

**New Faculty and Staff  
2017****Amy Aiello**

Associate Dean for Enrollment Management and External Affairs

B.A. Montclair State University  
M.A. Montclair State University  
Ed.D. Northeastern University

DR. AIELLO joined the Dean's Office of the College of Education and Human Services in April 2017. She is responsible for the enrollment management initiatives within the college and for marketing, public relations, and external affairs. Prior to coming to the CEHS Dean's Office, Amy spent fourteen years in various roles within The Graduate School at Montclair State University, most recently as Executive Director.

**Christine Aguilera**

Program Associate, Secondary and Special Education Department

B.A. Cornell University

MS. AGUILERA joined Montclair State University as program associate for the Department of Secondary & Special Education in November 2016. She is responsible for department administration, including budget, human resources, and events and program management. Ms. Aguilera comes to Montclair State from New York University, where she provided executive support to the Chief Digital Officer and the Office of the Vice President, NYU IT & Libraries. She also worked in New Jersey public schools as an aide for children with autism and multiple disabilities.

**Sherlene Ayala**

Clinical Specialist, Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership

B.A. SUNY, Plattsburgh  
M.A. SUNY, Plattsburgh  
Ph.D. Montclair State University (in progress)

MS. AYALA is the coordinator of the Higher Educational Leadership concentration in the Educational Leadership program in the Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership. A doctoral candidate in the Counseling PhD program at Montclair State, she specializes in diversity in higher education. She has had extensive experience in the field, including her service as Assistant Director of Campus Life at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, where she was in charge of the Diversity Programs and the Diversity Office as well as programs for new students. She is involved in leadership and service activities in numerous professional and community organizations.

**Alison J. Bermack**

Clinical Specialist, Department of Nutrition and Food Studies  
B.A. George Washington University  
M.B.A. American University

MS. BERMACK, who received her MBA from American University in 1993 with a specialization in Marketing, is joining the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies as the internship coordinator. She has been an adjunct instructor at MSU and Hunter College in addition to having had varied experiences in the field of marketing and food sciences. She has been the owner and founder of Cooking with Friends since 2007, which has included creating a website, a brand, a blog, and a community and e-newsletter, and also working regularly with multiple food and culinary businesses.

**Norma Jean Budd**

Lead Trainer and Technical Assistant Specialist, Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health  
B.A. Susquehanna University  
M.A. Fairleigh Dickinson University Clinical Counseling

MS. BUDD joined the staff of the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health, College of Education and Human Services, as a member of the newly formed Socio-Emotional Formation Initiative (SEFI) in January 2017. The SEFI team provides support for the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for Grow New Jersey Kids (GNJK) Technical Centers and their clients. Ms. Budd is responsible for training, support and consultation to the GNJK South region. Prior to joining the team, she worked as Family Support Manager for Center for Family Resources (Head Start, Early Head Start, home visiting). She is past president and Endorsement Coordinator of the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health.

**Inem Chahal**

Evaluation Associate, Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS)  
B.A. University of Toronto  
M.Sc. University of Guelph, Ontario

MS. CHAHAL, who conducts evaluation research for CREEHS, has experience in conducting applied research and evaluation in a variety of areas including education, public health, children and youth, recreation, policy effectiveness, community and economic development, local food and agriculture, decentralization and effective governance, and organizational assessments. She has managed and supported evaluations and research studies for local community organizations, NGOs, government, educational institutions, and international organizations such as UNICEF and the Canadian Red Cross. Ms. Chahal holds a M.Sc. in Planning and Development with a concentration in program evaluation from the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada.

**Naome Dunnell**

Clinical Specialist, Department of Early Childhood, Elementary, and Literacy Education

B.A. College of Saint Elizabeth

M.A.T. Montclair State University

M.A. Montclair State University

MS. DUNNELL is a Clinical Specialist working in the elementary education strand of the Newark-Montclair Urban Teacher Residency program. She has been a teacher in the Newark Public Schools and an adjunct faculty member at MSU. She brings a wealth of experience and expertise in early childhood education and in the mentoring and supervision of novice teachers. She has demonstrated leadership and organizational skills with a deep commitment to student-focused practices and community engagement.

**Ashley Ermer**

Assistant Professor, Department of Family Science and Human Development

B.A. Nebraska Wesleyan University

M.A. University of Missouri

Ph.D. University of Missouri

DR. ERMER received her Ph.D. in Human Environmental Sciences with an emphasis in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Missouri, Columbia, in April 2017. She joins the Department of Family Science and Human Development, bringing expertise in Gerontology—an important and growing field of study within family science. Dr. Ermer has published articles, presented numerous conference papers and served as a guest lecturer on the topic. She has also published in popular media, including the *Wall Street Journal*.

