



AMERICAN READING FORUM
2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
DECEMBER 11 – 14, 2024
CHARLOTTE HARBOR, FLORIDA

Mindful Literacy:

Literacy as an Umbrella for the Whole Person



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DECEMBER
11 – 14, 2024

Welcome to Charlotte Harbor

Welcome to the 2024 American Reading Forum conference at the Sunseeker in beautiful Fort Meyers! We are thrilled to be meeting together in person and thankful to everyone who made this conference possible.

This year's conference theme is "Mindful Literacy: Literacy as an Umbrella for the Whole Person." A recent *New York Times* article described how somatic experiences, or a focus on the physical, may be the key to improving mental health and addressing emotional needs. Experts in psychology and trauma-sensitive teaching and learning have known this for years. Many books for young children provide space for teaching somatic experiences (i.e., *The Happiest Tree: A Yoga Story*, *Kiyoshi's Walk*). Following the upheaval and isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the immediate concerns of the education community have changed. Trauma-sensitive teaching and understanding the mental health needs of all children is more than a moral imperative; it is now needed to sustain teachers and maintain systems of education. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an adverse effect on the literacy environments in which children learn and grow.

Teachers noted that the pandemic had a profound impact on the social and emotional growth of students, putting their development at risk. UNESCO also notes that the school closures associated with the pandemic have negatively affected learning by depriving children of opportunities to grow and develop socially. Studies note that skills gained from SEL, including self-management, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills extend far beyond the classroom. In literacy classrooms, self-management and relationship skills are necessary for successful small-group literacy instruction but are also needed for students to do the independent work necessary to gain new literacy skills. Teacher educators and colleagues come together annually to discuss how to make the lives of literacy teachers and children better. However, many mental health experts encourage us to consider self-care prior to caring for others. With this in mind, our team envisions ARF 2024 as a time to spend time thinking about not only "whole child" wellness through literacy, but "whole system" wellness. What might a joy-sustaining literacy classroom look like? A joy-sustaining school? A joy-sustaining teacher education program? We envision ARF 2024 as a time for discussion and healing.

Sincerely,

Megan Adams, Allison Garefino, Paula Guerra, Virginie Jackson, and Sanjuana Rodriguez

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American Reading Forum Board and Mission

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WHO WE ARE...

The American Reading Forum is a nonprofit, professional organization composed of individuals who share an interest in the advancement of literacy education. While the American Reading Forum is an organization that facilitates the dissemination of ideas and research, it places highest priority on providing its members opportunities for critical discussion of ideas, issues, research and emerging research interests, and paradigms.

HOW WE SERVE...

The American Reading Forum declares the following to be its reason for existence and the guidelines for its activities:

- To provide a true forum for literacy education where new research can be generated, research in progress can be refined, completed research can be reported, and reported research can be evaluated.
- To provide for the translation of literacy research, theory, and philosophical deliberations into sound practice, but with no research, discussion, or contemplation to be discarded because its implementation is not immediately apparent.
- To conduct a conference at which newly trained scholars and scholars in training can get to know and get assistance from established and distinguished scholars in the field, through a mutual exchange of ideas.
- To provide a yearbook through which scholars of all levels can share viewpoints, resources, and expertise.
- To ensure that in the field of literacy no idea is too bold or new to be given a hearing, and none too old to be given reconsideration.

Gary Moorman Early Career Literacy Scholar Award

The **Gary Moorman Early Career Literacy Scholar Award** honors one ARF member each year who is in the early stages of their career. This annual award was established in 2017 and is named after Gary Moorman, Professor Emeritus at Appalachian State University, in honor of his leadership and mentoring of young scholars. The award includes both a monetary prize and a commemorative plaque.

Criteria for Consideration

This award is given to American Reading Forum members who are at the early stages of their career (generally defined as the first five years post-doctorate). The primary criterion is engagement in innovative reading/literacy research that addresses critical questions about policy, theory, and/or instructional practice. Active participation in professional organizations, particularly ARF, will also be considered.

Past Recipients of the Award

2023	Adam Brieske-Ulenski	2019	Emily Howell and Jennifer Van Allen
2022	Jason DeHart	2018	Rachelle Savitz and Carrie Symons
2021	Brittany Adams	2017	Trevor Stewart and Vicky Cardullo
2020	Jeanne Dyches		

The 2024 Gary Moorman Award recipient will be announced at the Friday luncheon.

The Brenda S. Townsend Service Award

A literacy researcher is awarded the **Brenda S. Townsend Service Award** for their dedicated service to the organization.

Criteria for Consideration

Current ARF Brenda S. Townsend members may nominate a fellow member for this award. Awardees must have been an ARF member for 10 consecutive years, serving the organization in multiple capacities.

Recent Recipients of the Award

2023	Enrique Puig	2019	Carla K. Meyer
2022	Vicky Cardullo	2018	Lynn Yribarren
2021	----	2017	Mona Matthews
2020	Vicky Zygouris-Coe		

The 2024 Brenda S. Townsend Service Award recipient will be announced at the Friday luncheon.

Graduate Student Scholarship Award

Graduate students presenting at the December conference are eligible for consideration for a scholarship. The amount varies from year to year. The scholarship may only be awarded to a person once.

Criteria for Consideration

Each graduate student is selected to present at the conference according to the ratings obtained on the blind reviews of their session proposal, a slide deck, and receipt of a nomination letter from an ARF member.

People who accept the award are expected to consider submitting an article describing their conference session to the American Reading Forum's Annual Yearbook.

Graduate student scholarship recipients will be announced during the business meeting on Friday.

