January/February 2026 Vol. 6 Issue 3

EDUCATION CONNECTION

Florida Atlantic College of Education

A BIMONTHLY eNEWSLETTER



Garner Grant Writing Skills

Looking to gain or improve grant writing skills? Joseph C. Gagnon, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Special Education, offers a Grant Writing course for Florida Atlantic doctoral students seeking to write effective grant proposals to fund their research. Learn how to craft a Letter of Intent and grant proposal in a manner that will garner the attention of organizations and increase the likelihood of funding your project.

The distance-learning course, EEX 7526, Grant Writing, is scheduled for Mondays from 5:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m., beginning Jan. 12 during the spring 2026 semester for students who have been admitted to a graduate program or by permission of the instructor. The course examines the grant writing process involved in obtaining funds in local, national, foundation, corporate, and state funding environments. Students explore funding in their individual areas of focus, including topics from across the FAU campuses (e.g., Education, Nursing, Engineering, Psychology and Counselling, Computer Science, Neuroscience, Social Work and Criminology.

There is still time to register for this class. Last day to drop/add a class is Friday, Jan. 16, 2026. …. Read more

TOP STORIES

FACULTY MEMBER HONORED WITH TALON AWARD

Deborah L. Floyd, Ph.D., recognized for her dedication to students' success in Ph.D. Higher Ed. program.

COE STUDY: SMALL GROUP COUNSELING HELPS CHILDREN THRIVE AT SCHOOL

Department of Counselor Education findings identifies key outcomes.

FAU LAB SCHOOLS CAMPUS CELEBRATES ITS NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART HOME

Ribbon cutting ceremony officially celebrates opening of new complex.

COE Study: Small Group Counseling Helps Children Thrive at School

By Gisele Galoustian

Many students experience anxiety, stress or disconnection at school, which can hinder both their academic and social-emotional growth. While school counselors provide support, traditional programs often lack structured, evidence-based approaches to help students manage emotions, build peer relationships, and develop essential skills.

Addressing this critical need, researchers from Florida Atlantic University's Department of Counselor Education within the College of Education conducted a qualitative study to explore how participation in the Student Success Skills (SSS) small group counseling intervention influences middle school students' sense of connectedness to their school environment, guided by the Advocating Student-Within-Environment (ASE) theory. ... Read more



Faculty Member Garners Talan Award



Florida Atlantic College of Education faculty member, Deborah L. Floyd, Ph.D., received the Faculty Talon Award at the Talon Leadership and Service Awards Ceremony on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025 at the Recreation and Fitness Center, MAC Gym, on the Boca Raton Campus. She was one of four awardees.

A professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology, Floyd has served Florida Atlantic for over 25 years. Throughout her tenure, she has guided the next generation of higher education leaders through her teaching, mentorship and scholarship, supervising more than 50 dissertations and leading the University's Ph.D. Program in Educational Leadership with specialization in Higher Education Leaders. ... Read more

Two COE Faculty Members Receive Art of Science Awards

Florida Atlantic University's Division of Research announced its "Art of Science" competition winners on Nov. 7, 2025. Among the 10 recipients of the Research Excellence awards are two faculty members in the College of Education:

- Anne L. van Zelst, Ph.D., assistant professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, for her entry, Sonic Portrait.
- Yash Bhagwanji, Ph.D., associate professor, Curriculum and Instruction, for his entry, Hatchet.

The 31 winning photographs will be featured in the Art of Science Gallery Exhibition, opening March 31, 2026 at 4 p.m. in the Ritter Art Gallery, Boca Raton campus. ...Read more

EDUCATION CONNECTION

FAU Lab Schools

A.D. Henderson University School and Florida Atlantic University High School

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FAU Lab Schools Campus Officially Celebrates Its New State-of-the-Art Home

By Jonathan Fraysure

Florida Atlantic University celebrated the official opening of its brand-new Boca Raton campus of A.D. Henderson University School and Florida Atlantic University High School on Nov. 21, 2025 with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The nearly 62,000-square-foot complex houses the elementary, middle and high schools at the No. 2 public school system in the country. The state-of-the-art campus replaces the original home to ADHUS, which was built in 1968.

Speakers during the dedication ceremony were FAU President Adam Hasner; Joel Herbst, Ed.D., vice president for PK-12 pre-baccalaureate programs and FAU Lab Schools superintendent; State Representative Chip LaMarca; Michael Morris of The Marcus Foundation; and FAU High School senior Olie Hallstrom.

