



SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION &
COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Annual Report

2022 – 2023

SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Letter from the Dean



Dear Friends,

Pulling together this Annual Report offers an opportunity to reflect on the 2022-2023 academic year and all that we accomplished. It is a time of real excitement here in ECP and across Santa Clara University as new President Julie Sullivan brings energy and excitement to plans for our future. Here in ECP, our faculty and staff have been crafting new programs, teaching our students, and engaging our communities, all while continuing to engage in outstanding scholarship. Students and alumni have been learning and shaking things up—a deep commitment to making a difference in the lives of those around us.

A special shout out of congratulations to the Teacher Education faculty in the Department of Education, the SCU Online team, and the staff of ECP, as we launch our first fully online program. Nicknamed OMATTC, the Online Master of Arts in Teaching and Teaching Credential program has welcomed nearly 50 students in 2023—more than double our hopes for these first cohorts. The faculty worked hard to adapt their incredible in-person program into a high-quality, high-touch, Jesuit-informed and personalized online program that is expanding access to a Santa Clara education well beyond our region.

This comes on the heels of a complete revision of our teacher preparation programs—MATTC, CatMAT, and ExCEL—to offer an inclusive, integrated curriculum that cultivates general education teachers qualified to address a wide range of learning needs in their classrooms. These revisions, launched in 2022, will soon be followed by the addition of a Special Education credential (pending state approval).

This year, we in ECP sharpened our focus on bilingual teaching with the introduction of a new Bilingual Leadership Fellowship program, and increased access to Bilingual Authorization through scholarship funding and an online program for inservice teachers across California, Texas, and New Mexico. We have also expanded hiring and curriculum development within the area of child and adolescent mental health.

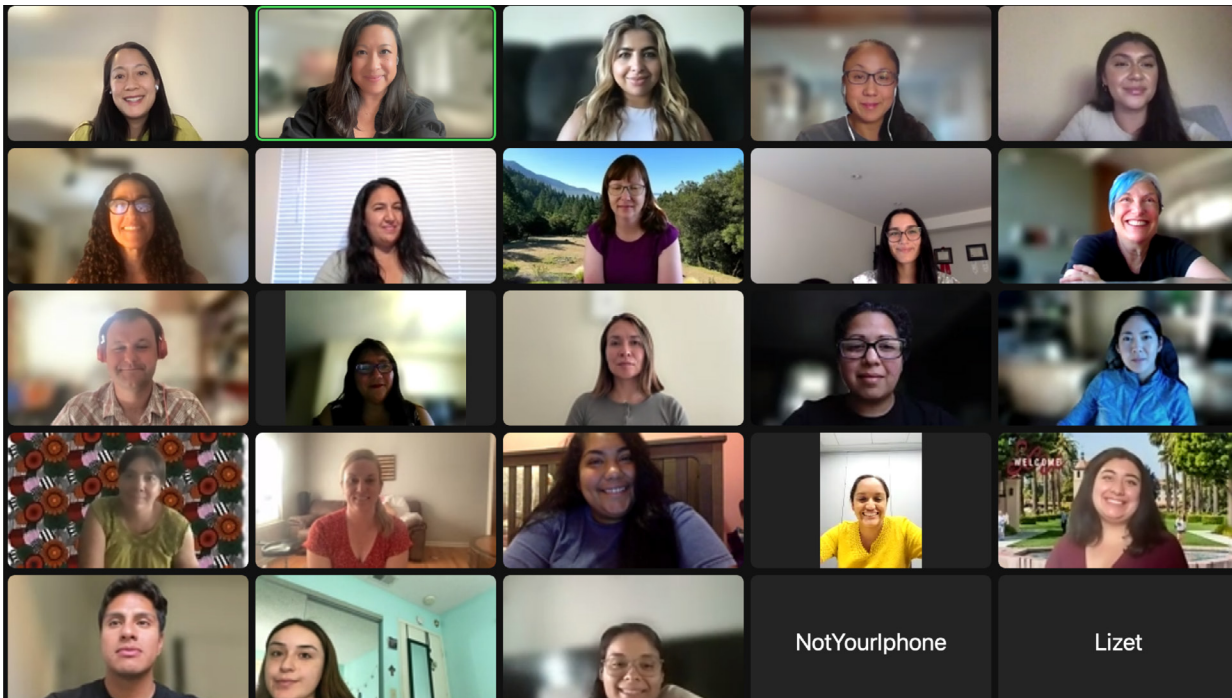
As you'll see in the pages following, a dedication to equity, inclusion, and high-quality programs inspire everything we do here. In the years ahead, we plan to sustain impact in this area by building upon the progress shown here, while embracing new ideas guided by our mission to positively transform schools, communities, and the greater society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sabrina Zirkel'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sabrina Zirkel, PhD
Dean, School of Education & Counseling Psychology

NEW PROGRAMS



The Launch of Santa Clara's Online Masters in Teaching & Teaching Credential Program

... and the positive impact it has had on the School of Education & Counseling Psychology

In response to the growing demand for flexible teacher-education programs, Santa Clara University's (SCU) School of Education & Counseling Psychology (ECP) launched an online version of the Master of Arts in Teaching and Teaching Credential (MATTTC) for both current and aspiring teachers in public, charter, and Catholic schools. Aligning with the school's commitment to education as a tool for social justice and to prepare educators dedicated to ensuring all learners are supported in the classroom, this program leads the charge as the first online offering from the School of Education & Counseling Psychology.

