

# FAMILY SCIENCE & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

DECEMBER 2020

## Explore Our Unique Doctoral Program

MSU's PhD in Family Science and Human Development is the *only* doctoral program of its kind in New Jersey, and one of 52 in the nation.



Our students learn to use a social justice perspective to understand and help strengthen diverse individuals, families, and communities through research, policy, and prevention and education programming.

To learn more about our program, please join us for two upcoming webinars. Click on the title to register.

[General Information Webinar](#) provides general information about the program, including our mission and purpose, curriculum, student learning, funding, career options, and basic application requirements.

**Wednesday, December 2, 5:30—6:30 pm**

[Application Information Webinar](#) explains the application process in detail and offers suggestions on how to write personal statements, prepare writing samples, and select recommenders.

**Thursday, December 10, 4:30—5:30 pm**

Graduates of this program pursue a wide range of professional opportunities such as faculty members in higher education, program administrators, researchers and evaluators, policymakers, and in vital roles at organizations focusing on children, youth, adults, older adults and families. Register today to learn more! ■

## Department Chair's Message



Dr. Lyndal Khaw

Dear FSHD Family,  
It is this time of the year again, when the semester *feels* pretty much wrapped up, and most of us start looking forward to the holidays and to winter break. This year, however, I am sure we are all welcoming the break with open arms! No doubt the holidays may look very differently for each person, especially after the year we have all collectively experienced.

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## Spring 2021 Delayed

Due to the impact of COVID-19, MSU has announced the following calendar adjustments:

- ◆ Spring 2021 semester will begin Monday, February 8 and end during the week of May 24.
- ◆ Spring Break is canceled.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### December 8

Reading Day —  
No classes!

### December 15

First day of  
Winter classes

### December 31

Last day to [Apply](#)  
for January graduation





## Student Spotlight

### Debree Rucker

Debree Rucker is a senior majoring in Family Science and Human Development, with a concentration in Family Services.

**Her Story:** During my time at Montclair, I've grown more than I thought was possible. When I first arrived on campus, I had no clue how much greatness I truly



possessed. I didn't know that within my collegiate journey I'd face so many adversities that would force me to decide to sink or swim. There were many times when I came close to drowning, but my true friends, family, and most importantly my faith kept me afloat. Now that my time at MSU is coming to an end, I can confidently

say I know I can handle anything that comes my way because I've overcome so much already.

***"She was unstoppable, not because she did not have failures or doubts, but because she continued on despite them."***

***~ Beau Taplin***

**Her Plan:** Majoring in Family Science and Human Development only confirmed what I knew was my calling because I felt at home. It has showed me that the possibilities are endless when it pertains to my future career. This major has also helped me understand different aspects of life that can greatly impact families and how as professionals, in order to provide our best, we need to always be aware and culturally competent. After Montclair, I intend to continue my education in Graduate School for Counseling. I have a burning passion for helping children see past limitations, the same way others have done for me (Vivian Tan, Dr. Jean, Mr. Cottle, etc.).

**Her Thoughts:** "I'll always be grateful for every blessing and lesson I've gained here at Montclair State University." ■

## December is National Human Rights Month

December is a time to honor the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), an international document adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948 as the foundation of international human rights law. Published in more than 500 languages, it is one of the most translated documents in the world.

***"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."***

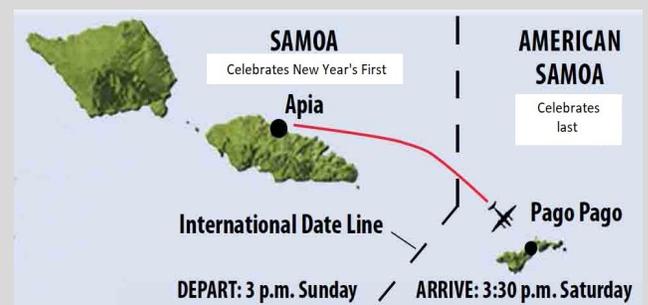
Perhaps this month we can spend some time learning about other cultures. When we begin to see things from another perspective, we are better able to understand and accept differences among us. ■

## New Year's Eve Fun Facts

- \* The first New Year's Eve gathering in Times Square was in 1904.
- \* The ball drop began in 1907 after fireworks were banned because burning embers were falling on the crowd.
- \* Americans drink 360 million glasses of champagne on New Year's Eve.



- \* Instead of a ball, Miami rings in the new year with "Big Orange," a 35-foot neon fruit.
- \* Hershey drops a giant Kiss!
- \* American Samoa in the South Pacific is the last inhabited place to ring in the new year. Some people fly there from Samoa, crossing the International Date Line, to celebrate twice.