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

Time	Event	Location
5:00 – 6:00pm	Executive Board Meeting	Cobia
6:00 – 8:00pm	Meet and Greet (All are Welcome)	Reflections Pool Bar

Thursday, December 12, 2024

Time	Event	Location
8:00 – 8:30am	Registration	Meeting Foyer
8:00 – 8:30am	Complimentary Coffee, Hot Tea, and Pastries	Meeting Foyer
8:30 – 9:00am	Welcome and Introduction	Royal Tern A
	<p>American Reading Forum President: Brittany Adams, The University of Alabama</p> <p>Conference Chairs: Megan Adams, Kennesaw State University Allison Garefino, Kennesaw State University Paula Guerra, Kennesaw State University Virginie Jackson, Kennesaw State University Sanjuana Rodriguez, Kennesaw State University</p>	
9:00 – 10:15am	Keynote Presentation	Royal Tern A
	<p>Safe Classrooms: Emotional Wellness as a Pathway to Academic Success</p> <p>Karla Montgomery-Ramirez, Energy Works ATL</p> <p>This presentation explores the critical connection between mental health, learning, and student development. Clinical Psychologist and Social Worker Karla Montgomery-Ramirez will provide psychoeducation on the nervous system, emphasizing its impact on student behavior, emotional regulation, and academic performance. The intersections between safety, curiosity, and adverse childhood experiences will be discussed and demonstrated, providing teachers with practical strategies to integrate emotional wellness and effective pedagogy. Through interactive mindfulness and emotional regulation activities, participants will gain tools to enhance both student well-being and academic success.</p>	
10:15 – 10:30am	Break	
10:30 – 11:45am	Paper Session	Silver Perch
	<p>Coming to Reading as a Whole Person: An Integrated Knowledge-Discursive Approach Jennie Baumann, Auburn University</p>	

10:30 – 11:45am
(cont.)

Students' diverse knowledge enriches text comprehension through classroom dialogue. This study examines how cultural, sociocultural, and strategic knowledge influence reading comprehension in student-led discussions. It reveals the importance of embracing varied knowledge types for authentic engagement, critical thinking, and inclusive learning experiences.

Reconceptualizing Teacher Candidates' Reading Attitudes for Promoting Aesthetic Reading Experiences with Diverse Literature

Dawn Martelli, Florida Gulf Coast University; Vickie Johnston, Florida Gulf Coast University; Michele Byrne, Florida Gulf Coast University

This research examined the perspectives of teacher candidates' reading habits, attitudes, beliefs, and values. In this study, the authors conducted an online survey to examine the perceptions of reading attitudes and habits of teacher candidates at the service and preservice level at a university.

Supporting English Learners' Reading Skills and Second Language Acquisition in Grades VPK-3: Lessons from Project ELITE

Vicky Zygouris-Coe, University of Central Florida; Marjorie Ceballos, University of Central Florida; Florin Mihai, University of Central Florida; Joyce Nutta, University of Central Florida; Leslie Duger Carvajal, University of Central Florida; Laila Noor, University of Central Florida

Presenters will share results from the Year 1 implementation of Project ELITE (English-Learner Infused Training and Experience) project which is designed to (a) support English Learners instruction by promoting school readiness, culturally relevant early reading skills, academic language development, and achievement in public voluntary pre-kindergarten through Grade 3.

Discussant: Virginie Jackson, Kennesaw State University

Paper Session

Blueback

**Developing Students' Multisyllabic Decoding/
Encoding and Teachers' Pedagogy**

Zoi A. Traga Philippakos, University of Tennessee Knoxville; Margaret Quinn, Texas A&M University; Rebekah Piccerno, University of Tennessee Knoxville; Adalea Davis, University of Tennessee Knoxville

The session will present the results of a study conducted with upper elementary students on multisyllabic decoding and encoding. The purpose of the study was to expand on the examination of the effects of multisyllabic program on 3rd to 5th learners and examine effects when instruction was provided by teachers.

**An Analysis of Literacy Coach's Self-Efficacy
Beliefs in the United States**

Michelle Kelley, University of Central Florida; Adam Brieske-Ulenski, Bridgewater State University

<p>10:30 – 11:45am (cont.)</p>	<p>Two literacy researchers knowledgeable and interested in how literacy coaches function in schools in the United States sought to update a previous national study. The three objectives of the study included: (1) development of a new self-efficacy scale for K -12 literacy coaches, (2) validation of a new scale, and (3) understanding the self-efficacy beliefs of the participating coaches. This presentation will share the study findings.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fostering Student Development: The Role of Transitional Spaces in After-School STEM Programs Victoria Cardullo, Auburn University</p> <p>This research examines how after-school STEM programs serve as transitional spaces, fostering student development by providing hands-on learning and exploration opportunities. Drawing on Winnicott's Transitional Space Theory, it explores how these programs enhance learning experiences, influence student interests in STEM, and cultivate essential 21st-century life skills.</p> <p>Discussant: Paula Guerra, Kennesaw State University</p>	
	Symposium	Royal Tern A
	<p style="text-align: center;">Meaning, Joy, Self-Study and Anti-Racist Teaching Nance S. Wilson, SUNY Cortland; Tierney Hinman, Auburn University; Kristen White, Northern Michigan University; Tess Dussling, St. Joseph's University; Wendy Gardiner, Pacific Lutheran University; Elizabeth Stevens, Roberts University; Amy Tondreau, University of Maryland Baltimore</p> <p>This symposium explores the role of joy in building and sustaining wellness in our six years as a self-study community. In parallel, symposium presenters provide time, space, and structure for developing audience self-study communities of practice while situating joy as the root of that work.</p>	
	Problems Court	Kingfisher
	<p style="text-align: center;">Upstanders in Children's Literature Ashton Adams, Texas Christian University; Amanda Slowey, Texas Christian University; Deja Munoz, Texas Christian University; Laura DeLeon, Texas Christian University</p> <p>In this presentation we will lead a conversation on the weighty task of hand-picking high-quality, age-appropriate texts for young students to mindfully learn about the foundations of sensitive topics and the characteristics of an upstander connects to the American Reading Forum's (2024) theme of "Mindful Literacy: Literacy as an Umbrella for the Whole Person." This approach allows elementary school teachers to effectively address sensitive topics and connect the content to critical social-emotional skills. As literacy leaders, we must use literature to encourage our students to be upstanders in their global community.</p>	
11:45 – 1:15pm	Lunch	On Your Own

