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School of Arts
and Sciences

Eliot-Pearson Department of
Child Study and Human Development

Eliot-Pearson Newsletter

Issue No. 9-May 2019

FROM OUR CHAIR

The end of the spring semester came with rain and flowers, and commencement is upon us. Graduating students are getting ready to celebrate with friends and families, and faculty are both happy and sad. On the one hand, we are proud of our students and everything they have accomplished and learned at Eliot-Pearson and Tufts University. On the other hand, it is heartbreaking to say goodbye to our intellectual children. However, we know, from past experience, that students will remain connected. They will reach out to us when in need of a letter of recommendation or advise, they will send us emails every so often, and they will stop by to share their journeys when in town.

With graduation comes the ending of my first year as chair of the department. I am proud of the work that we did at Eliot-Pearson and the many new initiatives launched. Amongst them, the Eliot-Pearson newsletter, carefully put together by Rachel Buff, who will be graduating in May, and an internal mechanism for funding projects from students and faculty aimed at advancing our vision of Eliot-Pearson in the XXI century. As icing on the cake, we were honored to welcome Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Congresswomen Katherine Clark and Lori Trahan, who toured Eliot-Pearson, chatted with students and faculty, and observed how kindergarten students engaged in robotics and a bioengineering activity.

I wish everyone a wonderful summer and I hope you will find time to rest, play, and connect with others and nature. See you back in September!



Marina Umaschi Bers

Professor and Chair

Featured Story

On May 3rd, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Congresswomen Katherine Clark and Lori Trahan visited the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development, prior to their panel at Tufts on accessible early childhood education. The three guests were led on a tour by department chair, [Professor Marina Bers](#) and [Eliot-Pearson Children's School](#) director, [Hanna Gebretensae](#).

The group stopped by Gaby Herrera's kindergarten classroom where young students programmed [KIBO robots](#) in an activity led by Ph.D. student [Madhu Govind](#). Children in the class presented Speaker Pelosi with a card that read, "Dear Speaker Nancy, Thank you for coming to our school. Thank you for helping all children feel strong and free."

Professor Bers discussed the important relationship between the EPCS and research done at Eliot-Pearson, as well as the university at large. The tour continued to Eliot-Pearson's [Evelyn G. Pitcher Curriculum Lab](#) run by lab director, [Bruce Johnson](#), where tour members greeted students, faculty, and staff, and observed a bioengineering activity. Ph.D. candidate [Amanda Strawhacker](#) instructed students utilizing [CRISPEE](#), a prototype she developed in the [DevTech Research Lab](#), as the children offered a song to the guests.

As quoted in [Tufts Now](#), Pelosi stated, "It's an honor to have been invited here. It's amazing to see how receptive the children are as they're learning. It's a beautiful facility and you obviously love your work—congratulations and thank you for what you're doing."



Student Spotlight



In his first year at Eliot-Pearson, master's student, [Nick Woolf](#), has jumped in to involve himself with a number of opportunities offered through the department and Tufts University.

E-P in the News

[Nancy Pelosi Visits Eliot-Pearson](#)

Grants

Ph.D. student and [CHERLab](#) graduate research assistant, [Patrece Joseph](#), has been awarded the [Society for Prevention Research Minority Travel Grant](#). This grant will support Patrece's

During the 2018-2019 academic year, Nick volunteered for one of the largest grassroots education advocacy organization supporting social-emotional learning in the country and helped to conduct research exploring effective “whole children” pedagogy throughout the state. In the fall and his first semester at E-P, Nick joined the [Tisch College Social-Emotional Learning and Civic Engagement \(SEL-CE\) Initiative](#) as a graduate research assistant and supported [professional development workshops](#) for Tufts faculty. This spring, he interned at a major Boston hospital and explored the impact of media on children’s health and development. Nick describes his efforts as, “a deliberate attempt to engage in a variety of different research and applied experiences to explore innovation in child study through many different lenses.”

Nick reflected on his time as a graduate student and indicates that to date, he has experienced emotional, academic, and professional growth. In speaking with Nick, it became clear that Eliot-Pearson’s emphasis on [research-practice integration](#) has played a specific role in this growth. “Through my internships and research opportunities, I have been afforded multiple opportunities to push myself outside of my comfort zone and invest in experimentation,” Nick says. Furthermore, he continued, “the coursework and faculty at E-P have equipped me to be a much more critical analyzer of research – both in terms of evaluating empirical research methods, as well as finding creative ways to apply research findings in real-world situations.” This summer, Nick will continue to expand his experience in these real-world situations with a [public policy fellowship](#) funded by the [Harvard Kennedy School](#). This fellowship affords him the opportunity to work for ten weeks at the

attendance to the society's [annual conference](#) at the end of this month.

