human Development

SEPTEMBER 2018



## Welcome Back!

### Letter from the Department Chair

Welcome to the 2018-2019 academic year! Welcome to the first issue of our Eliot Pearson newsletter! Welcome to our community!

I am honored to have been appointed as the new chair of the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development. Although I have been a professor at Eliot-Pearson since 2001, my own doctoral training is not as a developmentalist, but as a designer of technologies for children. My doctoral mentor at the MIT Media Lab, Seymour Papert, was a pioneer in the field of Artificial Intelligence and back in the late 60's, developed the first programming language for children, LOGO. He was passionate about making machines to help children think better, as opposed to machines that think on their own. Thus, he spent time in Geneva working with Jean Piaget. Seymour was adamant about changing the world through his work. He wanted to go beyond observing and describing. He wanted to intervene: to design new learning experiences. And that is what I learned from him.

As a designer, my goal is to lead our department into the XXIst century by creating new opportunities for doing research and applied work that is both scholarly and meaningful. We need to ask questions that are relevant for understanding the developing child and teen of today's world, given their changing families, neighborhoods, and institutions, as well as the rapidly changing social and cultural contexts driven by new technologies and complex societies.

With the establishment of the Eliot-Pearson Children's School (EPCS) and the Department of Child Studies, our department grew in the 60's to have one of the nation's first research-based early childhood lab schools. From its beginnings, the department focused on the integration of research and practice, and built a national and international reputation around its lab school. The lab school served as a place to experiment, train, and demo best practices associated with educating young children.

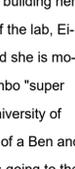
Building on this reputation, I am proud to share with you that the department will focus on the core theme of "Child Development in the 21st Century." This involves an expanded vision of the Children's School, our lab school, to become a "childhood hub" for interdisciplinary technological innovation around learning and development. This will have an impact on the courses offered and the applied training experiences for both graduate and undergraduate students. I know that while we cannot solve the world's major challenges—warp peace, healthy lives, economic development, innovative education and global sustainability—we can engage in meaningful research and applied work to provide new opportunities for the children, adolescents, and families of today and tomorrow. I invite you to join me on this new and exciting journey at Eliot-Pearson.

Marina Umaschi Bers

Professor and Department Chair

### Welcome to our New Faculty!

We welcome [Eileen Crehan](#) a new assistant professor in our department. Eileen is excited to be joining the Eliot-Pearson community and to be back in her home state. She is a clinical psychologist with a passion for exploring social development throughout the lifespan in the context of neurodevelopmental disorders. Two specific areas have emerged from this interest; first, understanding how social perception impacts interactions relative to cognitive and social factors and second, tailoring sexuality education programming to fit the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorder. Eileen is looking forward to building her research team at Tufts! Outside of the lab, Eileen is long time soccer player and she is moments away from becoming a Jumbo "super fan." During grad school at the University of Vermont, she became something of a Ben and Jerry's connoisseur and she loves going to the movies, the Red Sox, hiking, and corny jokes. Welcome, Eileen! We are happy to welcome you to Eliot-Pearson!



### With Gratitude and Well Wishes, Eliot-Pearson Says Farewell to Retirees

This past year, Fran Jacobs and Maryanne Wolf retired after almost four decades of dedicated, creative work, that made significant contributions to their respective fields – Fran in public policy for children and program evaluation and Maryanne in language and reading. Both have epitomized Eliot-Pearson's mission and though they will be sorely missed, we are certain that their work and spirit will live on at EP. And we are grateful.



Maryanne Wolf



Fran Jacobs

### Celebrations

For the past twenty-five years, Justina Clayton has played an integral role in compelling continuity and excellence among Eliot-Pearson's staff. Justina continues to ensure that programs, vital to Eliot-Pearson, function at the highest level and serves as a source of reliable support for students and faculty alike. Congratulations, Justina, on your 25th EP anniversary!



### Eliot-Pearson's 2018 Incoming Graduate Class

This fall, Eliot-Pearson welcomes 38 new graduate students to campus! An incoming Master's cohort of 33 students, as well as 5 doctoral candidates join the department, bringing with them a diverse set of backgrounds and expertise. In addition to representing 11 U.S. states, the class of 2018 hails from 4 other countries including: Guatemala, South Korea, and China. Over 25 undergraduate institutions are reflected by our new graduate students, as well as academic backgrounds in Psychology, Criminology, Early Education, Biosciences, International Relations, Pedagogy, Practical Ministries, Business Administration, English, Urban Education Policy, Spanish, Literature and Brain Sciences.