1:15 – 2:30pm	Paper Session	Silver Perch
<p style="text-align: center;">Learning to Teach English Learners in Secondary Science Classrooms Through the Intersection of Science, Second Language, and Disciplinary Literacy: A Multi-Case Study</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vicky Zygouris-Coe, University of Central Florida; Su Gao, University of Central Florida; Joyce Nutta, University of Central Florida; Kristina Brendel Otero, University of Central Florida</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Through a collaboration between science education, TESOL, and disciplinary literacy faculty, a tri-focal approach was designed and integrated into an interdisciplinary science education program to better prepare secondary preservice teachers (PSTs). Findings from this multi-case study showed that PSTs’ beliefs and practices varied over time during their learning process.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Developing a Framework for Relational Interviewing through Analysis of Vanity Fair's “Actors on Actors” Transcripts</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Brittany Adams, The University of Alabama; Gillian E. Mertens, SUNY Cortland</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This study engaged in discourse analysis of Vanity Fair's “Actors on Actors” transcripts to develop a relational interviewing framework, emphasizing interaction, empathy, and participatory dynamics. In analyzing these interviews, this study identifies key elements that enhance qualitative research, particularly in sensitive or emotional contexts, fostering deeper connections and richer data while maintaining an ethic of care for interviewees.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Balancing Care for Students by Implementing Rest as Resistance in Teacher Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emily Pendergrass, Vanderbilt University; Melanie Hundley, Vanderbilt University; Rebecca Peterson, Vanderbilt University</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This study investigates rest as resistance in university teaching, particularly within literacy education. Amidst rising student mental health challenges, we explore how integrating care and rest can disrupt academic oppression cycles. By employing mixed methods, we aim to foster empathetic, student-centered learning environments that enhance engagement and academic success.</p> <p>Discussant: Sanjuana Rodriguez, Kennesaw State University</p>		
Paper Session		Blueback
<p style="text-align: center;">Revisiting the Multiple Roles of Specialized Literacy Professionals in the United States: An Initial Analysis of the “Whole” Group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Adam Brieske-Ulenski, Bridgewater State University; Aimee Morewood, West Virginia University; Rita Bean, University of Pittsburg; Diane</p>		

1:15 – 2:30pm
(cont.)

Kern, University of Rhode Island; Virginia Goatley, University at Albany

This session shares the initial results of a national survey of specialized literacy professionals in the US. The session will begin with understanding how the new survey is different from the previous one. The results regarding the roles and responsibilities of various literacy professionals and the implications for various stakeholders (e.g., PK-12 school districts, teacher preparation programs) interested in studying their effectiveness in improving teaching and learning will be discussed.

Reading Young Adult Literature in Community: Three Reader Response Models as Inclusive Practice

Cathie English, Missouri State University; Isabella Eslick, Missouri State University; Autumn Meyer, Missouri State University; Allison Raymond, Missouri State University

This presentation's focus is upon the use of three models of small group reader response emphasizing inclusive practices with Young Adult Literature. The researchers found that the structure of the various methods and how well a group collaborated within the specific structure of each method affected engagement and learning.

Cohort Communities: Illuminating the Power of Connection

Amy Knowles, Missouri State University; Keely Scott, Missouri State University

Education students face a challenge of combating the national health crisis of loneliness while preparing for a profession that is demanding and often isolating. In this session, we will explain steps our program took to address these concerns. We will share a case study outlining the ways connecting through community enhanced students' emotional and academic lives.

Discussant: Megan Adams, Kennesaw State University

Symposium

Royal Tern A

Taming the Turmoil: Mindful Movement Stories for a Calm Classroom

Donna Kester Phillips, Niagara University; Susanne Rosinski, WNY Qigong

This symposium will explore and demonstrate the benefits of mindful movement to help students integrate the mind, emotions, and body through the use of story. These stories and storytelling are written with the intended purpose of addressing Breath, Senses, Body, Mind, and Emotions through the somatic experience of movement with the purpose of helping create a calm classroom with an environment for learning readiness.

1:15 – 2:30pm (cont.)	Problems Court	Kingfisher
<p style="text-align: center;">Learner Differences and Literacy Development: Adaptive Instruction in the Face of Technological Authoritarianism? George G. Hruby, Independent Scholar</p> <p>Increased technological control of the classroom impairs teachers’ ability to assert some effective autonomy in advancing students' literacy development given their differences, interests, needs, motivations, and identities. This session will enjoin attendees in a discussion about what to do about it!</p>		
2:30 – 2:45pm	Break	
2:45 – 4:00pm	Call to Forum	Royal Tern A
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Trauma Sensitive Literacy Instruction</i> Authored by Rachelle S. Savitz and Britnie Delinger Kane</p> <p>It is vital for educators to be aware of how traumatic experiences affect today’s students, yet few teachers learn the tools needed to successfully teach these students. This book highlights how English Language Arts teachers can design and implement trauma-sensitive literacy instruction that supports students. The authors show how to support middle and high school students with specific literacy practices (reading, speaking, listening, and writing) that build resilience. <i>Trauma-Sensitive Literacy Instruction</i> is for the many teachers who are unsure how to invite students and their traumas into classroom instruction and embed critical discussions and learning within their teaching practices and pedagogy. This book supports ELA teachers navigate student trauma in a way that empowers both students and teachers.</p> <p>Keynote speaker, longtime ARF member, and co-author of the text, Rachelle Savitz, will be present to share her insights. The topic of this book is highly relevant to the conference theme and the issues educators face in classrooms today. Rachelle has also graciously offered to donate a copy of the book for the annual raffle! We encourage members to acquire and read the text before the conference to prepare for a professional and robust discussion.</p> <p>Discussants: Jennifer VanSlander, Columbus State University; Sarah Sharpe, Columbus State University; Charlotte Henderson, Columbus State University</p>		
Paper Session		Silver Perch
<p style="text-align: center;">Wholeness of Middle Eastern Muslims in Picture Books Mehmet Gultekin, University of Arkansas</p> <p>This study examined the Middle East Picture book Award to determine what books are available about Middle Eastern Muslims who experience xenophobia and Islamophobia. The findings show that these books serve as windows by representing Middle Eastern Muslim, and randomly serve as sliding glass doors to develop empathy, yet they do not serve as mirrors.</p>		

2:45 – 4:00pm
(cont.)

