

## 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 and classroom assistants working with particular groups have been introduced in the classroom blog.



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

Danielle Sallmen and Andrew Lehmberg 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 Sallmen is working with the Morning 4's and Extended Morning Program this semester, and Mr. Lehmberg is teaching in the Kindergarten.



• Danielle Sallmen says, "I am a senior in the CASE Program at the University of Pittsburgh. I grew up in New Castle, Pennsylvania, which is about an hour from the city, with two older brothers. I danced for 14 years and became an assistant teacher as a teenager, so I developed my love of teaching through dance. I knew from the beginning that I wanted to work with young children but developed my interest in special education through the CASE program. I am in an honor fraternity, Phi Sigma Pi that does service events such as the Children's Hospital Radio-thon and packaging medical supplies through Global Links. I appreciate the vast opportunities that the preschool children have at the Children's School, such as cooking and the Make Shop."

• Andrew Lehmberg says, "I am senior at the University of Pittsburgh. I am from Westfield, New Jersey, about six hours from here. I lived in England for my early childhood years. My father is an engineer and my mother was a kindergarten teacher prior to having children. I started playing Ultimate Frisbee in sixth grade and am now on Pitt's men's Ultimate Frisbee club team. From the start of high school, I started helping coach, which gave me experience with younger children. I then started working with younger children at camps during the summer. Coming into college from my background with children and my mother's experience inspired me to pursue education, and Pitt's CASE program is excellent. The special education aspect resonates with experiences I had with children who have Down Syndrome. The Children's School is a fantastic opportunity for me to witness the progressive approach to education, which connects well with the CASE program emphasis on always seeking what is best for children."



## Undergraduate Spotlight

Hi! My name is Camille Williams, and I am currently a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon. I am a chemistry major with an intended minor in business. I am from Cincinnati, OH, which is a similar city to Pittsburgh and about 5 hours from here. I am also a captain of the varsity women's soccer team at CMU. Being on the soccer team has been a great experience as it has allowed me to grow my love of soccer, build relationships with incredible teammates, and travel to interesting places for games. I recently joined Kappa Alpha Theta sorority and am absolutely loving the amazing community and sense of "home away from home" it has given me. It is wonderful to know that in addition to the 30 women on the soccer team, I also have a family of 80 sisters to love and support me during my college years and beyond.



I have always had a passion for working with children. Throughout high school, I was an avid babysitter, I developed a summer camp for young girls called "Camp Fun in the Sun", I helped with little kids' soccer camps, and this summer I was a nanny for a vibrant family of 4 children. When my teammate came to me and asked if I would be interested in working with the Children's School, I knew it was the perfect opportunity for me!



The Children's School is such a unique and amazing place. The passion that the teachers bring to the classroom each day is undeniable, and I am so happy to work in such an incredible environment. I am currently working with the Morning 3's, and coming to work is definitely a highlight of my day. The eager curiosity that the children display in trying new activities and playing games is so inspiring and a joy to watch. Their ability to be completely engaged in the present moment is so humbling and reminds me that, no matter what is happening in my busy schedule, I much appreciate every moment. I look forward to watching the children grow and learning from them this year and beyond!

## CMU's 1000Plus Day

On Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, CMU students participating in the 1000Plus Day volunteered their time to remove our summer annuals from the garden and plant bulbs that will grow next spring. Thanks to Ms. Buchanan for being on site to guide the volunteers with the project!!



## Family Fall Fun Fest

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 21st. What a beautiful day they had! More than 60 children and adults from the Children's School and the Cyert Center played a musical mat game, tried their hand at a pumpkin ring toss, decorated a pumpkin, and hunted for gourds in the sandbox. Children had the opportunity to mix barnyard animal sounds and nursery rhymes using a DJ turntable. The playground climbers, wooden blocks, musical instruments, and mud kitchen were also open for play. Everyone got to snack on apple cider, pretzels, and chocolate chip cookies provided by the Mortar Board students.



Special thanks to event planners Aakash Parekh, Faith Kaufman, Dr. Richelle Bernazzoli, the Mortar Board faculty advisor, and Children's School educators, Jean Bird and Lilah Buchanan, who helped host the event!