**Eleanor Esposito**

Offsite and Special Programs Administrator

B.S. Rochester Institute of Technology

M.A. Kean University

MBA Adelphi University

MS. ESPOSITO joined Montclair State University in July, 2016 as the Offsite & Special Programs Administrator. Previously, Ms. Esposito has worked as a Reading Specialist for the Edgewater School District and spent seven years as an elementary school teacher in South Orange, where she taught all subject areas to kindergarten students, and second and third graders. She entered the education field after a successful sixteen-year career at American Express.

**Lauren Gama**

Research Assistant

B.A. Montclair State University

M.A. Montclair State University

Lauren joined Montclair State University as a Research Assistant in the Research on Evaluation and Developmental Systems Science (REDSS) Lab in July 2017. Her responsibilities include collecting and analyzing data for the Inspiring Purpose Project and the Boy Scouts of America Adult Volunteer Training

and Development Project. Lauren previously served as a graduate assistant in the REDSS Lab while working towards her master's degree in Family and Child Studies.

**Mark Heimerdinger**

CEHS Grants Manager

M.A., M.Phil. Columbia University

B.A. University of Kentucky

MR. HEIMERDINGER joins CEHS as the Grants Coordinator after 13 years as grant writer in the Office of Development. Prior to his time at Montclair State, Mr. Heimerdinger worked as the grant manager for the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, as a technical writer for Lucent Technologies and AT&T, and as a proposal writer at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

**Rachel Garver**

Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership

B.A. Harvard University

M.S.Ed. Bank Street College Graduate School of Education

M.S.Ed. University of Pennsylvania

Ph.D. New York University

DR. GARVER, a new faculty member in the Educational Leadership program, received her Ph.D. in Education from the Department of Teaching and Learning at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at New York University in May 2017. Dr. Garver has published research articles, book chapters, and book reviews and has presented conference papers on issues of segregation, equity, civil rights and immigration as they relate to educational practice and social policy. Dr. Garver has also been involved with numerous advocacy organizations advancing social justice inside and outside academia.

**Dr. Geraldine (Gerri) Koch**

Deputy Executive Director of the Center of Pedagogy

B.A. Fordham University

M.A. Pace University

Ed.D. Florida International University

Dr. KOCH comes to Montclair State University with more than 20 years' experience in higher education institutions, including Brandeis University, Felician University, Pace University, and Florida International University. She has a strong belief in the value of education for all students, especially those from non-traditional backgrounds. Her responsibilities as Deputy Executive Director of the Center of Pedagogy include oversight of day-to-day operations and of undergraduate and graduate recruitment, admissions, advisement, retention, and clinical internships. She also serves as a liaison with offices across campus involved in providing services and support to teacher education students.

**Tamara Leech**

Associate Professor, Department of Public Health

B.A. Princeton University  
M.A. University of Michigan  
Ph.D. University of Michigan

DR. LEECH received her PhD in Sociology with a cognate in Public Health from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 2006. She comes to MSU from Indiana University's Fairbanks School of Public Health, where she was a tenured Associate Professor and was Director of the Survey Research Center at Indiana University. Her research focuses on the social, cultural and relational aspects of health during adolescence and young adulthood. She has received several grants and has published peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. Dr. Leech has made important contributions to the interdisciplinary field of the study of health inequality.

**Rebecca Linares**

Assistant Professor, Department of Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy Education

B.A. University of Kentucky  
M.A. University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana  
Ph.D. University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

DR. LINARES received her Ph.D. in Language and Literacy in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in May 2017. Dr. Linares' scholarship focuses on early literacy development, particularly for young children who are English language learners. She has spent extended time in schools and classrooms in the U.S. and in a rural indigenous school in Peru, where she studied a Quechua-Spanish bilingual classroom. Dr. Linares has presented her research at several academic conferences. She has also engaged in volunteer work in the community and as an advocate for bilingual speakers and English language learners inside and outside of schools.

**Rebecca Miller**

Dietetics Coordinator

B.S. Rutgers University  
M.S. Boston University

MS. MILLER became the Dietetics Coordinator in the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies in 2016, after serving as an adjunct instructor beginning in 2014. She is responsible for providing student advisement and support to students in both the undergraduate and graduate Dietetics programs. She also continues her role as an instructor in the department.

**Juliana Natiello**

Clinical Specialist, Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership

B.A. Rutgers University  
M.A. Caldwell College

MS. NATIELLO received her MA in Counseling and Art Therapy from Caldwell College and is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She has joined the Department of Counseling and Educational

leadership as a Clinical Specialist providing leadership in managing the Community Counseling Clinic and supervising Counseling Interns. She has been a Senior Clinician at St. Mary's Hospital Adolescent Residence and an Outreach Consultant for the Academy of Clinical and Applied Psychoanalysis. She has published papers and has several presentations at professional conferences on topics such as cultural considerations in treatment of immigrants, trauma and families, and treatment using art.

