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Member Spotlight: Andres Sebastian Bustamante

AUTHOR

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Bio:

Andres Bustamante Ph.D. is an Associate Professor at the University of California Irvine's School of Education and the Faculty Director of the Orange County Educational Advancement Network (OCEAN), UC Irvine's research practice partnership community. He leads the Social, iTerative, Engaged, and Meaningful (STEM) Learning Lab, in designing and implementing play-based early childhood STEM experiences in places and spaces that children and families spend time (e.g., classrooms, parks, school yards, grocery stores etc.). He designs these experiences in partnership with local children, families, and educators, so they build from and sustain community values, goals, culture, and knowledge, while also maintaining connections to developmental and education sciences. Andres is invested in research that has practical implications for school and life success for children and families from underserved communities. His work has been funded by the National Science Foundation, Advanced Education Research and Development Fund (AERDF), Heising

Simons Foundation, and the American Educational Research Association (AERA). He was recognized by the Association for Psychological Science (APS) through their Rising Star Award for early career scholars. He is also committed to sharing and interpreting early childhood research with a broader audience through media outlets such as **Brookings Institution**, **Psychology Today**, & **BOLD Blog**.

Have you recently or do you currently serve on any SRCD Committees, Councils, or task forces?

I was a member at large on the Latinx Caucus Steering Committee and the chair of the mentorship sub-committee between the 2023 to 2025 biennial meetings.

What advice would you give to a grad student beginning their Ph.D. studies in developmental science or related field?

Grad school (and a career in developmental research) is hard work and will challenge you in many ways. I think the job of a graduate student is to find an area of research that you are really excited to learn about and passionate about the impact you can make. This will make the hard work well worth it and inspire you to navigate the many challenges that will arise. So early on, be curious, keep an open mind, and try lots of things until you find something you want to spend lots of time doing.

Why did you join the Latinx Caucus and how does it facilitate connection among members all year long?

I joined the Latinx Caucus in order to be in community with many of the scholars that I most admire in my field and with brilliant students and early career scholars doing impactful work with Latinx communities. The caucus does an amazing job creating opportunities for mentorship and networking through Cafecito meet ups, ice cream socials, and mentor mentee matching. It's been a very impactful community in my career.

Hobbies?

I've been playing basketball since I was 5 years old and I played competitively through college. My lower back would love for me to stop but I still play in adult leagues. The hobby that I have taken on since moving to California and would love to spend even more time doing is surfing!