MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

I want to start our first SPED/CD newsletter by saying how excited I am to be the new SPED/CD Department Head! It is a great opportunity for me and I am proud to work with such an amazing group of faculty and staff. I know that I will have many challenges and successes along the way and look forward to the many wonderful things we will accomplish together in our SPED/CD family. As many of you know, I am a graduate of the NMSU program in communication disorders for my master’s and bachelor’s degrees, so it is truly special for me to be back where I started. I know I am speaking to the choir when I say that NMSU is the best university in the country! My joy is twofold as an alumnae and as an employee of NMSU. It doesn’t get better than this. We have a solid group of doctoral, masters and undergraduate students in both programs. They continue to achieve at the highest levels.

The students and the faculty in the department have had many successes throughout the 2012/2013 academic year. I would like to share of few of these with you. Almost all faculty members presented their work at state, national and international conferences this year. Many of them presented their work together with students. I am very proud of this fact. Drs. Bae, Brown, Medina, Spencer, and Valdez had their research published this year. Many faculty members presented workshops around the country, state and in the local community. Our faculty’s good work is well-represented throughout the nation. This year, the first NMSU Cleft Palate Center was inaugurated with over 30 families attended the free clinic. A SPED student chapter of the Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) was started this fall. We hired two new faculty members in SPED whom you will hear more about next year. We also will be searching for a new faculty member in CD next fall. Dr. Linda Spencer was appointed as the new CD program director. This year we had four new faculty members join us, Dr. Zhen Chai assistant professor in SPED; Dr. Loana Mason, college assistant professor and director of the Teachers of the Visually Impaired Program; Dr. Victoria White, temporary college associate professor in SPED; and Mrs. Tenecia Yeboah, college assistant professor and coordinator of the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center. All four of them fit perfectly into our SPED/CD family.

There were so many exciting things that happened this year. We would need a 50 page newsletter to list everything! I hope you enjoy perusing through this newsletter to get just a flavor of what we did this year. It was truly astounding at what our faculty, staff and students accomplished this year.

We will continue to flourish as a department as we build our programs and educate our students. We have a big responsibility for training the best special education teachers and speech-language pathologists in New Mexico. We are definitely ready for that challenge!

Please stop by my office to say hello and have a cup of coffee anytime you are on campus!

I wish you a wonderful year and Go AGGIES!
Kathy Binger, Ph.D., CCC-SLP—a specialist in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) from the University of New Mexico—was the featured speaker at this year’s annual TriUnity Conference. Dr. Binger has 19 years of experience in the field using AAC and is an active researcher in evaluating the efficacy of intervention programs designed for those who use AAC. Dr. Binger also teaches graduate courses related to AAC at UNM and is a consultant for the Wyoming Assistive Technology Resources Center.

In addition to our featured speaker, faculty and staff presented during the TriUnity Conference—showing off their areas of interest and specialty. The department was truly well represented this year. Presenters included Dr. Mason, Dr. Chai, Ms. Medina, Ms. Yeboah, Ms. Herrenbruck, and Ms. Smiley.
Meet the Faculty

**Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance**

*Department Head
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: Cleft lip and palate, bilingual medical interpreter training, multicultural issues, speech production of young children with cleft palate.*

**Dr. Youkyung Bae**

*Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: Anatomy, physiology, and acoustics of the human speech mechanism with an emphasis on the velopharyngeal mechanism in normal individuals with craniofacial abnormalities.*

**Dr. Zhen Chai**

*Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: Early childhood special education, early intervention, early literacy development, technology, and positive behavior support.*

**Dr. Kathleen Cronin**

*Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: General special education, Autism Spectrum Disorders.*

**Dr. Aishah Patterson**

*Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: Adult neurogenics, physiological stress response, needs of culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and application of technology in assessment, treatment, and instruction.*

**Dr. Deborah Rhein**

*Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: Assessment and intervention of language differences and disorders as they relate to literacy development and school success, and fluency disorders.*

