

## 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 our diverse classroom assistants so that parents can learn about the undergraduate and graduate students who work in the classrooms with their children in different capacities. Photos of all our student assistants are posted on the Family Communication bulletin board across from our library.



### **Senior Student Teachers from Pitt's CASE Program**

Lindsay Wilson and Madeline Bondi 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 Bondi is teaching in the Kindergarten this semester and Miss Wilson is working with the Morning 4's and Extended Morning Program.



• Lindsay Wilson says, "I am a senior in the CASE Program at the University of Pittsburgh. I grew up in Wexford, which is about 30 minutes north of the city, with my three older sisters and three younger brothers. My family dynamic has played a big role in my decision to pursue Elementary Education, as I have been able to see my brothers go through those years in a public school system. My previous experiences with children include coaching gymnastics, nannying, in-school reading programs, as well as after school tutoring. Currently, I participate in several volunteer opportunities with Jumpstart through Kappa Delta Pi, the Education Honors Society at Pitt. I am so excited to be a part of The Children's School this semester, and I can't wait to learn from working with your children!"

• Madeline Bondi says, "I am senior at the University of Pittsburgh. I am from Hampton Township, PA. I love working with children and have experience working with children in a daycare setting and as a live-in nanny. Through the CASE program, I will apply for a dual teacher certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) in the following two areas: Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 4, and Special Education (Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8). In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family. In the past few weeks I have been at the school, I have learned a lot from my mentor teacher, and I am very impressed by the joy and engagement of all the wonderful children here at the Children's School."



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Every semester, students who have done well in the Principles of Child Development course and want to explore early childhood development more deeply can participate in an internship at the Children's School. In addition to discussing the ways that their experiences relate to developmental theories, students learn observational and case study methodology and gain practical experience working with children and educators.



### Interns from the "Practicum in Child Development" Course

- Aliya Blackwood is a junior Psychology major with an HCI minor in learning media. She is from Patterson, New Jersey and enjoys a variety of visual arts, including both sketching and digital. Aliya is aiming for a career in educational technology and game design.



- Lilah Buchanan is a senior Psychology major from Portland, Oregon. She is minoring in Hispanic Studies and planning a career in social work. Her enjoys serving as the volunteer coordinator for Camp Kesem, which serves children whose parents have cancer.

- Brianna Hudock is a junior Psychology major from the south hills of Pittsburgh. She plans to become a social psychology researcher, and she also enjoys improv and sketch comedy.



- Priscilla Medor is a junior Psychology major with a concentration in neuroscience. She resides in New City, New York and enjoys surrealistic art. She hopes to become a clinical psychologist.

- Chi Chi Nwankwo is a junior Psychology major from Coppell, Texas, planning a career in pediatrics. She enjoys volunteering, particularly for the 1000+ event at CMU and Project Sunshine at the Children's Institute.

- Sydney Remson is a senior Costume Design major from Barrington, Rhode Island. She is aiming for a career in theatre, film, and arts education. In addition, she likes creative fiction and non-fiction writing.



## Undergraduate Spotlight: Student Teacher Reflections

Lindsay Wilson and Madeline Bondi 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.



### • **Lindsay Wilson** (AM Younger 4's with Mrs. Bird)

*Spending this semester at the Children's School has provided me with such a rewarding early childhood education experience. Mrs. Bird and all the other Green Room educators have helped me see the classroom through the eyes of the students, and, in return, that viewpoint has made me more aware of what interests, engages, and excites these young learners. I have also learned many classroom management strategies that I can implement in future placements, and someday in a classroom of my own. The children at this school are so bright and curious, and working with them has reminded me of what being a teacher is all about. I would like to thank all of the educators at the Children's School, as well as the families, for allowing me to apply my studies in education to supporting the preschool program here, and I would love to return in the future.*



