

Undergraduate Spotlight

As a campus laboratory school, the Children's School offers research and observation opportunities to many undergraduate and graduate students from different departments across campus. In addition to these opportunities, we offer undergraduates a chance to work in the classrooms on a regular basis, either as student employees, interns, or volunteers. In the **Undergraduate Spotlight**, we will be featuring each of our undergraduate assistants so that parents can learn about the students who work in the classrooms with their children. Photos are posted on the Family Communication bulletin board across from our library.



Child Development Interns



- Siriana Abboud (pictured left) is a senior Psychology and Francophone Studies major preparing for graduate school in speech pathology or counseling while interning in the AM 4's class.
- Tori Iatarola is a sophomore Psychology major and CMU women's soccer player. She is interning in the AM 3's to gain experience with children.
- April Tillinghast is a senior Costume Design major interning in the Extended AM class. She is heading to graduate school in early childhood education to become a kindergarten teacher.

Senior Student Teachers from Pitt's CASE Program

Cara Vizzini and Sara Kelly are seniors in the University of Pittsburgh's Combined Accelerated Studies in Education (CASE) Program, a five-year undergraduate and masters program that includes a BS in Applied Developmental Psychology and a Masters of Education in early childhood and special education. Miss Kelly is teaching in the Kindergarten this semester and Miss Vizzini is working with the Morning 4's and Extended Morning Program.

• Sara Kelly says, "I am from Gibsonia, PA (about 30 minutes north of Pittsburgh). I have spent the last three years working in preschool classrooms both in Mount Washington and Hazelwood, through a program called Jumpstart. Currently, I work at the Children's Center of Pittsburgh. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family, exploring new places and going running outdoors. I am so excited to have the opportunity to student teach at the Children's School and I am looking forward to getting to know all of the students!"



• Cara Vizzini says, "I'm from Johnstown, PA. This is my fourth year working at the Falk Laboratory School Extended Day program. During my summers, I coach a junior high competitive cheerleading squad at my alma mater, Bishop McCort, while also working as a tutor in the Johnstown School district. I enjoy my time working with children of all ages and look forward to making memories with the preschool children here at CMU."

Undergraduate Spotlight

Bradley Schneider is working at the Children's School for his 3rd semester, in the preschool. Here he describes his experience.

When reflecting on my time here at Carnegie Mellon, the experiences I have shared with my friends at the Children's School are – without question – the ones I hold dearest. Learning and growing with them is undoubtedly the highlight of my week, every week. My heart absolutely melts each and every time one of their little hands reaches up for a hold, when they literally can't help but give an impulsive hug, or pretty much any time they share an opinion on anything.

I have had a passion for working with children for as long as I can remember. Back home in Miami, Florida, I have worked as a summer camp counselor for the past seven years at an incredible organization, Shake-A-Leg Miami. There, I teach children with mental and physical disabilities how to fish, sail, kayak, and swim.

I am a Psychology major wrapping up my final year at CMU. In addition to the Children's School, I work as a research assistant in a Health Psychology lab, directed by David Creswell, PhD, as well as intern in an outpatient Child Psychology clinic at UPMC, directed by David Kolko, PhD. After graduation, I plan on pursuing a doctoral degree in Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology; but I'd like to work abroad for a bit before diving into graduate work.

Outside of work, my favorite thing to do is cook. Both of my parents are very passionate about cooking, so I picked it up at a very young age. I cook all of my meals every day and am constantly inventing new creations. One of my proudest accomplishments was when I won the Carnegie Mellon Chili Cook-Off this past month.



I will miss a lot of things when I leave Pittsburgh this spring, but the Children's School – complete with bright, little faces, an endless supply of snacks, the smell of fresh laminate in the morning, and the greatest end-of-the-day song of all time – will certainly be what I miss most.

Undergraduate Research

Dr. Anna Fisher and Graduate Student Juliet Shafto's **Developmental Research Methods** students are preparing their final projects for the semester. They are beginning to pilot test their projects on the topics listed below. Families whose children participate will receive fuller parent descriptions via the child's backpack, and there is a sample in the Research Spotlight. Everyone can read the study descriptions on the Research Bulletin Board near the office door. Notice the interesting range of important topics in early childhood development!