Between summer CatMAT enrollment and the Fall 2023 cohort, the school welcomed nearly 50 students, more than double the school's initial projections. Students hail from 21 different cities and seven counties across California, including San Diego, Merced, and Monterey counties. Of the 30+ students beginning the online MATTTC program this fall, seven students are also enrolled in Bilingual Authorization to support bilingual students across the state.

Why Now & Why Online?

Just when California's teacher shortage seemed to be easing, it got worse. The COVID-19 global pandemic created a pertinent need for work and life to continue on, at safe distances, in our own homes. Schools throughout California moved to a remote format.

A seven-year increase in the number of new teacher credentials issued by the state ended last year with a 16% decline, exacerbating the state's ongoing teacher shortage. There were 16,491 new teaching credentials issued in California in 2021–22. The previous year, the state bestowed 19,659 such credentials, according to "Teacher Supply in California," an annual report to the state Legislature compiled by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. That leaves 3,000 fewer teachers, which will have a significant impact on California school districts already struggling to fill teaching positions — especially for those classified as "high needs" schools.

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SCU's Jesuit Foundation & Flexible Future

Building upon the university's Jesuit value of Cura Personalis, or care for the whole person, the new online and hybrid modalities give students additional flexibility to pursue their degree while still upholding ECP's reputation for quality. Aspiring educators who live far away or in rural areas with fewer options for high quality teacher preparation will now have access to a Santa Clara University education.

The OMATTC program is delivering the same curriculum as the in-person offering, but in a manner that maximizes convenience and life balance. The program is designed to feature regular synchronous learning—combining the in-person MATTC curriculum with innovative online learning pedagogy the school developed during the pandemic.

Santa Clara University's teacher-education programs have earned a reputation for preparing some of the most sought-after graduates in public, private, and Catholic school settings. In all programs, students begin their journey with foundational courses that emphasize Santa Clara's dedication to promoting inclusive classrooms, multicultural learning, and educational equity.

Students are provided the opportunity to work in practicum settings to blend theory and practice. With the new online offering, ECP hopes to broaden the reach of their notable teacher education programs to the rest of California and beyond.

In order to accomplish this goal, the Online Master of Arts in Teaching & Teaching Credential program falls under a larger initiative for Santa Clara. SCU's mission to increase the accessibility of higher education while still maintaining a productive learning community has manifested itself in the creation of SCU Online. SCU Online is Santa Clara University's virtual home for career-focused graduate degrees; it's the same Bronco experience, but with more flexibility by offering fully online and hybrid program modalities in both full-time and part-time tracks. ECP worked alongside the SCU Online team to launch, market, and recruit new students for the school's first online launch.

It Takes a Village

Santa Clara University prides itself on its community mindset. Following the announcement of SCU Online and the addition of the online MATTC modality, it was all hands on deck for ECP. School of Education faculty and staff came together to rise to the occasion.

The faculty and staff at SCU set out to ensure that their passion for the MATTC program seeps into the virtual world as well. Online students enrolled in the program participate in an intensive experience ensuring they feel a connection to their professors, peers, and the university. The experience provides students with an opportunity that immerses them in the SCU community—regardless of their location.

“SCU's Online MATTC promises a high-quality education with access to Santa Clara University's network and events, and collaboration with highly qualified faculty and peers,” says MATTC Program Director and Assistant Professor **Kathy Sun, PhD**. “One of the best things about our program, is the faculty's commitment to using education as tool to promote things such as social justice, racial equity, and respect for diversity.”

SCU faculty took this commitment to their students and their craft even one step further by dedicating hours at a time to being trained in how to build a course and teach in an online modality. Online MATTC faculty completed over 20 hours of workshops and training before beginning to build out their custom online courses; they customized these templates in SCU's learning management system (LMS). In addition, a team of lead instructional designers designed a rubric and set of standards to ensure that Santa Clara University's faculty are not only achieving their goals but also delivering the same quality of online instruction as the institution's in-person curriculum.

The Santa Clara Experience

“We are always thrilled to welcome students into the SCU community—a network of over 100,000 students, alumni, and faculty who are determined to make the world a better place,” states Dean of the School of Education & Counseling Psychology, **Sabrina Zirkel**. “Future SCU students should prepare to embark on one of the most rewarding, meaningful, and impactful careers, anywhere. Educating young people is the surest way to change the world.”