### • **Madeline Bondi** (Kindergarten with Mrs. Blizman)

*I really enjoyed the time I spent this past semester at The Children's School. I have learned a great deal of information that will benefit me in the future. I am so fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn in such a great environment. All of the kindergarten teachers welcomed me with open arms, and have been great mentors throughout the semester. They have taught me so much. The children have been a joy to work with, I enjoyed watching their creativity and eagerness to learn and try new activities. I hope that my classroom one day can look like the classrooms at The Children's School. I have enjoyed working with the wonderful students and staff at The Children's School, and I will miss working with everyone.*



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• **Chie (Chee-ay) Wach** (Kindergarten and Children's School Library)

*As a Freshman last year, I was continually charmed and intrigued by the students of the Children's School each time I saw them on the playground, in front of Margaret Morrison, or holding hands in a long, cheery line around campus. Their innocent, sometimes rambunctious presence was a breath of relief in an otherwise stressful campus. While working directly with them this semester, I have been even more delighted with their energy, vivacious personalities, and remarkable abilities that impress me every day. During the few hours that I spend with them each week, I have been privy to charged debates on how to spell 'kangaroo', daring innovation in contemporary animal portraits, and the most enthusiastic dance parties I've ever witnessed, on or off campus.*



*As a Creative Writing and Physics double major, I enjoy balancing very different interests, but my experience at the Children's School is one of my most important experiences here. Upon entering this job, I expected a fun opportunity to play with a bunch of cute kids; I was met with an advanced environment that vastly exceeded my expectations. The teachers take advantage of every situation to make each the best possible experience for the children, and the result is a remarkably intelligent, affectionate, fun-filled classroom. It is an essential faction of my experience as a Carnegie Mellon student, and I look forward to many more semesters learning with and from these friends.*

## Early Childhood Practicum Students

From January 23<sup>rd</sup> through February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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 students also, with the total group including 7 undergraduates. 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 Na Hyun Lee (left) will work with the Preschool 4's Team, and Undergraduate Ree A (Leah) Ju (right) will work with the Kindergarten. Na Hyun was last year's President of the Student Council and has volunteer experience as a tutor for children of North Korean defectors in Seoul. Leah went to school in the US during 8 years before college, and she is now the Student Body President for the Early Childhood Department at Duksung. We look forward to our children learning from these pre-service teachers from South Korea!

Thanks to the Mingo family (Atticus, K) 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](mailto:sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu) to discuss options.



## Undergraduate Spotlight

• **Lilah Buchanan** (Extended AM) is a Senior Psychology Major with a concentration in Developmental. She is also minoring in Hispanic Studies.



*During my time at CMU, I have often been struck by the multitude of different kinds of learning going on at any given time in the academic buildings that dot Carnegie Mellon's campus. I remember thinking just this when I mistakenly wandered into an upper level mechanical engineering class on my first day of college. As a future psychology major, it was a shock. Students in one classroom are becoming experts in robotics while, in a classroom right next door, students are learning the fine points of rhetoric, or Chinese history. I spent my first three years at CMU enraptured by the diversity of all this classroom learning. Racing across campus to my own classes, I was unaware of another learning process that was happening on the ground floor of Margaret Morrison.*



*At the Children's School, students have been busy too. As you know, these students, or "friends" as I would come to know them, have been deeply engaged in becoming kind and compassionate critical thinkers. These friends and their teachers at the Children's School warmly invited me into this learning last fall. They taught me lessons distinct from those imparted in classrooms elsewhere on campus. They taught me complete engagement in the present moment and true wonder in the face of new experience and discovery. I learned about the unbridled self-confidence that accompanies a phrase like, "I am so good at blinking; I can blink with both eyes at the same time", and I have seen this same self-confidence make tackling new challenges a source of joy. I learned lessons on equality taught by young children who pronounced, "Just because one boy is bigger than another doesn't make him better." The teachers, always ready to guide me, have shown me what masterful and intentional teaching looks like and have helped me to be thoughtful and purposeful in my interactions with young children.*

*At the Children's School, I have seen excellence in early childhood education. As I look (with trepidation) at the post-graduation "real world" and seek to find a useful role in social work with families, I will take with me this experience in excellence in early childhood. This experience has given shape and purpose to my desire to work with families to create meaningful experiences for young children back at home.*



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• **Martha Cryan** (AM Preschool 4's) is a Freshman Computer Science Major considering adding a minor in French. Martha's older sister, Abby, also worked at the Children's School during her tenure at CMU.