**Madelyn Perez**

Program Associate

B.S. Syracuse University

M.A. Montclair State University

MS. PEREZ joined the College of Education and Human Services Dean's Office as a program associate in January 2017. She is responsible for providing high-level administrative support to the two Associate Deans. Previously, Ms. Perez was a Graduate Assistant in the ADP Center for Learning Technologies at Montclair State University while working towards her Higher Education Leadership master's degree.

**David Alan Phillips**

Assistant Professor, Department of Exercise Science and Physical Education

B.A. University of Pretoria, South Africa

M.S. Barry University

Ph.D. University of Oregon

DR. PHILLIPS recently received his Ph.D. in Human Physiology from the Department of Human Physiology at the University of Oregon, specializing in Biomechanics. Dr. Phillips has conducted research in the Orthopedics Biomechanics Laboratory at the University of Oregon and at the Biomechanics Laboratory at Barry University, and has taught classes in Anatomy, Physiology, and Biomechanics. He has presented papers at several academic conferences and has submitted research papers to peer reviewed journals.

**Dena Quiñones**

Clinical Specialist, Department of Public Health.

B.A. SUNY, Albany

M.P.H. CUNY, Hunter

MS. QUIÑONES received her Master of Public Health from CUNY, Hunter College, in 2009 with a specialization in Health Education. She joined the Department of Public Health as a Clinical Specialist with responsibility for overseeing community engagement and student fieldwork. She has experience as a project manager, facilitating training and technical assistance as well as coaching of health care providers. She has also been a Research Scientist and Project Director at NYU's College of Nursing. She brings extensive background in health disparities and participatory community based research.

**E. Danielle Roberts**

B.A. College of William and Mary  
M.Ed. College of William and Mary  
Ph.D. Temple University

DR. ROBERTS joined Montclair State University in June 2017 as a post-doctoral researcher in the Research on Evaluation and Systems Science (REDSS) Lab within the Department of Family Science and Human Development. Her work focuses on the Inspiring Purpose project as well as other lab initiatives. Dr. Roberts' previous research focused on the social-emotional development of young children and how it relates to children's success in academic settings. Her dissertation examined pre-service teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices regarding emotional socialization in early childhood education.

**Samantha Romano**

edTPA Teacher Assessment Coordinator  
B.A. Ramapo College of New Jersey

MS. ROMANO joined Montclair State University as the edTPA Coordinator in January 2017. Working with the CEHS Assessment and Accreditation Coordinator, Ms. Romano is responsible for coordinating and facilitating support structures to successfully implement edTPA—the performance assessment required for certification of all teachers in New Jersey. Prior to her employment at MSU, she served as an Editorial Assistant at Pearson Education, helping to bring numerous textbooks to publication, and serving as a Learning Solutions Consultant. In the latter position, she gained experience in helping instructors map their courses to learning solutions, prepare their students for national assessments, and build their online courses.

**Julianne Thompson**

Program Administrator, Gifted and Talented Program  
B.Mus. Montclair State University

MS. THOMPSON is program administrator of Montclair State University's Gifted and Talented Program. She is responsible for the development and assessment of operations, student enrollment management, and office management. Ms. Thompson was previously Program Manager for Community Engagement at The Juilliard School, where she managed New York City community programs, teaching fellowships, and productions.

**Blanca Elizabeth Vega**

Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership  
B.A. Brandeis University  
M.A. New York University  
Ed.D. Teachers College, Columbia University

DR. VEGA received her Ed.D. in Higher and Postsecondary Education from Teachers College, Columbia University in 2015. She will be a faculty member in the Higher Educational Leadership concentration within the Educational Leadership program. Dr. Vega has published articles in well-recognized journals, book chapters and research reports. She has expertise in issues of race, diversity, equity, educational



opportunity, and law in the U.S. as well as in higher education policy in Ecuador. She has presented numerous papers at national and local conferences on topics such as undocumented students, the law, and financial aid. Given her international and national experience, she has been quoted in popular media such as the *New York Times*.

**Melissa Velez**

Program Associate

B.A. Montclair State University

M.A. Montclair State University (in progress)

MS. VELEZ joined CEHS as the program associate for the Center of Pedagogy in August 2017. She is responsible for providing high-level administrative support to the Executive and Deputy Executive Directors of the Center. Previously, Ms. Velez was a Graduate Student Services Specialist in The Graduate School and the secretary for the Department of Linguistics and the Department of Modern Languages and Literature in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.