The School of Education & Counseling Psychology has been serving the Santa Clara community for over 100 years, preparing outstanding educators, therapists, and advocates who are grounded in the Jesuit value of a deep respect for all and a commitment to social justice. Led by our expert faculty, students join an immersive program designed to inspire education and ensure everyone has access to the psychological tools and support they need to propel towards flourishing lives of meaning, purpose and connection... and our online program is no exception.

Promoting More Inclusive Classrooms with an Integrated Model of Teacher Preparation and a Dual Credential Option

It was during his time as an elementary school teacher that incoming SCU School of Education & Counseling Psychology (ECP) Assistant Professor **Dosun Ko** fully began to comprehend the challenges students with disabilities face in general education settings—setting in motion a career devoted to improving special education teacher training and the student experience.



“My classrooms consisted of students with and without disabilities, and it soon became apparent to me the systemic challenges impeding the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education settings.

As a general education teacher, I felt as though I was lacking the training necessary to provide the best quality education I could to my students with ability differences, and concurrently noticed a lack of collaboration between general and special education teachers,” says Ko.

Introducing the Integrated Curriculum and Dual Credential Option

Fueled by a school-wide commitment to inclusive education, faculty have spent the past several years redesigning our general education teacher preparation program to integrate learning materials ensuring all teachers are prepared to teach classrooms that include a wide range of neurodiverse students with different learning needs.

ECP Dean **Sabrina Zirkel** notes: “By grounding our teachers in an inclusive orientation that emerges from our commitment to Jesuit values and social justice, we are helping teachers learn to create classrooms where all children—including those without special educational needs—will thrive. We know that by using a broader range of pedagogical approaches in order to meet the needs of all learners, our teachers are better able to ensure all students in their classrooms are learning at the highest level. This is a true mind shift in how we think about inclusion—it benefits all children to be together.”

In addition, the school will soon add an Educational Specialist (aka Special Education) teaching credential, pending final approval by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing this fall. With this integrated curriculum, the Department of Education is ensuring that all teachers seeking an Educational Specialist Credential will have a deep understanding of pedagogy and how we can better support the learning of those with special educational needs. It also means that there is a relatively seamless “Dual Credential” option—where students can earn both a general education and an Educational Specialist credential if they plan their program and student teaching carefully with their advisor.



Above left: Assistant Professor Dosun Ko

Breaking Down the Barriers

Schools need more teachers and are especially desperate to fill positions for teachers with comprehensive training in teaching students with special learning needs. “The dual credential model has two purposes, including alleviating the teaching shortage. Students will be able to move on to careers in general or special education, making them better qualified to fill key shortage-fueled vacancies in both areas of education within schools,” says Ko. “But the most important purpose is to better serve students with learning differences in a general education setting. There is strong empirical evidence that when students with disabilities are educated in inclusive settings, they demonstrate more positive academic behavior and functional outcomes. Being prepared to serve both students with and without disabilities in general education settings will ultimately contribute to better learning outcomes for all students.”

Providing individualized special education services requires genuine collaboration and alliance across multiple agencies and entities to ensure all students are receiving the quality education they need. By having more teachers trained in both general and special education, we hope to further break down the barriers between both specialties and encourage more collaboration within the school building.

Cultivating a More Inclusive Classroom

“It’s also important to note that students of color are more likely to be identified as having disabilities because some educators that participate in the special education identification process haven’t been prepared to work in culturally and linguistically diverse communities,” says Ko.

“Our credential programs emphasize educating students in the intersectionality of ableism and racism, and students will learn how to work with culturally and ability diverse students.”

With the addition of this dual credential program at SCU and in more schools across the country, schools are receiving more equity-oriented educators equipped to fight for school systems that work for every student across ethnic backgrounds and ability differences.



CHILD & ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

SCU Welcomes New Endowed Chair and Faculty for Child and Adolescent Mental Health

Child and adolescent mental health is currently in crisis. Anxiety and depression rates are twice as high now as they were only a few years ago. In its recent annual survey of child and adolescent well-being, the CDC reports that today “more than one in three high school students experience poor mental health, and nine percent made suicide attempts.”

Yet new possibilities are beginning to emerge. Notably, Santa Clara University’s School of Education & Counseling Psychology is fortifying plans, programs, and personnel to help reverse these toxic trends.

The strategy and commitment to solve these unmet, unprecedented needs is the brainchild of the Department of Counseling Psychology at SCU and Dean **Sabrina Zirkel**. SCU alum **Sheri Sobrato Brisson MA '94** is the champion for funding for the new initiative, whose generous gift establishes a new endowed new Chair and emphasis in Child and Adolescent Mental Health at the University. The gift will also fund ongoing research and community outreach projects to promote and support improved mental health among children and teens.