Publications

Dupéré, V., Dion, E., [Leventhal, T.](#), Crosnoe, R., Goulet, M., & Archambault, I. (2019). [Circumstances preceding dropout among rural high school students: A comparison with urban peers. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 35\(3\), 1-20.](#)

Presentations

On June 10th, senior lecturer, [George Scarlett](#) will give a talk at a [conference](#) sponsored by the [Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology](#) -- on “Model Building to Define and Assess the Development of Earth Stewards.”

Congratulations

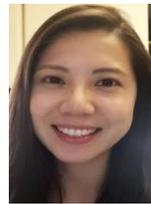


[Dr. Richard M. Lerner](#) was invited to be a founding member of the Science of Learning and Development (SoLD) Initiative’s National Advisory Committee. The Initiative seeks “to create transformative change in the education system, redesigned for equity and excellence, and continuously informed and improved by

[Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education \(DESE\)](#) on a project designed to embed social-emotional learning into the state's health standards, which were last revised in 1999. "I am very excited to gain experience in the policy world – as I have never worked in government before – and see how policy impacts the way that educators can best serve their students," Nick says.

As a student on the [applied track](#) within the Eliot-Pearson's master's program, when he returns to campus in the fall, Nick will begin an internship at a leading ed-tech start-up company in Boston. He will work with a team of specialists to help teachers and administrators better understand the latest social-emotional learning research and create data driven and evidence-based interventions for school districts. Nick hopes that his internship experiences and Tufts/Eliot-Pearson degree will help him pursue a career in the field of social-emotional learning, specifically, work with schools to implement programs and curriculums that integrate social-emotional learning with academics. "It has been very encouraging to see how impressed and intrigued professionals are when I describe all of the different courses and experiences that I have been able to pursue through the Eliot-Pearson Child Study and Human Development master's program. The feedback that I have received in informational interviews has made it clear that a master's degree from E-P indicates a significant level of expertise in a variety of different topics within the field of child studies," describes Nick. In the meantime, Nick will use his upcoming second year at E-P to continue to pursue research and applied experiences that will well position him to explore a number of different options in the field of child development. Having already pursued leadership roles at E-P

research, practices, and policies aligned with what we know from science about how children and young people best learn and develop." Dr. Lerner has also been appointed a member of the NIVEA Scientific Advisory Council, an initiative to support the work of NGOs in promoting social and emotional learning among youth in countries around the globe.



Congratulations to Ph.D. student, Xian Zhang, who successfully defended her doctoral thesis titled, Making Sense of Separation-Transnational Childcare in Chinese Immigrant Families.

2019 Eliot-Pearson Alumni Awards

Each year, the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development selects students to receive the Eliot-Pearson Alumni Award. The award recognizes the students best exemplifying service, leadership, and the spirit of Eliot-Pearson and Tufts University. Recipients are honored with a certificate and their names are added to the Alumni Award wall in the Eliot-Pearson department building. Congratulations to this year's recipients!



Ph.D. candidate, Sunah Hyun

including, work on the [Tufts Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#) and the [Fred Rothbaum Student Presentation Day](#) planning committee, Nick will take on new responsibilities as the E-P department's outreach coordinator, in the fall. We are excited to welcome him to this role and look forward to his great work next year!

Alumni Spotlight



When class of 2015 master's student, [Dylan Portelance](#) joined the Eliot-Pearson community, he came to the department with a background in computer science. Dylan capitalized on E-P's commitment to interdisciplinary work and education, and as he states, "arrived at Eliot-Pearson with a specific purpose: to become a more thoughtful producer of children's technology through an intentional combination of research and practice." To accomplish this goal, Dylan pursued one of the department's [concentration of study](#) at the time, New Technologies and Human Development, as well as the [thesis track](#) within the master's program.