Reading Mindfully: Graduate Students’ Demonstration of Metacognitive Processes through Social Annotation and Explicit Instruction

Jennie Baumann, Auburn University; Tess Dussling, St. Joseph’s University; Elizabeth Stevens, Roberts Wesleyan College; Brittany Adams, The University of Alabama; Nance Wilson, SUNY Cortland; Jane Bean-Folkes, Marist College & South Orange-Maplewood School District; Linda Smetana, California State University at East Bay

This study explores how graduate students' metacognitive processes, through social annotation and explicit instruction via the GRR framework, enhance mindful reading of digital texts. Contrary to assumptions, many need foundational skills, highlighting the importance of explicit metacognitive instruction for developing independent strategic reading and higher-order thinking skills.

Discussant: Emily Pendergrass, Vanderbilt University

Symposium

Blueback

Culturally Sustaining Early Literacy Pedagogies and Our Futures

Kindel Turner Nash, Appalachian State University; Roderick Peele, Northern Parkway School; Bilal Polson, Northern Parkway School; Erik Sumner, Northern Parkway School; Alicia Arce, Northern Parkway School; Kerry Elson, Central Park East II School; Gloria Boutte, University of South Carolina; Rachel McMillan, University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign; Nathaniel Bryan, University of Texas at Austin; Michele Myers, Wake Forest University; Eliza Braden, University of South Carolina; Sanjuana Rodriguez, Kennesaw State University; Kamania Wynter-Hoyte, University of South Carolina; Natasha Thornton, Thornton Educational Consulting; Ekaterina Strelakova-Hughes, University of Missouri-Kansas City; Rich Minaya, , University of Missouri-Kansas City; Nora Peterman, University of Missouri-Kansas City; Sakeena Everett, University of Connecticut, Roberta Price Gardner, Kennesaw State University; Brittany Frieson, University of North Texas; Wintre Foxworth Johnson, University of Virginia, Saba Khan Vlach, University of Iowa, Maria Leija, University of Texas at San Antonio; Teaira McMurtry, The University of Alabama; Gretchen Robinson, North Carolina A&T

This symposium foregrounds educators' and teacher educators multilayered stories grounded in research findings on culturally sustaining pedagogies across a range of early literacy research and practice contexts. Our primary goal is for participants to be able to contribute to a more loving and just future of culturally sustaining pedagogies with and for Black and other minoritized young children and communities.

2:45 – 4:00pm (cont.)	Problems Court	Kingfisher
	<p>Mixed Messages: Teacher Autonomy in Providing Joyful, Engaging, Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction Maria Genest, Endicott College; Julie Ankrum, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Joy Dangora Erickson, Endicott College; Aimee Morewood, West Virginia University</p> <p>This Problems Court will explore how literacy teacher educators can support teacher candidates and school partners as we navigate the misalignment between using valid and varied assessment data to design engaging literacy instruction and messages from policymakers to implement scripted literacy programs with fidelity.</p>	
5:00 – 6:30pm	Spirit of the Times (Food and Fun for All)	Tide’s Edge

Friday, December 13, 2024

Time	Event	Location
8:30 – 9:00am	Graduate Student Meeting	Kingfisher
8:30 – 9:00am	Registration	Meeting Foyer
8:30 – 9:00am	Complimentary Coffee, Hot Tea, and Pastries	Meeting Foyer
9:00 – 10:15am	Keynote Presentation	Royal Tern A
	<p>Trauma-Sensitive Literacy Instruction: Supporting Student Learning and Instruction in ELA Classrooms Rachelle Savitz, East Carolina University</p> <p>This presentation will explore key insights from <i>Trauma-sensitive Literacy Instruction: Building Student Resilience in English Language Arts Classrooms</i>, focusing on how literacy instruction can be adapted to support students who have experienced trauma. The session will address the realities of students' adverse childhood experiences and how these impact their cognitive, emotional, and academic development. Attendees will learn practical strategies for fostering a safe, supportive learning environment, integrating trauma-sensitive approaches into ELA instruction, and building resilience through thoughtful literacy practices that promote both academic and emotional growth. This session will have a hands-on element, so please bring your computer or phone.</p>	
10:15 – 10:30am	Break	
10:30 – 11:45am	Paper Session	Silver Perch
	<p>"I did not grow up here": How Teachers Can Create Thoughtful Literacy Learning Spaces for Third Culture Kids Kathleen Colantonio-Yurko, SUNY Brockport</p> <p>Third Culture Kids (TCK) are children who grow-up outside of their home culture and country. They face multiple phases of adjustment in schools and can struggle to find a sense of belonging. This presentation examines the transitions of TCKs represented in</p>	

<p>10:30 – 11:45am (cont.)</p>	<p>children's and YAL texts. Further, this presentation will discuss how teachers can create thoughtful and responsive literacy learning spaces for TCKs.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Scaling Literacy: A Rock Climbing Metaphor for Reading Development and Instruction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Brittany Adams, The University of Alabama; Karyn A. Allee, Mercer University; Nance S. Wilson, SUNY Cortland</p> <p>This presentation introduces an extended Scarborough's Reading Rope model that captures the use of the rope in action and considers the individual, the reading/learning environment, and the metacognition required to engage in critical reading. Using a rock climbing metaphor, we emphasize the importance of strategic, adaptive learning and practical teaching strategies to foster holistic literacy development.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Preparing Preservice Teachers for the Field: Mental Health First Aid Training in Educator Preparation Programs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stacie Finley, Missouri State University; Amber Howard, Missouri State University</p> <p>Students are facing mental health challenges. Literacy teachers, though not mental health professionals, can support students due to their trusted role. This study evaluated participants' beliefs about mental health and the impact of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training. Participants drew connections between the dialogic conversations required to build relationships with students and knowledge gained from MHFA training.</p> <p>Discussant: Virginie Jackson, Kennesaw State University</p>
<p>Paper Session</p>	<p>Blueback</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">AI Assisted/Created Picture Books in Reading and Writing Instructions for the Wholeness of the Literacy Instructions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mehmet Gultekin, University of Arkansas; Vahide Yigit Gencten, Adiyaman University</p> <p>AI has been in the classroom for a while. In this presentation, we discussed how AI created/generated picture books can be used in reading and writing instruction by following the guidelines that are developed by The National Reading Panel and The National Early Literacy Panel. We argued that these books can be used in reading and writing instructions. We also posed a question if reading and writing instructions will be whole without AI in the classrooms.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Perceptions of Ability vs Assessment Data: Implications for Literacy Instruction and Student Performance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Julie W. Ankrum, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Maria Genest, Endicott College; Farheen Mahmood, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Kara Ratai, Seton Hill University; Emily Goss, Indiana University of Pennsylvania</p>