Introducing Endowed Chair Greg Hajcak



Professor **Greg Hajcak**’s goal is as clear as it is compelling. He intends to design more practical, more accessible mental healthcare delivery systems to help more young people ASAP. His expertise in psychology, biomedical sciences, the neuroscience of adolescent anxiety and depression, MRI research, and applying the latest advances in technology,

give him the bandwidth to find inventive solutions for today’s mental health challenges.

For the former Professor of Psychology at Florida State who joins us this fall, Hajcak reached a turning point in his career toward the end of the pandemic.

“I had spent two decades trying to understand the brain, researching anxiety and depression in young people. And while I knew scholarly research was critical, I saw that so many young people couldn’t get the mental health treatment they needed. The lag time between research and mainstreaming new practices was frustrating. As a lifeline resource, we hadn’t really focused enough on actually making a difference for people—for consistently improving their mental well-being.”

“I couldn’t help but wonder if my efforts were missing the mark. Was I going to spend another 20 years producing knowledge that might not reach people to improve their lives? So I started exploring other career options. Very quickly I discovered a harmonic conjunction. Santa Clara University, one of the top schools in the field of education & counseling psychology, had recognized the enormity of the problem. That for 30% of kids in this country, their minds were out of joint. And SCU’s leadership was deeply committed to doing something substantive to reverse the spiral. I was offered the job—and as Steve Jobs said, ‘the opportunity to help make a ding in the universe.’ I jumped at it.”

Leveraging Technology to Enable New Mental Health Treatments

For Hajcak, his vision for a new child and adolescent counseling program isn’t just about increasing the number of therapists prepared to work with children and teens. That’s because—given the magnitude of the challenges—closing the deficit through increasing the number of therapists alone might not be possible.

Instead, he sees leveraging the lessons healthcare learned from the pandemic to make a broader, more immediate impact. At the top of that list is determining how technology can enable effective new mental health treatments.

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Left: Professor Greg Hajcak

Therapists in training can embrace new tech-driven models that maximize existing resources to help relieve the overburdening demands in the current healthcare system.

Another key consideration: “So much of the standard mental health treatment model was designed for adult patients—not with children or teens in mind. For example, one-hour sessions are often too long for the attention span of young children. Not to mention the challenge of getting non-driving patients to and from in-person sessions once a week. That’s a huge challenge and expense some families can’t manage.”

But there are helpful resources waiting to be tapped. 90% of American households are now computer enabled and today’s young people are exceptionally facile with technology. With this in mind, Hajcak has some ideas about how a re-imagined future might work differently for adolescents.

“I envision a stepped approach to care. For example, a young person going through a rough patch could review child-friendly online resources on their own clock—at their own pace. Or, if they prefer a guided approach, they could schedule a longer, one-time virtual group therapy or 1-on-1 session with a therapist or peer counselor. Patients who require more consistent care could do weekly virtual sessions—or even shorter check-ins multiple times per week by video or messaging apps.”

Hajcak can also imagine sending five-minute videos for clients to review during the week so their sessions could be more focused. “It may sound like a small tweak, but in practice it could mean all the difference. For example, studies consistently show that engaging social media is a significant driver of depression among young people. What if—rather than tweeting out frustration day-to-day to trolls—a young person could text a mental health professional or access the right digital resources the moment they’re needed? It could be life saving.”

Zoom sessions, smart links, video bursts, on-demand responses, personalized therapies — all these compelling new mental health delivery systems show real promise. Of all the unmet needs young people face today, reversing the ongoing mental health crisis deserves top priority, and the team at SCU’s School of Education & Counseling Psychology is making this their life’s work.

Fortifying the Team.

Success is built on leadership. And to ensure the new program’s success, also joining Hajcak will be three other new faculty with special expertise in child and adolescent mental health.

Atina Manvelian



Atina Manvelian joined this fall as an assistant professor in the Counseling Psychology (CPSY) Department. Sponsored by a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Atina earned her PhD in Clinical Psychology from the University of Arizona. She completed

her predoctoral clinical internship at the Veterans Affairs Healthcare System in Palo Alto, CA. As an adolescent-focused scholar and intervention scientist, Manvelian designs scalable, evidence-based interventions to promote healthy relationships and psychological well-being for at-risk youth. Invested in expanding access to mental health care for those who need it most, Manvelian is excited to teach the next generation of therapists at SCU to improve the lives of children and their families.

Alexandria Meyer



Alexandria Meyer joined Santa Clara this fall as a new associate professor in the CPSY Department. She is a clinical psychologist whose research, practice, and teaching focuses on mental health in children and is coming from a tenure track position at Florida State University.

She is deeply passionate about addressing the growing mental health needs of children through novel intervention approaches and is particularly interested in intervention approaches that can alter developmental trajectories to improve long-term outcomes for children and adolescents.