## Seeking Host Families

The Children's School will be hosting 2 undergraduate students from Duksung Women's University in Seoul, South Korea for an International Practicum Program. A total of 8 Early Childhood Education students will be in Pittsburgh for practicum experiences at our school, Falk, Carlow's Campus School, or Pitt's University Child Development Center. To help the students experience family life in Pittsburgh, we are recruiting two host families who live close to the university to provide **housing and some meals** for one male or one female practicum student from Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. Proximity to CMU is essential so that the students can use public transportation or rides from teachers to travel to and from school. Please contact Dr. Carver at [sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu) if you are interested in this hosting opportunity. Former host families will be happy to share their experiences with you, and student photos and bios will be available soon.



## Undergraduate Research

Dr. Anna Fisher'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. 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!

- **Does clutter on the activity table impact children's speed and accuracy when completing iSpy tasks that vary in difficulty?** (The Pictures Game, AM 4's and K)
- **How do children consider merit vs. need when suggesting fair distribution of extra goods?** (The Story Game, PM 3's, PM 4's & K)
- **How well can children of different ages identify emotions and link them to the situations that might trigger them?** (The Matching Faces Game, AM 3's, AM 4's & K)  
Which child below looks sad? What situation might have made the child sad? Why?



## Children's Media

This fall, we've had several families request advice about children's television and media use, so here we share the two best sources of research-based information for families and educators.

- **Common Sense Media** is "the leading independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids thrive in a world of media and technology. We empower parents, teachers, and policymakers by providing unbiased information, trusted advice, and innovative tools to help them harness the power of media and technology as a positive force in all kids' lives." (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org>).
- **The Erikson Institute's Technology in Early Childhood (TEC) Center** "empowers early childhood educators to make informed decisions about the appropriate use of technology with children from birth to age 8." (<http://teccenter.erikson.edu>).



## Toys for Tots Donations

Would you like to do the best you can to make a child's holiday? That's just what **Toys for Tots** strives to do. If you would like to donate a new unwrapped toy to Toys for Tots, you can take your donation to any Toys R Us or Babies R Us location. There is also a donation location at CMU's Wean Hall 4212. If you would like to find a drop off location near you or to volunteer please visit [toysfortots.org](http://toysfortots.org).

## Undergraduate Spotlight

Hi! My name is Grace Dzina and I am a senior at Carnegie Mellon, majoring in Social and Political History. After stumbling upon the Children's School during observations for a class a few years ago, I discovered a new world of learning at Carnegie Mellon. Away from the stress culture at the collegiate level, I found myself immersed in a world of friends who were filled with excitement in learning about the world around them. It was a world into which I knew I wanted to immerse myself, rather than simply observe.



I have always had a love of working with children, but my experience prior to coming to the Children's School was always on the softball field or in the pool. The experience I have gained here in the classroom has opened my eyes to a whole new side of child development. In helping with the friends, I have not only learned how to better engage with the friends, but I have also gotten to witness and adopt the skills each teacher brings to the classroom. Their examples have taught me about the intentionality that goes into each and every activity and interaction. The way in which they



leverage every point of contact to support learning process is remarkable. At the end of each work shift, I am left inspired by the friends' love and awe of learning and thinking. When the rigor of academia becomes overwhelming and frustrating, the children's pride in learning how to zip a coat and their joy in learning about the different parts of trees puts reality back into perspective. In return for my work at the Children's School, the friends have taught me the importance of excitement in knowledge and reminded me of the joy found in exploration.

## Undergraduate Spotlight: Student Teacher Reflections

Danielle Sallmen and Andrew Lemberg are seniors in U. Pitt's Combined Accelerated Studies in Education (CASE) Program, a five-year undergrad and Master's program that includes a BS in Applied Developmental Psychology and a M.Ed. in early childhood and special education.



