

HDFS NEWS

Family, Nutrition & Exercise Sciences (FNES) Department
Human Development & Family Science Newsletter - 2020



Dear Human Development and Family Science Students and Alumni,

We hope you and your families and friends are doing well through the difficult COVID-19 situation this year. As you know, we finished this academic year with online instruction. We are presenting you the 2020 Human Development and Family Science (HDFS) Newsletter

which includes program updates and information on our students' and alumni's achievements!

Thank you very much for keeping in touch with us! Stay safe and healthy!

Dr. Mihaela Robila, PhD, CFLE
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Human Development & Family Science Program News

In 2020, we have renewed our Family Life Education Certification (CFLE) from the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR/ www.ncfr.org). We had the HDFS program certified in 2005, and then we had renewals every five years (2010, 2015, 2020).

We strongly encourage our HDFS students to become student members of NCFR as it provides opportunities to network for career advancement and resources.

Welcome, New Adjunct Faculty!



Marie Therese Weisbrot

Marie Therese Weisbrot, MS, LCAT, CCLS is a child life specialist working within the Pediatric Emergency Department at Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York (CCMC), a Level One Trauma Center. She provides compassionate individualized child life care to children and their families during their visit. She also provides mentorship to peers within the division, co-leads clinical supervision for child life specialists, and supervises volunteers assigned to the department. She is looking forward to collaborative work with

the medical and psychosocial team in identifying and implementing best practices in working with infants, young children, and adolescents with developmental delays and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Prior to her work at CCMC, Therese was the supervisor of the Child Life Program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's (MSKCC) Pediatric Department for nearly 19 years. There she oversaw and developed the program, the child life staff, and volunteers. She practiced child life, working closely with the medical team, both inpatient and outpatient. She co-led therapeutic groups for caregivers, siblings, and adolescents and created programs—therapeutic and recreational—for managing the daily needs of hospitalized children and their families. Other previous work experience includes Queens Hospital Center's Adult Psychiatric Department-Inpatient Unit as a senior activities therapist and also an art therapy consultant with AHRC of Queens.

During her years of leadership at MSKCC, Therese also worked with the Association for Child Life Professionals (formerly the

Child Life Council)—the national governing body for child life specialists—by chairing two committees: the Web and Online Networking Advisory Committee and the Volunteer Recognition and Engagement Committee. Regionally, Therese supported Child Life of Greater New York, a collaborative networking group of child life leaders, by taking on the roles of treasurer on the executive board as well as the registration chair for several annual conferences.

Therese earned her master's degree in art therapy with a specialization in photo art therapy from the College of New Rochelle in New Rochelle, New York. She has a bachelor's degree in fine arts with a minor in art therapy from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. She's done trainings through the Play Therapy Training Institute in New Jersey. She is currently a certified child life specialist (CCLS) and a licensed creative arts therapist (LCAT) in New York.

She is an avid photographer, a pretty good cook, great friend, wife to an amazing husband, and mother of two brilliant and beautiful children.



Welcome Back to our Returning Adjunct Faculty!



Lucille DiMola

Lucille DiMola, MBA, an adjunct lecturer since 2015, has a background in finance and healthcare. She works with students on such issues as utilizing family resources, decision making, and planning and coping skills. Sound decisions for both individuals and families and changes in the lifespan stages are viewed through case studies. Life's practical lessons, such as creating budgets, introduction to corporate social responsibility, and contributions made by non-profits are introduced in the Family and Individual Finance class. DiMola has a Bachelor's of Science in accounting and a master's in business administration. She has worked in both corporate and non-profit organizations. Teaching, as a second career, has been a rewarding experience. She has been teaching FNES 151: Families as Consumers and FNES 153: Family Resource Management for several years.

Faculty Updates

Dr. Elizabeth Riina continues her research on the social and cultural contexts for parenting and child development. She applied for a federal grant to examine the developmental course of parenting stress for single mothers. Here she aims to identify stability and change in parenting stress from childhood through adolescence and the sources of support that help to reduce parenting strains.

