

Undergraduate Spotlight: Getting to Know You



As a campus laboratory school, the Children's School offers research and observation opportunities to many undergraduate and graduate students from different departments across campus. In addition to these opportunities, we offer undergraduates a chance to work in the classrooms on a regular basis, either as student employees, interns, or volunteers. In the **Undergraduate Spotlight**, we will be featuring each of our undergraduate assistants so that parents can learn about the students who work in the classrooms with their children. Photos are posted on the Family Communication bulletin board.

Child Development Interns

- Alicia Low (AM 3's) is a senior studying linguistics and psychology. She enjoys writing, reading, baking, painting, doing crafts, and traveling.
- Matt Masticova (AM 4's) is a DJ at the CMU campus radio station and writes for the New Yinzer, a Pittsburgh literary magazine. He is a junior psychology and creative writing major.
- Sara Mouhktar (PM 3's) works as an RA and in the infant language learning lab. She is a senior majoring in psychology and English.
- Marisa Wiltsie (Kindergarten) enjoys sewing and cospla (costume play). She is a junior majoring in psychology and plans to become a counselor for children.

Student Employee of the Month

Caroline Landau is a senior art major from Reading, PA. She loves teaching and spending time with the children, especially in artistic activities that reveal their amazing imagination. She says working at the Children's School is one of her favorite parts of college because of the incredible learning environment, the teachers, and - of course - the children! No two days are alike, and for that reason it is always exciting. Caroline plans to attend graduate school in education to pursue a career as a high school art teacher. Numerous teachers have made an impact on her life, and she believes that by entering the same field she can have a similar positive impression on her students. At CMU, she enjoys the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority because of the leadership roles, philanthropic activities, and opportunities to meet people on campus and in the larger community.



Senior Student Teachers from Pitt's CASE Program

• Kristi Frisch, Katie Bouvy, and Carolyn Kroll are seniors in the University of Pittsburgh's Combined Accelerated Studies in Education (CASE) Program, a five-year undergraduate and masters program that includes a BS in Applied Developmental Psychology and a Masters of Education in early childhood and special education.



For their practicum experience this fall, they are teaching with mentors Charline Tomer, Krissy Opferman, and Donna Perovich respectively.

Undergraduate Spotlight: Chris Conte

This is my first semester working at the Children's School, and I am very grateful to work with so many kind people and great children. On my second day, I was standing on the playground when Mrs. Rosenblum suggested, "Go play with the children". That statement summarizes the work I do. At first, I was a little too shy to approach the friends, but, little by little, I have really enjoyed getting to know them. Despite what one might think, the friends all have very developed and distinct personalities.



One of my favorite moments at the Children's School was when one child left her spot at circle time to walk up to and kiss another. At the expense of some macho-ness, I will admit that it was one of the cutest things I've ever seen. Playing with the friends is just as enjoyable for me as it is for them. I like showing them new things like how to draw letters and build more complex structures. Sometimes, difficult situations arise where friends get angry or upset. There are no clear answers in these situations, and so it is important to be alert and use my judgment to handle them effectively.



On the playground with the kindergarten, I saw Mrs. Perovich take full advantage of a difficult situation by turning it into a learning opportunity for the friends. One friend was crying because she wasn't picked to be a puppy in their game. Mrs. Perovich responded by asking, "Why can't everyone who wants to be a puppy, be a puppy?" One friend became noticeably thoughtful about the question, and I expect that she will search for similar everybody-wins solutions the next time difficult situations arise in the future. This incident is one of many where we are lucky enough to make a positive impact by taking the time to teach the friends good habits.

High School Interns

- Hello, my name is Kenya Brown, and I am a senior at City Charter High School. I am interning at the Children's School as part of my graduation requirements. After high school, I plan to attend college for elementary education or biology, but I don't yet have a particular school in mind. I really love interning here at the Children's School and interacting with all of the children. The thing I like to do the most here is watch the children play and interact with each other because I get to observe their social skills and their communication skills. My favorite part of the day is when I



come in and all of the children are playing and all of the kids say hi to me. Really, just hearing the children laugh, giggle, and play really brightens my day.



- My name is Makenzie Romonovich. I am an 18-year-old senior at Brashear High School in the Pittsburgh Public School's **Start On Success** program. My internship here at Carnegie Mellon Children's School has been fantastic so far. I work with 11 preschool 4's friends, and they are truly the reason why I want to continue my dream career of becoming an elementary school teacher. The children are always willing to learn new things. They see me come into the Green Room, greet me with "hello", and some even give me hugs. They are precious young children who have a great future ahead of them.