### • **Danielle Sallmen** (AM Younger 4's with Mrs. Opferman)

*My time at the Children's School has been filled with amazing opportunities and valuable learning experiences that I will carry with me through all future teaching endeavors. It has been a pleasure getting to work with all the bright-minded students and to watch them grow in the brief time that I*



*have been here. Mrs. Opferman and all the other Green Room teachers have set great examples of what effective teaching looks like in the classroom, and the best teaching mechanisms to advance a student's learning. I am so glad to have been placed in such an outstanding school setting where the learning possibilities seem endless. It is hard to believe that my time here is coming to an end. Thank you to all the educators and faculty who have made my first student teaching experience a rewarding and enjoyable one. I will truly miss working with everyone at the Children's School.*

### • **Andrew Lemberg** (Kindergarten with Mrs. Blizman)

*Having the opportunity to work with Mrs. Blizman and the other Kindergarten teachers this semester has been an incredibly insightful and humbling experience. The educators at the CMU Children's School are like a big family, and I immediately felt welcome and continue to be greeted by happy faces each morning. From the first day of school, I was impressed with how the classroom was arranged to prepare both teachers and students for success, and also with how well all three teachers worked together in harmony. It has been a classroom dynamic that I haven't experienced thus far in my time at Pitt, but observing the Kindergarten team has provided me an example of how effective it can be. I have been very fortunate to have Mrs. Blizman guide my progress as a young educator through development of lesson plans, daily work activities, and classroom management skills. The knowledge I have gained has been priceless, and I look forward to building upon and applying it to my studies, as well as wherever my future career takes me. My summary of my time at the Children's School cannot be complete without mentioning the students with whom I got to interact each day. Their willingness to learn, as well as their acceptance of me in the classroom, has been unbelievably heartwarming. Any challenge they presented has strengthened me for my future teaching, which is just one way that they have shown me that teaching is a two-way street and that, at times, I am as much a student as they are! Overall, my time in the Kindergarten classroom has been wonderful, and I look forward to visiting everyone in the future.*



## Undergraduate Spotlight:

In addition to benefitting from the help of diverse CMU undergraduates, the Children's School occasionally partners with high schools to provide career experience for high school students, including the talented Cynthia Scott.

• My name is Cynthia Scott, and I am currently a senior at City Charter High School. I got the pleasure of coming to The Children's School for the internship portion of our senior requirements for graduation. Next year, my tentative plan is to attend Robert Morris University to study sport psychology and sports management. Being an intern at the Children's School has been a great experience. I genuinely enjoyed everything that I got to do and observe during my time here. All the educators are amazing and all the children are great to be around. I have been to a lot of early childhood centers, but honestly none have been as well structured and organized as the Children's School. The teachers mentoring me are all helpful and insightful, and I learned a lot from



the children as well. Not only was my time here fun and interesting, but through observing how the different children interact with each other and work through problems, I learned things that I will be able to take with me into the future.

## Early Childhood Practicum Students

From January 26<sup>th</sup> through February 11<sup>th</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, with the total group including 6 undergraduates and 1 master's student. We look forward to learning more about the initiatives our South Korean colleagues are leading in early childhood and to reflecting with them about the cross-cultural similarities and differences in our values and approaches related to educating young children.



Undergraduate Do Yeon Chae will work with the Preschool 4's Team, and Graduate Student Hyun Tae Kim will work with the Kindergarten. Do Yeon began volunteering in early childhood centers in middle school and enjoys learning about different teaching approaches. Hyun Tae is involved in music and puppetry with children. While in college, he helped organize volunteers to fund and build a kindergarten in the Philippines. We look forward to our children learning from these pre-service teachers from South Korea!

Thanks to the Richardson (Wilder, 4's) and Fortier (Lucy 4's and Eli K) families 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:

Elizabeth La (Kindergarten) is a first year student at CMU's Dietrich College, hoping to major in Cognitive Science with a concentration in Psychology and an additional major in Statistics.

"Elizabeth, look at my invisible unicorn! I told her not to follow me to school, but she wouldn't listen..."