<p>10:30 – 11:45am (cont.)</p>	<p>Research demonstrates that responsive literacy instruction is essential to meet the needs of diverse students; still, many teachers instruct with scripted programs. We will share findings from a case study describing one teacher’s implementation of a scripted program. Data comparing student performance with and without scripted program implementation will be shared.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Exploring Relational and Embodied Literacy Coaching: A Multimodal Positioning Analysis Katarina N. Silvestri, SUNY Cortland; Gillian E. Mertens, SUNY Cortland</p> <p>This multimodal positioning analysis explores the relational and multimodal coaching moves made by one literacy coach during modeled instructional literacy coaching videos. Through analysis of multimodal discourse including gaze, gesture, and speech, this study reveals myriad ways that one literacy coach was responsive to a new teacher during instructional coaching.</p> <p>Discussant: Megan Adams, Kennesaw State University</p>	
	Symposium	Royal Tern A
	<p style="text-align: center;">The Writing Marathon as Meditative Literacy Practice Cathie English, Missouri State University; Amy Knowles, Missouri State University; Keely Scott, Missouri State University</p> <p>This symposium will enact a writing marathon within the environs of the resort and surrounding area. Writing Marathons are especially suited to the 2024 American Reading Forum Conference because its pedagogical focus is upon the following three forms of literacy: culturally sustainable, social emotional, and trauma sensitive.</p>	
	Problems Court	Kingfisher
	<p style="text-align: center;">How Can Mindful Teacher Educators Support Literacy Teachers in the Era of SoR? Jennifer Van Allen, Lehman College, CUNY; Harriet Fayne, Lehman College, CUNY; Debra Coffey, Independent Scholar; Jennifer Collett, Lehman College, CUNY</p> <p>Using a case study with voices from a large, urban district, we examine how SoR policy has created “living contradictions” in teacher preparation as it is implemented around the US and discuss ideas for mindfully preparing literacy teachers for this new era of the Reading Wars.</p>	
<p>11:45 – 1:15pm</p>	<p>Lunch (Provided with Registration) Royal Tern B</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Join us for a buffet lunch and the presentation of: Gary Moorman Early Career Literacy Scholar Award and Brenda S. Townsend Service Award</p>	

1:15 – 1:30pm	Break			
1:30 – 2:45pm	Paper Session	Silver Perch		
<p style="text-align: center;">Joyful Vitality in Teacher Education Heidi Lyn Hadley, Auburn University; Amy Knowles, Missouri State University</p> <p>Boldt's concept of vitality in literacy education has important implications for teacher educators. This study traces the journey of two teacher educators as they attempt to model vital literacy and pedagogical practices in their teacher preparation program.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sustaining Joyful and Meaningful Literacy through Anti-Bias and Anti-Racist Themes in Children's Literature Annemarie Kaczmarczyk, Mercer University; Karyn Allee, Mercer University; Sherron Killingsworth Roberts, University of Central Florida; Patricia Crawford, University of Pittsburgh</p> <p>This presentation examines how recent award-winning children's picture books can enhance literacy by incorporating anti-bias and anti-racist themes. It analyzes books from 2013 to 2023 using Critical Race Theory, highlighting themes of affirmation, empathy, and action to promote understanding and inclusivity among young children in early education settings.</p> <p>Discussant: Jason DeHart, Independent Scholar</p>				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 67%; padding: 2px;">Paper Session</td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 2px;">Blueback</td> </tr> </table>			Paper Session	Blueback
Paper Session	Blueback			
<p style="text-align: center;">Is Your Syllabus Trauma Informed? An Application of Equity-Centered Trauma-Informed Education in Teacher Education Amber Howard, Missouri State University; Stacie Finley, Missouri State University</p> <p>This session will share results from a course transformation using Shevrin Venet's four proactive priorities to address systemic issues in trauma-informed education. Surveys show that a thoughtfully crafted, equity-centered syllabus fostered positive student attitudes and a supportive learning environment, bridging theoretical and practical applications in pedagogy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Trends in Early Literacy Instructional Practices (2006-2023): A Systematic Literature Review Kindel Turner Nash, Appalachian State University; Debra Prykanowski, Appalachian State University; Aftynne Cheek, Appalachian State University; Woodrow Trathen, Appalachian State University; Peijuan Tau, Appalachian State University; Ashley Pennell, Appalachian State University; Rebecca Payne Jordan, Salem College; Jennifer Jaramillo, The Early Childhood Group; Gretchen Robinson, North Carolina A&T</p> <p>This presentation shares initial findings and implications from a systematic literature review regarding trends in early literacy practices and over the last decade.</p>				

