

# FAMILY SCIENCE & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

DECEMBER 2022

## New Task Force will Address NJ Teacher Shortage

With the number of educators rapidly declining in New Jersey, Governor Phil Murphy has created a special task force to address the lack of K-12 public school teachers in the state. The **Task Force on Public School Staff Shortages in New Jersey** is charged with addressing “the challenges facing our educational workforce” and recommending short- and long-term solutions to reverse the decline of teachers, as well as recruit and retain school staff.

According to the New Jersey Department of Education, the state has experienced a 25 percent decrease in the number of teaching certifications being issued in the past decade. Other factors contributing to the decline are the perception of inadequate compensation, and an uptick in retirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Shortages have worsened significantly in areas such as special education, science, math and bilingual education.

On the Indeed employment website, a quick search for full-time public school teachers in New Jersey returned more

than 800 open positions. This could be perceived as good news for FSHD students, approximately half of whom have a [concentration in Families, Children and School Settings](#) which is the track to teacher certification at the P-3 and K-6 levels. In this concentration, students examine the cultural, community, and socioeconomic contexts in which families function, and learn interventions that support children and families in a variety of educational settings. With so many opportunities available, our students should have no trouble pursuing their dreams and launching successful teaching careers.

The new Task Force comprises representatives from teachers’ unions, school boards and state associations for superintendents and administrators, among others. With a directive to release its initial recommendations by January 30, 2023, the group has wasted no time getting to work.

New Jersey is not alone in this problem. The federal government has encouraged states to use emergency COVID relief funds to hire teachers to alleviate some shortages. ■



## Department Chair’s Corner

Well, I think it is safe to say that our warm fall days are officially over! The cold crisp wind has set in, the leaves are on the ground, and the holidays are in the air. Just in time for me to be back in the Chair’s corner, after eight very blissful weeks of bonding leave with my newborn Selene. While I



Dr. Lyndal Khaw

enjoyed every minute of my leave, I am also glad to be back to our vibrant campus community. I love seeing students in the hallways again! My sincere thanks to

my colleague Dr. Jon Caspi for managing the department as Acting Chair during my absence.

While I am sure many are already looking forward to the holiday season, I wanted to share some of my reflections thinking back to Election Day. By the time you read this, perhaps this is already off your radar (what midterm elections?) but at the time of my writing this message, this just happened last week. As I shared before, I finally got my citizenship in April, making this year my very first year of voting – ever! I never had the opportunity to vote in my home country either. I wanted the full election experience, so off I headed to the neighborhood

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

### December 20

Thursday classes meet on Tuesday

### December 21

Fall 2022 semester ends

### December 22

Winter 2023 classes begin

### December 31

Fall grades posted in Nest



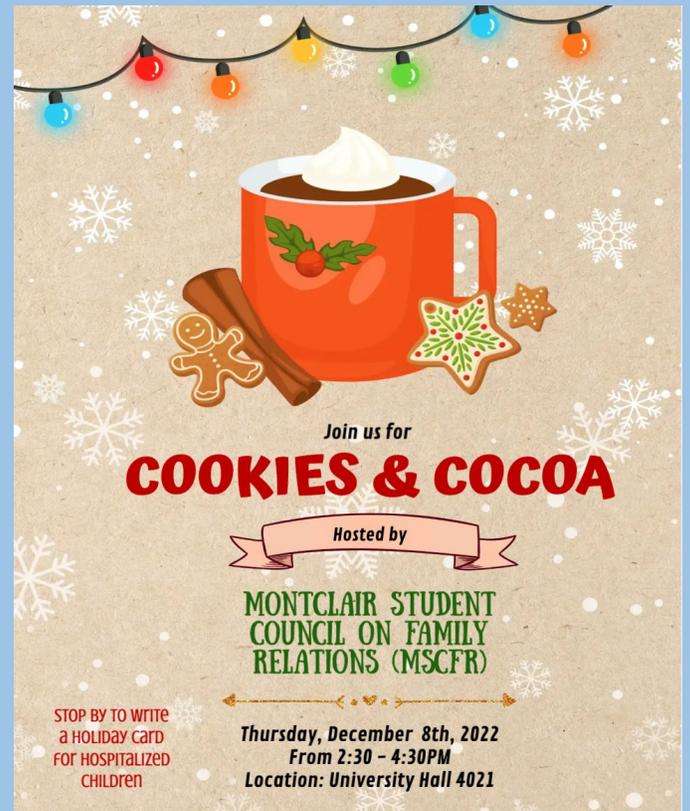
## Gaining Perspective at Family Relations Conference

