



EDUCATION CONNECTION

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

VOL. 5, ISSUE 1

A BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024

Welcome New Faculty and Staff

FAU College of Education welcomed a new department chair, as well as six new tenure-earning faculty members, three new non-tenure track faculty, two new postdoctoral fellows and seven new staff members during the COE Welcome Back event on Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2024 at the Live Oak Pavilion C & D on the Boca Raton Campus.

In addition, eight new faculty who joined A.D. Henderson University School/ Florida Atlantic University High School were recognized.

Dean's Office

Joseph Brojomohun-Gagnon, Ph.D.
Chair and Professor
Department of Special Education

Anne Fennimore, Ph.D.
Director of Communications

Sarah Roberts, B.A.
Office Assistant
Deans' Office

OASS

Tim Sebesta, M.A.
Academic Advisor

CE

Alexander Fields, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Tiffany Vastardis, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow

Lyda Holguin-Gaviria, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow

CE & SE

Mae Posadas, M.A.
Coordinator, Department
Administrative Services

CI

Melissa Antonelli, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Bridgette Cassidy, Ph.D.
Instructor, Early Childhood

CSD

Anne van Zelst, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Christy Timm Fulkerson, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Lilyanna Zmijak, Ph.D.
Visiting Instructor

ELRM

Sangbeak Ye, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

Katherine Friesen, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Higher
Education Leadership

Mykel Beorchia, Ph.D.
Director of the Office of
Appreciative Education

Matthew Fritzius, M.Ed.
Director of Research,
Development & Special Projects,
OEEL

SE

Kaley Adams, Ph.D., BCBA
ACI Visiting Instructor

Lauren Veit, M.S., CRC
CADR Transition Specialist

ADHUS & FAU High School

Samara Ballintine, B.A.
ESE Teacher

Jori Davis, B.A.E.
MS English/Language Arts
Teacher

Erica Finnegan, M.A.
Elementary Teacher

Estelle Gonzalez, B.A.E.
Elementary Teacher

Meghan Kulesky, B.A.
Elementary Teacher

Eda Kuluslu, M.S.T.
High School Math Teacher

Lauren Simonitis, Ph.D.
Research and Biomaging
Specialist

Brian Putnam, M.S.
MS Science Teacher



New COE Appointments; Staff Promotions

COE Dean Stephen Silverman, Ed.D., tapped two faculty members for new roles as Interim Senior Associate Dean, effective July 1, 2024, and as the first Director of the Center for Research Excellence, which was established by the College of Education in Summer 2024. He also declared three new appointments, effective July 1, 2024, in the Academy for Community Inclusion in the Department of Special Education:

Elizabeth Villares Sacks, Ph.D.
Interim Senior Associate Dean
Dean's Office

Michael DeDonno, Ph.D.
Director of the Center for Research
Excellence
Dean's Office

Gwendolyn Carey, Ed.D.
ACI Instructor
Department of Special Education

Angelica Downey, Ph.D.
ACI Instructor
Department of Special Education

Brianna Joseph Miller, Ed.D.
ACI Instructor
Department of Special Education

In addition, COE staff promotions in 2024 include:

Jennifer Percival, Ph.D.,
Director of FAU CARD
Department of Special Education

Susanna Launder, Ph.D.,
Assistant Director of FAU CARD
Department of Special Education

Jacqueline Wood, Ph.D.,
Assistant Director of FAU CARD
Department of Special Education

Christy Laureano
Assistant After School Director
Pine Jog Environmental Education
Center

COE Faculty Tenure and/or Promotions

Traci Baxley, Ed.D.
Professor

Daniel Reyes-Guerra, Ph.D.
Professor

Cristobal Salinas, Jr., Ph.D.
Professor

Sabrina Sembianti, Ph.D.
Professor

Kelly Steele, M.S.
Senior Instructor

COE Names New Department Chair and New Communications Officer

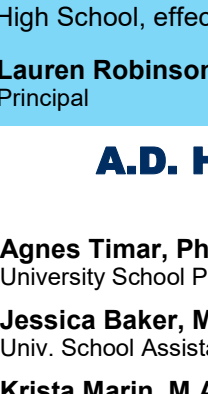


Joseph Calvin Gagnon (Brojomohun-Gagnon), Ph.D., joined Florida Atlantic University as Professor and Chair of the [Department of Special Education](#) in the College of Education on Aug. 1, 2024, after an international search. As Chair, he has management and oversight responsibilities of, "the faculty and department efforts to promote research-based practices that reflect changing societal needs of people with disabilities, their families and the professionals and organization who work with them," according to the department's mission and purpose. Together with faculty, students, and community members, he is tasked with, "improving the quality of education for all people."