1:30 – 2:45pm (cont.)	Discussant: Sanjuana Rodriguez, Kennesaw State University	
	Paper Session	Kingfisher
<p style="text-align: center;">Teachers as Readers: An Examination of Pre- and In-service Teachers' Reading Habits Karen Morrison, University of South Alabama; Rebecca Giles, University of South Alabama</p> <p>Reading habits research asserts that teachers who are avid readers possess a greater range of experiences from which to motivate reading. This study considered important constructs in reading research that significantly impact students' reading achievement and have been linked to the abilities of reading teachers. We will share our findings!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A Critical Look at the Influence of Teacher Candidates' Reading Backgrounds on Literature Selections for Use in the Classroom Karen Kleppe Graham, Arkansas State University</p> <p>The purpose was to examine selected children's literature and the ways in which those selections were influenced by the participants' reading backgrounds. Using critical literacy, this paper sought to understand the essential role literature selection played in elementary classroom lesson planning and by extension – the role their selections played in promoting an inclusive literacy learning environment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Exploring a Struggling Reader's Profile: A Case Study Investigating the Impact of Recent State Legislation Shelley Therien, University of Florida</p> <p>This case study focuses on one struggling reader who is a rising sixth grade student directly affected by federal and state (Florida) educational policies. It will examine her history of reading instruction and interventions in elementary school, her current reading abilities, and her needs as a new middle school student.</p> <p>Discussant: Karla Montgomery-Ramirez, Energy Works ATL</p>		
Advancing Literacy Session		Royal Tern A
<p style="text-align: center;">An Exploration of the Influence of Literacy Identities on Perceived Instructional Ability Jennifer L. VanSlander, Columbus State University; Sarah Sharpe, Columbus State University; Charlotte Henderson, Columbus State University; Patricia Patrick, Columbus State University</p> <p>This study aims to explore the construction of literacy identities of pre-service teachers (PSTs) and their influence on their perceived ability to provide literacy instruction. The study uses Functional Context Theory to examine PSTs' constructed literacy identities. The study will be conducted during the fall semester 2024, using a narrative inquiry approach to explore the literacy lived experiences and stories of PSTs.</p>		

1:30 – 2:45pm
(cont.)

An Assessment of Rural Literacy Needs
Adalea Davis, University of Tennessee; Zoi Traga Philippakos,
University of Tennessee

In this study, we are surveying Central Appalachian teachers and principals to identify the challenges faced at the local level by members of school communities. The main research questions for this investigation will be the following: What are the factors that affect schooling and literacy within your community? What are the factors that affect the literacy performance of the students? Then, we will examine the literacy performance of the schools in relation to the findings.

**The Impact of Trauma Infused Care on an
After-School Reading Intervention Program**
Valerie Gresser, Duquesne University; Carla Meyer, Duquesne
University

This presentation describes an ongoing study taking place in an urban K-5 school where Trauma Informed Care (TIC) is infused into an after-school reading intervention program. The study investigates the impact that TIC has on students as they work to improve their reading skills using an evidence-based reading intervention program.

**Moving Toward the Culturally Relevant and Developmentally
Appropriate Implementation of SoR**
Mary Jane McIlwain, Auburn University

Literacy researchers and practitioners are answering the call for the developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant implementation of SoR in Pk-1. Prioritizing a single interpretation narrows the field's opportunity to build and extend a comprehensive model that is understandable, research-able, and practical across basic and applied research settings. Join the conversation that synthesizes SoR research in diverse early childhood settings through the use of rapid analysis.

**The Benefits & Challenges in the Role of an
Instructor at the Fast Start Program**
Tasi Levao, Kennesaw State University

First-hand accounts and personal testimonies will be offered for critical discussion on the benefits of implementing a Literacy Summer Program that's focused in the lens of social-emotional learning and cultural engagement in literacy. This presentation aims to expand upon not only the fundamental skills and theories involved, but how the implementation of these skills and trainings have a mutually beneficial impact on our elementary students and teachers/staff.

**Beyond the Red Pen: Leveraging AI for Improved Teacher
Well-Being and Efficient Grading in Writing Pedagogy**
Bridget Newell; University of Florida

This ongoing study explores how two English Language Arts teachers use an AI-enabled application to streamline their grading process and balance their workload. This

1:30 – 2:45pm (cont.)	<p>study aims to understand the ways in which AI assists teachers is grading student essays and the broader implications for writing instruction.</p> <p>Timekeeper: Victoria Cardullo, Auburn University</p>	
2:45 – 3:00pm	Break	
3:00 – 4:15pm	Paper Session	Silver Perch
	<p>From Marshallese Atolls to Ozark Atolls: Reading Picture Books Created by Marshallese Children in Book Clubs for Abolitionist Teaching</p> <p>Mehmet Gultekin, University of Arkansas; Alissa Blair, University of Arkansas; Alison Wilson, University of Houston</p> <p>Ozarks have the second largest Marshallese community, yet still their educational disparities are ongoing. As three abolitionist researchers/ teacher educators serving in Ozark Atolls, we engaged in book picture book club discussions created by Marshallese children in Marshall Islands. We aim to center the Marshallese way of knowing, being and living to integrate into education system in Ozark Atolls for their wholeness.</p>	
	<p>Exploring State Elementary Writing Evaluation Rubrics through a Joy-Sustaining Literacy Lens</p> <p>Earlisha J. Whitfield, University of Central Florida; Sherron Killingsworth Roberts, University of Central Florida</p> <p>This content analysis examined the evaluative components of elementary, high-stakes, state-standardized writing sample rubrics. Using Spandel’s analytical traits as our conceptual framework, this manuscript explored possible commonalities and intersections among the six traits within each state’s writing sample rubric.</p>	
<p>Development of a Scale on Multisyllabic Word Reading and Spelling Anxiety</p> <p>Zoi A. Traga Philippakos, University of Tennessee; Margaret Quinn, Texas A&M University</p> <p>Because of the importance of affective factors broadly and reading anxiety more specifically for students’ reading experiences, reading outcomes, and the efficacy of interventions, this study seeks to develop and provide initial evaluation on a reading-multisyllabic-words anxiety scale specifically designed for targeted use with upper elementary students to understand their feelings of anxiety with encoding and decoding multisyllabic words.</p>		
<p>Discussant: Paula Guerra, Kennesaw State University</p>		