The Department of Family Science and Human Development was well represented by faculty, alumni and doctoral students at the annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) in Minneapolis. NCFR is the non-profit, multidisciplinary professional association dedicated solely to family research, practice and education. The theme of the 2022 conference was *Light and Shadow: Shifting Perspective and Families*.



*FSHD Alumna Dr. Veronica Barrios (second from left) reconnected with faculty members Dr. Brad van Eeden-Moorfield, Dr. Olena Nesteruk, Dr. Ashley Ermer and Dr. Soyoung Lee at the NCFR Conference. Dr. Barrios is now an assistant professor at Miami University (Ohio).*

*Many visitors stopped by the FSHD table to chat with our ambassadors at the National Council on Family Relations conference in November. Representing the department are (l to r) Dr. Soyoung Lee, Dr. Pearl Stewart, PhD Candidate Jackie Keenoy, PhD Candidate Jeanie Park, Dr. Ashley Ermer and Dr. Olena Nesteruk.*



*FSHD doctoral student Jackie Keenoy (third from right) delivered a well-received presentation on aging studies titled "Engagement Promotes a Sense of Purpose for Older Adults" at the National Council for Family Relations Conference in Minneapolis in November.*

*The Montclair Student Council on Family Relations (MSCFR) is the university's student affiliate group of the National Council on Family Relations. For more information, contact [assafi1@montclair.edu](mailto:assafi1@montclair.edu).*

## Student Spotlight

### Sydney Jenkinson

Sydney Jenkinson is a senior Family Science and Human Development major with a Family Services concentration and a Psychology minor, graduating in spring 2023.

**Her Story:** I decided to major in FSHD because the classes in this department attune to the in-depth study of child and family development, which sets the academic foundation of my future work in pediatric healthcare.



My career goal is to become a Certified Child Life Specialist specializing in surgery at a large, freestanding children's hospital.

Certified Child Life Specialists are clinically trained professionals and part of a pediatric multidisciplinary care team, whose job it is to support the psychosocial, emotional, and developmental health of pediatric patients in order to normalize the hospital experience and reduce medical trauma. My favorite part about this field is seeing the resilience in children who are overcoming such adverse medical experiences.

**Her Plan:** Child life is a very competitive field, seeking out students who strive academically as well as have vast experience working with all types of children in a variety of settings. It took me about half a year to prepare my applications to send out last summer to 30 children's hospitals across the nation, in hopes of obtaining an internship.

With a lot of hard work and perseverance, I am proud to say that this spring, I will be completing an intensive child life clinical internship at the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. I am beyond excited to indulge myself in this learning opportunity and can't wait to apply my years of experience, schooling and passion into this program.

**Her Thoughts:** "Don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone and challenge yourself. Not only will you find out more of who you are as a person through this, you will grow and find some of life's most exciting and memorable moments, which in return will only help shape you to your finest potential!" ■

## Department Chair's Corner *(Continued from page 1)*

polling station with my husband and my baby daughter. As a first-time voter, there was definitely this sense of excitement and pride that I have never felt before on a *Tuesday* in any given November in previous years. I realize now that the swell of pride came from performing my newfound civic duty!

What is civic duty? When I teach about civic duty in class, my students and I talk about society's charge to us, to fulfill our responsibilities in order to preserve a healthy democracy. As we have seen in recent years, both in the U.S. and elsewhere around the world, a healthy democracy is not always easily attainable and is constantly under threat. That is why fair and free elections are so important, and you should never underestimate the power of the individual voter.

Individual folks like you and me, our kids, families, and communities are the backbone of our government and our larger society (if you're suddenly thinking of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, you're correct!)