Gagnon holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in Special Education from the University of Maryland at College Park and the University of Colorado at Denver, respectively, and a B.S. in Education from the University of Vermont. Prior to his position at FAU, Gagnon was a professor of special pedagogy at the University of Helsinki and a tenured faculty member in the Department of Special Education at the University of Florida. Additionally, he was a Fulbright Scholar in the Republic of South Africa.

A prolific researcher and scholar, Gagnon has published extensively in the area of special education and has worked and advocated for the needs and rights of people with exceptionalities. His research focuses on ensuring youth at the greatest risk for educational, behavioral, and social failure are provided the supports necessary for long-term success in school and society. In particular, he addresses the needs of youth with emotional disturbance and learning disabilities in inclusive education, as well as those who are incarcerated or in day treatment/residential education and treatment settings.

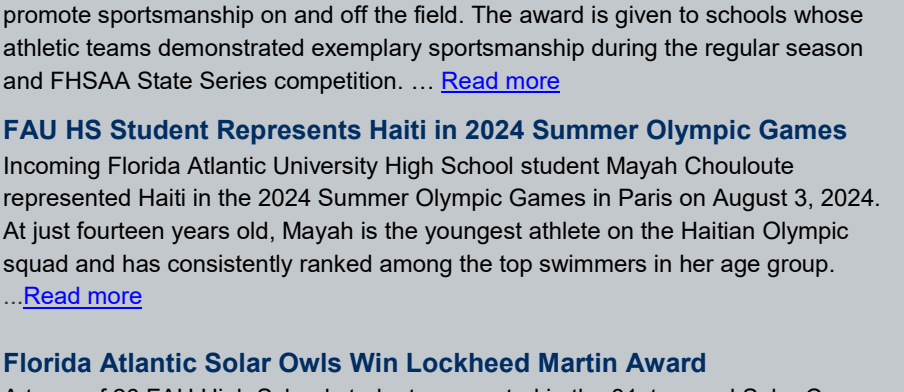
Gagnon also has a variety of teaching experiences, including serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco and over a decade of teaching in inclusive settings, day treatment and residential psychiatric schools, and in a charter school for students identified as gifted and talented.



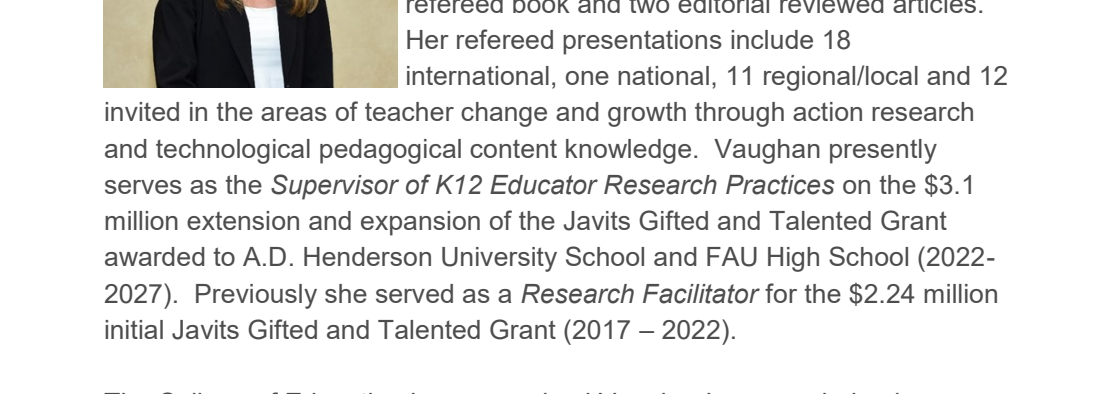
Anne Fennimore, Ph.D., returned to the COE Dean's Office as Director of Communications, effective Aug. 31, 2024. She is responsible for representing and promoting the College of Education, within Florida Atlantic University and the broader community. Prior to this role, she served the University in a variety of capacities, most recently as Associate Director of Development Communications for the Division of Institutional Advancement, and Director of Marketing and Communications for the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine.