- **Can prosocial behavior be primed with stories?** (The Coloring Game, AM 4's & K)
- **How does music impact focus on challenging tasks?** (The Letter Finding Game, AM 4's and K)
- **Can indirect priming and explicit instruction enhance children's ability to delay gratification?** (The Choosing Game, PM 3's and 4's)
- **Does highlighting a character's perspective improve children's performance on false belief tasks?** (The Crayon Box Game, AM 3's, AM 4's and K)



Fall Family Fun

Thanks to the CMU students from the Mortar Board Senior Honor Society who offered a fun fall family event on the Children's School playground on the morning of October 17th. About 60 children and adults from the Children's School and the Cyert Center played an apple toss game, a pumpkin ring toss, pumpkin bowling, pumpkin/apple tic tac toe, and a parachute leaf toss. We played with pumpkin spice playdough. We predicted the number of seeds in an apple and then counted the actual number. We learned that all pumpkins float – even the very heavy ones – because the hollow space inside makes each pumpkin weigh less than the amount of water it displaces. The children also created fall leaf placemats, leaf rubbings, and apple & pumpkin prints, as well as decorating their own tiny pumpkins. Everyone also got to sample apple juice, apple cider, and the various treats provided by the Mortar Board students.



Special thanks to event planners April Tillinghast, one of the Children's School interns and the Mortar Board Vice President, and Dr. Sharon Carver, who is the Mortar Board faculty advisor!

Undergraduate Spotlight

Danielle Lehmann is working at the Children's School for her 3rd year, in the preschool. Here she describes her experience.

My favorite aspect of the Children's School is the environment for the friends and for work-study students like myself. As a helper, I'm always welcomed into the Children's School with smiles and questions about my day, and I can tell that everyone genuinely cares. In the classroom, friends are encouraged to use their words and explain how they feel, which I think is a vital skill for everyone, especially in this technology-focused world. Sometimes the friends surprise me with how well they listen to each other, to the teachers, and even to me. Their ability to share, use kind words, and help each other is so uplifting.

When others ask what I do for work, I get to tell them that I make crafts and play with children, but in my third year here, I know that my responsibilities lie well beyond that. I walk an interesting line between playmate and "adult." I am able to engage with the friends in dramatic play or with blocks and playdough. However, when a friend is feeling hurt and upset or needs help, I'm able to provide adult support, echoing the words and ideas that I've heard the teachers say for the past two years.



When friends want my attention, I kneel at their level. At first it usually surprises them, but I feel we can have a better conversation when we're eye to eye and they know I'm listening. The stories the friends tell are so fascinating. As an architecture and creative writing major, I love listening to their lists of things they like or things they did that day. They give me a different perspective on life by sharing a simpler view of the world. My job has always been my respite from long hours of schoolwork and it has rejuvenated me more times than I can count. As I work toward graduation this spring, I will always remember the Children's School as a vital part of my college experience.

SisterFriend Support by Mortar Board



SisterFriend

The Mortar Board Senior Honor Society is partnering with SisterFriend (www.sisterfriend.org), which is "an organization by women for women dedicated to sustaining feminine health by providing homeless and underprivileged women and girls with feminine care products. Women living in poverty typically know where to find a safe place to sleep or a hot meal to eat. But when it comes to taking care of their feminine hygiene needs, they often have nowhere to turn. Tampons and sanitary pads usually top the list of needs at shelters, since they're pricey and supporters don't often donate them. The Honor Society members are collecting feminine hygiene supplies for SisterFriend and have invited SisterFriend founder and director, Tamara Whiting, to speak about her organization on Tuesday, December 8th at 7:00pm in Porter Hall 100. If you would like to make a donation, please send the feminine hygiene products to the Children's School office. Everyone is also welcome to attend Tamara's presentation. Please contact Dr. Carver if you have questions.



Student Teacher Reflections

Cara Vizzini and Sara Kelly are seniors in U. Pitt's Combined Accelerated Studies in Education (CASE) Program, a five-year undergrad and masters program that includes a BS in Applied Developmental Psychology and a M.Ed. in early childhood and special education.



- Cara Vizzini (AM Younger 4's with Mrs. Opferman)

This past semester has been amazing. I was fortunate enough to experience what a school should be like. Mrs. Opferman and the other Green Room teachers are wonderful mentors, and I can't thank them enough for all that they've taught me. The children that I have taught this semester have shown me how important it is that playing and learning go hand in hand. I had a great time trekking through the rainforest and exploring space with them. It's sad that my time at the Children's School has come to an end, but I can't wait to take what I've learned here and use it in my future endeavors. Thank you to all who have welcomed me, and I hope to see you again.