The future rests in our collective ability and commitment to preserve our healthy democracy. I may sound like a broken record, but if you earned the right to vote, I hope you exercised your civic duty and voted. And hey, if you missed your chance to vote this time around, no worries, 2024 is just around the corner! As a first-time voter, I promise you that I did not take my right to vote for granted. I did it for myself and I did it for my daughter.



As this semester draws nearer to a close, on behalf of the FSHD staff and faculty, I'd like to wish everyone a lovely, peaceful, and happy holiday season. Take the opportunity to reflect, reconnect, and recharge during your upcoming winter break.

See you in 2023! ■

## FSHD Internship Insights

### Spring Deadline - January 7

Attention Spring 2023 interns! The January 7 deadline to finalize your internship is fast approaching! Ideally, having a verbal offer by the end of the Fall semester will allow you enough time to receive official approval and finalize all the details.

Year end is a very busy time for students and employers alike! Do your best to connect with employers now so you won't run out of time to find an internship.

### Drop in for Questions

Internship Coordinator Colleen Casenta is here to help; don't hesitate to contact her for guidance! She is holding another session when you can pop in for quick internship questions:

**Internship Drop-In Hour**  
**Thursday, December 8**  
**11:00 am - 12:00 pm**

Drop in virtually on Zoom or in-person in her office, University Hall, Student Success Center, Suite 3102. She is excited to chat with you. To register and find more information, [click here](#).

If you can't make it at that time, or if you have more detailed questions, please schedule an appointment with Colleen through [Handshake](#) or email her at [casentac@montclair.edu](mailto:casentac@montclair.edu).

You've got this! Hang in there and keep going! ■

## Webinar Explores Substance Abuse Certifications

**Wednesday, December 14, 2022**  
**5:00—6:00 p.m.**

If substance abuse counseling appeals to you, [register here](#) for a webinar about programs that prepare students to become counselors in a variety of work settings.

**Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor Certificate** courses fulfill the educational requirements set by the Addiction Professionals Certification Board of New Jersey.

**Student Assistance Coordinator** program offers students the opportunity to take post-master's courses required by the New Jersey Department of Education for individuals who wish to become Substance Awareness Coordinators in K-12 schools. ■

## Career Corner

With a degree in Family Science and Human Development, you can pursue a career as a...

### Caseworker

Caseworkers assist and counsel individuals and families in at-risk communities who might be, for example, victims of child abuse or domestic violence, suffering from physical or mental illness, dealing with financial hardship, or senior citizens.

Government agencies and non-profit organizations commonly employ caseworkers. In some positions, certifications or licensure may be required.

Successful caseworkers need strong communication and listening skills, and must learn to ask pertinent questions. Empathy is an important quality, as well as the ability to advocate for others.

Caseworker responsibilities include:

- Making home visits to assess client needs
- Compiling case reports
- Providing support, guidance, and counsel to families in need
- Making referrals or introductions to other agencies
- Scheduling and escorting individuals to appointments with legal aid workers, counselors, doctors, etc.
- Monitoring visits between at-risk or fragile children and family members
- Motivating individuals to participate in rehabilitation programs
- Reporting abuse and obtaining protection and/or services for clients ■

## December 2 is Special Education Day

**DECEMBER**

**2**

National Special Education Day commemorates the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the first federal special education law in the nation.

IDEA declares that children with disabilities shall have access to public education, special education and related services. Signed by President Ford in 1975, this law was a critical step on the path to making education and resources equitable for all children. ■

# Social Justice Initiatives

## December is Universal Human Rights Month

Universal Human Rights Month is celebrated around the world in December, and Human Rights Day is observed annually on December 10. That's the day in 1948 the United



Nations General Assembly adopted the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), a milestone document that proclaimed the inalienable rights to which everyone is entitled, and brought human rights into the realm of international law. Available in more than 500 languages, it is the most translated *document* in the world.

### The UN Protects Human Rights

Human rights principles of equality and freedom are often tied to economic, social and cultural rights. According to the United Nations' website, a human rights-based approach to development is the best way to reduce inequalities, and a human rights-based economy builds a sustainable environment in which racism, social injustices, and other forms of discrimination are not tolerated.