In addition, Dr. Riina was invited to give a talk at the biennial meeting for the Society of Research on Adolescence (SRA) in San Diego, CA, in March 2020 (meeting postponed due to COVID-19). Her findings show that adolescent adjustment problems are related to later increases in co-parenting conflict for mothers and fathers. The manuscript titled *Bidirectional Associations between Youth Adjustment and Mothers' and Fathers' Co-parenting Conflict* was recently accepted for publication in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (in press).

Dr. Riina is currently teaching an independent study research seminar, focused on identifying family socioeconomic factors as predictors of family meal time practices and adolescent health behaviors.

Dr. Mihaela Robila was as a Provost's Faculty Fellow for the academic year 2019–2020. She collaborated with the Provost's Office on several initiatives to increase internationalization at the campus level. One of these was the initiation of the *QC Global Newsletter*, which serves as a platform for QC to highlight faculty efforts with respect to their participation in international projects, publications, grants, and collaborations with an international focus, emphasizing the contributions of faculty to the science on the global arena.



Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to share with you the first Queens College QC Global newsletter. As part of our strategic plan, we are working to expand QC's international presence and interactions. I thank Professor Mihaela Robila, a 2019–20 Provost's Faculty Fellow, for spearheading the development of the newsletter as part of her fellowship project.

We have recently become the first college in New York State to sign an agreement with Novatia, a global higher education organization that partners with universities to increase international students' access to higher education and prepare them for future success. This partnership will broaden international education on campus, enhance our global reach and reputation, and expand learning opportunities for students. We are expecting the first cohort of students in Spring 2020. With the campus situated in the most diverse county in the United States, Queens College already has students with very diverse cultural backgrounds, representing most of the world's nationalities. We think that international students will find this rich cultural diversity attractive and comforting. These are also appealing factors to many of the faculty members who choose to work at Queens College, who are themselves globally minded and conducting extensive international work and collaborations.

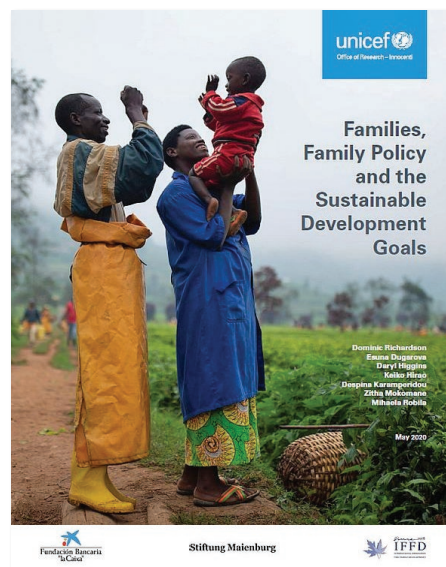
QC Global seeks to highlight the significant contributions that our faculty members are making in the international arena by providing a platform to illustrate faculty participation in international projects, publications, grants, and collaborations with an international focus.

I hope that you will enjoy reading about our faculty members' international scholarship and collaborations, from excavating a sanctuary in Israel, to examining Portuguese historical manuscripts, to collaborating with colleagues in Mexico and South Africa, among many other fascinating topics profiled in this inaugural issue. I thank our Deans—William McClure, Craig Michaels, Daniel Weinstein, and Michael Wylie—for their suggestions, and our faculty colleagues for their contributions to this issue. We are also inviting faculty and students to share with us their own international scholarly experiences to be featured in future issues (please send them by email to mihaela.robila@qc.cuny.edu).

Elizabeth Riina
Dr. Elizabeth Riina
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

QC Global Newsletter

Dr. Robila has started a new area of research and co-authored, with Dr. Stefan Robila, an article titled "Applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Methodologies to Behavioral and Social Sciences," published in the *Journal of Child and Family Studies* (2019). She presented parts of this work at the 2019 National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Conference in Fort Worth, Texas and at the 2020 American Psychological (APA) Convention.