3:00 – 4:15pm (cont.)	Paper Session	Blueback
<p style="text-align: center;">Mindful Literacy: Creating Healing Classrooms in Post-Pandemic Education Laura Lim Sang, Kennesaw State University</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical need for trauma-sensitive approaches in educational settings. This proposal explores how mindful literacy, rooted in social work tenets, can create healing spaces in literacy classrooms that address both the emotional and academic needs of students. By integrating trauma-sensitive literacy teaching with positive psychosomatic experiences, educators can foster environments that support healing, resilience, and learning.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Discourse of Character-Focused Literacy Teacher: A Comparative Case Study of Three Secondary Teachers’ Practices Jared McKee, University of Florida; Mark Pacheco, University of Florida</p> <p>Using Gee’s discourse analysis, this comparative case study explores how three secondary literacy teachers enact their roles as character-focused literacy instructors and support culturally and linguistically diverse students. Findings reveal that all teachers implemented a character-focused literacy discourse through explicit concept teaching, literature use, and structured discussions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Navigating a Scripted Reading Program: Recommendations from the Field Michelle Ciminelli, Niagara University</p> <p>This presentation describes the experiences of eight teachers and an administrator during the first-year implementation of a scripted reading program. Data consisted of multiple interviews, observational field notes, and artifacts. Results indicated initial fear and apprehension, a process of adaptation, and suggestions for administrators. Recommendations for navigating a scripted reading program while intentionally implementing well-rounded literacy instruction will be presented.</p> <p>Discussant: Nance S. Wilson, SUNY Cortland</p>		
Advancing Literacy Session		Royal Tern A
<p style="text-align: center;">Encouraging Understanding and Joy: Studying Immigrants and Refugees in Canadian Atlantic Children’s Literature Jan Lacina, Texas Christian University; Deja Munoz, Texas Christian University; Amanda Slowey, Texas Christian University</p> <p>This presentation will describe a study of children’s books featuring immigrants/refugees as protagonists in Canadian Atlantic children’s literature. Second, the presentation will describe the ongoing results of studying these books during weekly book club meetings with children.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Responding to TikTok Videos: A Survey of Aspiring</p>		

3:00 – 4:15pm
(cont.)

Secondary English Language Arts Teachers

Heather Wright, Gardner-Webb University; Lauren May, Longwood University

The study's purpose is to examine, via survey, the influence that secondary ELA teacher TikTok videos have on aspiring secondary ELA teachers. Research Question: What feelings or associations do aspiring secondary ELA teachers have toward their future teaching career after watching TikTok videos created by other secondary ELA teachers?

Joy Matters: An Action Research Project in a Middle Grades ELA Methods Course

Kristie W. Smith, Kennesaw State University

Through critical literacies, youth can perceive social constructs and biases and “read the world.” Middle grades teachers should take up critical pedagogies, while meeting the social-emotional needs of young adolescents. In this study, I interrogate my pedagogical practices for ELA teacher development in joyful literacy instruction for the middle level.

How Teaching a Dog to Read Using Early Literacy Strategies Can Offer Insight into Successful Literacy Instruction and Provide Motivation for Striving and Beginning Readers

Brittany Beeker, Clemson University

Dogs are man's best friend, but they can also be tools used in the classroom to show struggling readers what can potentially be achieved. In this study, dogs will be taught to read simple words using the same popular techniques and strategies used to teach kids how to read.

Mindful Literacy: Literacy Educators Engaging in Transdisciplinary Research

Aimee Morewood, West Virginia University; Canyon Lohnas, West Virginia University

This presentation uses a humanities lens to discuss its transdisciplinary work involving medical professionals and literacy educators. These two concepts support individual health literacy, which will be demonstrated through examples of literacy educators' research, and participants will engage in conversations focused on the next steps needed in transdisciplinary literacy research.

Timekeeper: Megan Adams, Kennesaw State University

3:00 – 4:15pm (cont.)	Problems Court	Kingfisher
	<p style="text-align: center;">Envisioning Models of Literacy for Inclusive Practice and Healing Jason D. DeHart, Independent Scholar</p> <p>This session is intended to explore reading and literacy models through dialogue and interaction to critically and playfully unpack a more unified theory for examining literacy practices. The approach is intended to be creative, inclusive, conversational, and artful as participants discuss the complexities of language and the processes that must be accounted for in educational models.</p>	
4:15 – 6:00pm	Business Meeting	Royal Tern A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business report • Presentation of Graduate Student Scholarship Awards • Raffle winners announced 	

Saturday, December 14, 2024

Time	Event	Location
8:30 – 9:00am	Registration	Meeting Foyer
8:30 – 9:00am	Complimentary Coffee, Hot Tea, and Pastries	Meeting Foyer
9:00 – 10:15am	Keynote Presentation	Royal Tern A
	<p style="text-align: center;">Learning and Leading Beyond Disciplinary Silos Mandie B. Dunn, University of South Florida</p> <p>Becoming critical thinkers requires us to be literate as a life-long transdisciplinary endeavor that necessitates language arts, sciences, social studies, mathematics, and the arts. Teaching students to become transdisciplinary literate demands a coherent and intentional K–12 framework for instruction with flexible and fluid research validated instructional practices that teach students to question the questions as they become more internationally savvy to solve real world issues. Real world issues are never solved by monodisciplinary thinking in disciplinary silos. Real world issues are solved by curious and imaginative transdisciplinary solution seekers that tap into the world.</p>	
10:15 – 10:30am	Break	
10:30 – 11:45am	Paper Session	Silver Perch
	<p style="text-align: center;">Tails, Tears, and Tantrums: Internet Narratives in Children’s Picture Books Gillian E. Mertens, SUNY Cortland; Brittany Adams, The University of Alabama</p> <p>This study conducts a content analysis of contemporary children’s picture books that center on digital technology use, including the Internet, online gaming, social media, and digital devices. Through this analysis, key narratives employed by authors to convey abstract aspects of the online experience are identified, offering insights into the sociocultural depictions of online spaces that young learners are first encountering.</p>	

10:30 – 11:45am
(cont.)

Building from Their Own Words: Bi-/Multilingual Secondary Students' Home and School Linguaging Practices

Alexis McBride, St. Joseph's University

This study investigates how urban, bi-/multilingual high school students describe their language usage in school vs. out-of-school settings, in an attempt to leverage their sophisticated language knowledge within the classroom. Together we will explore focus group interview data with participants in grades 9 through 12 (n=40).