Aya Inamori Williams



A clinical psychologist who focuses on the wellbeing of children and families, **Aya Inamori Williams** is joining Santa Clara Fall 2024 as an assistant professor in the CPSY Department. Williams provides clinical services to children and families from

diverse backgrounds, especially immigrant families. She is deeply passionate about research on bilingualism and use of language as a tool to understand, manage and communicate emotions.

Williams received her Bachelor’s in Linguistics and Psychology at Stanford University, her PhD degree in Clinical Psychology at UC Berkeley, and completed her internship in the Clinical Psychology Training Program at UCSF.

3RD ANNUAL LGBTQ+ SYMPOSIUM

Fostering Safe Spaces for LGBTQ+ Youth

In April 2023, Florida's Board of Education approved a ban on classroom instruction about sexual orientation and gender identity in all grades—excluding the classroom as a place where LGBTQ+ youth can feel safe and heard. With this being just one of many policy-driven attacks on the community in the country this year, it's no surprise that 58% of LGBTQ+ youth reported experiencing symptoms of depression in 2022, and the percentage of LGBTQ+ youth who have seriously considered suicide in the last year increased three percent compared to 42% in 2021, according to The Trevor Project's annual survey on LGBTQ+ youth mental health.

The survey also found that LGBTQ+ youth who found their school to be LGBTQ-affirming reported lower rates of attempting suicide, highlighting the significance of educators and other mental health professionals being adequately prepared to support these youth.

To encourage dialogue and education around providing the best mental health care for this community, the Santa Clara University School of Education & Counseling Psychology (ECP) LGBTQ+ Emphasis and the ECP Center for Professional Development will be hosting its third annual LGBTQ+ Affirming Mental Health Care Symposium on November 17, 2023.

"The current increase in marginalization of the LGBTQ+ Community makes this work more necessary all the time," says **Janet Sims**, lecturer and LGBTQ+ emphasis coordinator for the Counseling Psychology Department. "We're excited to bring back the symposium each year as a space for mental health professionals and students to come together to deepen their understanding of the specialized needs of this community."

Speakers

Jay Bettergarcia, PhD
Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology & Child Development at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Benjamin Geilhufe
Therapist, Trainer and Consultant

Finn Gratton, LMFT, LPCC
Somatic Psychotherapist and Consultant

Janet Sims
Lecturer and LGBTQ+ Emphasis Coordinator at Santa Clara University Graduate School of Counseling Psychology

Topics

- Clinicians as Advocates: Understanding the Mental Health Impacts of the Current Political Climate on Transgender and Gender Diverse Clients
- Neurodiversity Affirming Care for LGBTQ+ Youth and Adults
- Radical Healing with Queer and Trans Latinx/Latine Clients
- Religion, Spirituality and Mental Health in the LGBTQ+ Community



Above: Janet Sims and Carmina Mendoza at last year's Gender Affirming Mental Health Symposium

Left: (left to right) Dean Sabrina Zirkel, Director for Community and Professional Development Carmina Mendoza, and speakers Janet Sims, Jen Hastings, and Jei Africa at last year's event

■ LATINX RESEARCH CENTER

2023 Latina/e/o Youth Mental Health Symposium: Advocating for Latina/e/o Education Through the Lens of Mental Health Support and Solutions

While there's no one-size-fits-all solution for achieving equity in education, **Carmina Mendoza** believes addressing the mental health needs of students, their families, teachers, administrators, and everyone involved in education is fundamental for progress.

A lifelong educator, Mendoza's experience has been rooted in a devotion to improving the state of Latina/e/o education, equipping her for her current role as the Santa Clara University School of Education & Counseling Psychology's Director for Community and Professional Development. Her passion has taken her across 28 years of bilingual teaching and immigrant education research positions, and inspired her current participation in the Latinos for Education: Aspiring Latino Leaders Fellowship—a nine-month program that supports the professional development of Latina/e/o education leaders in Massachusetts, Houston and the Bay Area.

As part of the fellowship, Mendoza was asked to create a project to address the state of Latina/e/o education and, in collaboration with the San Mateo Union High School District (SMUHSD) and Latinos for Education, is leading the Latina/e/o Youth Mental Health Symposium this September, under the sponsorship of SCU's Latinx Research Center. This symposium is one way to create awareness about the importance of mental health care in providing equal access to education.

"In speaking with SMUHSD and Latinos for Education about working together on a project, we concluded that we could not give access to equitable education for Latina/e/o students if we do not address their mental health care needs," says Mendoza.

"The purpose of this symposium is to come together as caring adults who support Latina/e/o youth and learn from each other as professionals by unpacking our current opportunities and barriers to support the mental health needs of our students."

Despite the year-over-year decline in adolescent emergency hospital visits for mental health conditions between 2021 and 2022, 2023 levels still remain higher than those prior to the pandemic, according to the CDC.

