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Introducing the 2023-2024 SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) is pleased to announce the 2023-2024 SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows.

The SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Programs include placement opportunities in federal congressional offices as well as federal and state executive branch agencies. The purpose of the fellowship programs is to provide researchers with immersive opportunities to learn about policy development, implementation, and evaluation, and to use their research skills in child development to inform public policy at the federal or state level.

Learn more about the SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Programs

2023 - 2024 SRCD Federal Policy Fellows

SRCD Federal Executive Branch Policy Fellows



Jessie Bridgewater, Ph.D.

Dr. Jessie Bridgewater is an incoming SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow at the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Jessie received her B.A. in psychology and M.A. in clinical psychology at California State University, Northridge. Recently, Jessie received her Ph.D. in developmental psychology from the University of California, Riverside with specialized training in quantitative as well as diversity and inclusion psychology. Broadly, Jessie's program of research focuses on risk and resilience processes among ethnic and racial minority youth. Jessie is especially interested in parenting processes, childhood adversity, and systemic biases.



Carly Champagne, Ph.D.

Dr. Carly Champagne is a second year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Child Care (OCC) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Carly is an interdisciplinary social scientist who draws from education, assessment, and human development to improve the lived experiences of children and families. Carly received her Ph.D. in Education from Temple University with a concentration in educational psychology and focus in early childhood. Carly's research focused on how academic environments shape the development of children's achievement motivation, such as the influence of teacher-child interactions on children's feelings of belonging and perceived competence. As a postdoctoral researcher, she evaluated the reliability, validity, cultural relevance and usability of educational and psychological assessments. She also facilitated program evaluations and developed theories of change in collaboration with community organizations such as United For Brownsville. Carly instructed multiple undergraduate courses, including child development, cognitive development and learning theories, abnormal psychology, and program evaluation. She taught in a variety of formats (e.g., in person and virtual, synchronous and asynchronous) and supervised fieldwork for preservice middle school teachers. As a legislative fellow in the US Senate, Carly worked on education, health, and housing portfolios including preK-higher education, mental health, child nutrition, community development and disaster relief policy. She is interested in improving children's well-being and access to culturally relevant education by addressing approaches to teacher training and delivery of social services.



Brett Greenfield, Ph.D.

Dr. Brett Greenfield is an incoming SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Brett received his Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in 2023. His research focuses on children and families impacted by child welfare systems and child welfare policy, with particular focus on queer youth and families. His dissertation research focused on identity development among queer adoptive couples. Prior to completing his Ph.D., Brett earned a Bachelors and a Masters of Social Work at Baylor University, and a Masters of Divinity.



Paige Greenwood, Ph.D.

Dr. Paige Greenwood is an incoming SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Head Start in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Paige B. Greenwood received her Ph.D. in neuroscience from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine in 2021. She was a postdoctoral research fellow at Columbia University Irving Medical Center and was awarded a T32 for Translational Research in Child Psychiatric Disorders. Her research focused on the compounding effects of prenatal exposure to air pollution and proximal measures of socioeconomic disadvantage on the brain and academic outcomes in childhood using functional MRI.



Diane Gumina, Ph.D.

Dr. Diane Gumina is a second-year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Pregnancy and Perinatology Branch (PPB) at the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). At NICHD she works on supporting extramural research programs related to normal and abnormal placental development, and common obstetric complications such as preterm birth, fetal growth restriction, and preeclampsia. One goal of the PPB is to improve ways to diagnose, treat, and prevent such complications, which is one of Dr. Gumina's long-standing interests. She is also interested in understanding how exposure to a suboptimal in utero environment impacts the long-term health of both the mother and baby. Her doctorate work at the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus focused on elucidating the cellular mechanisms responsible for reduced development of the placental vasculature associated with severe fetal growth restriction. Dr. Gumina earned her M.S. in Cellular and Developmental Biology from the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus and a B.A. in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder.



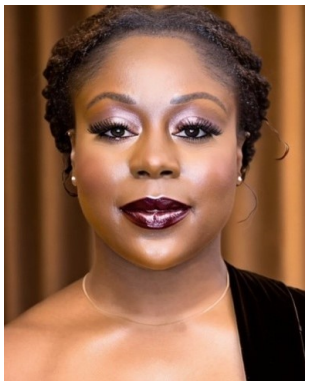
Toria Herd, Ph.D.

Dr. Toria Herd is an incoming SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Toria received her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Virginia Tech in 2021. She received her M.S. in Developmental Psychology at Virginia Tech and her B.A. in Psychology from the State University of New York College at Geneseo. Toria's research uses a developmental psychopathology framework and longitudinal modeling to understand how individual and environmental risk and protective factors coalesce to predict adolescent health risk behaviors and psychopathology. She has primarily focused on parenting factors, (e.g., maltreatment, parent-child relationship quality) and emotion regulation development. She also has significant experience implementing the Research-to-Policy Collaboration model bridging research and policymaker communities by providing science communication training to researchers as well as non-partisan technical assistance to congressional offices on child welfare issues.