Undergraduate Research

Yevdokiya (Dussy) Yermolyeva's and Bryan Matlen's **Developmental Research Methods** students are preparing their final projects for the semester. Though the research procedures are still being finalized, the topics are listed below. Families whose children participate will receive fuller parent descriptions via the child's backpack. Everyone can read the study descriptions on the Research Bulletin Board outside the Children's School Office. Notice the interesting range of important topics in early childhood development!

Children's memory for 2-dimensional vs. 3-dimensional representations of home and school rooms (The Room Arranging Game, K only)

The impact of supportive vs. unsupportive visual cues on story memory (The "Going to Grandma's" Game, 3's and 4's)

The effects color scheme and music tempo on the speed of simple shape identification and motor tasks (The Stars and Beads Game, K only)

Children's short-term memory for color sequences presented and recalled verbally vs. visually (The Color Game, 4's only)

Children's ability to recreate toy actions they see a videotaped adult perform, after a preliminary play session with the identical toy or a similar toy (The Copy Cat Game, 3's and K)

The role of demonstration vs. physical participation in children's ability to remember color sorting patterns immediately vs. after a few minute delay (The Sort the Beads Game, Afternoon Children)

The effects of neutral acknowledgement vs. effort reinforcement on sorting accuracy (The Sorting Game, 3's and K)

The speed and accuracy of gender identification for faces of children, adults, and elderly adults (The Faces Game, 4's and K)

Children's accuracy of tracing familiar upper & lower case letters compared to unfamiliar figures with the same component lines (The Tracing Game, 4's and K)

The impact of verbal fluency and visual vs. auditory cues on children's emotion labeling (The Emotions Game, 3's and K)

Scholarship Fundraising Efforts

As you know, the Children's School participates in the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. Through the EITC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits while providing financial assistance for children to attend the Children's School. Thus far in 2012-13, we have received \$33,000 from Duquesne Light and subsidiaries of ThermoFisher Scientific. If you would like more info or can help us to build a list of prospective businesses, please contact the Main Office.

Benefit Dinner at Eleven: Our Benefit Dinner at Eleven was well attended by current Children's School families, as well as a few alumni. The event added \$3,288 for our Scholarship Fund!

Pittsburgh's Day Of Giving: For the first time, The Children's School participated in the Pittsburgh Gives Day of Giving. Children's School families and alumni donated just over \$4,000 and we are waiting to learn what our match from The Pittsburgh Foundation will be.

Undergraduate Spotlight



Hello Children's School friends and families! For those of you who I have not met yet, my name is **Hayley Rahl**, and I am a junior psychology major with a concentration in developmental psychology, health psychology, and an art minor. I am from northern Virginia and have worked there as a nanny, daycare teacher, and camp counselor. In Pittsburgh, I was an intern for Dr. Carver's *Practicum in Child Development* course last semester and enjoyed working with the PM Blue Room friends. This semester I am a classroom assistant in the preschool. I am also a student researcher at the Children's School, currently playing the Emotions Game, which assesses whether children rely more on visual cues or auditory cues to determine how someone feels. Working with friends at the Children's School is a blast and has become a highlight of my week! The best experience from last semester was when the Blue Room friends took a bike ride around campus. This semester the art projects have been wonderful! My plans for the future include grad school for child clinical psychology, and as much traveling as possible. I hope to see you around the Children's School!



"Find ways to play."

So writes Stephen C. Lundin to corporate executives and businessmen in *Fish!: A Proven Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*. It's **Jackie Mishol's** favorite challenge. Jackie writes, "As a sophomore Dramaturgy major - which is in essence a triple major in drama, history, and English writing - I am always searching for ways to incorporate fun in my work. At The Children's School, I couldn't be happier to work with professionals who are able to find the joy in their everyday routine. Here I have the opportunity to make memorable moments and find fun as I switch between roles and activities throughout the day, and it's been a challenge more than gladly accepted! As the oldest child of six, I have been working with children for almost as long as I can remember. My work credits include dance instruction, mentoring, and camp counseling of children ages eighteen months through teens, in addition to performing professionally for children and families. Some of my performance highlights include doing shows with Daffy Duck from *The Looney Tunes* cartoons, dancing with Dorothy the Dinosaur from *The Wiggles*, and interviewing young guests on a waffle shop talk show right here in the city. My time at The Children's School this year has been cut unexpectedly short