- Sara Kelly (Kindergarten with Mrs. Perovich)

Over the last few months, I have learned so much about what it means to be a teacher. From the very beginning of the semester, the educators and families at the Children's School made me feel welcome. Mrs. Perovich, Mrs. Blizman and Mrs. Armbruster were so encouraging and allowed me to be creative with my lessons. They taught me strategies that I know I will use in my own classroom someday. The kindergarten students made me excited to wake up and come to school every day. There was never a moment where they could not make me laugh or smile, and I am



truly going to miss spending my days with them. I did not know what to expect for my first semester as a student teacher, but I can honestly say that this experience was better than I could have ever imagined. Next semester, I will be working in a life skills classroom, which will be a brand new challenge for me. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your family this semester, the memories I made will surely last a lifetime.

Continuing Partnership with Homewood HUB

Our educators have continued partnering with PAEYC's (Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children) Homewood HUB. Once a month, members of our staff attend a "Come Play" session held at the HUB to demonstrate and discuss methods of instruction with approximately 10 at-home educators and the children they teach. This past semester, Mrs. McGillen and Mrs. Loomis demonstrated a cooking lesson, Mr.

Salinetto and Mrs. Perovich introduced hands-on natural science activities, and Mrs. Bird and Mrs. Marshall entertained with some music and movement fun! We truly enjoy engaging with these educators and children at a center located only 2 miles from CMU, and we learn as much from these experiences as we share!



Undergraduate Spotlight

Alexis DeLaRosa (Lexi) is a junior at Carnegie Mellon, studying Decision Science and also pursuing Music Technology. She found the Children's School during the spring semester of her sophomore year and expected a fun job with children but received so much more.



"I never could have predicted the amount of joy it would bring me to wake up so early to start my day at the Children's School. I'm so grateful that every week I get to meet young, bright people and work alongside some of the most kind, gentle, considerate and loving educators I've ever met. Even



though I hope to work somewhere within the music industry, the Children's School has introduced the idea of teaching music or theater workshops and working with children in the arts. Working at the Children's School has truly been an honor that I'll miss and carry with me forever as one of my most special experiences at Carnegie Mellon."

Early Childhood Practicum Students

From January 16th through 31st, we will host two early childhood practicum students from Duksung Women's University (Seoul, South Korea) for an International Practicum Program. The Campus School at Carlow University, the Falk School at the University of Pittsburgh, and the University Child Development Center will each also host two students each, with the total group including 4 undergraduates and 4 graduate students. We look forward to learning more about the initiatives our South Korean colleagues are leading in early childhood and in reflecting with them about the cross-cultural similarities and differences in our values and approaches related to educating young children.



Undergraduate Dam Eun (Eileen) Kim will work with Mr. Salinetto in the Preschool 3's, and Masters student Sung Mi Kim will work with Mrs. Cherin in the Preschool 4's. Mr. Salinetto met both of the students when he was in South Korea in the fall. Sung Mi has more than a decade of early childhood teaching experience and won the "Best Teacher" award at the Korean Peace Center in 2013. Our preschoolers are studying "Children Around the World" during January, so it will be a fantastic experience to work with early childhood teachers from South Korea!



Thanks to the Aronson family (Maya, 3's) for offering housing to these visiting students. If you are interested in helping with other aspects of hosting (e.g., welcome bags, meals, etc.), please contact Dr. Carver at sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu to discuss options.

Undergraduate Spotlight

Anthony DiDonato (Sophomore, Humanities & Arts)

The Children's School has a special place in my heart. I graduated from the kindergarten at the Children's School in May 2001 and have so many pleasant memories. When I walked into the office early September of this



year, it was the first time I had been back since leaving for the summer before first grade, and I did not expect anyone to remember me. I was 100% wrong. The moment I stepped in I was welcomed with delighted faces and even a few surprised shrieks. I immediately embraced all of my teachers and was reminded of the positive impact the Children's School has on people, young or old, first-timers or kindergarten graduates!



This is my second semester working here; and after being reintroduced to such a wonderful atmosphere, I regret not beginning freshman year. The teachers at the Children's School are some of the most genuine people I have ever met. From the teachers to interns, the abundance of support, friendliness, and love shared is truly that of a family. No matter how tired I am, or how my day has started, when I enter the Children's School Wednesdays at 1 pm, my day is immediately better. And how could it not? Being greeted by smiling faces and hearing high-pitched voices of blissfully happy children would warm anyone's heart.