*This is my first semester at the Children's School, and, so far, it has been an absolutely amazing way to spend my mornings and a really great learning experience. Amidst challenging coursework and other obligations on campus, being in the company of an enthusiastic staff and creative and caring friends has been a very positive addition to my weekly life. I love to see special moments between friends that show they care, like when two friends have a long hug because one is the line leader and the other is the caboose. I've also started to learn and grow myself as I learn to help the friends with different situations and problems that they encounter in their daily lives.*

*For example, one day, one of the friends forgot her toys at home and was upset that she wouldn't be*



*able to take them to another friend's house for a playdate after school. As she walked up to circle time teary-eyed, Mrs. Opferman decided to make the situation into a learning experience for the friends and ask, "how might we fix the problem our friend has?" As the friends went around the circle giving advice, I started to see how asking this kind of question is productive and positive both for the friends to think about in their daily life and for anyone to think about when they encounter a problem. These kinds of lessons weren't what I expected to learn while working at the Children's School, but they are most definitely valuable in and outside of my job here, and I hope to continue to learn more during my time working here!*

## 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 program runs 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 practicums, from pure observation to student teaching. We also benefit from the students' diverse talents!



## Undergraduate Spotlight

Perhaps you wonder *What's Next?* for the undergraduates who have taken all the courses connected with the Children's School and want to delve even deeper into the field of early childhood development and education. They've conducted observations here as part of the *Principles of Child Development* course, worked as interns in our classrooms via the *Practicum in Child Development* course, and learned to conduct formal research with young children as part of their *Developmental Research Methods* course. Here are some of the unique academic experiences these students have chosen for the final year of their undergraduate degree programs.



- **Lisa Murphy**, who plans to be an early childhood special educator, is interning one full day per week at the Environmental Charter School. She supported the 1<sup>st</sup> grade educators by designing a Peace Corner to promote mindfulness, relaxation, and conflict resolution, while herself learning how to work in an inclusive classroom and plan lessons for students with widely varying skill levels.
- **Lilah Buchanan**, who is heading for a career in social work, is doing an independent study to investigate strengths-based models for supporting parenting, particularly for those parents most at risk for struggle based on their levels of education, economics, etc. As part of her project, Lilah has observed parent education events at the Children's School and Angels' Place.
- **Aubry Brown**, who wants to become a Veterinarian, is interning on weekends at the Animal Rescue League's Wildlife Center and, in addition to gaining valuable animal care experience, plans to develop educational materials for the public on treatment of wild animals.
- **Caroline Santilli** is conducting a capstone project for her Bachelor of Humanities and Arts degree to show how her psychology and art interests can be integrated. She has been doing literature research, interviews with art educators, and site visits to art programs designed for typically and atypically developing children and plans to synthesize what she's learned by creating a web site that will be useful to art educators interested in better meeting the needs of children with special needs.

## Alumni Profile

• **Stanton Man:** *In 2016, I graduated from Carnegie Mellon with a B.S. in Decision Science, with a focus on quantitative decision making and market research. I worked at the Children's School as a work study and loved every moment of it. I'm currently working in Philadelphia for Accenture's Digital practice, where I specialize in Marketing and Customer Analytics. I also occasionally volunteer at the local Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) School, where I help high school students with their resumes and interview skills to better prepare them for their future endeavors. I am extremely thankful to the Children's School educators for always providing a place of comfort, positivity, and goldfish during my time at CMU.*





## IALS Conference in Memphis, TN

From April 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mrs. Bird and Mrs. Tomer attended the annual conference of the International Association of Laboratory Schools, where they presented a session on “Encouraging Critical Thinking and Problem Solving in an Early Childhood Make Shop”.



