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Introducing the 2024-2025 SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) is pleased to announce the 2024-2025 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

2024 - 2025 SRCD Federal Agency Policy Fellows



Jessie Bridgewater, Ph.D.

Dr. Jessie Bridgewater is a second year SRCD federal agency 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.



Melissa Y. Delgado, Ph.D. (she/her/ella)

Dr. Melissa Delgado is an incoming SRCD federal agency fellow at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). She earned her Ph.D. in Family Studies and Human Development from Arizona State University, where she also completed training as a W.T. Grant Foundation post-doctoral fellow. Currently an Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Science at the University of Arizona's Norton School of Human Ecology, Dr. Delgado's research centers on understanding and addressing health and well-being disparities among Latinx youth. Utilizing cultural-ecological models and developmental frameworks, she examines sociocultural stressors such as ethnic discrimination and economic hardship, revealing both protective and vulnerability characteristics within Latinx youth and their families. Employing mixed methods design, she provides nuanced insights into Latinx adolescent contextual processes, including those bridging family and school that call for greater cultural sensitivity in schools, for example. Dr. Delgado's person-centered approach also identifies unique school-level risk and support profiles impacting youth and well-being.



Brett Greenfield, Ph.D.

Dr. Brett Greenfield is aa second year SRCD federal agency 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. Greenwood is a second year SRCD federal agency 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 (HHS). Dr. 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.



Morgan Healy, Ph.D.

Morgan Healy is an incoming SRCD federal agency 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 (HHS). Morgan is a preventative early intervention researcher who is interested in using implementation science principles to improve the scale-up and sustainability of global early childhood programs and policies. She was awarded the Gates-Cambridge Scholarship from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to fund her PhD studies at the University of Cambridge, UK, where she is set to graduate this summer. Her dissertation research explored the mechanisms and differential effectiveness of two scaled home-visiting programs in the UK and Brazil. Prior to her PhD, Morgan worked at the Harvard David Rockefeller Office in Sao Paulo, Brazil on early childhood programming, and as a Bloomberg Fellow for the Mayor of Baton Rouge on the city's Cradle to K Parenting Initiative. She received her Master's in International Education Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2019 and completed a Fulbright in Belo Horizonte Brazil in 2018.



Toria Herd, Ph.D.

Dr. Toria Herd is a second year SRCD federal agency 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.



Andrew (Drew) McGee, Ph.D.

Dr. Andrew (Drew) McGee is an incoming SRCD federal agency fellow in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Drew recently received his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Denver. During his time at DU, he also served as a 2020-2021 SRCD Predoctoral State Policy Fellow in the Office of Early Childhood, Colorado. He previously earned an M.A. in Clinical Psychology in Education from Teacher's College at Columbia University and a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Utah. Drew's primary interests involve developing and testing intervention and prevention programs (such as improving sensitive caregiving, behavioral interventions, ECMH consultation, or high-quality ECE) to minimize the impact of early life adversity and enhance caregiver and child socioemotional outcomes. He has hands-on experience as a preschool teacher, working on policy consultation and program evaluation, and expertise in community-engaged research.



LaRen Morton, Ph.D.

LaRen Morton is an incoming SRCD federal agency 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.S. in Family Science and from the University of Georgia with a M.S. in Human Development and Family Science. This May, she will receive her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Science with specialized training in quantitative research methods. Using culturally relevant frameworks and longitudinal methodologies, LaRen has explored the impact of contextual factors on children’s social, emotional, and academic development. More specifically, her research interests surround the importance of equitable and inclusive school environments that promote minoritized students’ academic achievement.



Jazlyn Nketia, Ph.D.

Dr. Jazlyn Nketia is a second year SRCD federal agency 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 (HHS). Jazlyn graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park with a B.A. in Psychology with Minors in Philosophy and Neuroscience. Jazlyn is a Ronald E. McNair Scholar and has undergraduate research experience in interpersonal relationships between adults, social cognitive development in middle childhood, and impulsivity and delay discounting in adolescence. Jazlyn completed her PhD in Cognitive Science at Brown University and completed her dissertation research at Columbia University as an IvyPlus Exchange Scholar. Broadly, her graduate research studied the role of lived experience on cognitive development, specifically working memory development in early childhood. Dr. Nketia has an interest in taking an inclusive, equitable, and interdisciplinary approach that involves taking a global perspective to developmental science. Dr. Nketia has worked on projects in the United States, Ghana, Jordan, consulted with the Katsuiku Academy in Tokyo, Japan, and is a member of the Jacobs Research Network that is based in the Netherlands.