A Florida Atlantic alumna, Fennimore received a Bachelor of Music in commercial music, Bachelor of Arts in psychology, Master of Business Administration, Doctor of Philosophy in public administration and Certificate in Digital Marketing. Additionally, she earned a Master of Music in music industry from the University of Miami.

COE Mentor, Student Receive SURF Award



[Melanie Acosta, Ph.D.](#) (left), Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education, and faculty mentor to Abigail Jean Francois, a Health Science major with a concentration in science in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science, who presented her research findings during the 2024 Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI) Annual Summer Retreat on Tuesday, Aug. 13, 2024 at the Schmidt Family Complex for Academic and Athletic Excellence on the Boca Raton campus. Francois, along with research team member and mentor, Acosta, were one of 33 awardees of the 2024 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) for their research, titled, *The Jeanes Supervisors of Palm Beach and Broward County: Their Curricular Contribution's And Community Impact*.



A.D. Henderson & FAU High School New Appointment

Joel D. Herbst, Ed.D., Assistant Dean, PK-12 Schools & Educational Programs and Superintendent, announced the appointment of the new Principal of A.D. Henderson University School and Florida Atlantic University High School, effective Aug. 3, 2024. ... [Read more](#)

Lauren Robinson, Ed.D.
Principal

A.D. Henderson & FAU High School Faculty Promotion

Agnes Timar, Ph.D.
University School Professor

Jessica Baker, M.Ed.
Univ. School Assistant Professor

Krista Marin, M.A.E.
Univ. School Assistant Professor

Cara Pavsek, M.Ed.
Univ. School Assistant Professor

Allan Phipps, M.S.
Univ. School Assistant Professor

Lauren Arlt, M.Ed.
Univ. School Accomplished Instr.

Elisa Francani-Cimino, M.S.E.
Univ. School Accomplished Instr.

Kristina Potter-Oliveri, M.S.
Univ. School Accomplished Instr.

Samantha Vallejo, B.A.
Univ. School Accomplished Instr.

FAU High School Athletic Program Receives Sportsmanship Award; Students Compete

The athletic program at Florida Atlantic University High School has been selected as the Class 3A winner of the esteemed [Fred E. Rozelle Sportsmanship Award](#). This Florida High School Athletic Association award recognizes member schools that promote sportsmanship on and off the field. The award is given to schools whose athletic teams demonstrated exemplary sportsmanship during the regular season and FHSAA State Series competition. ... [Read more](#)

FAU HS Student Represents Haiti in 2024 Summer Olympic Games

Incoming Florida Atlantic University High School student Mayah Chouloute represented Haiti in the 2024 Summer Olympic Games in Paris on August 3, 2024.

At just fourteen years old, Mayah is the youngest athlete on the Haitian Olympic squad and has consistently ranked among the top swimmers in her age group.

... [Read more](#)

Florida Atlantic Solar Owls Win Lockheed Martin Award

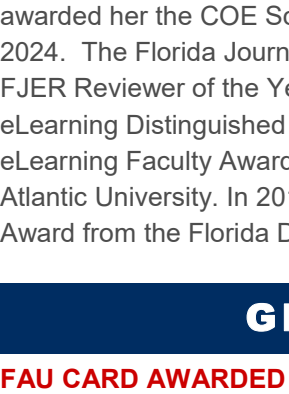
A team of 26 FAU High School students competed in the 31st annual Solar Car Challenge at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth in July 2024. With great success, the Florida Atlantic Solar Owls won the Lockheed Martin Award for demonstrating the highest level of engineering excellence and finished second in the competition's Cruiser Division. The team earned its accomplishments under the leadership of Allan Phipps, director of The Cane Institute and STEM coordinator at FAU High and A.D. Henderson. ... [Read more](#)

FAU High State Champs Compete in Golf National Invitational

The Florida Atlantic University High School girls' golf team took home 1A District 14 and 1A Region 4 crowns in fall 2023, before claiming the school's first-ever state title in girls' golf at the 2023 Class 1A FHSAA State Championship at Mission Inn Resort and Club in Howey-in-the-Hills. As state champions, the six-member team earned a bid to play in the 2024 Girls High School Golf National Invitational in Frisco, Texas in July 2024 guided by head coach Cherene Castillo. ... [Read more](#)

