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2025 SRCD Biennial Awardees

SRCD is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2025 SRCD Biennial Awards! Join us in congratulating the distinguished awardees at the SRCD Awards Ceremony, Thursday, May 1, beginning at 5:30 p.m. CST.

SRCD Senior Distinguished Contributions Awards

The SRCD Senior Awards Committee, chaired by Governing Council member Gustavo Carlo, selected six Distinguished Award recipients. The recipients of each of these prestigious awards are as follows:

Distinguished Scientific Contributions to Child Development



Margaret Beale Spencer, University of Chicago

For her outstanding contributions to developmental science and committed mentorship of generations of humanity-focused scholars representing and working across multiple disciplines.

For providing leadership that advances our understanding of the life course experiences of diverse people living in varied cultural and socio-economic contexts and consistently working to generate and apply that knowledge to promote shared human thriving.

For her role in creating and disseminating the Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST), which recognizes the universality of human vulnerability and potential for resiliency given ecology-linked identity processes critical for flourishing and applicable to globally situated humans



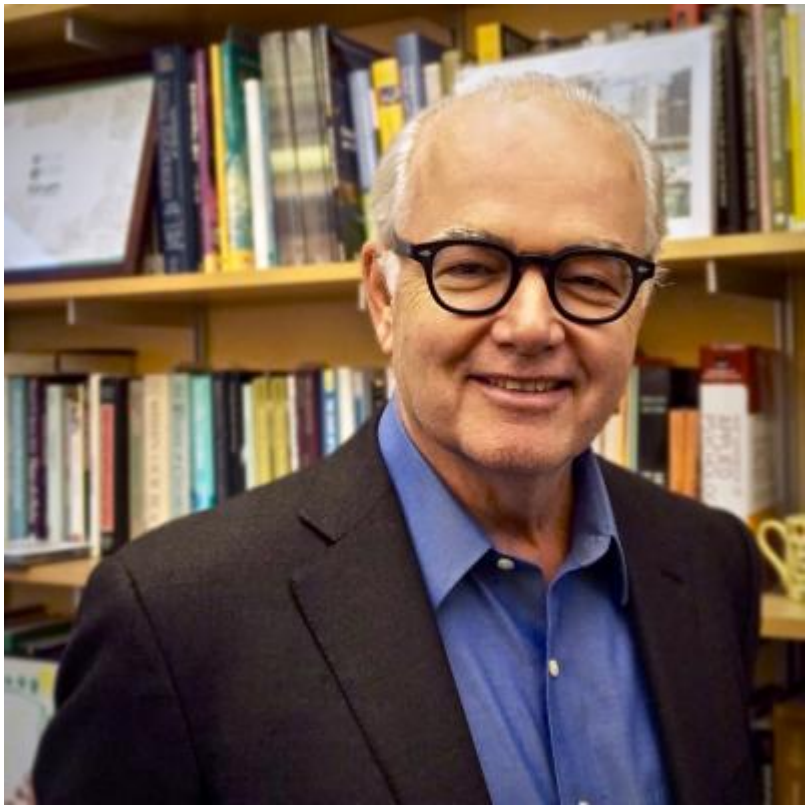
Ann S. Masten, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

For her pioneering contributions to theory and methods focused on understanding and promoting resilience in human development.

For her work to broaden models of psychopathology beyond risks, deficits, and problems to include assets, protective processes, and adaptive outcomes.

For her translation of research into practical guidance for clinicians, educators, first responders, service providers, policymakers, and caregivers to reduce risk, boost resources, and nurture resilience in the lives of children.

Distinguished Contributions to Understanding International, Cultural, and Contextual Diversity in Child Development



J. Lawrence Aber, New York University

For his outstanding research contributions investigating the culture- and context- specific influences of poverty, violence and related risk and protective factors on children's development in the United States, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East.

For his seminal efforts in the translation of developmental science into the design, rigorous evaluation and revision of complex place-based interventions to enhance children's academic learning and social-emotional development.

For his promotion of research-practice-policy partnerships across organizations, cultures and contexts.

Distinguished Contributions to Mentoring of Developmental Scientists



Adriana J. Umaña-Taylor, Harvard University

For her significant contributions to understanding adolescents' ethnic-racial identity development as a core developmental competency.

For her work in providing a heuristic for translating developmental theory and empirical evidence into practice, improving the lives of adolescents through the evidence-based Identity Project.

For her research documenting the value of using strengths-based approaches to better understand adolescents' development and adjustment in the context of culturally based risk.

Distinguished Contributions to Interdisciplinary Understanding of Child Development



Velma McBride Murry, Vanderbilt University

For her groundbreaking research on the impact of racism and sociocultural risks on African American families, emphasizing strengths-based family interventions that enhance parenting, delay youth risk behaviors, and address health disparities to advance health equity.

For her leadership in transforming developmental science from deficit-based to asset-based approaches, leveraging cultural and contextual insights to challenge perceived universals and inform character development frameworks for diverse populations.

For her impactful translation of research into practice, policy, and community-based interventions that address chronic and emerging issues, benefiting rural African American families and promoting broader social justice.

Distinguished Contributions to Public Policy & Practice in Child Development



Karen Bierman, Pennsylvania State University

For exceptional contributions to the design and evaluation of school-based and family-focused interventions that promote social-emotional competence and school success.

For cutting-edge applications of developmental science and longitudinal methodologies to understand and optimize the long-term impact of early interventions.

For translational efforts to disseminate research findings and increase school and community supports for vulnerable children and families.