**Dr. Linda J. Spencer**

*Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: Examining the speech-language and literacy development of children with hearing loss and also those who use cochlear implants.*

**Dr. Alfred Valdez**

*Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: Applying cognitive theories to educational technology, early language development/disorders, phonological development/disorders, and basic/advanced statistical methods.*
Dr. Robert Ivey  
*College Associate Professor*  
**Area of Interest:** Audiology: Central Auditory System, it’s evaluation using behavioral and electrophysiological measures and management

Dr. Loana Mason  
*College Assistant Professor*  
**Area of Interest:** Use and development of best practices with learners who have visual impairments, including those with additional disabilities, attitudes about blindness and visual impairment, and literacy

Ms. Amelia Medina  
*College Assistant Professor*  
**Area of Interest:** Spanish/Bilingual treatment issues in assessment and intervention

Dr. Victoria White  
*Temporary College Associate Professor*  
**Area of Interest:** Speech-language pathology, special education, and developing collaborative programs with public schools

Ms. Tenecia Yeboah  
*College Assistant Professor*  
**Coordinator of Clinical Services**  
**Area of Interest:** Early childhood intervention, pediatric language and disorders, myofunctional therapy, and voice disorders

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**SPED/CD Student Enrollment**

Our department continues to grow! We have a strong number of undergraduate students in both Special Education and Communication Disorders. Additionally, our graduate programs have grown considerably over the last few years! We look forward to the continued growth of our programs and the success of our students!

**Doctoral Students:** 20  
**Graduate Students:** 74  
**Undergraduate Students:** ~250
This spring, New Mexico State University recognized twelve individuals from the NMSU community during the university’s 2013 Spring Convocation. The twelve individuals were awarded the Donald C. Roush Award for 2012—an award that recognizes excellence in teaching. Interim executive vice president and provost, Jay B. Jordan, commented on the event: “It is always rewarding to take time to recognize the outstanding work of our faculty. The Roush Award winners are exemplary reminders of the positive impact professors make in the lives of our students.” The College of Education was represented as Dr. Youkyung Bae was presented the award during the Convocation. Congratulations, Dr. Bae!

SPED/CD Faculty attend the Convocation
Senator Mary Kay Papen has been a strong supporter of the department and shares our purpose: “To improve the lives of others.” Senator Papen not only assisted in the successful passing of the NMSU Capital Outlay Bill, she was instrumental in granting $75,000 to the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center last year. Given all of her efforts on our behalf, a reception was held in her honor at the Speech and Hearing Center on Friday, May 3d.

Graduate students in the Communication Disorders Program demonstrated equipment that was purchased using some of the monies awarded from the grant. “It is an amazing opportunity to show Senator Papen, and other supporters, what a positive impact their support has had—not only on our education, but on the community we serve,” explains graduate student, Jason Saenz.

Senator Papen speaks to her drive for supporting programs such as ours: “...James, who’s 8 and he has three markers for autism and that really sent me on the road of looking at it. There’s nothing like walking in the shoes of something that affects someone in your family, particularly your grandchildren and your children, that calls you to the service of doing what you need to do.”

The department and the CD Program thank Senator Papen, and all of our supporters, for their valued and continued support.
On Friday, March 1, 2013, Dr. Linda Spencer and two students from the Communication Disorders Program attended the State Legislature for the New Mexico Speech-Language and Hearing Association (NMSHA) Day in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Undergraduate student—Ms. Zully Garcia, and graduate student—Ms. Genevieve Muñoz, accompanied Dr. Spencer to Santa Fe’s “Round House”. There they met with Doreen Gallegos—County Representative, for a tour of the House of Representative chambers as part of NMSHA Day.

Dr. Spencer described the day to be “very enriching for students and faculty, as we were able to learn about the legislative process, practice our speaking skills by educating various legislators about what our field does, meet others in our state organization, and see how the ‘Memorial’ process works in the Senate.”

The three NMSU representatives were guests of Senator Mary Jane Garcia, and were seated on the podium of the Senate, to the right of the Lieutenant Governor John Sanchez. They were introduced as part of the group acknowledged for ‘NMSHA Day’.