Fall 2024 FAU Public Health Information & Resources

FACULTY FOCUS



[Michele Vaughan, Ed.D.](#), Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, has built a record of research, including 23 refereed journal articles, three refereed book chapters/contributions, one refereed book and two editorial reviewed articles. Her refereed presentations include 18

international, one national, 11 regional/local and 12 invited in the areas of teacher change and growth through action research and technological pedagogical content knowledge. Vaughan presently serves as the *Supervisor of K12 Educator Research Practices* on the \$3.1 million extension and expansion of the Javits Gifted and Talented Grant awarded to A.D. Henderson University School and FAU High School (2022-2027). Previously she served as a *Research Facilitator* for the \$2.24 million initial Javits Gifted and Talented Grant (2017 – 2022).

The College of Education has recognized Vaughan's research, having awarded her the COE Scholar of the Year at the Associate Professor level in 2024. The Florida Journal of Educational Research (FJER) awarded her the FJER Reviewer of the Year in 2019. She received the Excellence in eLearning Distinguished Achievement Award in 2019 and the Excellence in eLearning Faculty Award in 2016 from the Center for eLearning at Florida Atlantic University. In 2017, she earned the Innovation in Higher Education Award from the Florida Distance Learning Association.

GRANT FEATURE

FAU CARD AWARDED CONTINUING RESEARCH GRANT

For the third consecutive year, Florida Atlantic University [Center for Autism and Related Disabilities](#) (FAU CARD) has been awarded a one-year research grant from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDCC). For the 2024-2025 period, the grant amounts to \$174,140, bringing the total funding for this three-year project to over \$470,000. The project focuses on creating and delivering training sessions for law enforcement officers and first responders, including emergency medical personnel and firefighters, equipping them with a broad range of techniques to effectively and empathetically engage with individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).



These efforts aim to foster trust and improve the quality of interactions. Additionally, the project will establish an advisory committee and review state legislative regulations and policies regarding the training of law enforcement and emergency personnel on IDD and co-occurring mental health conditions. To participate in a pilot training, email Exume at texume@fau.edu and, to join the advisory team, contact Scott at jscott@fau.edu. ... [Read more](#)

DID YOU KNOW?



Beginning in Fall 2024 the application for scholarships offered by the College of Education (COE) will be [Scholarship Universe](#). Scholarship Universe is an online scholarship matching tool for students that make finding and applying for both internal and external scholarships faster and easier.

The COE awards scholarships at both the departmental and college levels each year. Juniors, seniors and graduate students officially admitted to the COE and enrolled in coursework are eligible to apply for COE scholarships. Undergraduate teacher preparation majors must have passed all sections of the FTCE – General Knowledge test to apply. For more information, visit [COE Scholarships](#). Questions? Contact goescholarships@fau.edu.

Important Dates

Faculty
Sept. 6—Faculty Assembly

Research Symposiums
Oct. 21— [14th Annual Broward Student Research Showcase](#)

Students
Sept. 6—[Application for Degree](#) due for fall 2024

Sept. 15—Spring Student Teaching Application due

Oct. 3—Explore FAU

Oct. 21—[Graduate College Open House](#)

Oct. 19—Explore FAU

Oct. 21—Fall Dissertation Defense deadline

Oct. 28—Fall Dissertation due in the Dean's Office

Oct. 28—Fall Thesis Defense deadline

Awards

Andenoro, A. C. & Friesen, K. L. (2024, June). *Association of Leadership Educator 2024 Innovative Practice Paper Award*. Project CLEAR: Building Economic Bridges for Our Communities through Leadership & Entrepreneurship. *Proceedings of the Association of Leadership Educators*, Minneapolis.

Publications

Book

Forgan, J. W., Balsamo, N., & Miller, K. M. (2024). *Parent's quick start guide to dysgraphia*.

Book Chapter

Danesh, A.A. (2024). Assessment and Management of Tinnitus and Hyperacusis, Chapter 7. In: *Overcoming Hearing Loss: From Drug Therapy to Cochlear Implant*, Adrien Eshraghi (Ed). World Scientific, ISBN-10: 981128850X

Peer Reviewed Articles

*Bendit, A. & Mariani, M. (2024). The implementation of universal mental health screeners in an early college high school program. *Professional School Counseling*. Accepted for publication.