The [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) leads the UN in the promotion and protection of human rights and supports the human rights components of peacekeeping missions in several countries. Headquartered in Geneva, the OHCHR has many regional offices (including New York City), human rights centers, stand-alone offices and human rights advisors all over the world.

The High Commissioner regularly comments on situations in the world relating to human rights issues, and has the authority to investigate situations and publish reports on them.

### Making a Difference at Home

A number of MSU students are gaining hands-on experience in this area with a Human Rights Education Internship through the [Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Education Project](#) in the College of Education and Human Services.

Interns select a human rights topic, conduct a guided research project, study human rights pedagogy and cutting-edge interactive teaching technology, and then develop and teach a one-hour lesson in a local public school. Spring 2023 interns will be focusing on a range of topics including mental health access, immigrant and indigenous rights, Islamophobia, and discrimination in the U.S. criminal justice system against ex-convicts.

### Helpful Resources

Educators and students can learn more about how to defend human rights at home and abroad with the following resources:

- [Human Rights Education Website](#)
- [Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development Document](#)

**The principle of  
universality of human rights  
is the cornerstone  
of international  
human rights law.  
This means that we are  
all equally entitled  
to our human rights.  
- United Nations website**

### Share Your Thoughts

Remember to use our virtual feedback form as an anonymous way to share feedback and/or suggestions related to the FSHD community's social justice work. The form can be found here:

[https://montclair.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3JHboG6J8W0DO4J](https://montclair.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3JHboG6J8W0DO4J)

Be empathetic.  
Be compassionate.  
Be kind.  
Be you! ■

## University News

### Restructuring CEHS into Two Colleges

Montclair State University has announced that effective July 1, 2023, the College of Education and Human Services – where the Department of Family Science and Human Development is currently located – will be divided into two separate and distinctive entities:

- The **College for Community Health** will prepare the next generation of community health professionals to meet the imperative for health equity.
- The **College for Education and Learning** will align with current trends, adapt to future change, and allow for the creation of new academic offerings to meet the evolving needs of our state and nation.

FSHD will be part of the College for Community Health along with five other departments: Counseling, Exercise Science and Physical Education, Nutrition and Food Studies, and Public Health, as well as Communication Sciences and Disorders, which is currently housed in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

FSHD students in the School Settings concentration (our teaching track) will remain FSHD majors, and will apply to the Teacher Education Program through the Center of Pedagogy, as they have always done. ■

### Moving to a 16-Week Semester

In an effort to offer optimal instruction and meet the needs of the growing student population, the university will extend the length of semesters from 15 to 16 weeks by starting the academic year in the last week of August. These changes will become effective in Fall 2023, with opening day on August 28, and the end of term on December 18.

According to the Provost's Office, this adjustment will better align program offerings with the academic calendar, and will allow the scheduling of more eight-week courses that non-traditional students require for continued progress toward degree completion and academic success. Extending the full term by one week will also align cohort programs with the master calendar and streamline the financial aid awards process.

The 16-week semester will include three “no classes days” on Labor Day, Election Day and the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. This helps eliminate the need to hold classes on a non-scheduled day (i.e., holding Thursday classes on a Tuesday). ■

## Job Hunting Skills

Prepare for your job search with free career workshops at the CEHS Student Success Center. These programs require [registration](#) and are held in University Hall 3102.

### Interview Skills

**Monday, December 5, 2022**  
**3:00—4:00 pm**

This workshop will explain how to prepare for an interview and how to respond to commonly asked questions.

### Resume Writing

**Thursday, December 1 11:00 am—12:00 pm**  
**Wednesday, December 7 12:00—1:00 pm**

Your resume is a potential employer's first impression of you. Make it stand out! Learn how to format and tailor it to fit each position for which you are applying.

### Using LinkedIn

**Wednesday, December 7 2:00—3:00 pm**

Discover the power of LinkedIn and create your personal profile. Learn effective online job search strategies too!

Questions? Email [CEHScareer@montclair.edu](mailto:CEHScareer@montclair.edu). ■

## Plan Ahead for Summer!

**Registration for Summer 2023  
is now open.**  
**Start planning for next year!**

## Family Science & Human Development

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[Visit the FSHD Website](#)

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Lisa Mills, Newsletter Editor