Families, Family Policy and the Sustainable Development Goals, May 2020

Dr. Robila was a co-author of the *Families and Sustainable Development Goals Report* (2020) launched on May 15 at the International Day of the Family online celebration webinar organized by the Family Program in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Dr. Robila was invited to present a paper on *Parenting in Europe* at the *United Nations Expert Group Meeting* organized by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2020, online).

Student News

Congratulations to our 2020 Student Awardees!

Tara Roberts has been awarded the 2020 **FNES Award** for high scholarship and future promise in Human Development and Family Science.



Tara Roberts

Nessa Wardak has been awarded the 2020 **Anne Whelan Dwyer and Patrick Andrew Dwyer Award** for significant professional service to the Human Development and Family Science Program.



Nessa Wardak

Aiman H. Mehar has been awarded the 2020 **Estelle Rosenzweig Scholarship** for high academic achievement in Human Development and Family Science Program and community engagement.



Aiman H. Mehar

AAFCS Student Club

Dr. Riina is the faculty adviser for the student club. We strongly encourage HDFS alumni to come visit and share information about their post-graduate pathways with current students. If you are interested in being a guest speaker, please contact Dr. Riina at eriina@qc.cuny.edu.

The club has been active throughout 2019–2020. We invited several new and returning guest speakers to present about the wide variety of graduate school and career opportunities for HDFS majors. In the fall, we welcomed professor Angela Renz who shared her experiences in her social work career and Mary DeGiovine-Robins, program director for vocational services at EAC Network, who shared professional development tips. For spring, we invited Lizaura



Students at our club meetings: Jaime Esposito and Nessa Ward

German from Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)-NYC to talk about her work in youth advocacy for children in foster care and planned our first APA-Style writing workshop. Both events were postponed due to COVID-19 but will be rescheduled soon.

Professional Development Possible Minors for HDFS Students

Some of our HDFS students are considering adding a minor to their academic portfolio. The two minors below are good examples that our students have been pursuing or could consider pursuing to complement their knowledge and skills.

Student Services and Peer Counseling Minor

Several of our students over the years pursued a minor in peer counseling. This is a good pathway, particularly for those interested in developing a career in family therapy, mental health counseling, school counseling, or social work. HDFS students could use four of our HDFS courses (FNES 147, 248, 256, and 347) towards this minor.

For more information, please consult their website:

<https://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/counseling/peer/Pages/Minor-in-Student-Personnel.aspx>

Global Studies Minor

Pursuing a global studies minor is good for students who are interested in pursuing careers focusing on policies or cultural and global issues. New York City is a place with many national and international agencies that could present career opportunities and employment.

For more information please consult their website:

<https://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/GlobalEd/OGEI/Pages/Global-Studies-Minor.aspx>

Students Professional Development

Below are examples of the activities our students are involved in.

Emely Arias: “I’m currently working at Queens Centers for Progress in a residential setting, I provide support for 10 individuals with a range of disabilities. This support includes running their daily goals to community habilitation. I completed my field work there last semester and recently got hired at Skip of NY—and at this agency you get a case and provide one-on-one care. I applied for this job because ideally in the future I would like to work with kids, and Skip of NY focuses on kids with disabilities. I thought it would be the perfect bridge from what I do now to what I’d like to do in the future. I’m also applying to master’s programs in social work.”

Keyana Baerga conducted her Fieldwork at the Throgsneck Extended Care facility in the Bronx. It is a nursing home that provides both physical and occupational therapy to patients living in the facility. She was accepted into the Baruch’s Master for Public Administration (MPA) program and at the Middlebury Institute for International Studies MPA program in Monterey, California.

Kiana Cheng worked as a counselor at World of Discovery day camp during the summer of 2019.

Gabrielle Gunther currently works at Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC) as a therapy assistant in their after-school program. Previously she worked as a direct support professional for the Association for Habilitation and Residential Care (AHRC) Suffolk County, where she assisted residents in group home settings. She has also obtained a certificate in Mental Health First Aid from NYC Department of Health. She volunteered at Peer Health Exchange as a senior educator, going to local high schools that lacked a health program to teach the students about health advocacy and wellness.

