Center for Autism Research & Education

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Faculty Members

Doreen Arcus, Ph.D. – Psychology
Eliza Bobek, Ph.D. – Education
Alice A. Frye, MPH, Ph.D. – Psychology
Monica Galizzi, Ph.D. – Economics
Gena R. Greher, Ed.D. – Music Education
Ashleigh Hillier, Ph.D. – Psychology
Rebecca Markovits, Ph.D., BCBA-D – Psychology
Allyssa McCabe, Ph.D. – Psychology
John W. McKenna, Ph.D – Education
Brenna Quinn, Ph.D., RN, NCSN – Nursing
Rocío Rosales, Ph.D. – Psychology
Richard W. Serna, Ph.D. – Psychology
Katherine L. Tucker, Ph.D. – Biomedical & Nutritional Science
Hsi-Wu Wong, Ph.D. – Chemical Engineering

Our Mission

The mission of the UMass Lowell Center for Autism Research and Education is to establish UMass Lowell as a regional and national center for ASD research, to educate our students and the public concerning issues relevant to the autism community, and to partner with local agencies to help improve the lives of those with ASD and their families.
Dr. Jean Frazier (UMass Medical School and Executive Director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center) discussed medical and psychiatric comorbidities that commonly occur in individuals with ASD. She highlighted how medical conditions can first manifest in emotional and/or behavioral symptoms, complicating the diagnostic process. Finally, the prevalence of various psychiatric disorders and how they manifest in the ASD population.

Susan Woods (Retired Associate Dean, Student Support Services, Middlesex Community College) discussed with parents and students how to prepare for the transition to post-secondary environments. She talked about identifying questions to ask, understanding applicable laws, requesting accommodations, and learning about helpful resources.

Katherine Fox (M.A), Director of Training & Development at Vinfen, a registered yoga instructor, and Senior Adjunct Professor at UMass Lowell, came to discuss mindfulness and stress reduction.

Stay Tuned: Our Expert Speaker Series for Fall 2018 will be announced soon!
OPEN HOUSE

UML’s Department of Psychology hosted their first Graduate Programs Open House. Faculty and current students hosted prospective graduate students to discuss the Community Social Psychology and Autism Studies Master's Programs. It was a great time had by all!

CELEBRATION!

Students in the Autism Studies Master’s program are preparing to graduate. They celebrated during a graduation and awards ceremony. Congratulations to all!

OUR RESEARCH

PARTICIPANT POOL

The Center for Autism Research and Education is currently looking for individuals to join our Research Participant Pool. CARE conducts research that improves our understanding of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) across children, adolescents and adults. Research is conducted in many areas including education, language, learning, development, and adult outcomes. To join the Research Participant Pool, please visit our website.

https://www.uml.edu/Research/Autism/Research/Participant-Pool.aspx
FEATURED FACULTY STORY

Rocio Rosales, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA, an Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at UMass Lowell, also serves as the Graduate Program Coordinator for the Master of Science in Autism Studies Program. Given this role, she is a member of UMass Lowell’s Center for Autism Research and Education (CARE) faculty. Dr. Rosales is an important contributor to this group through her work in the community and her research.

When she is not teaching undergraduate and graduate students in a formal classroom, she may be doing it through hands-on experiences in the community. Dr. Rosales runs a support group for caregivers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and a simultaneous social group for their children. The group provides UMass Lowell students an opportunity to gain their own experience working with children on the spectrum.

Some research interests of Dr. Rosales include evaluating various teaching techniques to establish verbal behavior in individuals with ASD. This includes evaluating why some common interventions yield inconsistent results. Some of her most recent research addresses how we can improve outcomes by examining pre-requisite skills that may contribute to the success of certain interventions. She is also interested in issues pertaining to staff training and treatment integrity, and specifically in how technology can be used to train staff to implement various procedures such as conducting preference assessments and functional analyses. In addition to conducting research, Dr. Rosales is passionate about disseminating the information to make it more accessible to the public. She hopes that CARE will be able to establish UMass Lowell as a learning hub for the community and a place for students to get involved.

Dr. Rosales hopes to be able to collaborate with faculty from other departments like Computer Science and Education in the near future. For this, she views CARE’s diverse interdisciplinary faculty as such a strength. Anecdotally, she refers to reading about how the “Ivory Tower” may be better described as an “Ivory Archipelago.”¹ She explains that there may be a range of ivory towers, each representing a specific discipline with important ideas, and although some of their interests may be related, they would never know without communicating. The faculty members all hold different perspectives, but their ideas often coincide. CARE provides them with opportunities to come together and make a meaningful impact on the ASD community.

For more information about our CARE faculty and their current projects visit our website: https://www.uml.edu/Research/Autism/members/

OUR GROUPS

“The Network”

The Network is a social program ran by Ashleigh Hillier, Ph.D. for highly functioning individuals on the autism spectrum, ages between 16 and 30 years.

The group meets once a month either on campus or somewhere in the community. The goal is to provide opportunities to form lasting and rewarding connections and friendships.

There is also a group meeting for parents scheduled at the same times.

“Autism Parent Support Group”

This group is coordinated by Rocío Rosales, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA in collaboration with NFI Family Resource Center in Lowell.

The group meets bi-weekly at NFI. It has two components: a parent support group for caregivers of children with ASD (ages 6 and under), and a socialization group for the children. This portion is run by UML students and focuses on encouraging the development of play, language, and social skills.

CONNECT WITH US

Visit CARE’s website for more information:
uml.edu/research/autism

Please “Like” our Facebook Page to stay updated on CARE’s latest news and updates:
facebook.com/UmlCARE

CONTACT US

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