upon my acceptance of a role as a performer with the Walt Disney Company next semester, but as I work through the company's college program in Florida, I'll carry all of the experience I have gotten here at The Children's School with me. Joining the staff this September allowed me to make some of the standout happy moments of my sophomore year happen with the wonderful faculty, staff, and students I encounter each day. Working with the children has brought many a smile to my face, and from talking superheroes at dismissal to sharing discoveries on the playground, I am so happy to have gotten the opportunity to bring smiles to other people's faces, too.



Undergraduate Spotlight: Student Teacher Reflections

Kristi Frisch, a student teacher with Mrs. Tomer in the 3's Program, writes, "Working at the Children's School has been a wonderful experience. The staff and students have all been extremely welcoming to me. From the first day I arrived, it was obvious that the staff truly care about their students. The students have so many resources available to them, and it has been enlightening to see how these enhance their education. I quickly learned that these students are receiving the best education possible at this school. My experience with my mentor teacher, Mrs. Tomer, has far exceeded my expectations. Working alongside the entire 3's team has taught me more than I ever expected. Even the children have taught me so much! I will never forget my experience here and I am already sad to be thinking about how my time here is coming to end. I will be forever grateful for the wonderful experience I have had at the Children's School!"



Katie Bouvy, a student teacher with Mrs. Opferman in the 4's Program, reflects, "As a senior at Pitt studying Early Childhood and Special Education, I've spent 4 years in classrooms across Pittsburgh, but none have come close to giving me the same depth of experience that I've received here at The Children's School. Not only do I learn something every day from the amazing family of educators and advocates here, but also from the children—about art, about play, about how to be a better person. I love the sunny atmosphere of the school, how it allows the students to be confident exploring their environment, and how every step is a teachable moment. William Arthur Ward described educator quality with a comparison, 'The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.' Not only do I see our children being inspired by their teachers every day, but I have also been inspired by them. Being placed in such a warm, creative, open, and inspiring setting has helped me feel more confident than ever that teaching is what I was born to do. I've deeply appreciated my time with The Children's School family, and I hope to have the opportunity to return in the future."



Carolyn Kroll, a student teacher with Mrs. Perovich in the Kindergarten, notes, "It's hard to believe that my experience in the kindergarten classroom is nearly complete. The last 15 weeks involved hard work, creative planning, evaluations, and - of course - twenty-four bright and enthusiastic children. My experience working with the kindergarten team, the school staff, and the children has been positive and endearing as I anticipate a classroom of my own. Initially, I did not know what to expect. I have to admit that I was a little apprehensive, but the school has been welcoming and the kindergarten team was open to my contributions and lesson ideas. Mrs. Perovich provided appropriate guidance as I worked to develop and implement lessons. She gave me valuable advice and suggestions that I look forward to using in my continuing preparation as an early childhood educator. Just as your children have learned a great deal since September, I too, find myself a more mature, better prepared, and eager pre-service teacher. Together, we all have progressed toward a brighter future. Thank you for supporting me as a student teacher; I am grateful for all of the kindergarten memories."



Undergraduate Spotlight

Airiss (pronounced like the word "heiress") **Finley** has always had a natural love for kids. She states, "Between the honest comments and the curious questions, it has been a wonderful experience working at the Children's School." Airiss is currently a sophomore studying psychology with a concentration in the social and personality areas. She has worked as a counselor with children between the ages of four and five



for the past three years and done community service with children via the Pediatric Therapy Network. Airiss is originally from Los Angeles, and she says that being so far away from home has really caused her to appreciate the community that is the Children's School. "It is a home away from home." Airiss worked in the fall with the Green Room and Extended Day friends, but is pictured here with the Kindergarten friends in December. Her favorite part of the day is sitting for lunch with friends and having conversations with them. Airiss plans on working at the Children's School for the rest of her undergraduate career and then continuing her education in psychology by going to graduate school in clinical psychology.

Perhaps you wondered ...

... what ever happens to the undergraduates who work at the Children's School.