“A.D. Henderson and FAU High School not only set the standard for excellence but are redefining what K-12 education can look like,” said Hasner. …Course Description

IMPORTANT DATES

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION FACULTY

Jan. 23 –Faculty Assembly

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS

Jan. 30—Application for Degree due for Spring 2026

Jan. 31—Fall 2026 Student Teaching Application due

Feb. 16 & 23--Choose FAU

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION GRADUATE, SPECIALISTS AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Application submission deadlines

COE Staff Spotlight

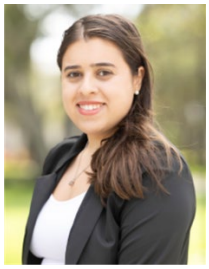


Mariana Rivera, Development Associate for Florida Atlantic College of Education, was inducted into the Parliament of Owls during the 6:30 p.m. ceremony at the Recreation and Fitness Center, MAC Gym, on the Boca Raton campus on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025 during Homecoming 2025. Rivera was one of 25 recent graduates and students University-wide to receive this distinction. She was selected for her active engagement through Owl Networks, including First * Proud, which offers mentoring opportunities for first-generation students and alumni, and the Education Professional Network, which provides professional development, networking and resources for those pursuing careers in education.

In her current roles as Development Associate for the COE, Rivera supports impactful initiatives such as the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) and the Academy for Community Inclusion (ACI). "Through this work, I am committed to creating opportunities and building stronger community at Florida Atlantic," stated Rivera.

Parliament of OWLs

Student Spotlight



Gabriella Maluf Nunes, a graduate student pursuing an Ed.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling in the Department of Counselor Education in Florida Atlantic's College of Education, was inducted into the Parliament of Owls during Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025 ceremony. Nunes was selected for her leadership in fostering belonging, promoting accessibility and helping strengthen Florida Atlantic's connection with the autism and disability community across her experiences swerving Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and CARD, in Florida Atlantic's College of Education. As a Graduate Assistant at CARD, she has helped plan and support major community events, collaborated with professionals across the Autism Spectrum Disorder/Mental Health Task Force, and contributed to two Florida Development Disabilities Council (FDDC)-funded research projects.

Retired OASS Associate Dean Remembered

Wayne Hill, Ed.D., retired Associate Dean of the Office of Academic and Student Services in Florida Atlantic's College of Education, passed away on Oct. 23, 2025. During the Nov. 7, 2025 Faculty Assembly meeting, he was remembered for his legacy. Hill was very well know by COE faculty, staff and students during his tenure. He retired in 2003. "His institutional memory and commitment to students are almost unmatched," recalled Valerie Bristor, Ph.D., retired COE Dean. "He also had an awesome sense of humor!"

The current Associate Dean, Office for Academic and Student Services, in FAU's COE, Deborah Shepherd, Ed.D., recalls having the privilege of working with Hill for many years. "He was a mentor and friend; one of the finest people I have had the honor to work with," said Shepherd. "He was not only an exceptional leader and colleague, but also one of the greatest advocates and supporters of students." Obituary.

Did You Know?

FAU College of Education student organizations play a critical role in helping to create a vibrant and robust campus community, as well as leadership/ professional development, research and networking opportunities. So consider actively participating in one of the following student organizations:

College Wide

Kappa Delta Pi (Rho Omega Chapter)
(International honor society in education)
President: Danielle Brown
Faculty Counselors: Susannah Brown, Ph.D. and Ann Musgrove, Ed.D.

Student Achievement Council (SAC)
(Interdepartmental/interdisciplinary group of College of Education students whose mission is to provide a forum for students to present their scholarly work, meet new people, and learn from each other. Major responsibilities include the organization of an annual college-wide research symposium, and the selection of the COE's Distinguished Teacher of the Year.) **The 2026 research symposium will be held virtually on April 16 from 4 p.m. - 7 p.m., celebrating its 25th anniversary.** The COE SAC has proven to be a wonderful opportunity for students to experience and develop team leadership.
President: Erica Cheva
Faculty Advisor: Dilys Schoorman, Ph.D.

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
National Student Speech Language Hearing Association *(Encourages the academic, professional and advocacy interests of FAU students in the field of communication sciences and disorders)*
Faculty Advisor: Kelly Steele, M.S., CCC-SLP
Pre-Speech & Hearing Association (Pre-SHA) (*For undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing careers in speech-language pathology, audiology, or the field of communication sciences and/or hearing sciences.)*
Faculty Advisor: Kelly Steele, M.S., CCC-SLP

Department of Counselor Education
Chi Sigma Iota (Beta Rho Chi Chapter)
(International honor society for professional counselors, counselor educators and students)
President: Brandon Triche
Chapter Faculty Advisor: Kelly Emelianchik-Key, Ph.D.
Co-Chapter Faculty Advisor: Ayse Torres, Ph.D.

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Florida Future Educators of America (FFEA) (*For pre-collegiate and collegiate teacher recruitment*)
Faculty Advisor: Rina Bousalis, Ph.D.