Moreover, research indicates that Latina/e/o youth experience higher rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicidal ideation compared to their non-Latina/e/o peers, yet, stigma, barriers, and the lack of adequate, culturally sensitive, and



linguistically appropriate mental health support exacerbates these issues, leading to higher rates of untreated mental health conditions among Latina/e/o youth and ultimately, decreased academic and professional attainment.

Mental health experts and educators will convene at the symposium to discuss adaptive solutions to support these youth, including methods to optimize therapy at school sites, tools to promote the de-stigmatization of mental health in schools, liberation psychology frameworks to support Latina/e/o communities, and more.

Confirmed speakers include mental health disparities researcher and SCU faculty member Alice Villatoro, and ECP alum and Adjunct Professor **Kathryn "Kitzi" Hendricks**, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and PPSC in School Counseling at Aptitud Community Academy at Goss in Alum Rock Union School District. Speakers bring to the symposium extensive experience working with Latina/e/o youth in local school districts and organizations.

"Latina/e/o youth and families in the United States face many unique challenges, including discrimination, racism, acculturation stress, and socioeconomic and sociopolitical disparities, which can adversely impact their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It is of paramount importance to create safe and inclusive environments centered on the strengths and resilience of Latina/e/o youth and families," says Kitzi Hendricks.

"As mental health professionals and educators on the front lines of this work, discussing methods of destigmatizing mental health, providing resources and linkage to community supports, offering quality mental health services, and fostering opportunities for empowerment and community in which all youth can thrive is essential. We have an ethical and social responsibility to expand and utilize our knowledge, education, and privileges to advocate and lead the movement in our communities, fueling the purpose behind this year's symposium."

Inspiring Today's Leaders to Empower Bilingual Learners Through Fellowship

This summer, Santa Clara University's School of Education & Counseling Psychology (ECP) celebrated its first cohort's completion of the new Bilingual Leadership Fellowship program. The program represents one of ECP's many initiatives devoted to fostering more inclusive education for multilingual learners.

The five-session program brings together current leaders in education to discuss how best to support the success of multilingual students, based on research, policies, and theoretical frameworks to ensure kids aren't falling behind in their classes. Upon completion, leaders earn a certificate in Bilingual Leadership. ECP fully funded the education of this first cohort.

"Beyond receiving Bilingual Leadership certification, our 11 fellows were excited to have a space where they could focus on multilingual students that have been historically marginalized," says program instructor **Raul Lomeli**. "In their places of work, many of these leaders feel siloed in strategizing on how best to support these students, because school districts often only have one school dedicated to bilingual education and aren't always prioritizing this learning across all schools. In our program, they find peers with a shared passion for empowering multilingual students."



As part of their final projects, students presented how they plan to incorporate the concepts they've learned into their work in the upcoming school year. Ideas included step-by-step processes for promoting community cultural wealth within their school districts, and how to educate teachers and administrators in critical consciousness—a method of achieving a deep understanding of the world through being exposed to social and political contradictions, with the goal of taking action against oppressive elements.

"School leaders can often feel restricted by traditional pedagogy that makes it difficult to engage in critical multilingual learning conversations driven by research, rather than politics. This tension has historically been a great barrier in pushing bilingual leadership forward," says instructor **Eddie Mosqueda**.

"Santa Clara University is taking an active role in trying to bring people together to develop different structures and frameworks that can work across different school contexts."

With the recent passage of The California Multilingual Education Act of 2016 allowing schools to provide multiple programs besides English immersion classes to promote bilingualism, ECP is looking forward to continuing the program and advancing this movement towards creating equity-oriented learning environments for all students.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Dressing Authentically: Meet the student behind SCU's first clothing drive for transgender and gender non-conforming students



As of June 2023, the Human Rights Campaign has tracked over 535 anti-LGBTQ+ bills moving through state legislatures across the country. Collectively, these bills threaten to remove access to gender-affirming care for 44% of transgender youth, which many health experts fear will negatively impact the lives of this vulnerable population.

“When who you are doesn’t align with who the world says you should be, it ruins your mental health, it makes you think you don’t belong, and it can make you feel that you’re unworthy to be breathing,” says **Annissa Crow MA '24**.

As a graduate student specializing in LGBTQ+ counseling and a Student Inclusion Educator (SIE) at SCU's Rainbow Resource Center, an on-campus organization that educates, empowers, and celebrates the experiences and identities of the LGBTQ+ community, Crow felt inspired to act.

This year, she debuted a new event series called “Thrift-T”—SCU's first clothing drive series specifically for transgender and gender non-conforming students. In the wake of these hateful bills, Crow explains, access to clothing that aligns with your gender can be “life-saving.”

Though Thrift-T was inspired by other campus clothing drives, she felt that it offered something bigger. “It created a place for people to just come in and feel welcome and safe, like an extension of the Rainbow Resource Center.”

Changing a person's world

When Crow came up with the idea of the Thrift-T event, she was intentional about every aspect of the event.

