

FAMILY SCIENCE & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

NOVEMBER 2022

Welcoming Our New FSHD Students

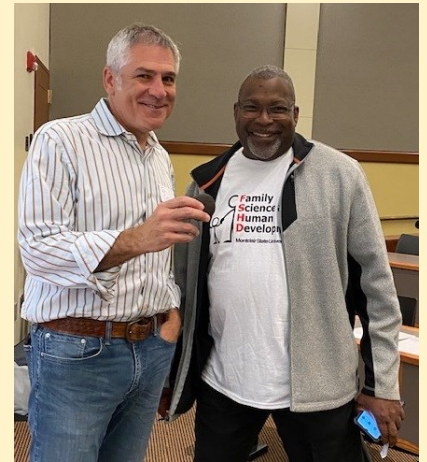
FSHD freshmen, new transfer students, and newly-declared FSHD minors appreciated the opportunity to gather with department representatives during a Welcome Dinner in October. While enjoying a delicious, catered Italian meal, the students and their guests chatted with FSHD faculty and staff, and asked questions about career options, the Family Services internship program, and scheduling classes. Each attendee received an FSHD tote bag filled with swag, and an FSHD t-shirt to wear proudly around campus.



New FSHD students and their guests chat with each other while enjoying a hot meal at the FSHD Welcome Dinner.



Camila Araya (left), a junior FSHD major who also serves as a peer counselor, explores the internship program with Department Administrator Shannon Bellum.



Acting Department Chair Dr. Jon Caspi (left) and Department Advisor Chris Cottle greeted students and answered questions about opportunities in the FSHD field. They also enjoyed the mini Moon Pies for dessert!

Department Chair's Corner

Greetings! I hope your semester is going well. My time in the role of Acting Chair is coming to an end and I want to thank the wonderful staff and faculty in the Department of Family Science and Human Development for their support. You all made my time in this position a rewarding one and I am thankful for the opportunity to see the work you all do at close distance. FSHD is exceptionally lucky.

A message I would like to convey before I depart from this role and return to being just plain ol' faculty is: *Take care of yourself!* I frequently hear from students that they are "so tired" and "overwhelmed." That's OK if it's for short periods of time. Life can be hectic and so many of you are carrying many responsibilities. But, if you are feeling that way for a long period of

time, it's time to take action!

Here are some tips I have found helpful, a "recipe" for feeling better:

First and foremost, get sleep! Not getting enough sleep makes everything worse. It makes us cranky, interrupts our abilities to concentrate and perform well, and takes the joy out of life. Simply adjusting your sleep schedule can make a world of difference.

Second, make time to connect with others.



Dr. Jonathan Caspi

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DATES TO REMEMBER

November 1

Deadline to apply for Spring 2023 Internships

November 3

Registration opens for Spring 2023

November 24-27

No classes - Thanksgiving Break

November 28

Registration opens for Summer 2023

November 30

Thursday classes meet on Wednesday

Small Steps Open Doors to Adoption

November is National Adoption Month, an initiative of the U.S. Children's Bureau that seeks to increase awareness of adoption issues, and highlight the need for families to adopt teens in the foster care system.

This year's theme, "Small Steps Open Doors," recognizes that pursuing permanency for teens in foster care can be challenging, but small steps along the way can make all the difference. The focus is on adoption for teens because they wait

longer for permanency than younger children and are at higher risk of aging out. In 2020, only five percent of adoptees were 15-18 years old.

Teens need love, support, and a sense of belonging that families can provide. Securing lifelong connections is a critical component in determining their future achievement, health, and well-being.

Taking the time to talk with and listen to teens can help adults earn their trust, and help the youth become more engaged in their own permanency planning. It also creates an environment where they can be honest, ask questions, and be part of the decision-making process about their own lives.

To learn more, visit [National Adoption Month website](https://www.childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth) or [AdoptUSkids.org](https://adoptuskids.org). ■



FSDH Internship Insights

Secure Your Site

Spring 2023 interns, reach out to Colleen Casenta, your Internship Coordinator! She has been speaking with employers who are interested in FSDH interns and she wants to share these opportunities with you. Employers include Bergen United Way, Brave Wings Therapy, Nutley Family Service Bureau, Spectrum Works, All-Stars Project of NJ, New Jersey Association of Black Educators, and many more! This is a great opportunity to confirm your site for the Spring.

Drop-in for Questions

Colleen is holding another Internship Drop-In Hour on Wednesday, November 2 from 1:00-2:00 pm when you can pop in for any quick internship questions! Drop-in virtually on Zoom or in-person in her office, University Hall, Student Success Center, Suite 3102. She is excited to chat with you. To register and find more information, [click here](#).

If you have more detailed questions, please schedule an appointment with Colleen through Handshake or email her at casentac@montclair.edu. ■

Internships allow you to beef up your resume AND expand your professional network. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, at least 70% of all jobs are filled through networking.