Bhagwanji, Y. (2024, Spring/Summer). Early childhood protostars, formative entanglements, and later environmental advocacies and actions. *International Journal of Early Childhood Environmental Education*, 11(2), 3-9.

Brown, V. & Kumar, D. (2024). Bring them back to campus: Optional engaging campus activities for online classes with livestreaming. *Florida Distance Learning Association Journal*, 8 (1), <https://nswworks.nova.edu/fdla-journal/vol8/iss1/13/>

Childs, C. (2024). How Does the Implementation of a Customized Training Program Tailored to the Individual Athlete's Abilities and Goals Impact the Performance and Confidence of a Cross-Country Team Over a Season? *Florida Journal of Educational Research*, 61(1).

Hansen, M., Feng, L., Kumar, D., and Zerbino, N. (2024). STEM teacher workforce in high-need schools resilient despite shrinking supply and increasing demand. *EdWorking Papers*, 24-1024. Retrieved from Annenberg Institute at Brown University: <https://doi.org/10.26300/pqd0-vh09>

King A.M., Cooper J.N., Oganezova K., Mittal J., McKenna K., Godur D.A., Zalta M., **Danesh A.A.**, Mittal R., Eshraghi A.A. Vestibular Schwannoma and Tinnitus: A Systematic Review of Microsurgery Compared to Gamma Knife Radiosurgery. *J Clin Med*. 2024 May 23;13(11):3065. doi: 10.3390/jcm13113065. PMID: 38892775; PMCID: PMC11173275.

Labarta, A., Emelianchik-Key, K., Peluso, P. R., Gill, C. S., & Colvin, K. F. (2024). Measuring risk and protective factors for eating and body image concerns in LGBTQ+ communities: An instrument development and validation study. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-024-09563-2>

LaBelle, B., Gagnon, J. C., Joyce-Beaulieu, D., Lane, J., Gage, N., Kranzler, J., Houchins, D., Lane, H., McCray, E., Lambert, R., & Ball, S. (2024). Evaluating the utility of the MAYSI-2 among African-American male juvenile offenders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 49, 222-235. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01987429241229045>

Miller, B., Berlingo, L., & Kearney, K. (in press-July 2024). Experience fitness anywhere! Developing an at-home virtual fitness program for young adults with intellectual disabilities. *Strategies: A Journal for Physical and Sport Educators*.

Powers, J. R., Axelrod, D., Brown, S. L., Musgrove, A. T., Bogle IV, R. A., & Brown, D. R. (2024). Bringing STEM to the Table: A Taste of Informal STEM Learning in a Community-Based Literacy Festival. *Journal of Literacy and Technology*, 25 (2), https://literacyandtechnology.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/ilt_v25_2_powers_axelrod_sbrown_musgrove_bogle_dbrown-1.pdf

Su-Keene, E. & Labarta, A. (2024). The four horsemen of anti-racist school leadership: A communication guide to bridging racial conflict in school relationships. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 97(3), 55-62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2024.2346507>

FAU Lab Schools Research Newsletters: [Summer 2024](#) [August 2024](#)

Prestigious Lectures

Invited

Danesh, A. (2024). Misophonia: Exploring its Underlying Neurophysiologic, Genetic and Audiologic Factors and How to Manage It. Invited Speaker. Annual Convention of Florida Academy of Audiology, Orlando Florida August 2024.

Danesh, A. (2024). A Practical Tinnitus Management Protocol by addressing the Principles of Sensation, Emotion and Cognition (SEC). Invited Speaker. Annual Convention of Florida Academy of Audiology, Orlando Florida August 2024.

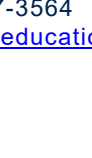
Invited Book Commentary
Bogotch, I. (2024). Concluding Commentary. *Schooling for Social Justice, Equity and Inclusion: Problematising Theory, Policy and Practice*. Emerald Publishing. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/978-1-83549-758-620241005/full/html DOI 10.1108/9781835497586>

Grants

Carey, G. & Kearney, K. (2024). Program Support Grant. ECMC 2024 GO! Generating Outcomes: Funding Innovation and Equity in Education. \$5,000.

Scott, J. & Exume, T. (2024-2025). Training First Responders. Funded by Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. \$174,140.

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