The conference included tours of the University of Memphis Campus Elementary School, the Barbara K. Lipman Early Childhood School and Research Institute, and the Maxine Smith STEAM Middle School, talks about the role of laboratory schools in advancing educational theory, research and practice, and receptions at the Confucius Institute and on a Mississippi River Boat.

## Honor for Lisa Murphy

Excerpts from **“Senior Wants to Help Young Children Reach Their Potential”**

By Emily Stimmel

<http://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/news/news-stories/2017/april/murphy-lankford-award.html>



*Carnegie Mellon University's Lisa Murphy ... is the 2017 recipient of the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences' Gretchen Lankford Prize ... Named for the late Gretchen Goldsmith Lankford, the prize underscores her 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.” Murphy plans to pursue a master's degree in special education and teach children between preschool and first grade. She is particularly interested in understanding how children on the autism spectrum learn and develop. “Each child is a different puzzle and I love the challenge of combining observations, collaboration with others and research to figure out what the most effective intervention may be,” said Murphy, who is majoring in psychology with a concentration in child development ... According to Sharon Carver, Murphy has found her niche teaching in early elementary inclusive classrooms. Murphy has interned in an autism support classroom at The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh and is currently a teacher's assistant in an inclusive first grade class at the Environmental Charter School.*

*Outside the classroom, Murphy is the vice president of the ... Psi Chi psychology honor society and a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She has organized the 3v3 basketball tournament for the Special Olympics at CMU ... and she has established a reputation as the greatest basketball player in CMU history. Carver believes these diverse activities will help Murphy become a better teacher. “As a scholar-athlete, Lisa has also developed her leadership and teamwork skills, so she is poised to combine her personal passion with a proactive and productive approach to improving special education during children's foundational years,” said Carver ... Murphy has been accepted to three ... master's programs in special education. She believes the Lankford Prize will positively impact her future goals. “It serves as validation that my ambitions and goals to enter the field of teaching are meaningful and promising,” said Murphy.*

The Children's School educators are honored to have been a part of Lisa's professional journey at CMU, and we eagerly anticipate word of her impact in education.



## Undergraduate Spotlight Farewell Seniors!

We are saying good-bye to six of our highly valued student employees.



- **Lilah Buchanan** plans to complete her undergraduate degree in August. *"I am really excited to be getting to join the Children's School June camp this year. After I graduate, I plan to return to Portland, Oregon when I look forward to working to support families facing difficult situations. I plan to pursue graduate school in social work."*

- **Lexi Delarosa** says, *"Following graduation I'll be working at a summer camp in the arts/performance and sports department with ages anywhere between 5 and 14 years old. I'll then be returning to school near home in New York for my Master's degree in either occupational or exercise therapy while simultaneously performing / auditioning whenever and wherever I can and working on getting my yoga teacher training ☺."*



- **Liz Dolinar** plans to return to her home in Cleveland, Ohio to work as a full-time intern architect at the international firm DLR Group / Westlake Reed Leskosky. *"I am excited to rejoin DLR/WRL's healthcare design team after my internship with them last summer, and I will be working on earning my professional license. My summer plans include volunteering, reading, camping, and visiting the beach before I start work in June!"*

- **Rafael McCauley** plans to pursue a career in Computer Security. *"If all goes well, I'll be interning here in Pittsburgh this summer as a junior penetration tester finding computer system vulnerabilities a hacker could exploit. I hope to learn a lot and be able to start helping make "the cyber" safer very soon ☺."*



- **Caroline Santilli** comments, *"My future plans are to work in the box office of an opera house in Stonington, Maine this summer and spend some time with my family. Then, in the fall, I will be attending George Washington University for two years to gain a Master's degree in Art Therapy."*

- **Jaclyn Zois** plans to begin her Master of Science degree in Medical Sciences at Boston University School of Medicine this fall. *"It will definitely be an adjustment from Pittsburgh and all the communities I have here at CMU, but I'm excited to go back home! From there, I plan to attend medical school with the ultimate goal of becoming a pediatric specialist."*



Thanks to all of our seniors for the support of our programs, and best wishes for thriving in your personal and professional lives!