She held the thrift at campus venues close to gender-neutral bathrooms, organized clothes according to size rather than gender, and brought shopping bags from home so the event was as sustainable as possible. She also made sure that in addition to making all the clothing and accessories free, she also had local community resources listed in a slideshow.

Luckily, the work paid off.

“Ten minutes before the first event had started, there were a dozen people already lined up,” Crow says. “And throughout the event, students were FaceTiming each other saying ‘You need to get down here. There’s so much cute stuff and cool resources.’”

Thrift-T was held three times during the spring quarter, and each time, more than 100 students attended, which was the largest turnout Crow can remember from any Rainbow Resource Center event she led. But for her, it wasn’t about the numbers—it was about impact.

“At the second Thrift-T event, a gender-expansive student came up to me, teary-eyed and thanked me,” she recalls. “They said that it was the first time they could wear clothes that made them feel like the gender they were, and while they couldn’t take the clothes home, they expressed gratitude because at least for the last couple of months, they were able to live in their gender authentically.”

Crow tears up just remembering this encounter. “I’ve always had the goal to change the world, and even if it’s just one person’s world, it means so much because this is the kind of support I needed once, and now I can be there for somebody else.”



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Steve Gospe's Journey From Tech to Teaching

“It resonates with me.”

For as long as he can remember, Silicon Valley tech veteran **Steve Gospe MA '23** has tried to help show others the way.

At Palo Alto's legendary Varian Associates, his first job out of college, he met an employee in the firm's microwave division who was studying hard for his Associate degree.



“But he just could not get through algebra,” Gospe recalls. “He said, ‘I can’t do it.’ I said, ‘I’ll help you.’ And I taught him. It was a challenge, but we got through it, and he went on to earn his degree.”

The experience was so rewarding that for years after, Gospe says he often wondered, “Gee, maybe I should have been a teacher.”

Though his passion for a career in engineering won out—he made contributions to sensor technology at Intel, then used his expertise in photonics at Intevac. When the latter company was sold, he decided it was a good time to move on.

Looking around for what came next, Gospe knew he wanted to make a different kind of impact. His mind returned to teaching. He joined EnCorps, a non-profit that recruits career-changing STEM professionals interested in teaching in under-resourced communities. A program leader there also suggested he apply for a full-tuition Noyce Teaching Fellowship at Santa Clara University's School of Education & Counseling Psychology.

Named after Intel co-founder Robert Noyce, the year-long master's in teaching and teaching credential program is aimed at STEM majors and professionals who want to teach middle and high school math in racially, ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse schools.

It was just what Gospe—who also speaks some Spanish—was looking to do, first during teacher training in math at Mt. Pleasant High School in East San Jose, and now full-time at Westmont High School in Campbell, teaching math and engineering.

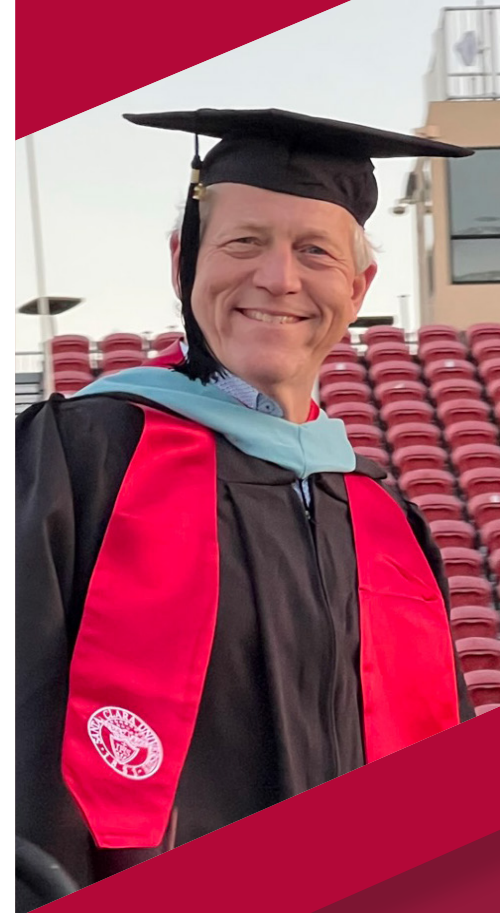
His goal is two-fold: “I want to see if I can make a difference for someone who might be the next Einstein out there. And I want to make sure that these students have a chance to get the opportunities I did.”

At Santa Clara, he learned “how to be a teacher” through subjects he had never studied before, including psychological principles, behavior assessment, and classroom management. “And also about the Jesuit mindset of patience and perseverance and social equity, it resonates with me,” Gospe says.

“I may be an old white guy, but I’m aware that there are economic disparities where I’ll be teaching. Really listening and showing respect and getting to know your students — that’s a big thing at Santa Clara.”