Shirley Huang, Ph.D.

Dr. Shirley Huang (she/her) is a second-year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Shirley is eager to review research portfolios and grant proposals, develop child research agendas, and understand the roles and responsibilities of a grant program officer. Shirley completed her Ph.D. at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research interests are in bilingual language development, cultural-linguistic differences, and emotion language skills. Specifically, she studied how cultural and language differences influence emotion language development in bilingual children. Prior to her research, Shirley completed her clinical M.S. in speech-language pathology at Boston University. She worked with children with developmental disorders (e.g., dyslexia, Autism, Down Syndrome) and children and families from minority backgrounds. Her clinical experiences inspired her research and policy interests to advance health equity.



Jazlyn Nketia, Ph.D.

Dr. Jazlyn Nketia is an incoming SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park with a B.A. in Psychology with Minors in Philosophy and Neuroscience. Jazlyn just finished my Ph.D. in Cognitive Science at Brown University and completed her dissertation research at Columbia University. Broadly, her research studies the role of lived experience on cognitive development in early childhood.



Kylee Probert, Ph.D.

Dr. Kylee Probert is a second-year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to her fellowship, Kylee obtained her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) at Oregon State University, where her graduate work spanned the areas of early childhood and child welfare. Her research on foster parent retention utilized strong state and local partnerships to uncover needed supports and subsequent self-efficacy development for foster parents, particularly for tribal foster homes. She also assisted in the development and implementation of a small, state level intervention to support new and applying home-based child care educators (HBCC) in light of 2014 Reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG). In OPRE, Kylee will assist in assessing the needs of Tribal Head Start programs and related 2019 Head Start Family and Child Experiences (FACES) data, while also working towards supporting the HBCC workforce and subsequent home-based child care quality. Kylee especially values the importance of research translation and dissemination in all of her policy-related work.



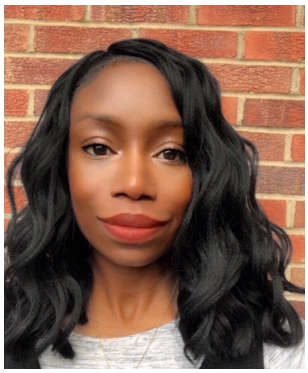
Kizzann Ashana "Shana" Ratcliff, Ph.D.

Dr. Kizzann Ashana "Shana" Ratcliff (she/her) is a second-year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Head Start (OHS) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Ratcliff received her B.A. in Psychology from Pomona College and her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from The Pennsylvania State University, with minors in Developmental Science and Education Intervention Science. Prior to the SRCD Fellowship, Dr. Ratcliff completed her post-doctoral training in early childhood and perinatal behavioral health at Children’s National Hospital. Her research and policy interests include early social and emotional development, improving access to and equity in child and family behavioral health services, and addressing implementation/sustainability barriers in early childhood programs.



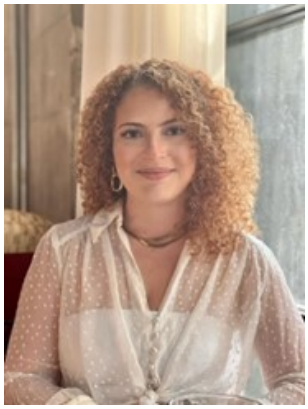
Tanya Tavassolie, Ph.D.

Dr. Tanya Tavassolie is a second-year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Head Start (OHS) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She will be working in the Policy, Oversight, and Planning office. Tanya just completed the SRCD/AAAS Congressional fellowship where she worked on the education, early childhood, and child welfare portfolio in Senator Maggie Hassan's office. Dr. Tavassolie completed her postdoctoral position at the University of Maryland where she led an ongoing evaluation for a research-to-program partnership with a Head Start center in Washington, DC. While there, she provided technical assistance for early educators around data usage and utilization. She also led an evaluation for an Early Head Start Childcare Partnership. Dr. Tavassolie is a developmental psychologist and received her Ph.D. from George Mason University in Applied Developmental Psychology in 2018. Her graduate work focused on investigating racial and ethnic equity issues in the implementation of elementary education policies. She earned her M.A. from George Mason University as well and her B.A. in Neuroscience from Franklin and Marshall College.



Tamarie Willis, Ph.D.

Dr. Tamarie Willis is a second year SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to becoming a fellow at SRCD, she worked at the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice where she managed all federal and state grants related to reentry initiatives. There, she managed reentry programs in nine prisons and three jails in the state of Michigan for individuals with cooccurring substance use and mental illness who were returning to the community and their families. Her graduate work examines the interface of the criminal legal system and child welfare public policies, specifically the impact of child welfare policy on incarcerated parents and the clinical, educational, and behavioral outcomes for their children in state care. Dr. Willis is committed to the continuum of research, advocacy, policy, and practice with a continued focus on addressing the often-racialized inequities in the criminal justice policy and child welfare practices. Dr. Willis holds a Ph.D. in Social Work with minors in Criminal Justice and Statistics from Wayne State University.