Giselle Marmolejos volunteered in St. John’s Bread and Life program, a non-profit organization that provides assistance with meeting basic needs and works to fight hunger in New York City.

Tanisha Marte currently interns in the Grand Street Settlement as a group leader in the after-school program.

Sarah Y. Park interns at the YWCA in the social services department. Here she is learning how to apply housing, MTA card, and food stamp benefits. She also helps with translation services for seniors who speak Korean. Seeing them feel more comfortable makes Sarah feel proud of the assistance she provides!

Pamela Perez is double majoring in psychology and human development and family science. She is currently a Cultural Corps intern at the Laundromat Project. She is the treasurer of Alliance of Latin American Students (ALAS) and recently completed her time as a peer counselor last semester. Pamela is a CUNY Service Corps Cohort 5 Alumni, where she interned at Ember Charter School in Brooklyn from 2017 to 2018. She is also in the process of becoming a Generation Citizen Democracy Coach at a high school for this semester.

Patricia Tulloch worked at Eihab Human Services, a non-profit organization serving children and adults with developmental disabilities and behavioral health challenges.

Shayla Vasquez is interning at New Alternatives, which is a service for LGBTQ+ homeless young adults, ages 18–24. She is helping with housing applications and also sitting in case management meetings. Shayla was accepted in the Nutrition and Exercise Science master’s program in our department.

Rachel Wilburn works at Behavior Frontiers as a behavior therapist, providing one-on-one intervention for children ages 5–17 diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

HDFS Student Spotlight



Yasmin Jalil

Yasmin Jalil (2019): “I completed my undergraduate studies in December 2019. In my time here, I’ve explored many issues relating to my majors: human development and family science and psychology. I started my journey by interning on campus as a mentor with Project ExCEL. I understood how lost students may have felt when they first start college, so I wanted to help give guidance to make students’ undergraduate experience go smoother. Then I applied to CUNY Service Corps and received a placement in Central Park Zoo as an educator intern. I helped my supervisors by co-facilitating lessons during Mommy and Me classes and zoo camps. It was amazing to see children with so much enthusiasm about wildlife at a young age. As these children were going through a major development stage in life, I was able to see them grow with knowledge and enthusiasm. I have also worked in a program called Resilience Advocacy Project as a facilitator. In this program, I led a class of high school students about social issues within the community and also taught them about identity. It was fascinating to see students eager to talk about social issues they witnessed but upsetting to

hear how they thought they are too little in the community to change it. So, as a part of the program itinerary, we chose a topic and did a community impact project on preventing street harassment by decorating white shirts and spreading the word around the school. I enjoyed providing guidance in every professional setting I have worked in. There are many people who want to grow or enact change but do not know where to get resources. I would like to be that connector with the help of my experience and knowledge from HDFS. To achieve my goal, I am currently in the process of applying to graduate school under mental health counseling.”

Fernando Hernandez: “I used to work at Queen Centers for Progress as a direct support professional. Currently I work as a Community Habilitation Specialist at Skip of NY: <https://skipofny.org>. I plan activities for the individual assigned to me. This is a big change for me because instead of being assigned to two or three individuals, I’m being assigned to one. Another big change for me was the fact that I went from working with adults to working with children. To me, that’s rewarding to work with a different age group. The best feeling for me right now is gaining the parents’ trust to help the individual or doing fun activities with my individual and making my individual smile a lot. My favorite one is when I’m about to leave and my individual is saying, “Fernando I can’t wait for you to come back.” For the people who feel uncomfortable working with people with disabilities, just know they’re actually one of the most kindest and the most sweetest people on this planet!”

Alumni News

Amber Jenkins (2019) obtained her bachelor’s degree in human development and family studies with a minor in sociology from Queens College. Upon graduation, she was promoted from an assistant site director to the program site director for an elementary school in East Elmhurst. Amber is also working on obtaining her School Age Care Credential License (SACC) to open her own daycare and afterschool program.

“Utilizing the skills I have obtained from my HDFS courses and using all the strategies studied from our research based methods has helped with my experiences working with immigrant families and families in different socioeconomic standing from childhood to early adolescence. The process has been rewarding thus far, and I can’t wait to continue to grow in my career,” said Jenkins.