Career Corner

With a degree in Family Science and Human Development, you can pursue a career as a...

Child Life Specialist

Child Life professionals support a philosophy of family-centered care in medical settings to promote optimum development of children and their families. They strive to maintain normal living patterns and minimize psychological trauma by reducing the anxiety that many children experience in hospital and healthcare settings. They also work on strengthening the children's abilities to cope with stressful situations.

Child Life Specialists commonly work in hospitals, pediatric physician and dental offices, and outpatient clinics. Typical responsibilities include:

- Preparing children for medical tests and procedures through education, rehearsal, and coping skill development
- Therapeutic and diversional play using dolls, stuffed animals and medical equipment
- Supporting families during hospitalization or challenging events
- Sibling support
- Bereavement and grief support
- Activities to continue normal growth and development while children are hospitalized
- Emergency room interventions
- Hospital pre-admission tours and information ■

Student Spotlight

Jasmine Jackson



Jasmine Jackson is a senior majoring in Family Science and Human Development with a concentration in Family Services.

Her Story: The first time Jasmine stepped onto the Montclair State campus, she felt at home. She was only 11 years old, but somehow she knew this was the

college for her. At that time, Jasmine's mom was a student studying for her bachelor's degree.

During her senior year of high school, Jasmine believed she wouldn't make it into college, with low test scores and financial issues, but Montclair State University gave her a chance. She entered college planning to become a therapist, however, by junior year she was no longer interested in that career path. Jasmine thought she had lost hope, but thanks to her advisor, Mr. Christopher Cottle, and her amazing professors, she knew she would be okay.

Jasmine realized she wanted to help families and people in her community when she enrolled in Mr. Cottle's class, *Poverty and Families*. She was impressed with how passionate he was, and that inspired her to want to do more for her people.

Her Plan: Jasmine recognizes there are many impoverished families. She wants to bring hope to the hopeless and encourage those who have given up, especially the younger generation. She believes children are our future and need extra care, and when you change one young person's life, it creates a domino effect. Eventually, society will gain ambitious and well-rounded people. Thanks to Mr. Cottle and FSHD, she has found her purpose again!

Jasmine will graduate in May 2023. She is exploring many career opportunities and is excited to start her professional journey! With the tools she has learned from FSHD, she is well-prepared!

Her Thoughts: Jasmine has always had a passion for people, so FSHD was the perfect major for her. It is more than just understanding families, but understanding people from all walks of life. ■

Department Chair's Corner (Continued from page 1)

When we get overwhelmed, we often let social relationships fall low on our priority list because we have so many things we have to get done. But social connection is the food of happiness. Think of how you feel after spending just a few minutes joking around with a friend or classmate. It is vital for your health that you make sure you schedule even short periods of times connecting with friends or family.

Third, make sure you have an activity in your schedule that brings you joy, such as art, music, sports, or clubs. Our brains need a break, and engaging in creativity can help us slow our overactive thoughts. It really helps if these "blowing off steam" activities involve other people too.

Fourth, I know this sounds obvious, but eat well. Skipping meals or filling in with junk food leads to people who are "hangry" – getting easily agitated because one is hungry (imagine yourself waiting a long time for a table at a restaurant!). When we don't have energy for things because we are hungry or overtired, everything becomes overwhelming.

Fifth, use your smartphone calendars to organize your tasks. Include even small tasks such as a phone call or a reminder to take out the garbage. Schedule homework and study time and make sure nothing interferes. If you schedule time to practice a musical instrument, follow through and don't say, "I have too much work to do." You can even schedule naps!

Sixth, you've heard this a thousand times, get some exercise. It's good for the brain and the science has been clear that exercise helps us think better and feel calmer.

If you are really struggling, find a therapist. Just a few conversations can make a world of difference in developing a more positive outlook, learning to organize ourselves better, and just being happier people. Going to a therapist does not mean you are crazy. Close to 90% of the population will speak with a mental health professional at some time in their lives. Life has its difficult moments and it's wise to know when one needs help and to utilize those resources.

As Montclair State University students, you can access free and confidential counseling from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). [Their website](#) has many resources including how to make an appointment with a counselor or how to find an off-campus therapist.

I share these strategies with you out of concern and my wish for all of you is to enjoy life! Finally, I want to wish Dr. Khaw a warm "welcome back!" ■

Pen Pal Project Connects with Ukraine

Students in the Family Science and Human Development elective class **Immigrant Families** (FSHD 350) have become international pen pals with Ukrainian students this semester. According to Professor Olena Nesteruk, "The goal of the Pen Pal Project is to promote cross-cultural connections between Ukraine and the USA and to enhance the lives of young people." The project aligns with many topics explored in her class, including migration, refugees, displaced persons, and transnational families.