Hannah Valdiviejas, Ph.D.

Dr. Hannah Valdiviejas is an incoming SRCD U.S. Federal Congressional Branch fellow. She graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology under the division of cognitive sciences of teaching and learning. She completed her B.A. in Psychology and Spanish from Northeastern Illinois University. Hannah is a proud graduate of community college and a Hispanic serving institution, which shaped her academic and career goals. Her scholarly interests center around educational equity within topics like, but not limited to, dual-language education, minority serving institutions, and culturally responsive evaluation and assessment. Hannah's current research interests include understanding the experiences of racially marginalized students and the learning decisions they make that are rooted in disproving stereotypes about their race or ethnicity in predominantly White settings. In general, using her skill and familiarity with multiple methodologies, her overarching interest is in developing culturally informed research and practice that enhances marginalized students' academic experiences.

2023 - 2024 SRCD State Policy Fellows



Lara Markovitz, Ph.D.

Dr. Lara Markovitz is a SRCD State Policy Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Office of Child Support (OCS) in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). She is currently engaged in child support policy research and family-centered program development. Lara holds a Ph.D. in Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis, where her doctoral training was supported by a National Institute of Mental Health T32 Pre-doctoral Fellowship. Her research has focused on the effect of policy design on father involvement. Lara's dissertation examined the influence of child support policy design on father identity. She has been an active member of Michigan Action Plan for Father Involvement (MAP-FI) and the Metro Detroit Fatherhood Policy Initiative since 2020. Prior to her doctoral studies, Lara served as a bilingual (Spanish) social worker and case manager in community-based health and mental health settings and schools throughout New York City. Dr. Markovitz completed her Master of Science in Social Work at Columbia University in 2012 and her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Michigan in 2006.



Sara Nozadi, Ph.D.

Dr. Sara Nozadi is an incoming SRCD State Policy Post-Doctoral Fellow at the State of New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). She received a Ph.D. in Child Development from Arizona State University and a B.A. from San Francisco State University. Dr. Nozadi is an interdisciplinary developmental scientist and a research assistant professor at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center. Her broad research program is focused on understanding the interplay between individual characteristics and environment in predicting children's neurodevelopmental outcomes from infancy to early childhood and identifying modifiable factors contributing to resiliency. Dr. Nozadi is particularly interested in understanding the impact of broader social and environmental factors (e.g., environmental exposure, rurality, community-level accessibility to resources and services) on psychosocial aspect of home environment and children's outcomes in underserved, marginalized and/or rural communities. During the past few years, Dr. Nozadi has worked on multiple environmental health projects involving indigenous communities, which has given her the opportunity to gain experience in conducting community-partnered research and to collaborate with research teams at various universities, grassroot community organizations, early childhood coalitions and non-profit organizations across the state of New Mexico including those serving children from indigenous and rural communities. With her diverse methodological and collaborative experiences, she is committed to contribute to ECECD initiatives that aim to advance social and racial equity in administration and implementation of social services to improve the health, well-being and education of children in New Mexico.



Isabella Sciuto Ozenbaugh, Ph.D.

Dr. Isabella Sciuto Ozenbaugh is an incoming SRCD State Policy Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC) in the state of Oregon. Isabella Sciuto Ozenbaugh graduated with her bachelor's degree in Psychological Science from California State University San Marcos and received her master's degree and Ph.D. from Oregon State University in Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS). Her research focuses on the development of self-regulation in early childhood and the development and implementation of self-regulation interventions for children in preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary school. Isabella's work also focuses on evaluating child care policies, ways to expand access to child care programs for children and families, and designing professional development supports for child care providers.



Faith VanMeter, Ph.D.

Dr. Faith VanMeter is a second-year SRCD State Policy Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Child Safety and Permanence Division, Promotion and Prevention Unit. She is currently working on projects related to improving the evaluation of parent outreach programs and developing a comprehensive, culturally responsive continuum of care that aims to reduce encounters families, and particularly Black, Brown and Indigenous families, have with the child welfare system by providing access to other systems of support. Dr. VanMeter received her Ph.D. in developmental psychology from the University of Minnesota's Institute of Child Development. Her most recent research used state administrative data from all counties in Minnesota to establish a link between foster care placement characteristics and the likelihood and timing of initial contact with the juvenile justice system. During her time in graduate school, Dr. VanMeter became increasingly passionate about utilizing her developmental knowledge in applied fields. Through collaborations with the University of Minnesota Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) and Pennsylvania State University's Research-to-Policy Collaboration (RPC), she gained experience in the child welfare field and learned about the barriers of and potential solutions to translating developmental research into policy. Ultimately through this fellowship and throughout her career, Dr. VanMeter seeks to make systems-level change that will improve the wellbeing of vulnerable Minnesotan children and families.