This amazing opportunity was partially funded by NMSHA via a grant received from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to promote student advocacy for the profession. Dr. Spencer praised the efforts and attendance of the two students: “Our students were poised and intelligent representatives of NMSU and the CD Program.”
The sixth annual World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) was celebrated on April 2, 2013. Each year, organizations world-wide sponsor events to raise money and awareness in the name of Autism. The newly founded chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) at New Mexico State University wanted to start off with a bang and take part in this world-wide event. Students in CEC promoted WAAD by handing out over 500 flyers to students on campus. “...We handed out fact sheets that were compiled from sources in current literature and on the Internet...” said NMSU CEC chapter President, Melinda Shane.

Currently, NMSU is funding some research to aid in better understanding Autism. The research, conducted in Regents Row, is focusing on using a toy to identify emotion. The toy in question? Mr. Potato Head. Researchers aim to use Mr. Potato Head to increase recognition of facial expressions for emotion in children on the Autism spectrum.

Melinda Shane explains that the research is still at the baseline phase and data collection will continue over the summer. The research team strives for positive results, where Mr. Potato Head will no longer solely be a toy—but serve as a vehicle for learning for children with disabilities.

### Autism Facts
- Three main challenges of Autism include: communication, social interaction, social skills, and repetitive behaviors.
- There is no cure for autism. People have autism their whole life.
- 1 in every 88 children have autism in the US. It’s prevalence has increased over the past decade.
Capital Outlay Funds Approved for Speech and Hearing Center

We are pleased to announce the approval of the NMSU Capital Outlay Bill. Governor Susana Martinez signed the bill which included $50,000 for the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center. We would like to thank the Governor, Senator Mary Kay Papen, and Ricardo Rel—NMSU Senior Director of Government Relations—for their support in acquiring the extra $50,000 for the Center.

Capital outlay funds are monies approved by the state Legislature to obtain or upgrade equipment or for construction on land utilized by the public. These funds are most commonly non-recurrent, one-time monies. Dr. Linda Spencer and Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance submitted the proposal in order to upgrade audiology services in the department. The funding will satisfy the need to test hearing of infants and toddlers whilst supporting the early-intervention efforts within the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders.

Building Repair Renewal

September proved to be a lucky month for the department as we received $35,000 in Building Repair Renewal (BRR) money. This money is a one-time award through University competition. The funds will are dedicated to a variety of upgrades in the department, including: built-in cabinets in the Cole Conference Room, new student lockers for the ERG Clinic, built-in shelving in all research labs, and Administrative Assistant Sandra Romero’s office space will be renovated. Plans for remodeling are in motion—keep an eye out for updates!
Proseminar is a Hit in the Department

The 2012-2013 academic year played host to the inception of Proseminar (Prosem) within the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. The idea for Proseminar stemmed from a faculty expressed need and desire to share individual projects, provide opportunities to build relationships between the SPED/CD faculty and students, and provide a venue for graduate students to share research and projects. A Proseminar Committee, composed of SPED /CD Faculty members: Dr. Mason, Dr. Patterson, Dr. Cronin, Dr. Spencer, and Ms. Medina—planned and organized three Friday afternoon Proseminars.

The inaugural Prosem was held Friday, February 8, with two additional Prosems scheduled for Friday March 15th and Friday May 3rd. The final Prosem of the term, May 3rd, included staff, faculty, and students who have presented their research posters throughout the year. This Poster Extravaganza was held in the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center.