Helen (Hyun Jeong) Kim earned a Bachelor of Humanities and Arts in Psychology and Music at Carnegie Mellon with honors in May of 2010. During Helen's tenure at CMU, she took all three of Dr. Carver's courses (Principles of Child Development, Practicum in Child Development, and the graduate-level Educational Goals, Instruction, and Assessment). She did her practicum in the 3's program, and also worked as a research assistant in Dr. Anna Fisher's lab here using the eye tracking equipment. Helen also did an independent study project here observing how teachers support children who are learning English as their second (or third) language. In the two years since graduation, Helen moved to New York City, earned a Master of Arts in Early Childhood General Education and Early Childhood Special Education at the Columbia University Teachers College (May 2012) and is currently working at both the Manhattan Korean School as an Assistant Teacher and at All About Kids as a Special Education Itinerant Teacher. Helen is in the process of applying for top quality doctoral programs so she can fulfill her research interests, including "issues of multiculturalism in special education; immigrant families' perception and assessment of early childhood inclusive special education; early childhood learning and development in special education (especially of language and culture minority children); learning of children with disabilities in home contexts; and family dynamics and parenting of children with disabilities."



Undergraduate Spotlight:

Matt Mastricova was an intern for Dr. Carver's Practicum in Child Development last semester and enjoyed working in the Children's School so much that he decided to come back to work as a classroom assistant this semester! He's excited that he is working with the friends in the Green Room again this semester and that he gets to work with the Red Room friends. Matt never fails to be amazed at how much he learns from the students and staff and loves working in such a supportive community. His favorite part about working at the Children's School is seeing how the friends can tell fantastically detailed narratives using simple classroom materials. Just last week, he helped some students build a disaster management factory that made new stores and buildings after a volcanic eruption.



Before coming to Carnegie Mellon, Matt was a camp counselor for the YMCA and JCC in addition to being a classroom assistant in a preschool class for children for developmental disabilities, where he learned the basic principles of ABA therapy and worked with local occupational and physical therapists. Matt is a junior majoring in psychology and creative writing, and when he's not working at the Children's School, he DJs for Carnegie Mellon's radio station, WRCT, and helps runs a writers' workshop for CMU students.

Child Development Interns

- Chi Chi Do-Nguyen is a junior Psychology major interning in the PM 4's. She has taught children acting and modeling, and she is a volunteer at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.
- Tyler Dossett is a senior Psychology major interning in the AM 3's. She was a student employee at the Children's School last year then spent a semester studying in South Korea. She enjoys theatre, fashion, and visual arts.
- Aurelia Henderson (MLK photo) is a senior Creative Writing / Psychology major interning in the Kindergarten. She taught Sunday School at her church, studied abroad in London, and enjoys acting, filmmaking and screenwriting.
- Becca Jacobs is a senior Psychology / Spanish major who has a lot of experience working with children. She loves animals, crafts, and music, and she is interning in the Kindergarten.
- Hannah Leavenworth (above right) is a senior Civil Engineering major who always enjoyed doing science experiments at home. She aims to share a love of math and science with the Kindergarten children while interning.
- Anna Loiterstein (front page) is a senior Psychology major who works at the Children's School in three capacities. She is interning in the Extended AM program, working as a researcher in Dr. Anna Fisher's lab, and TAing for Dr. Sharon Carver's Principles of Child Development course.
- Alex McCluskey is a senior Psychology / Spanish major interning in the PM 3's. She just returned from studying abroad in Spain and is a competitive ballroom dancer.
- Corinne Rockoff (MFM photo) is a junior International Relations and Politics / Psychology major interning in the AM 4's. She participates in the Scotch & Soda theatre and plays cello and piano.
- Anna Vande Velde is a sophomore Psychology major who works at both the Cyert Center and the Shadyside Presbyterian Church nursery. She is interning in the Extended PM program.



Undergraduate Spotlight

For **Alicia (Yi Jun) Low**, the Children's School is where she unearthed a new passion. Alicia never truly realized how much she adores children until her internship with Dr. Sharon Carver's Practicum in Child Development class. This is her second semester with the Blue and Red Room friends, and she says, "Being around these bright and energetic children never fails to make me smile!" She is especially excited about the science experiments in this month's Water unit, where the children are asked to create hypotheses, observe outcomes, and form conclusions.



Alicia has had a longstanding interest in child development and infant language acquisition. In the past, she was actively involved in her church's Sunday School and day camps, and she has worked as a research assistant in Dr. Erik Thiessen's Infant Language and Learning Lab. This semester, Alicia sought opportunities to get more involved in education. She is mentoring high school students for a community literacy project as part of a class, and she will be working with Guatemalan children for a week with the "Alternative Spring Break" group.