Dylan describes his thesis, [Code and Tell: An Exploration of Peer Interviews and Computational Thinking with ScratchJr in the Early Childhood Classroom](#), as "understanding the learning opportunities afforded by a uniquely designed "peer interview" activity that supplemented learning to code in K-2 classrooms using a prototype of the [ScratchJr](#) iPad app for coding in early childhood." The research process for his thesis combined with coursework within the



M.A. candidate, Rachel Buff



B.A. candidate, Kevin Dunn

2019 Graduate Research Excellence at Tufts (GREAT) Fellowship

The [GREAT](#) program is a two-and-a-half week summer program that aims to cultivate outstanding graduate researchers at Tufts. Leveraging interactive pedagogy and a supportive interdisciplinary environment, it enables intermediate graduate students to acquire skills in research, communication and computation to excel in their Ph.D. and career. GREAT is one of two signature [professional programs](#) of [GSAS](#), complementing the [Graduate Institute for Teaching \(GIFT\) program](#).



Ph.D. student, Andrew Farina
2019 GREAT Fellow



Ph.D. student, Yerin Park
2019 GREAT Fellow

program yielded practical skills and frameworks that Dylan continues to use today. Since graduating from Tufts/E-P, he has worked in children's robotics at [Wonder Workshop](#), a company that creates [robots](#), [software](#), and [curriculums](#) for elementary schools. Dylan currently leads the education product management team. As product manager, he is responsible for understanding the concerns and problems faced by the company's customers – primary early childhood educators and administrators – and facilitating a solution with his engineering and design teams.

Dylan has found the holistic, individualized, and strengths-based approaches embraced at Eliot-Pearson, valuable in his professional work. He says, "Any great product manager or businessperson knows that when it comes to solving problems for a customer, personal, social, and emotional needs are often far more important and valuable to fulfill than functional ones. At Wonder Workshop, I spend just as much time thinking about how students and educators build confidence, perseverance, and positive identities in the context of coding and robotics education, than I spend thinking about coding and robotics themselves."

While he feels as though the practical skills he developed at E-P contribute to the work that he does on a daily basis, Dylan believes, "the biggest impact E-P had on my personal growth is through planting the seeds for a community of peers and mentors that I continue to connect with and learn from. Likewise, the department's commitment to an [interdisciplinary education](#), serves to enhance student opportunities and outcomes. "My research and learning experiences were transformed for the better by having access to a variety of folks in my cohort, the faculty, and the general E-P community who

Announcements

Summer 2019 Course Registration

[Registration](#) for Summer I and Summer II courses is going on now.

Featured Courses

[Foundational Diagnostic Assessment](#) (CSHD 0143)

[Child Life and the Hospitalized Child](#) (CSHD 0143-B)

[Promoting Healthy Living](#) (CSHD 0143-BA)

[Advanced Personal-Social Development](#) (CSHD 0161)

[Approaches to 'Problem Behaviors'](#) (CSHD 0192)

For a full list of course offerings, visit Tufts [Student Information System \(SIS\)](#).

Course descriptions can be found [here](#) on the [Eliot-Pearson website](#).

Photos from the Graduate Awards Ceremony now available!

For those unable to attend the 2019 Graduate Awards Ceremony, photos from the event are now available. [Click here](#) to view.

Congratulations again to this year's winners!

Upcoming Events

[Narrative Crossings: A Collaboration between Jayanthi Mistry \(Tufts University\) and K. Bowen \(City Lights\)](#)

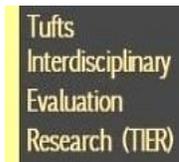
Going on now through Commencement weekend

[Tisch Library](#)

This display represents the original writing (poems, expressive writing) of Tufts Students and high school students (from Somerville &

examine children and development through a wide variety of lenses,” Dylan says. Accordingly, he encourages students to, “leave your bubble” and “find ways to connect with people.”

E-P Community News



Recently, [TIER](#) participated in a briefing for Massachusetts legislators where our recent [article](#) in the American Journal of Public Health describing the positive effects of the [Healthy Families Massachusetts home visiting program](#) (of the [Children's Trust Massachusetts](#)) was featured. TIER researcher, [Rebecca Fauth](#) presented the longitudinal findings to state legislators. [Jessica Goldberg](#) attended the expert roundtable meeting held by [Health Resources and Services Administration \(HRSA\)](#) to deliberate performance measurement and assessment of improvement for the federal [Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting \(MIECHV\) program](#). Three TIER research assistants will be graduating on May 19th, including doctoral candidates [Meera Menon](#), [Katie Aasland](#), and [Melissa Colon](#).