Every time I step into the Children's School, I am struck by the level of creativity of my small friends. From the imaginary animals they create, to the masterpieces they build out of Legos, to the picture books they make, the children are all so imaginative and willing to think outside of the box. My favorite part of working at the Children's School is conversing with the friends and asking them questions about their creations, encouraging them to add details to the worlds they have created. Often times, they have no trouble answering questions on the spot, and sometimes even go on little rants about all

the different aspects of their world. This is fascinating to me because back in the real world of college-level classes, my peers and I have often struggled to use creativity in simple tasks such as deciding on group names. In fact, just last week in the student-taught ASL class that I'm taking, a group came up with the name "TBD" during a class activity. "To be determined". Basically meaning, "I have no imagination and am too lazy to think of a name right now, so I'll put it off until later". Then again, my group name was "Left", indicating the side of the room where we were seated, so I guess I should not critique another group's name. If this task was called for here, at the Children's School, I can imagine all the friends raising their hands, faces filled with excitement, eager to share their suggestion for a group name. This contrast is truly remarkable, if not disappointing on the college students' part, for we generally assume that college students perform better than kindergarten students because we have a more developed brain. I believe that by surrounding myself with my kindergarten friends, I not only get to spend time relaxing and interacting with children, just like when I was home in California, but I also use my brain in new ways compared to what college courses require.



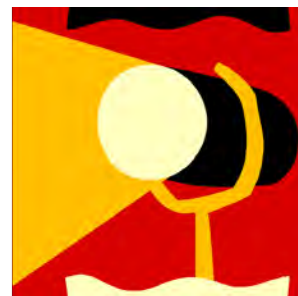
**New Interns:** In addition to our student employees, undergraduate interns taking Dr. Carver's



Practicum in Child Development course support our children and teachers in the classroom six hours per week, while also engaging in a seminar with Dr. Carver every Wednesday morning. This semester, we have Yusuf Mehkri (left) in the AM 3's, Lynnette Ramsay in the AM 4's, and Lily Marty and Christine Phang (right) in the Kindergarten.

## Undergraduate Spotlight:

My name is Rachel Glasser and I am a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon, studying Communication Design. I started working at the Children's School at the beginning of this semester and it has been a great experience so far. One of my friends worked at the Children's School about a year ago, and when I told her I was looking for a job this semester she suggested that I work here. I am truly grateful for that suggestion because working with the children doesn't even feel like a job. Instead, it is like taking a relaxing break from the stresses of going to class and being a student.



I usually go to gym with the Kindergarten class on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and it is so much fun to play games and run around with all of the friends. They have so much energy but are also attentive and considerate. Since there is a lot of physical activity that is sometimes challenging, there are usually a couple of small incidents with the friends running into each other or falling down. I



have seen a lot of great instances of friends being very apologetic and aware of their own actions when they run into another friend and cause them to fall over, and moments like these make me appreciate how considerate and kind these young friends have learned to be to each other.

The Children's School is truly a great place for me to learn and grow. All of the people who work at the school have been so kind and welcoming to me and I can see that it is also a great place for all of the young students. I am excited for what is to come as I keep on working here and learning through these meaningful experiences.

## Varsity Swimmers & Divers Offer Lessons

It is the time of year again for the Tartan Swim & Dive Lesson Fundraiser! This spring, we will be offering eight lesson dates for interested swimmers 3 years old and up. Our lessons are taught by members of the Carnegie Mellon University Varsity Swimming & Diving Team, and we welcome all ability levels. Information regarding dates, prices, and times is included below:

- **Dates:** 4/2 - 4/5 (Monday - Thursday) and 4/9 - 4/12 (Monday - Thursday)
- **Times:** 4:30 - 5:00 pm      5:00 - 5:30pm      5:30 - 6:00pm      6:00 - 6:30pm
- **Pricing:** 1-4 lessons - \$25 per lesson      5-8 lessons - \$20 per lesson

If you are interested in registering for lessons, please e-mail Coach Myles ([myleso@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:myleso@andrew.cmu.edu)) with the dates and times you would like, as well as the name of the swimmer(s), age(s), and a brief description of their ability level. Coach Myles will reply to confirm your spot and give you additional information regarding your lesson(s). **You will also need to complete a waiver form and return it prior to your first lesson.**

Coach Myles is happy to answer any questions you may have through e-mail or phone ([412-268-6082](tel:412-268-6082)). Thanks, and we look forward to seeing you on the pool deck!