**Presenters this Term**

- Doctoral students Melissa Shane and Judy Salamon presented: *Using the Potato Head Task to Assess the Perception of Emotion in Children with Autism.*
- Dr. Linda Spencer and Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance shared their research: *Emergence of Speech Sounds between 7 and 24 Months of Cochlear Implant Use.*
- Doctoral student Randa Keely presented: *Student Perceptions of the Five Co-Teaching Models.*
- Master’s student Noah Eggebraaten shared: *Effects of Procedural Variation in Speech Recognition Thresholds of Adults with Normal Hearing.*

Proseminar’s main goal is to provide students, staff, and faculty with a venue to share their research and projects. It also aims to encourage students, faculty, and staff to share research and projects on the continuum of progress: conception, methodology, data interpretation, and completion. The department hopes Prosem will provide a positive network for feedback and support for projects, as well as to possibly provide continuing education credits. Congratulations, and thank you to all who participated in Proseminar this term!
This academic year, the department played host to two undergraduate meet and greets—one in the fall, and one in the spring. During the fall, the inaugural undergraduate meet and greet was held in Cole Conference Room. There were 46 undergraduate students over the two hours of the event. The students had opportunities to win door prizes, eat pizza, and meet the faculty and staff that makes up the department. We are hoping to hold the meet and greet each fall semester as a way to keep up with the undergraduate students and thank them for their hard work and dedication.

In April, the undergraduate meet and greet was held in the Speech and Hearing Center. Close to 50 undergraduate students—from both Special Education and Communication Disorders—were in attendance. This provided students an opportunity to mingle and meet with professors outside the classroom environment. A dozen or so door prizes were awarded—with one lucky winner receiving two pizzas delivered by Dr. Salas-Provance.
Fall 2012/Spring 2013 Faculty Super-Stars

We would like to acknowledge faculty members who received awards this academic year:

Dr. Kathleen Cronin — Patricia Christmore Teaching Award
Dr. Kathy Chinn — Dean’s Award for Service
Dr. Alfred Valdez — Dean’s Award for Research
Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance — Dean’s Award for Leadership

The department is lucky to have such outstanding faculty members! We thank our students and the College of Education for taking the time to call attention to the efforts of these amazing individuals. Thank you, faculty and staff—for all of your hard work! The students, College, and the University appreciate all you do!

Special Education Students Attend CEC Convention and Expo 2013

This year, the Special Education Program at New Mexico State University was represented at the Council of Exceptional Children Convention and Expo held in San Antonio, Texas from April 3-6, 2013. The CEC is a professional organization whose aim is to advance the educational success of children and youth classified as gifted or disabled. A large group of faculty, doctoral, and masters students attended the convention. NMSU students and faculty joined the largest group of professional devoted to gifted and special needs students. The Expo provided our students and faculty opportunities to network, attend workshops, engage in dialogues in hot-topic areas, and browse the Expo hall for job opportunities.

Left to Right: Alice Jones, Amer Jafar, Dr. Kathleen Cronin, Ali Alkathami, Pinar Yasar, Randa Keeley, and Judy Salamon. Not Pictured: Dr. Zhen Chai, Dr. Loretta Salas, Dr. Loana Mason, an Dr. Monica Brown.
Congratulations, SPED/CD Students!

We are proud to acknowledge the accomplishments of the students in Special Education, Communication Disorders and the New Mexico—Preparing Autism Spectrum Specialists (NM-PASS) project. The department would like to congratulate the students who graduated in the Fall of 2012 and in the Spring of 2013! We could not be more proud of our students! They are driven and dedicated individuals who are testaments to the future of our professions! Congratulations, SPED/CD students!

### Fall 2012 Masters Graduates: Special Education

- Benjamin Aranda
- Cheryl Homer-Anderson
- Fabian Ortiz
- Lourdes Cruz
- Laura Luna
- Sadie Ortiz
- Cruz Echaniz
- Amanda Morton
- Jessica Thomas
- Amy Fletcher
- Elizabeth Ortega
- Gina Torres

### Fall 2012 Masters Graduates: NM-PASS Cohort 1

- Laura Luna
- Fabian Ortiz
- Gina Torres
- Amanda Morton
- Sadie Ortiz

### Spring 2013 Masters Graduates: Special Education

- Ali Alkathami
- Stacy Elliott
- Mary Vaughn
- Ashley Bettmann
- Lorissa Lobb
- Rose Celeste Danner
- Johnny “JJ” Ortiz