The kindergarten friends, whether they know it or not, will leave a lasting impression on some of my memories at Carnegie Mellon. Each friend is extremely unique, and after getting the chance to sit down and talk to them, I really got a feel for their personalities. Whether it's helping them work through specific tasks, listening to the reasoning behind the pictures drawn in their journals, or even just having a casual conversation, I enjoy all of my interactions with the kindergarten friends. There's nothing much better than walking into the kindergarten room and having a friend pop his or her head up to say hello. I will truly miss all the Children's School has to offer when I graduate from Carnegie Mellon. If I end up staying in Pittsburgh and raising a family, my children will attend the Children's School, if only to give their dad an excuse to keep visiting!

Family Math Fun

CMU students from the Mortar Board Senior Honor Society are hosting a family event at the Children's School on Saturday, February 20th from 10am to Noon. Please join Children's School and Cyert Center families for activities and games involving

shapes, numbers, patterns, etc. We'll be celebrating the number 100 since we'll have just passed the 100th day of school. Dr. Carver is the group's faculty advisor, and April Tillinghast, a kindergarten intern, is the Vice President. Watch for more information and a chance to RSVP via email.



Undergraduate Spotlight

Jessey Schwartz (Senior, Psychology)

As a student, many days are filled with scheduling time throughout the day to finish papers and projects as quickly as possible with few breaks.

When I come to work at the Children's School, it allows me to hit pause in the middle of my hectic schedule. Playing with shaving cream and paint, mailing letters to friends in the classroom, and creating balloon rockets to take a trip to the moon are a few examples of the great things I get to do at work. The children impress me every day with their wit and creativity. Everything is exciting, not only for the children, but for everyone involved. And after my shifts are over, I get to show off my dyed blue fingers from making playdough and the stickers stuck to my jeans.

I've spent four wonderful semesters working at the Children's School, and since I am graduating in May, unfortunately this one is my last. Without the Children's School, I wouldn't have such an extensive vocabulary for types of dinosaurs or the levels in the jungle, which impresses my friends every time they come up in conversation (which is more often than you'd think!). I also wouldn't have learned how important it was to stay positive in spite of bad behavior or mistakes. The teachers seem to know the perfect solution to every fight over a toy, every wrecked castle, every spill of milk, and every distraction during circle time. It's thoroughly impressive how careful and positive each teacher's response is to these problems, when it's so easy and instinctive to be negative and critical.



Lessons like these are just the tip of the iceberg of what I've gained during my time at the Children's School. My experience here has provided a great foundation for working with children, as I plan on attending graduate school for speech-language pathology. I'll miss every teacher and child, but I know they'll all be doing wonderful things!

Student Volunteers, Interns & Employees

The Children's School is an ideal setting for students with tight schedules to arrange opportunities for observation and practice of excellent early childhood education as volunteers, interns, and employees. Because we have both morning and afternoon preschool sessions, our kindergarten has instructional times both in the morning and the afternoon, and our extended day programs run at lunchtime, there are essentially continuous instructional sessions in progress. Because of our existing procedures for observation and research, we are equipped to handle students at all levels in their teaching practica, from pure observation to student teaching. We also benefit from the students' diverse talents!



Family Math Fun with Mortar Board Seniors

On Saturday morning, February 20th, CMU students from the Mortar Board Senior Honor Society hosted a Family Math Fun event at the Children's School for Children's School and Cyert Center families. Dr. Carver is the group's faculty advisor, and April Tillinghast, a kindergarten intern, is the Vice President. During the event, children got to do crafts and collages with 100 stickers, try different ways to make 100 cents, play dice games to 100, predict the volume of 100 water drops, do 100 exercises, build with 100 blocks, make a snack with 100 pieces, draw a self-portrait of themselves at age 100, etc. Thanks to the talented seniors who sponsored this engaging event!