Given the option to participate in either the Pen Pal Project or a book club, 24 of the 27 FSHD students chose the pen pal assignment. They are communicating with Ukrainian eighth graders to mentor, support, and encourage English learning and education, while sharing and learning about each other's lives, cultures, and countries.

Ukrainian Partners

The partner school is located in Chervonohrad, a small town in western Ukraine. Although it is far from the front line, the town gets daily air raids and indiscriminate shelling from Russia (new Ukrainian grammar rules include not capitalizing the name of the country-terrorist).

Most of the schoolchildren are from Chervonohrad, but many have been internally displaced from eastern Ukraine, seeking refuge from Russian occupation, deportation to Russia, or heavy fighting. Some pen pals' parents and relatives are serving in the UA army, defending their country; a few have been wounded or killed.

Dr. Nesteruk, a Ukrainian native, communicates regularly with Chervonohrad's English teacher and school principal to guarantee that their first collaboration is successful. In their introductory video, the Ukrainian team provided a look at their school and classrooms, and performed creative skits. They also shared an air raid siren and a view of the school's bomb shelter where they continue their lessons during missile strikes and bombings. They showed the hard reality of how Ukrainian children are learning during the war.

Communication

The pen pal pairs have been communicating via email, snail mail, social media, and individual video calls. They discuss hobbies and interests, family, food, school, music, movies, fashion, sports, jobs, holidays, friends, travel, feelings, and future plans. Initially the 13-14-year-old Ukrainians were anxious about their English ability and communicating with older



FSHD pen pals in the Immigrant Families class.

Americans, but they were amazed at how easy it is to connect. All the participants really enjoy communicating with an international friend and are learning that they have a lot in common.

Care packages

In addition to letters, FSHD students sent their pen pals individual care packages filled with Halloween candy, snacks, small gifts, and souvenirs representing MSU, New Jersey, and the USA. Three boxes were shipped with the help of the Ukrainian-American non-profit Friends of Chervonohrad. Also in the works is a Halloween video that will include pictures of costumes, decorated houses, etc., to help the Ukrainian students learn about American traditions.

Benefits

The rewards of the Pen Pal Project benefit students on both sides of the world with the opportunity to:

- Interact with English learners/speakers
- Bridge international friendships
- Provide/receive mentoring and support
- Learn about another country, its people and culture
- Develop cross-cultural perspective and appreciation of positives and negatives in one's life

FSHD students have an option to prepare creative presentations with their pen pals about any topic/issue, and all participants will write a final reflection at the end of the semester.

As future educators and family services professionals, these students are learning about life and schooling for children in a country at war, and gaining a better understanding of non-voluntary migration, displacement, and refugee crisis, all topics covered in their class. They are also discovering the incredible resilience of the Ukrainian nation, from children and families to teachers and all citizens. ■



The Ukrainian 8th grade pen pals.



Dr. Olena Nesteruk shipped care packages to the Ukrainian pen pals.

Social Justice Initiatives

Celebrating Native American Heritage

Native American Heritage Month in November honors indigenous people and their contributions to our country and the world. As a university, we celebrated Indigenous Peoples Day with a special event that featured thriving cultures, introduced the new minor in Native American and Indigenous Studies (housed in the Department of Religion), and unveiled the university's formal Land Acknowledgement Statement. While confirming that the university sits on land expropriated from the Lenape, the statement recognizes "...the resilience and persistence of contemporary indigenous communities and their role in educating all of us about justice, equity, and the stewardship of the land throughout the generations."

*"Give me knowledge
so / may have kindness for all."*

- Plains Indian Proverb

During this month we focus on the diverse histories and cultures of Native American people and tribal nations, and raise awareness about the unique challenges they have faced historically and in the present. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Education strives to educate others about "the spiritual, mental, physical and cultural aspects" of native peoples. The FSHD Social Justice Advisory Board encourages you to take the opportunity this month to expand and share your knowledge about Native American culture by using the following resources:

- [PBS](#): 30 indigenous stories for 30 days
- [National Museum of the American Indian](#): history, webinars and more
- [Bureau of Indian Education](#): educational resources

Share Your Thoughts

Remember to use our virtual feedback form as an anonymous way to share feedback and/or suggestions related to the FSHD community's social justice work. The form can be found here:

https://montclair.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3JHboG6J8W0DO4J

Be empathetic. Be compassionate. Be kind. Be you! ■



The university's celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day featured musical performances and traditional dances by a variety of tribal representatives, as well as the reading of the Land Acknowledgement Statement.



Veterans Day

Honoring all those who served

Vote

THE GENERAL ELECTION IS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

**Vote Your Values
Fight for Your Rights**

Happy
Thanksgiving

Red Hawks Athletics



Come out and cheer
for your Fall teams!

**Soccer
Football
Swimming
Basketball
Field Hockey**

Find the
[full calendar here](#)

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