These first-year students yield applied experience as camp counselors, project managers, licensed behavioral technicians, community outreach coordinators, special education teachers, medical assistants, student advisors, army officers, pre-school teachers, crisis counselors, teaching assistants, pediatric anesthesiologists, and child/family case managers. Individuals have also served as research assistants and completed internships in clinical research, behavioral health, school psychology, criminology, and social services. We warmly welcome the incoming graduate class of 2018 and look forward to their contributions within the Eliot-Pearson community!

### Eliot-Pearson Summer Publications

- ScratchJr Coding Cards, developed by Professor Marina Bers and Amanda Sullivan, were released in July. The ScratchJr Coding Cards are a deck of 75 activity cards that use fun and exciting projects designed to educate young children with the visual programming language, ScratchJr.
- Strawhacker, A., & Bers, M. U. (2018). What They Learn When They Learn Coding: Investigating Cognitive Development and Computer Programming in Young Children. Educational Technology Research and Development. Online First. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-018-9622-x>
- Sarama, J., Clements, D., Nielsen, N., Blanton, M., Romance, N., Hoover, M., Staudt, C., Baroody, A., McWayne, C., and McCulloch, C., (2018). Considerations for STEM education for PreK through grade 3. Waltham, MA: Education Development Center, Inc. Retrieved from <http://cadrek12.org/resources/considerationsstem-education-prek-through-grade-3>

- Shuey, E. A. & Leventhal, T. (2018). Neighborhood context and center-based child care use: Does immigrant status matter? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 44, 124-135.
- Strawhacker, A. and Bers, M. U. (2018). *Promoting Positive Technological Development in a Kindergarten Makerspace: A Qualitative Case Study*. European Journal of STEM Education, 3(2b). <https://doi.org/10.20897/ejsteme/xxxx>
- Elkin, M., Sullivan, A., & Bers, M. U. (2018). *Books, Butterflies, and 'Bots: Integrating Engineering and Robotics into Early Childhood Curricula*. In Early Engineering Learning (pp. 225-248). Springer, Singapore
- Sullivan, A. & Bers, M.U. (2018). *The Impact of Teacher Gender on Girls' Performance on Programming Tasks in Early Elementary School*. Journal of Information Technology Education: Innovations in Practice, 17, 153162.
- Dupéré, V., Dion, E., Nault-Brière, F., Archambault, I., Leventhal, T., & Lesage, A. (2018). Revisiting the link between depression symptoms and high school dropout: Timing of exposure matters. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 62, 205-211.

### Grants of Summer 2018

- Eliot-Pearson Ph.D. Candidate, [Sunah Hyun](#), working with Professor [Christie McWayne](#), has received an award for her dissertation entitled: *Examination of Chinese Immigrant Parents' Beliefs about Children's Social Development Through Play: A Mixed Methods Explanatory Sequential Study*, from the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She is part of a national cohort of Early Care and Education Scholars: Head Start Graduate Student Research Program awardees.
- Summer Scholar Grant awarded to Catherine Cowell, an undergrad at [DevTech](#) research group, for a project exploring the relationship between bilingualism and learning to code in early childhood. The study is supervised by Professor [Marina Bers](#) coding as a literacy approach to learning computer programming, and is being conducted in tandem with two studies currently happening at DevTech: [The Coding Brain](#) and the [Coding as Another Language \(CAL\)](#), which examines brain activity during coding.

- Professor [Tama Leventhal](#), has received the following grants; Principal Investigator, National Science Foundation, "Community Resources that Promote Mexican Origin Children's STEM Education across Diverse Families" 2018-2019, Principal Investigator, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, "Head Start, Parenting, and Residentially Mobile Young Children's Health and Well-being" 2018-2019, and Co-Principal Investigator, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Extending Wave 1 of Housing and Children's Healthy Development."
- Eliot-Pearson undergraduate, [Yasmin Farah](#), is the recipient of the [Mitchell Fellowship Award](#). The program supports personal, career, and leadership development for Mitchell scholarship award recipients. As a recipient of this award, Yasmin will join Professor [Tama Leventhal](#) and Ph.D. candidate, [Natalya Zaika](#) on their research promoting STEM in under-represented groups.

### Eliot-Pearson Community

The [Readiness through Integrative Science and Engineering \(RISE\)](#) project led by Professors [Christie McWayne](#) and [Javanthi Mistry](#) has entered a new phase in which 50 [Head Start](#) classrooms are participating in a randomized controlled trial. The research team is very grateful for this collaboration and look forward to continuing their work with this amazing group of teachers and administrators.