## Faculty Spotlight

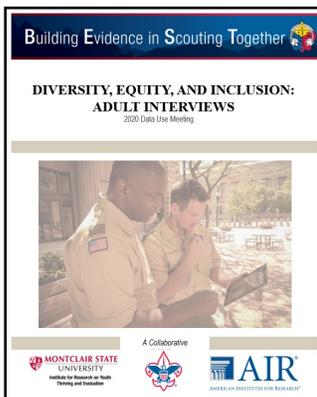
**Dr. Jennifer Urban**  
Faculty Member since 2009



**What she teaches:** This year Dr. Urban is teaching Dissertation Seminar and Concepts & Theories of Human Development. In the past, she has taught master's level Research Methods and Evaluation & Program Planning, and undergraduate courses in Research Methods and Child Development II: Adolescence.

**Fun Fact:** She was born and raised right here in Montclair, NJ.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Be adventurous in your selection of classes. Try taking something that sounds intriguing but maybe isn't an obvious choice."



**Research and publications:** Dr. Urban and her colleagues have been using data from their *Building Evidence in Scouting Together (BEST)* study to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in Boy Scouts of America.

Urban, J.B., Linver, M., Moroney, D., Nichols, T., Hargraves, M., Roberts, E.D., Quinn, J., Brown, M., Gama, L., Gorsky, D., Doubledee, R., & Cox, M. (In press). Developing and testing a theory of change for Boy Scouts of America. *Applied Developmental Science*.

Doi: 10.1080/10888691.2020.1844008

She also published: Urban, J. B., & Linver, M. R. (Eds.). (2019). *Building a Career Outside Academia: A Guide for Doctoral Students in the Behavioral and Social Sciences*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press. ■

## Professor Goldstein Featured in CEHS Spotlight



Dr. Sara Goldstein, FSHD professor and PhD program director, is the subject of the Spotlight section on the College of Education & Human Services website. Read all about the path that lead her to choose a career studying human development.

<https://www.montclair.edu/cehs/2020/11/16/dr-sara-goldstein/>

## Department Chair's Message

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But our Fall and winter-bound holidays like Diwali, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa remind us that time-cherished traditions can be spaces of comfort and stability for families and individuals, even as we navigate a world of change. Traditions like the special food you share, the cultural attire you wear, the songs you sing, the jokes you share, and other yearly routines you do with your loved ones that bring peace, connectedness, and joy. They elicit memories and tell stories that shape your view of what this time of the year means to *you*. However you celebrate, I hope you also celebrate the many things in life that are commonly cherished, like kinships and friendships, good health, and care and kindness for others.

Let's also be mindful that for many in our community, the holidays this year can elicit the opposite — feelings of loss, loneliness, disappointment or fear. Like so many of you, in the interest of keeping everyone safe, my family and I will be celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas away from our extended families, which is bittersweet and a huge break from our norm. But this year is *not* a normal year, and I have hope that a new normal will come to us soon. In the meantime, lean in to your support systems (virtually or otherwise), practice self-preservation, and keep up the good work on responsible practices like mask-wearing and physical distancing. You are doing the right thing.

On behalf of the FSHD faculty and staff, we wish you all a safe and peaceful holiday and look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

Warmly,  
Dr. Khaw

## Our Holiday Traditions

“Traditions” are customs and beliefs passed down through generations. They provide comfort and consistency, and give us a sense of belonging. In many cases, they help us create the special memories we carry throughout our lives. We asked some of our FSHD folks if their families have any fun or special holiday traditions. Here’s what we learned...



### Hidden Surprise

Department Chair Dr. Lyndal Khaw told us that her family hides a pickle ornament in their Christmas



tree every year. The person lucky enough to find it gets to open presents first! Her son was super excited to find the pickle last year!

### Save the Turkeys!

Dr. Sara Goldstein’s family celebrates Thanksgiving with a vegan, cruelty-free feast, eating tofurkey instead of turkey. Each year they “adopt” a turkey at the Farm



Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, NY. Here’s Tutu, the rescued bird they proudly sponsored this year!

### Family Hike

After a relaxing Thanksgiving brunch, Dr. Soyoung Lee’s family rides public transportation from their Manhattan home to the north end of Central Park. Then they walk all the way back home through the park to begin cooking their holiday feast!



### Welcome Baby Lily!

Congratulations to Dr. Ashley Ermer and her husband Paul on the exciting arrival of their first child. Lily Violet Ermer Whiteside made her grand entrance on November 16, 2020. She is a precious and beautiful addition to our FSHD family!