Go Tartans!!

Coach Myles Oliver, Assistant Men's and Women's Swim Coach

## Undergraduate Spotlight:

In addition to benefitting from the help of diverse CMU undergraduates, the Children's School occasionally partners with high schools to provide career experience for high school students, including the talented Hanna O'Donnell, who is a senior at City High School.

My experience at CMU's Children's School is easily one of the most eye opening and humbling experiences I've had in my 18 years. It not only has been a great time with the staff and students, but it has given me relationships with people who have helped me find myself and my career path. Every day is an adventure here at the Children's School. You never know what you're going to walk into, but that's the exciting part! I have loved this opportunity to work with the teachers and students in all different types of environments outside of the classroom, from the gym,



to Schenley Park, to the playground, and so much more. I have also loved interacting with students from all over the world who don't speak much English, seeing them learn and interact in very similar ways. I am thankful and humbled that I have been a part of the Children's School family. It truly has been a blessing to have had this opportunity with this amazing group of teachers and students.



## Kindergartners Decorate for Dietrich Day

Dietrich Day on March 28<sup>th</sup> is designed to celebrate all that CMU's Dietrich College of Humanities & Social Sciences has to offer, which includes the Children's School. The festive afternoon of food and games on the CFA Lawn will include a nacho bar, an obstacle course, desserts and sweets, a mobile photo booth, oversized lawn games, and bedazzled unicorns made by our kindergarten friends. The mythical unicorn is Dietrich College's mascot, perhaps to open our minds to possibilities!



## Undergrads Support Spring Carnival



On Friday and Saturday, April 20 and 21, from 8am to Noon, the CMU Alumni Association will sponsor a KidZone Area in a tent on Frew Street with a balloon artist, face painting, coloring, free t-shirts, and the opportunity for children to build and race their own LEGO® buggy on our track. The Midway rides open at 11am on Friday and Saturday, with most rides costing between \$.50 and \$2.00. For a full carnival schedule, see <http://www.alumni.cmu.edu/s/1410/alumni/index-social.aspx?sid=1410&gid=1&pgid=785>.

Undergrads Tori Iatarola and Camille Williams are working with their sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta, on a Titanic-themed booth. It's Camille's first time experiencing this CMU tradition! New volunteer Hannah Fernandes is working on the Santa's Workshop booth with the Delta Gamma sorority.

## Undergraduate Spotlight: Farewell Seniors!

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



- **Grace Dzina** will be traveling to Taiwan for a big family reunion and then spending the summer working in New York City at DREAM/Harlem RBI with their baseball and academic summer program for middle schoolers.



- **Tori Iatarola** is applying to schools for a Masters in Nursing.



- **Michelle Kang** is returning to Korea over the summer. She plans to work as a research associate in a psychology lab in the fall and also prepare for graduate school to pursue her interests in developmental psychology.

- **Rachel McKinney** is moving to Nashville, Tennessee to work as a research assistant in the Psychiatry Department at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She will then be pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology.



- **Lynnette Ramsey** will graduate in May with a BS Psychology and a minor in linguistics. She will be going home to New Jersey to continue her search for a full-time job in a metropolitan area. Lynnette's long term goal is to go to graduate school for speech pathology.

- **Charline Tomer** plans on traveling and spending time with her two grandchildren. 😊

- **Lauren Yan** will be going to Korea to teach English in the fall.

Thank you to all of these seniors who have shared themselves and their talents with us to enrich our team and our program!!



## Senior Capstone to Explain Biomimicry

Inventure Lab is a Design Capstone Project created by CMU seniors Gillan Johnson, Noah Johnson, Faith Kaufman, Alexandra Palatucci and Charles Van De Zande aiming to bridge ecology, design, and sustainability through making and play. The Kindergarten children recently assisted in the pilot test of the Inventure Lab on the playground by engaging in biomimicry. Pretending to be bees, the children participated in a scavenger hunt to collect "nectar" from flowers, and build the "hive".