RISE has been mentioned in recent publications including a chapter describing the project in, [Promising Practices in Engaging Families in STEM Learning](#), and a video titled [Families Matter for STEM Learning](#), released by the [Global Family Research Project](#) that focuses on

The [DevTech](#) research group, directed by Professor [Marina Bers](#), had a very busy summer! Members of the group gave several presentations including the Scratch Conference at MIT Media Lab (July 26-28), Tufts STEM Ed Symposium (June 6-7), Wonder of Learning Reggio Emilia exhibit, and a DevTech Professional Development Workshop (July 24-25).

DevTech also engaged in outreach efforts throughout the summer. During robotics and programming camps, children and families explored music and deep sea creatures with [KIBO](#) and [ScratchJr](#).

Over the summer, [Julia Wisnia](#) project member and Ph.D. student participated in the Pan-Mass Challenge as a cancer survivor. Her journey has been described by one local publication and in article titled, [A Series of Miracles Helped Winchester Woman Beat Cancer](#). In August, Julia discussed her experience in, [From Ovarian Cancer Patient to Pan-Mass Challenge Cyclist in On Year](#), featured on a Dana Farber blog. Julia's story was also highlighted on [WBZ-TV Boston's CBS Channel Four](#).

Teachers and administrators learned about integrating new technologies into their learning settings. Interns from local high schools and universities learned about research methods, data collection, and interfacing with children and families through DevTech's mentorship efforts.

This summer, 54 teachers were reached through PD and graduate teacher training, 57 children were reached through workshops, 57 research play sessions, as well as 16 high school and college-aged interns involved in research and peer-mentorship. In July, [Apollite](#) featured the DevTech group in, [Meet the Robots Teaching Singapore's Kids Tech](#).

Tufts Interdisciplinary Evaluation Research (TIER) is currently working on two new projects. Over the summer, TIER was awarded the evaluation contract for the [Early Intervention Parenting Partnerships \(EIPP\) program](#) funded by the MA Department of Public Health (MDPH). EIPP provides home visiting and group services to pregnant and postpartum women and infants with identified risk factors that heighten their vulnerability to poor health and development.

TIER is also serving as the lead evaluator for the [Massachusetts Essentials for Childhood \(MA EFC\)](#) project led by MDPH with funding from the CDC. MA EFC will bring together public and private stakeholders across multiple sectors to address the problem of child maltreatment by promoting safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments.

Research Assistant Professor [Jessica Goldberg](#) was asked to serve on Research Advisory Council for the Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting program study in Arizona.

Over the summer, TIER Principal Investigator Professor [Ann Easterbrooks](#), served on [Program Committee for National Research Conference on Early Childhood](#), held in Washington D.C. She also presented at the conference with new Ph.D. [Rachel Katz](#) and graduate students [Meera Menon](#) and [Lauren Stargel](#).

Research Assistant Professors [Becky Faulstich](#) and [Jessica Goldberg](#) and Visiting Scholar [Rachel Chazan Cohen](#) were appointed as [Senior Research Fellows at Child Trends](#), the nation's leading nonprofit research organization focused on improving the lives and prospects of children, youth, and their families.

[Rachel Katz](#) was selected as one of the two national recipients of the [Society for Research in Child Development \(SRCD\) State Policy Postdoctoral Fellowships](#). This postdoctoral fellowship supports work in state executive branch agencies that focus on early childhood, helping to bridge research and policy. She is working at the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health \(DPH\) in the Division of Early Intervention](#).

Dr. [Kathleen Camara](#), Associate Professor and Director of the [Tufts Consortium for Evaluation and Research in the Arts and Youth Development](#), has been appointed to the [Board of The International Society for Improvised Music \(ISIM\)](#) and will serve as Treasurer for the organization. Dr. Camara is on Research Leave for 2018-19 and is working with her Tufts research team on the preparation of [YouthBEAT](#) Research

and Evaluation final reports on the impact of music participation on the musical, social and academic achievement of youths in under-served communities throughout the U.S. Dr. Camara has also been recently invited to serve as the evaluation consultant to the [Center for Transforming Communities](#) to design and implement a project that will expand the support of cultural and artistic qualitative data to support the authentic voices of communities in Memphis.

The [Children's Television Project \(CTV\)](#) at Eliot-Pearson, spearheaded by Associate Professor [Chip Gilje Dobrow](#) and Senior Lecturer [Julie Dobrow](#), investigates the images of race, gender, ethnicity and age in children's animated programming, and the effects of these images on children.

An article Dobrow and Gidney, along with their colleague Jennifer Burton from Tufts' Drama and Dance Department, published in [The Conversation](#), continues to elicit interest from in and outside of academia. Dobrow was recently interviewed by a consulting team that's working with Disney in an effort to widen their representation of characters. More information about the project can be found at [The Children's Television Project \(CTV\)](#).