Alicia is a senior and will graduate this coming May with degrees in linguistics and psychology (concentration in cognitive neuroscience). She will be heading back to Malaysia, where she will participate in a 6-week internship program with *Voice of the Children* or *Teach for Malaysia*. She hopes to pursue a career in education policy or education research.



Undergraduate Researchers in Training

Dr. Anna Fisher's two sections of **Developmental Research Methods** students are preparing their final projects for the semester. Though the research protocols are still being developed, the students are planning to study the impact of many educationally relevant strategies on children's performance on typical early childhood tasks. For example, groups are studying whether working alone vs. working with a partner yields better performance on puzzles, whether children modulate the speed of their motor performance based on the pace of background music, whether comprehension prompting increases children's understanding of different perspectives, whether using familiar task materials makes it easier for children to imagine viewpoints counter to their own, whether verbal prompting increases sharing behavior, whether giving synonyms or examples helps children learn vocabulary in context better, and whether physically pointing to items in a story helps with recall. Families whose children participate will receive fuller parent descriptions via the child's backpack. Everyone can read the study descriptions on the Research Bulletin Board outside the Children's School Office. What an interesting set of developmental psychology topics!



Undergraduate Spotlight:

For **Cat Mao**, "working at the Children's School is like taking a mini-vacation in the middle of a busy day. As soon as I see the children playing, making conversations with one another, or even getting so excited that their laughs turn into screams, any stress I have just disappears. Their endless energy is simply contagious! I definitely would love to work at the Children's School throughout my college career, and hope to continue similar work after college."



As a pre-med student with an intended major in Global Studies, I hope to eventually become a pediatrician. I plan to work with Doctors without Borders for a year or two before settling down in San Francisco (my hometown). By working at the Children's School, being involved in UNICEF and Global Medical Brigades, and volunteering with children in the past, my desire to help children maintain their health and well being has only gotten stronger. The lessons I've learned from interacting with the 3s and 4s have already come in handy - especially during this past spring break, when I travelled to Nicaragua to help set up a free

health care clinic. We discovered a major similarity between the Nicaraguan children and the children here. As long as they're playing, they're happy! Working at the Children's School has truly made my freshman year at Carnegie even more enjoyable, and I cannot wait to return next year."

Shared Design Experience

During the last week of our Water unit, our Preschool 4's had the opportunity to visit the Freshman "Design Studio II Class" exhibition upstairs in Margaret Morrison. Co-teachers Dan Boyarski and Wayne Chung focused their *RE:USE Project 2013* on Animals. The children were so inspired by the creative ways the undergraduates recycled materials into art that they wanted to build their own sculptures. Since the children were studying water, the teachers challenged them to construct an undersea animal or form of transportation. They designed an amazing variety of sculptures and then invited the freshmen to come tour the preschool exhibit. At that point, the freshmen were impressed – both with the children's creativity and their ability to explain their work!



Undergraduate Spotlight: Farewell Seniors & High School Interns

Sadly, we have to say goodbye to some of our CMU student employees and interns. We wish them well in their future endeavors!

Chris Conte will be working in the IT department at Freddie Mac for a year then doing a Teach For America Program. He plans to become a teacher.



Abby Cryan will be working at our June Camp this year so we don't have to say goodbye to her just yet! Then she will be studying Speech Language Pathology at the University of Pittsburgh.

Tyler Dossett plans to take a year off to explore the fashion world and then go to graduate school to pursue drama therapy.



Caroline Landau will be living in New Zealand and working on her art for a year and then entering graduate school for art education in the fall of 2014.

Anna Loiterstein plans to attend Yeshiva University in their doctoral program in Child Clinical Psychology.



Alex McCluskey will attend Columbia University to get a Master's Degree in Mental Health Counseling. Then she hopes to obtain a doctorate.

Makenzie Romonovich came to us through the Pittsburgh Public Schools Start On Success Program. She will be attending CCAC for 2 years and then plans to transfer to Duquesne University to study Education.



Gabi Rueda will be working in Pamplona, Spain in the International Relations Department of the Universidad de Navarra. She hopes to eventually teach English in Brazil or elsewhere in Latin America on a Fulbright Scholarship. Gabi will also be working at our June camp.

Thanks to all of our amazingly talented student assistants. Each of you helps us achieve excellence!