[DevTech](#) Ph.D candidate, [Amanda Strawhacker](#), attended the [“Learn.Design.Compute with Bio Workshop for Connecting Computational Thinking with Synthetic Biology Applications in K-](#)

Medford) who participated in the field component of a course on the ***Development of Self and Identity (CSHD 004)***. Through workshops led by Kerri Bowen, Ph.D., Executive Director of City Lights and guest speakers (a locally-based writer, photographer, and poet), students created pieces of original writing, poems, literary postcards and an Instagram page, to share personal narratives about their identity, and their sense of belonging and place in local communities and national contexts. The display also contains the voices of youth from outside the program, elicited through community building poetry workshops that explore themes of Identity (***I am***), Family and Community (***I come from, I carry***), Voice (***I say***), Vision (***I see***), and Resistance to Societal Meta-Narratives (***I am not***).

[Early Childhood Technology \(ECT\) Graduate Certificate Program Virtual Open House](#)

Saturday, May 18th

4:00 pm (EDT)

Want to learn more about Eliot-Pearson's [Early Childhood Technology \(ECT\) Graduate Certificate program](#)? Join associate director, [Dr. Amanda Sullivan](#), for a virtual open house about the program. The webinar will cover the application process, scope of coursework, and have time for your individual Q&A. [Register here](#).

[Graduation](#)

Sunday, May 19th

Phase I Ceremony-9:00 am-11:00 am (EDT)

[The Green](#) (between Ballou Hall and

Benderson Hall)

The All-University Commencement ceremony in which all Tufts schools participate. It includes the Academic Procession, the awarding of honorary degrees, the All-University Commencement

[16 Education" workshop](#), funded by the NSF at the University of Pennsylvania. She shared her work with [CRISPEE](#) engaging early childhood students in biodesign and bioengineering. On May 11th, [ScratchJr](#) was featured at [MIT's Scratch Day](#), a global network of over 800 events that encourages children to code. DevTech director, [Marina Bers](#) was a keynote speaker at the "[Challenges: 2019](#)" conference at the University of Minho in Braga, Portugal.



Professor and director of the [Children and Community Contexts \(C3\)](#) lab, [Tama Leventhal](#), will attend the [SRCDC Committee/Caucus Chairs Meeting](#) on May 21-22.

Alumni News

[**Breaking the STEM Stereotype: Reaching Girls in Early Childhood**](#)

New book available for pre-order by [Dr. Amanda Sullivan](#), Ph.D, Eliot-Pearson MA/PhD alum (class of 2016) with a Foreword written by [Professor Marina Umaschi Bers](#). In her new book, [**Breaking the STEM Stereotype: Reaching Girls in Early Childhood**](#), Dr. Sullivan discusses the persistent underrepresentation of women in STEM fields and the societal issues of equity around this. She builds the case that early childhood is a critical time to begin reaching girls and goes on to provide practical suggestions for picture books, tools, technologies, and activities that can be used with girls at an early age. This book discusses the powerful role of stereotypes in our children's lives and empowers parents and

address, recognition of faculty emeriti, presentation of degree candidates by school, and the granting of degrees by the Tufts University Board of Trustees.

[**Eliot-Pearson Graduation Reception**](#)

Sunday, May 19th

11:30 am-1:00 pm (EDT)

[Eliot-Pearson Building](#)

[**Phase II-Eliot-Pearson CSHD Department Ceremony**](#)

Sunday, May 19th

1:30 pm-3:00 pm (EDT)

[Cousens Athletic Complex](#)

Phase II of Commencement at Tufts consists of individual degree ceremonies and luncheons. Immediately following the Phase I All-University Commencement (Sunday, May 19), individual department and school ceremonies will take place. It is at these ceremonies that graduates' names are announced, and students are individually recognized.

[**Summer I Session Begins**](#)

Summer I classes begin Wednesday, May 22nd

educators with strategies to dispel them. Learn more or order your copy [here!](#)

Please click one of the links below to make a donation to Eliot-Pearson.

[Eliot-Pearson's Greatest Needs Funds](#)

[Eliot-Pearson Children's School Scholarship Fund](#)

Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development
Tufts University
105 College Avenue
Medford, MA 02115

Eliot-Pearson
Department of Child Study
and Human Development



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