This summer, Professor [Richard Lerner](#) continued work on his five-year appointment to Pope Francis' [Pontifical Academy for Life](#). This past June, he attended a meeting of the Academy at the Vatican. Dr. Lerner was accompanied by his wife [Jacqueline V. Lerner](#), who is a Professor of Applied Developmental Psychology at Boston College.

Additionally, Professor Lerner's younger son [Jarrett Lerner](#), who is the Managing Director of the [Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development](#) and his wife Dannie Ventre—an alum of the Tufts M.Ed. program in early childhood education also made the trip with their then 8-month-old daughter, Isla Teres Lerner who was warmly greeted by Pope Francis! Professor Lerner will be returning to the Vatican in February for the next meeting of the Pontifical Academy for Life.

Another exciting year has begun at the [Eliot-Pearson Children's School!](#) This September 80 children for the start of the 2018-2019 academic year. The EPCS student body ranges in age from 2 years, 9 months through 7 years old and will fill four classrooms at the school including: Preschool East, Preschool West, PreK-K, and K-1 Grade. Classes this year will be led by four returning head teachers, [Matthew Slepian](#) (K-1), [Lyne May Lim](#) (PreK-K), [Victor Bradley](#) (Preschool West), and [Vanessa Cid](#) (Preschool East).

The school excitedly welcomes back a group of dedicated specialists; Occupational Therapist [Tal Baz](#), Speech Therapist [Vanja Machado](#), Occupational Therapist [Sara Sobach](#), and Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Music Therapist [Corinne Garmache](#). The EPCS community is rounded out by a stellar team of administrative staff. [Saameh Solaimani](#), [María Hastings](#), [Jennifer Cavazos](#), [Gabriela Herrera](#), and [Katie Caster](#), led by school director [Hanna Gebretensae](#).

Stay tuned for news of what promises to be another inspiring year at the Eliot-Pearson Children's School!

### Congratulations

[Richard Lerner](#), Professor, Bergstrom Chair in Applied Developmental Science, and Director, [Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development](#) has been recognized as the 2018 International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (ISSBD) Award for Applications of Behavioral Development Theory and Research.

[Sasha Fleary](#) has been named the 2018 Evans Family Assistant Professor of Child Study and Human Development. The professorship is part of the [Brighter World: The Campaign for Tufts](#) and was established to aid in the recruitment of outstanding faculty, nurture career development of junior faculty, and enhance efforts to retain outstanding junior faculty.

[Kerri Modry-Mandell](#) has been promoted to the rank of Senior Lecturer in the department. Professor Modry-Mandell is an expert in pediatric psychology, developmental psychopathology, children's sibling relationships, as well as family functioning and adaptations to pediatric chronic illness.

[Paul Chase](#), has been named an Assistant Research Professor at [Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development](#). Professor Chase is interested in the role of intentional self-regulation in academic success, and trajectories of academic development.

[George Scarlett](#) Starts the academic year as a new [Tisch Fellow](#)—joining other Tisch Fellows to help carry out Tufts' commitment to civic engagement. His own project is studying the alums of the [New England Aquarium's youth programs](#)—to better understand the development of ocean stewards.

[Jonathan M. Tirrell](#) has been named an Assistant Research Professor at the [Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development](#). Professor Tirrell is interested in the role of forgiveness in character development, cross-cultural positive youth development, and the evaluation of international intervention programs promoting thriving among youth in poverty.

### Alumni News

[Children at the Center: Transforming Early Education in the Boston Public Schools](#) By Betty Bardige, Megina Bardell, and Ben Mandell



[From Survive to Thrive: A Director's Guide for Leading an Early Childhood Program](#) by Debbie LeeKeenan and Iris Chin Ponte



Recent Ph.D. graduate, Elise Harris, just published a piece for the William T. Grant Foundation entitled [A Piece of the Puzzle for Promoting Educational Equity: Adults in Youth Organizing](#).

The Daily Times of Pakistan has published an article written by Eliot-Pearson graduate student Isha Fahad. The op-ed piece, [Election Manifestos have Neglected the Differently Aabled](#) deals with the issues of inclusive education for all children (whether typical or atypically developing).

Former doctoral student, Sara Anderson has been selected as a [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Interdisciplinary Researcher Leader](#). While at Eliot-Pearson, Sara was advised by Dr. Tama Leventhal and is currently an Assistant Professor at West Virginia.

Eliot-Pearson alum Elizabeth Shuey recently received the [Jacobs Foundation LSX Fellowship](#). Elizabeth is a Policy Analyst in the Education and Skills Directorate at OECD, working specifically on the [Early Childhood Education and Care Team](#).