Literacy For The "Whole Person:" Examining How Secondary Teachers Incorporate Mental Health Programs in Their Literary Practices

Sydney M. Smith, University of Central Florida

The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that one in six U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year. Teachers have expressed a need for more knowledge, training, and resources to better support adolescents' mental health. This study explores the impact of mental health programs, such as Project AWARE, on secondary English Language Arts (ELA) teachers' pedagogical practices. Project AWARE aims to improve adolescents' social and emotional development through coordinated support services. The study seeks to understand how this federal grant has influenced high school ELA teachers' classroom and literary practices.

Discussant: Jan Lacina, Texas Christian University

Advancing Literacy Session

Royal Tern A

What Are We Teaching the Children?: Emotion-based Lessons in Mongolian Picturebooks as Understood Through Comparative, Critical Content Analysis

Jeane Copenhaver-Johnson, Ithaca College; Ninjin Tumurbat, Ithaca College

In an analysis of Mongolian picturebooks, we explore representations of protagonists' emotional regulation, applying the theoretical framework of ideal affect to better understand lessons advanced in stories where characters respond to difficult, emotional life circumstances. We are eager to discuss critical questions our emergent findings prompt for us.

Critical Content Analysis to Explore Supplemental Children's English Literature in Postcolonial Pakistani Schools

Farheen Mahmood, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

This research is grounded in transactional and postcolonial theory to explore Bishop's metaphorical term of whether stories function as windows, mirrors or sliding glass doors in Supplemental Children's English Literature in Postcolonial Pakistani Schools.

How Preservice Teachers Use and Perceive Artificial Intelligence to Design Culturally Responsive Phonics Instruction

<p>10:30 – 11:45am (cont.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Angela Curfman, West Liberty University</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This presentation will present research that extended on critical pedagogy that empowers preservice teachers to question and critically examine artificial intelligence. Through the advocacy of learners as problem-solvers, the study set out to explore the understandings and experiences of preservice teachers when they utilize artificial intelligence to design culturally responsive phonics instruction.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">After the Storm: Using Storybooks to Build Resilience Constance Beecher, Iowa State University</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Weather-related disasters have impacted several parts of the U.S. and become increasingly more common. While some children may be able to express how they are feeling about these events, others may find it harder to express their thoughts and feelings. Adults can use storybooks to help children learn about natural disasters, understand their feelings, gain empathy, and express their emotions. A 3-part program to support children's resilience will be presented.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Infusing Literacy Instruction with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Practicum Valerie Gresser, Duquesne University; Kimberly Davidson, Duquesne University</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Researchers discuss results of their self-study of incorporating mini-lessons and reflections on culturally relevant pedagogy to the literacy practicum in a educator preparation program.</p> <p>Timekeeper: Megan Adams, Kennesaw State University</p>	
<p>11:45 – 12:00pm</p>	<p>Closing Remarks & Adjournment</p>	<p>Royal Tern A</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">American Reading Forum President Brittany Adams, The University of Alabama</p>		

About the Keynote Speakers



Rachelle Savitz is an associate professor of reading/literacy at East Carolina University. She was previously a K-12 literacy coach/interventionist and high school reading teacher. She was the recipient of the 2020 Clemson Graduate Student Government Outstanding Graduate Student Advocate Award, the 2019 Association of Literacy Educators and Researcher’s Jerry Johns Promising Researcher Award, and the 2018 Early Career Literacy Scholar Award from the American Reading Forum. She explores critical inquiry, culturally sustaining pedagogy, trauma-sensitive practices, and teacher self-efficacy related to disciplinary literacy and the use of equitable literacy materials and curricula.



Mandie Bevels Dunn is an assistant professor of English Education at the University of South Florida and a former high school English language arts teacher. In her scholarship, she centers teachers’ lives and well-being by studying the relationship between teachers’ emotions and their pedagogy, including teachers’ relationship-building efforts with students. In particular, she has been studying how teachers who were grieving a death managed their emotions in the context of reading, writing, and thinking with students. In this work, she identifies the challenges grieving teachers face as well as the supports that will help sustain them following the death of a loved one.



Karla Montgomery-Ramirez is the co-Director of Energy Works Atlanta and Clinical Case Manager in the Academy for Language and Literacy at Kennesaw State University. Karla is a psychologist who graduated from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, a Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW) from Kennesaw State University, and a co-founder of Energy Works ATL. She utilizes her knowledge and training working in the intersection between mental health, education, and culture. Her focus is to provide trauma-informed and culturally competent direct and group services through psychosomatic methodologies, but also understands the importance of enacting change at the community and policy levels as a way to enhance every individual’s wellbeing.

About the Conference Chairs



Megan Adams is an Associate Professor of Reading Education in the Department of Secondary and Middle Grades Education and the co-Director of the Academy for Language and Literacy at Kennesaw State University. Megan is a Qualitative methodologist and is passionate about serving teachers and learners in various ways. Megan's research can be found on Research Gate and Google Scholar.



Sanjuana Rodriguez an Associate Professor of Reading and Literacy Education and Co-Director of the Academy for Language and Literacy at Kennesaw State University. Her research interests include early literacy development of culturally and linguistically diverse students, Latinx children's literature, and the experiences of Latinx pre-and in-service teachers.



Virginie Jackson is an Assistant Professor of Literacy Education and Program Coordinator in the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education in the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University. She teaches undergraduate and graduate reading methods, reading assessments, and pre-school curriculum courses. Virginie's research focuses on culturally responsive early literacy practices and critical literacy development of young learners. Her work centers on the preparation of preservice teachers to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students in engaging, multi-model, and multifaceted ways.



Paula Guerra is a Professor of Mathematics Education in the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education at the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University. Her research interests include teaching and learning math for social justice, comparing pre-service teachers' experiences and reactions to teaching math for social justice, the experience of girls, especially Latinas learning mathematics, and the experiences of Latinx pre- and in-service teachers in the US.



Allison Garefino is a Research Scholar in Wellstar College of Health and Human Services at Kennesaw State University and Clinical Director of the Children and Family Programs. She brings over 20 years of experience in training, implementation, and evaluation of psychosocial interventions. Trained in Participatory Analysis for Community Action as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer, her interests include clinical implementation and research, focusing on the intersection between well-being and pedagogy. She has significant experience implementing randomized controlled trials in both laboratory and community settings.