### Spring 2013 Masters Graduates: Communication Disorders

- Margarita Apodaca
- Amanda Davis
- Vanessa Montoya
- Mariel Azcarate
- Amy Elkins
- Stacy Mora
- Kaisa Baker
- Magdalena Escobedo
- Gracie Pargas
- Kathleen Brejer
- Fielding Estepp
- Tessa Penn-Smith
- Teresa Bringas
- Erin Hackey
- Margo Reid
- Nora Brosnan
- Monica Harms
- Denise Silva
- Guillermina Castillo
- Ann Marie Lowery
- Jennifer Stokes
- Jennifer Coe
- Brittney Martinez
- Pauline Wills
Graduation Photographs

Fall 2012 NM-Pass Cohort 1

Fall 2012 SPED Hooding Ceremony

Spring 2013 SPED Hooding Ceremony

Spring 2013 CD Hooding Ceremony

Spring 2013 Doctoral Graduate: Dr. Susan Morrison

Dr. Susan Morrison (center) with her doctoral committee: L to R: Dr. DeVall, Dr. Rhein, Dr. Gallegos, and Dr. Cronin

Susan Morrison presenting at NMSHA
June of 2012 was the last month for, now retirees, Dr. Anne Gallegos and Dr. Elissa Wolfe Poel.

- Dr. Gallegos, Regents Professor Emeritus in SPED/CD taught classes related to both general and bilingual/multicultural special education.
- Dr. Poel was the director of the Special Education Student Teaching Program and Associate Professor. Now she works in the Agricultural office and planned to continue working on grants related to Agriculture and teaching.

The Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders has welcomed four new faces since the beginning of the Summer of 2012. Introducing: Dr. Loana Mason, Dr. Zhen Chai, Dr. Victoria White and Mrs. Tenecia Trammel-Yeboah.

- Dr. Loana Mason is a College Assistant Professor in SPED. Her research areas include: attitudes about blindness and visual impairment, quality education for learners who also have significant disabilities, and literacy. Dr. Mason is the Director of the Visual Impairment Program at NMSU.
- Dr. Chai is an assistant professor in SPED. Her research areas include early childhood education, early intervention, early literacy development, technology, and positive behavior support.
- Dr. White is a full-time temporary college associate professor in SPED. She has overseen supervision courses and was the instructor for a section of SPED 350 and SPED 360.
- Mrs. Tenecia Trammel-Yeboah is an assistant professor and Coordinator of Clinical Services at the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center. She is the instructor for CD 589 clinical practicum and is a clinical supervisor.

Welcome to the department, Dr. Mason, Dr. Chai, Dr. White, and Mrs. Trammel-Yeboah!
During the academic year of 2012/2013, many faculty members from the department attended the Teaching Academy. The Teaching Academy provides NMSU educators with mentoring, networking, and training services. Dr. Loana Mason and Dr. Zhen Chai share some information:

Dr. Mason attended two trainings and outlined some of the most useful information she took from them.

**Documenting Effective Teaching in Digital Measures**

- Teaching Academy has many rubrics for professors to use:
  - Evaluation of course syllabi
  - Learning Objectives
  - Videotaped lessons
  - Online course design

- **Let’s Talk Online Teaching**
  - Scavenger hunts within the Canvas course require students to demonstrate their knowledge of Canvas and navigation through the course.
  - 12 Step Checklist to Meeting Quality Matters Standard One
    - Available on the Online Improvement Center’s wiki (or visit Dr. Mason!)

Dr. Chai attended the session, **Let’s Talk Teaching**. Here are some of the highlights she reported:

- Have discussion questions answered before class via Canvas
- Reward on time assignments
- Use descriptive praise
- Give midterm evaluation
- Post changes you will make based on their responses

Thank you both for such useful information! This is valuable information that will help us all in our courses! We encourage everyone to utilize the Teaching Academy and their resources whenever possible!