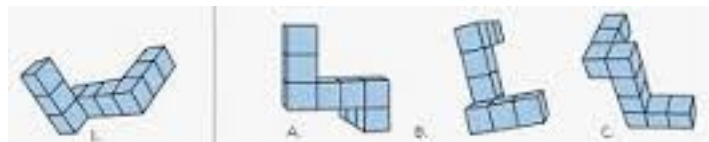
Undergraduate Researchers in Training

Students in Dr. Stephanie Siler's **Developmental Research Methods** class are preparing their final projects for the semester. Though the research protocols are still being developed, the students are planning to study many educationally relevant early childhood tasks. Learning the impact of the variables studied on children's performance and learning can help parents and educators better choose approaches for supporting their progress.

- **The Tower of Hanoi Game** – Testing whether providing subgoals for challenging tasks will increase kindergartners' persistence in solving them.



- **The Line Game** – Experimenting with factors that influence the likelihood that 3, 4, and 5-year-old children will change their answers on an open-ended line comparison task when adults offer contrasting perspectives.



- **The Block Game** – Determining whether demonstration and feedback during practice will improve 4 and 5 year olds' performance on a 3-dimensional mental rotation task.

- **The Storytelling Game** – Testing whether gender and/or sibling status influences 3, 4, and 5-year-old children's responses to stories in which there is a conflict, such as how to share one toy, between characters who appear to be of equal status (left) vs. differential status (right).



- **The Letters and Numbers Game** - Determining whether gender-biased theming of letter and number games (e.g., color and image type) impacts 4 and 5 year olds' preferences when given choices of which to play, compared to games with similar content but gender neutral themes.

- **The Toy Sharing Game** - Testing whether 3 and 5-year-old children are able to integrate another's perspective into their decisions about which toys to offer for sharing.

Families whose children participate will receive fuller parent descriptions via the child's backpack. Everyone can read the study descriptions on the Research Bulletin Board to the left of the Children's School office. What an interesting set of developmental psychology topics!

Undergraduate Spotlight

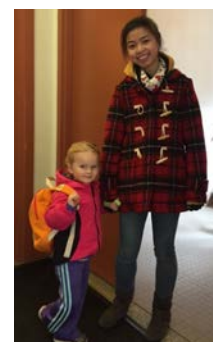
Lauren Yan (Sophomore, Psychology)

My mom once showed me a quote that read: "Sometimes you need to talk to a three year old so you can understand life again." I don't think there is a more accurate statement to describe how much working at the Children's School has helped me. When a three year old asks me how to spell "I love mom", suddenly, even if just for a little while, the stress of all those homework assignments to do and exams to study for goes away. The Children's School is like a bubble inside CMU, and it is a bubble of smiles like sunshine and overflowing energy, even at 8 am on a rainy Monday morning. All the teachers and staff are superb, and they were so welcoming from the start. Every day, I learn a little bit more from them about how to interact with children and how to handle all kinds of situations that arise throughout the day. There's definitely a lot more to learn at the Children's School than just outer space and textiles.

And even though the children may be the ones asking me if China is a state or a country, I am the one learning about how curious and bright they all are. It never ceases to amaze me how much they know, how considerate they are, how honest they are, and how quick and eager they are to learn. Watching them solve their own problems and challenges is often inspiring for me to work harder and solve my own. It is fascinating to watch the children ponder something until it makes sense to them, even if it doesn't make sense to us. In the little time I spend with them every week, I came to realize that sometimes it takes a child's perspective to figure out the most puzzling questions. They are, after all, the ones that help us understand life again.



The Children's School has honestly been the biggest turnaround for my sophomore year at CMU. Seeing the children walk in with the biggest smile can only start my day off right. Hearing their stories that they are so excited to tell me makes me just as excited as they are because, if they felt that it was important and awesome enough to tell me, then it must have been pretty super important and awesome. Coming to school is definitely the best part of my week, when I get the chance to escape the CMU world into a little sanctuary. I only wish that I had discovered it in my freshman year, but knowing that I have two more years to try to understand life makes me just as thankful to have found it now.



Scholarship Funding Update

In March, we received additional contributions to our Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs. Through the EITC and OSTC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits while providing financial assistance for children to attend preschool or an approved K-12 school. In addition to the donations mentioned in previous newsletters, we have also received contributions from HM Healthcare, PNC Bank, and UPMC. If you would like more information or can help us to build a list of prospective businesses, please contact the Main Office.

Undergraduate Spotlight Farewell Seniors!



Siriana Abboud will be working on her MA in Early Childhood Education with bilingual extension at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Arielle Cohen is planning to attend Loyola Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago following graduation.