Student Achievement Council (SAC)



Student Achievement Council members met and mingled with mentors during the SAC social on Nov. 7, 2025. Clockwise from left are Erica Cheva, president; Danielle Brown, vice president; Francine Coker, webmaster; Rita Ashkar, membership director; Maria Soto, vice president; Vanessa Robinson, treasurer, and Macie Barrett, secretary (center). Guest speakers included: Ira Bogotch, Ed.D., retired professor within the Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology; Bryan Hursh, Ph.D., OURI program coordinator; Melissa Antonelli, Ph.D., assistant professor of literacies within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. SAC Faculty Advisor Dilys Schoorman, Ph.D., professor, and Andres Ramirez, Ph.D., associate professor, within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction also participated in the event along with students from various departments in the College of Education.



Kappa Delta Pi (Rho Omega Chapter)

On Nov. 17, 2025, the Rho Omega Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi presented certificates, honor cords and KDP graduation regalia to Hailey Elizabeth Birch and Megan Green. From Left are President Danielle Brown, Ann Musgrove, Ed.D., Susannah Brown, Ph.D., Vice President Samantha Lopez, Treasurer Christina Nerju, Green and Birch. Co-counselors S. Brown and Musgrove began the honor ceremony to explain the ideals of KDP. The KDP Rho Omega Chapter officers, Brown, Lopez, and Nerju presented the certificates and honor cords. Family members, along with Jillian Powers, Ph.D., associate professor, and Melissa Antonelli, Ph.D., assistant professor, both within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction attended the festive celebration.

EDUCATION CONNECTION

FACULTY ACCOMPISHMENTS

Florida Atlantic College of Education

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Awards Bestowed by Professional Organizations

Vasquez-Colina, M. *Researcher of the Year Award* (2025). Florida Educational Research Association (FERA).



Villares Sacks, E. (November 2025). *School Counselor Advocate: School, Community and Family Award.* Florida School Counselor Association. [Villares (right) accepts the award from the American School Counselor Association's 2025 School Counselor of the Year Carmen Larson, Ph.D., who is a WAVES postdoctoral fellow within the Department of Counselor Education.] ...Read more

GRANTS

Simpson, B., **Hill, C.**, & **Coleman, R.** (2025). Florida Atlantic University Science, Ecology & Experimental Discovery (FAU SEED) Program [Awarded grant proposal]. Florida Atlantic University Pine Jog Environmental Education Center; Prime Time Palm Beach County. (Funded $50,902).

Hill, C., & **Coleman, R.** (2025). Teaching Empathy Through Nature Program [Awarded grant proposal]. Florida Atlantic University Pine Jog Environmental Education Center; Prime Time Palm Beach County. (Funded $50,776).

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Brown, V., & Saurez, D. (2025). NotebookLM: Revolutionizing learning for students with neurodivergent challenges using AI and Universal Design principles. *Florida Distance Learning Association Journal, 8*. https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fdla-journal/vol9/iss1/22/

Goldstein, R. E., & **Bloom, J. L.** (2025, October 26). Using curiosity as a motivational technique for engaging in student affairs assessment. *The Assessment Review, 6*(1). https://assessatcuny.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2025/10/using-curiosity-as-a-motivational-technique-for-engaging-in-student-affairs-assessment/

Kline, D. (2025). Implementation of Book Clubs and their Effects on Student Motivation . *Florida Journal of Educational Research*, *62*(3). https://doi.org/10.62798/ACPX8907

FAU Lab Schools Research Newsletters:

November 2025 December 2025

FAU Stiles-Nicolson STEM Teacher Academy Newsletter:

Quarter 2

Presentations

van Zelst, A.L., Dobuler, A., Cocilovo, F., Gafni, A., Arnett, S., Earle, F.S. (2025, November 20-22). *Harnessing time: Leveraging chronotype synchrony and asynchrony to promote efficient speck motor learning.* [Conference presentation, Meritorious award]. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association 2025 Convention, Washington, D.C. United States.

van Zelst, A.L., Young, I, Qi, Z., Earle, F.S. (2025, November 20-22). *Cognitive-linguistic profiles of adults with developmental language disorder.* [Conference presentation, Centennial award]. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association 2025 Convention, Washington, D.C. United States.

Williams, D. F., Brown, S.B., & Cocilovo, F. (2025). An Investigation of the Impacts of a Stuttering Storybook. *International Stuttering Awareness Day Online Conference.* Available at: https://isad.live/isad-2025/papers-presented-by-2025/research-therapy-and-support-2025/an-investigation-of-the-impacts-of-a-stuttering-storybook-dale-williams-susannah-brown-francesca-cocilovo/ ...Read more

Invited

van Zelst, A.L., (2025, December 2). *Time is not a thief: Capturing the offline neural dynamics of speck learning.* [Invited conference presentation]. Stiles-Nicholson Brain Institute Neuroscience Seminar Series, Boca Raton, Fla., United States.

Florida Atlantic University College of Education

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