Congratulations to Dr. Salas-Provance for being named as a **Distinguished Member** of the Teaching Academy!
The Department Celebrates in Style

No matter the occasion, the faculty, staff, and students of the SPED/CD Department know how to have a good time. We have celebrated countless birthdays this past year, dressed to scare during Halloween, dawned our red carpet gowns and tuxedoes for the Friends of CD reception, and gathered for holiday festivities. One thing is for sure: be it birthday or gala, we are one group that knows how to do it right!

1. SPED/CD Holiday lunch.
2. Administrative Assistant Appreciation Day—Monica Sullivan, Norma Vasquez, Ashley Maki, Sandra Romero.
3. Friends of CD Reception: Billy Garrett, Cynthia Garrett, Belen Lopez, Dr. Salas-Provance.
4. Celebrating birthdays with Dr. Salas-Provance, Dr. Spencer, Dr. Cronin, Dr. Chai, and Dr. Mason.
6. Dr. Spencer, Dr. Chinn, and Sandra Romero celebrate birthdays!
7. Dr. White, Dr. Salas-Provance, Dr. Chai, Ms. Yeboah, Dr. Rhein, Dr. Cronin and Dr. Chinn pose in their Halloween costumes.
Visual Impairment Program

Dr. Loana Mason—one of our new faculty members—has been busy this year. She took her students of the Visual Impairment Program to the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired during the week of July 9-13, 2012. Dr. Mason spoke highly of the student’s adventures and learning activities: “Students had opportunities to interact with campers and engage in a variety of blindness simulation activities. While wearing either blindfolds or low vision simulators, students went grocery shopping and then cooked lunch, learned how to play various adapted sports, and traveled on campus and in the community. By the end of the week, everyone was exhausted, but they all learned how to promote the independence of students with visual impairments.” We are excited to welcome Dr. Mason into the SPED/CD Family! You can keep up with NMSU VIP on Facebook!

NMSU Student Chapter: Council for Exceptional Children

New Mexico State University now has its own chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Pictured are attendees of the very first CEC meeting. We are extremely pleased to have such an amazing organization within the department. We hope the best for the CEC!

Above and Beyond Award

Our very own Ms. Sandra Romero was nominated by the department for the University’s Above & Beyond Award. This award recognizes full-time employees who have demonstrated a strong commitment to NMSU and have made a significant contribution to the University. We cannot think of a more deserving and appropriate recipient for this award. We thank you for your hard work and dedication and hope the University recognizes you!
We Appreciate Your Support!

If you would like to make a donation....

Donating to the Special Education Program and the Communication Disorders Program is easy!

You may send a check to:

**College of Education Dean’s Office**
MSC 3AC
New Mexico State University
P.O. Box 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003

Please make the check out to: NMSU Foundation.

You may call (575) 646-2130 if you prefer to make a credit card donation.

Please use the memo space on your check to indicate the account number for the fund to which you are donating. Account numbers for CD may be found below:

#984155  Edgar R. Garrett Endowment
#104468  Farmer Supervision Gift Award Fund
#984610  Mary Knott Graduate Student Scholarship

In SPED, we have many scholarship funds such as:

*Michael Gallegos Memorial Scholarship*
*Dr. Kristine Derer Memorial Endowed Scholarship*
*John and Patricia Chinn and Jean Lambright Endowment Scholarship*

Call (575) 646-2130 to find out how to donate to scholarships!

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Many thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter.

A special thank-you to Jason Saenz for creating this issue of Conexiones.

Send us updates! Next year, we would like to include an Alumni section and share what our students do after graduation.

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Cole Development Fund

Congratulations, Dr. Bae and Dr. Brown! They both received support for travel expenses—through the Cole Development Fund—for international presentations this summer. Both Dr. Bae and Dr. Brown will be presenting their work to the department this fall.

Full Professorship

We would like to congratulate Dr. Monica Brown and her promotion to full professor in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. Dr. Brown received notice of her promotion to professor this semester. Her new title comes into effect this fall! Congratulations, Dr. Brown!