Daneele Thorpe, Ph.D.

Dr. Daneele Thorpe is an incoming SRCD federal agency 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). Daneele received her B.A. in psychology and public health at Franklin and Marshall College. She recently received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Stony Brook University. Her research focuses on examining how neighborhoods (e.g., resource disparities and violence exposure) influence the well-being of young children and their families. Daneele is also interested in the dissemination of preventative parenting interventions and trauma-focused treatment for families living in historically under-resourced communities to alleviate the effects of neighborhood-level systemic disparities.



Kaitlin Trexberg, Ph.D.

Dr. KaitlinTrexberg is an incoming SRCD federal agency 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 (HHS). Kaitlin received her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies with a Dual Title in Clinical Translation Science from The Pennsylvania State University. She received her M.S. in Human Development and Family Studies from The Pennsylvania State University and her B.A. in Psychology and Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley. Broadly, her research focuses on macro and proximal processes that influence parents and children during the transition to parenthood. Kaitlin is especially interested in parenting processes, policy effects, and socioemotional outcomes for economically disadvantaged families.



Hannah Valdiviejas, Ph.D.

Dr. Hannah Valdiviejas is an incoming SRCD federal agency 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 (HHS). She served as the 2023-2024 Federal Congressional Branch Fellow where she worked on Senator Coons' health and education policy portfolio, which included issues related to PreK - higher education and career and technical education. In her role as a congressional fellow, she worked with institutions of higher education in Delaware to secure Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CCAMPIS) grants for the creation or enhancement of child care centers on their campuses. She also worked closely with USAID and the Thrive Coalition to implement the Global Child Thrive Act, which authorizes programs to aid vulnerable children in developing countries and to direct relevant executive branch agencies to incorporate early childhood development into current programs. Hannah is an interdisciplinary social scientist that pulls from education, psychology, policy, evaluation and assessment, and data science to advocate for marginalized children, students, and their families. Her doctoral research dealt with creating a culturally responsive measurement tool to capture the lived experiences of racially minoritized students and the learning decisions they make that are rooted in disproving stereotypes related to their intelligence in predominantly White STEM spaces. She holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology with a concentration in quantitative methods and a Certificate in Evaluation and Assessment from the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign.

2024 - 2025 SRCD Congressional Policy Fellow



Lorraine Blatt, Ph.D.

Lorraine Blatt is an incoming SRCD congressional fellow. This May she will receive a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Pittsburgh. Her research broadly focuses on how structural inequities and education policies shape child development in the U.S. Her current work examines how school segregation relates to children's academic and social development in elementary school. Prior to pursuing her PhD, Lorraine worked as a researcher at the Urban Institute, where she focused on child care and anti-poverty policies. She holds a BA in Psychology from Grinnell College and an MS in Developmental Psychology from the University of Pittsburgh.

2024 - 2025 SRCD State Agency Policy Fellows



Lee LeBoeuf, Ph.D.

Dr. Lee LeBoeuf is an incoming SRCD state agency fellow in the Division of Early Childhood Care and Education at the Virginia Department of Education. Lee will finish her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at the University of Viriginia (UVA) in the spring of 2024. At UVA, Lee is an Institute of Education Sciences pre-doctoral fellow, a LIFE Academy Fellow with the Max Plank Institute for Human Development in Berlin, and a Community Data Fellow for the Equity Center at UVA. Her doctoral research focused on education equity, student-teacher relationships, and Montessori preschool. Prior to beginning graduate school, Lee taught elementary school in Cleveland, Ohio. She received her BA in psychology from Ohio Wesleyan University in 2017.



Sara Nozadi, Ph.D.

Dr. Sara Nozadi is a second year SRCD state agency 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 a second year SRCD state agency fellow at the Data and Analytics Office in the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC) in the state of Oregon. Dr. 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.



Jess Sullivan, Ph.D.

Dr. Jess Sullivan is an incoming SRCD state agency fellow in the New York State Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS). She is currently a Professor at Skidmore College, where she serves as Associate Chair of the Psychology Department. She is also currently an Associate Editor at the journal *Child Development*. Jess Holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in Developmental Psychology from the University of California, San Diego, and a B.A. in Religious Studies from Wesleyan University. Dr. Sullivan's research focuses on understanding learning both withing the United States, and across cultures, educational systems, and languages. She studies early childhood and has conducted numerous research projects on how children learn about numbers, language, and the social world around them.