Mattie Hedgebeth plans to return to her home state of Maryland. There she plans to work while volunteering in a psychology lab at the University of Maryland. In the fall, she will apply to graduate school to pursue a Ph.D. in psychological anthropology.

Danielle Lehmann will be working in NYC for an internship and then will be returning to CMU for a Masters of Arts in Professional Writing.

Stanton Man will be missing the Children's School from Philadelphia where he will be working for Accenture as a Digital Consulting Analyst.

Jessey Schwartz plans to work in research before attending graduate school for speech pathology in 2017.

April Tillinghast will be attending Texas A&M University's Masters of Education Program and hopes to teach near Houston, Texas.

Sam Walczak will continue his education at the Heinz College getting his Masters of Information Systems Management degree. Afterwards, he hopes to do technology consulting through an international company that will allow him to utilize his Chinese language skills.



1000PLUS Volunteer Day

On Saturday, April 2, six CMU student volunteers worked with Miss Hancock to prepare the playground and hillside garden for the spring. The students worked to "fluff" the playground mulch that had compacted over the winter. In addition, they removed leaf debris on the hillside, pruned our perennials, and turned over the soil in the garden beds to prepare for our spring planting days in May. Thank you so much to these hardworking volunteers!!



Honor for Siriana Abboud

Excerpts from **“Respect and Compassion Drive Senior’s Educational Philosophy”**

By Emily Stimmel (<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/news/news-stories/2016/april/lankford-prize.html>)

Siriana Abboud’s (DC’16) educational philosophy is simple: “Tout moun se moun.” Derived from a Haitian proverb meaning “All people are people,” the phrase encapsulates respect, dignity and compassion — values that drive Abboud’s teaching and volunteer work. “As a teacher, I cannot assume that I can completely change the lives of the students I will teach,” said Abboud, a psychology major with an additional major in French and Francophone Studies. “Rather, they will influence me as I influence them.”

To recognize her commitment to quality education, Abboud has been selected as the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences’ 2016 recipient of the Gretchen Lankford Prize. Modern Languages Department Head Susan Polansky nominated Abboud for the award. She remarked, “Siriana is a true global citizen with multicultural and multilingual skills in English, French and Arabic. She has lived, worked and volunteered in diverse places around the globe, including Lebanon and Haiti.” As a freshman, Abboud co-founded CMU in Haiti and joined Carnegie Mellon University’s International Student Union. On a 2014 visit to her home country of Lebanon, she gained hands-on clinical experience as a psychiatric intern at the American University of Beirut Medical Center and at a men’s drug and alcohol rehabilitation clinic. And as a development intern at Hôpital Albert Schweitzer (HAS) in Pittsburgh, she helped organize fundraisers and connect HAS to other non-profit organizations working in Haiti. Through activities like these, Abboud has developed a multicultural perspective that informs her teaching in the Children’s School. Last fall, Abboud enrolled in Sharon Carver’s “Practicum in Child Development,” a course designed to help students deepen their understanding of developmental psychology by assisting in a classroom. Carver, the director of the Children’s School, noted Abboud’s nuanced understanding of child development. “She frequently noted cross-cultural commonalities and contrasts based on her personal experiences, and she challenged the group to consider many types of diversity that might impact development,” Carver wrote.

The prize is named for the late Gretchen Goldsmith Lankford, a 1943 graduate of Margaret Morrison College. It underscores Lankford’s deep conviction that “devoted teaching makes a difference in the lives of young people, helping them to fulfill their potentials as intellectuals, citizens and as human beings.” To Polansky, Abboud exemplifies Lankford’s vision for the prize. “She has already excelled in teaching and is working with students of different ages, cultures and backgrounds, both locally and internationally. She appreciates how crucial education is, and she is passionate about cultivating networks for growth to make the lives of individuals and groups better,” Polansky said. After graduating from CMU, Abboud will pursue her M.A. in early childhood education with a bilingual extension from Columbia University, Teachers College. She hopes to eventually work in education policy and reform. Abboud commented, “It was so inspiring to meet students and teachers who fought to break down the barriers of a broken educational system on a daily basis.” She also draws inspiration from the Dietrich College faculty who encouraged her to pursue the enriching work of education. “I have been warned time and time again that teaching will be a challenging profession. The most important thing I can have to succeed will be support,” said Abboud. “Through this award, I have found support from fellow educators, and I have a new spark of excitement to begin my graduate studies and find my way back into the classroom.”