New For Biennial 2025 - Distinguished Contributions to Advancing Research on Child Development in the Majority World Award



Nirmala Rao, The University of Hong Kong

For her methodologically rigorous, large-scale studies that have significantly advanced research on child development in Asia and the Pacific, generating robust evidence and leading to tangible improvements in equity-focused early childhood policy.

For her work developing, refining, and applying innovative tools that have provided valuable insights into children's developmental trajectories across diverse early learning environments.

For her work forging impactful collaborations with influential partners to disseminate findings and promote investment, ultimately improving the lives of underprivileged children in the Majority World.

Meet with Nirmala Rao at Chat with Leaders on Thursday Lunch: May 1, 2025 - 11:50 am - 1:20 pm CT. Tickets purchased with registration.

SRCD Early Career Research Contributions Awards

Five scholars, selected by the SRCD Early Career Award Committee, chaired by Governing Council member Nancy Hill, will be recipients of this prestigious award, which is accompanied by an honorarium of $1,000 USD. The following five award recipients have strongly distinguished themselves as researchers and scholars, as evidenced through research, publications, and scholarly activities:



Emma Armstrong-Carter, Tufts University

For her innovative research on children's and adolescents' contributions to their families, such as providing physical care, emotional support, household assistance and financial support to their siblings, parents and grandparents.

For her collaborations with schools and state governments to translate evidence into policies that support caregiving children's academic success and wellbeing.



Ka I Ip, University of Minnesota

For his pioneering research on cultural influences in emotion regulation development and the impact of early adversity and structural racism on developmental psychopathology.

For his innovative use of multidisciplinary methodologies to deepen scientific understanding and his unwavering dedication to informing policies that reduce disparities, promote health equity, and foster resilience in diverse communities.



Kristie Poole, McMaster University

For her theoretical and empirical contributions to understanding children's temperament and socio-emotional development.

For her commitment to promoting diverse perspectives that celebrate individual differences in children's temperament.



Lindsay Taraban, University of Pittsburgh

For her research using a family systems perspective to explore early caregiving behaviors and the protective role of the parent-child relationship in the context of early life stress, with the aim of leveraging resilience factors to enhance the wellbeing of both parents and children.

For her focus on understanding the mutual influence between mothers and fathers and their joint contributions to children's social, emotional, and cognitive development, particularly through the lenses of parental depression and sensitive caregiving.



Aya Inamori Williams, Santa Clara University

For her innovative contributions to understanding risk and protective processes for socioemotional development in children from diverse sociocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

For her work examining how caregiver- and parent-child relationships, interactions, and conversations promote children's self-regulation, academic skills, and sense of security.

For her recognition of linguistic and cultural assets in immigrant families as valuable resources to mitigate the impact of systemic barriers and to protect the mental health of children, youth, and families.

SRCD Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award

The SRCD Outstanding Dissertation Award Committee, chaired by Governing Council member Stephen Russell, selected five scholars for this prestigious award, which is accompanied by a $500 USD honorarium. Selection was based on criteria that included the quality of the dissertation, publications emerging from the project, and the nominee's current position and engagement in the field of child development research:



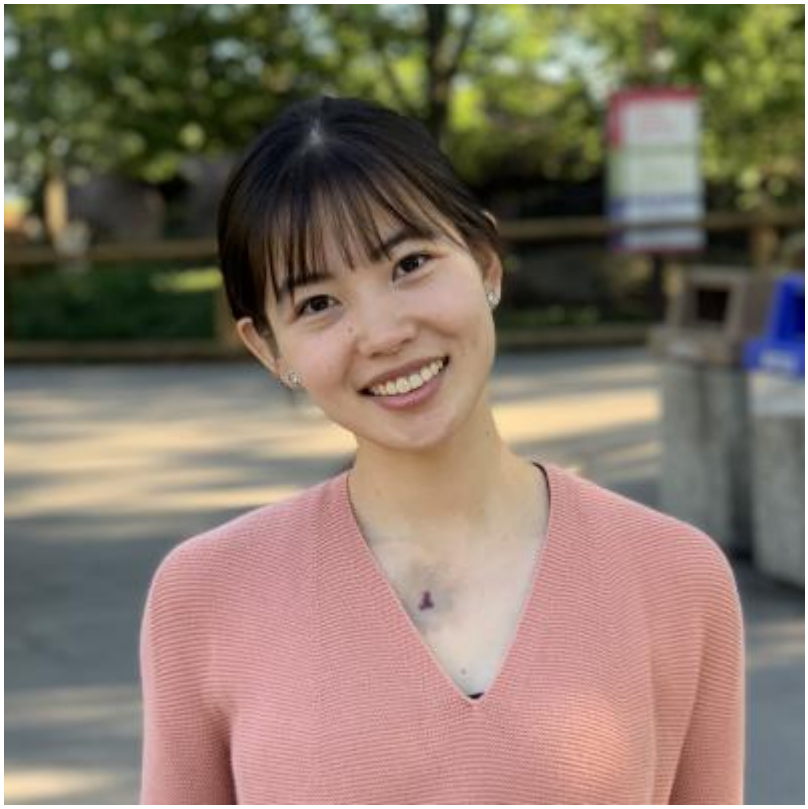
Lauren Eales, University of California, Los Angeles

For her mixed methods longitudinal dissertation assessing child problematic media use, family functioning, and white parental media-based racial socialization during the dual COVID-19 and whiteness pandemics.



Stephanie Haft, University of California, San Francisco

For her dissertation on acculturation and psychological adjustment, which is the first to longitudinally and multidimensionally investigate this topic in children from Chinese American immigrant families.



Linxi Lu, The University of Chicago

For advancing theoretical and empirical understanding of socioeconomic disparities in home math environment and early math development through experimental and mixed-method studies, and for designing innovative, scalable interventions to support families in need.