Denell Nobadeh (2019) was accepted in the master in health informatics program at Hofstra University. She completed her fieldwork at ACQC (Aids Center of Queens County) on Jamaica Avenue in Queens, NY.

Shavany Reid (2018) currently works at Shema Kolainu as a community habilitation provider where she helps children with ADHD and autism reach certain goals. These goals can be anywhere from learning money management skills to anger management and how to socialize with others. She also volunteers for Mount Sinai’s Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention (SAVI) Program where she provides emotional support, information, and crisis intervention for survivors of sexual assault and/or intimate partner violence. She is in the process of applying to nursing programs with the goal of eventually becoming a psychiatric nurse practitioner.

Mo Urzola Tellez (2016)

graduated with an MSW from Silberman School of Social Work in May 2019 with a practice method in community organizing and specialization in aging. During their social work internships, Mo worked with LGBTQ+ youth, under-documented people, sex workers, and sex trafficking survivors. Currently, Mo is the friendly visiting coordinator at GRIOT Circle, a multiservice agency that works with LGBTQ+ elders of color. In this role, Mo connects New York City LGBTQ+ elders of color who have challenges leaving their home with friendly visiting volunteers for weekly social visits. Friendly visits build community through intergenerational lines and enhance social engagement opportunities to decrease loneliness and social isolation. In addition, Mo facilitates workshops on the intersections of age, race, gender, and sexuality for New York City's Department for the aging case managers.

Alumni Spotlights:

Lois Muñoz (2017), graduated from Columbia University School of Social Work with a master's in advanced clinical social work in 2019. She completed her practicum at Mount Sinai Hospital Social Service Department as the child protection social worker and women's and children social worker. She currently works at the Queens Child Advocacy Center



Lois Muñoz

as a clinical forensic specialist. She works with a multidisciplinary team that investigates child sexual abuse and severe physical abuse. Lois provides direct clinical services, forensic interviews, and advocacy to child victims and their families. Her career as a social worker includes working with children and families in both outpatient and inpatient care, immigration and policy, and education success programs. As a future educator and advocate for the community, Lois hopes to address and reform child welfare laws at a national level. These initiatives started during her undergraduate career at Queens College. Lois graduated with a bachelor's in family and consumer science-human development and family science and psychology. During her academic career, Lois volunteered at the Queens's College Child Development Center. Lois would like to give a sincere

thanks to her Queens College mentors for consistently educating, guiding, and motivating her to pursue her professional career goals.

Tara Roberts (2019): "I am currently a graduate student at Hunter College in the School of Education's School Counseling Master's Program. I will be receiving a New York State certification in school counseling for grades K–12 at the completion of the two-year program. My time in the HDFS department has prepared me well for my graduate studies. As an undergraduate student in the HDFS department, I was the treasurer and a member of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) club in which I assisted in organizing club meetings and invited professionals within our field to speak. During this time, I also volunteered at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Academy's extended day program where I interned for the fieldwork class required for the HDFS major. I interned with their school counselor where I gained some insight as to what it's like to be a school counselor. I sat in on one-on-one sessions, assisted class lessons, led a class lesson myself, and helped with any other activities the counselor led at the school. I'm very grateful for my time in the HDFS department and for how much experience I learned from my peers and professors."



Congratulations to our 2020 HDFS Graduates!

Emely Arias
Keyana Baerga
Raiza Bayolima
Alyssa Checo
Yazmin Coyomani
Jamie Esposito
Sarah Gao
Carlos Garcia
Katherine Gusqui
Andrew Ha
Fernando Hernandez
Monika Islam
Yasmin Jalil
Tanisha Marte
Amanda Moskowitz
Alisha Mukim
Pamela Perez
Kiara Rivas
Tara Roberts
Ashante Salley
Joan Tan
Ishmael Tulloch
Francesca Ulysse
Shayla Vasquez
Yaroslava Vega
Nessa Wardak

“Wherever you go, go with all your heart!”
Confucius