Gospe knows he still has a lot to learn, and Santa Clara continues to support him. For example, over the next year, ECP faculty members **Kathy Stoehr** and **Kathy Sun** will continue to drop in on his classes, observe his teaching style, then offer ideas and suggestions.

“It’s amazing,” he says. “I can pick up the phone right now and tell my professors, ‘Hey, this happened. What do you think?’ And they will do whatever it takes to help me out.”



Counseling Psychology Professor's New Book Teaches Children Self-Love, Compassion

By saying “Good morning, I love you” to herself each day, a young girl changes her negative self-talk and embraces happiness.

Whenever Santa Clara Counseling Psychology Professor **Shauna Shapiro** is asked about the most important thing parents can teach their children, she always answers “self-love.”

To Shapiro, it's a type of superpower that can transform anyone's brain to make them mentally stronger, better able to face challenges, and more compassionate when considering their own mistakes.

She first explored the topic of self-love in a 2020 book called “Good Morning, I Love You.” Much of her research centers around neuroplasticity—people's ability to rewire their brains and change habits. Shapiro wrote it with adult readers in mind, noting it's never too late to cultivate compassion for oneself.

But earlier this year, the SCU professor revisited that book and the idea of self-love. She wondered how much more impactful it would be to teach self-compassion, mindfulness and resilience to kids, whose young brains absorb information faster.

“It kind of hit me over the head, so I decided to write a children's book about it,” says Shapiro, who teaches graduate students in the marriage and family therapy program at the School of Education & Counseling Psychology.

Her brightly animated, 32-page book has a similar uplifting message for children.

“Good Morning, I Love You, Violet!” tells the story of a skeptical young girl named Violet who struggles with not feeling good enough, not smart enough. But at school she learns to counter her negative self-talk by putting her hand over her heart each morning and saying, “Good Morning, I Love You, Violet!”

Aimed at children ages 3 to 8, Shapiro hopes the book, available in late October, will not only resonate with youngsters, but all of us.

“One of my favorite phrases is, ‘What you practice grows stronger.’ This is the core of neuroplasticity—how our repeated behaviors, thoughts and emotions can shape your brain.”

Shapiro says that a children's book about self-compassion is not typical.



“We teach our kids to be nice to other people, but we really don't focus on the importance of kindness to ourselves,” she explains. As both her earlier research and adult book demonstrate, when we make a mistake, we are more likely to shame and judge ourselves, which then shuts down the learning centers of the brain.

“It literally paralyzes us in the very acts that we're trying to change,” she says. And just like Violet, who in the story makes a series of mistakes for which she berates herself—from giving the wrong answer on a quiz, to coming up short on blocking a soccer goal—we rob ourselves of the energy and resources needed to learn from the mistake.

As Shapiro says, “To transform our lives, we need a compassionate mindset, not shame.”



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

2022–2023

67

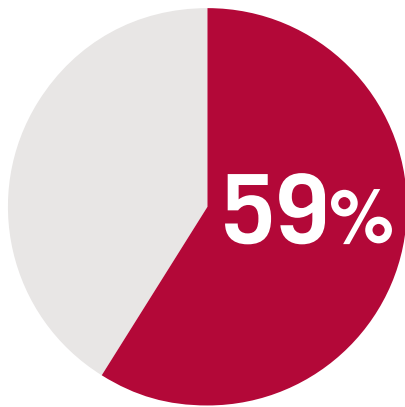
Students enrolled in Bilingual Authorization, including

56

Middle and high school STEM educators across CA and Texas*

720

Total ECP students



59%

Percentage of students who identify as students of color

68%

Percentage of teacher ed students committed to working in low income schools

Enrollment in Counseling Psychology Emphases

65+

Students in LGBTQ+ emphasis

150+

Students in Health emphasis

65+

Students in Latinx emphasis

50+

Students in Alternative and Correctional emphasis



*In 2022, Santa Clara University School of Education & Counseling Psychology professor and Associate Dean Marco Bravo received a \$2.7M grant from the National Professional Development Program of the Department of Education to fund “Project Leverage,” a program preparing STEM teachers to incorporate bilingual instruction in their classrooms.



Part of an Enduring Legacy

The School of Education & Counseling Psychology vision imagines a region and a world in which everyone has access to an inspiring education and is provided the psychological tools and support needed to propel them toward flourishing lives of meaning, purpose and connection. To embody this vision, our mission is to cultivate educators and professionals dedicated to positively transforming schools, communities, and the greater society through their work rooted in social justice.

Department of Education

Preparing teachers and leaders for public schools, Catholic schools, and social impact organizations

Academic Programs

Master of Arts in Teaching

Master of Arts in Educational Leadership

Doctor of Education in Social Justice Leadership

Department of Counseling Psychology

Preparing therapists, licensed clinical counselors, human service professionals, and other counselors in non-mental health settings

Academic Programs

Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

Master of Arts in Counseling

Master of Arts in Applied Psychology