



BUFFALO STATE
The State University of New York
Spring 2026

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION

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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Dear EXED Community,

Do you feel it? Do you see it? As we round the midway point of the semester, momentum is building across our programs. Nowhere is this more vivid than in the student and faculty experience, where the pull and stretch of growth tightens and the “productive struggle” of learning becomes visible. This is a time when the pace is steady, the work is real, and the rigorous pursuit of knowledge is evident.

This affirms the strong sense of pride I feel for our department. Our programs continue to be updated, with extensive revisions in recent years driven by certification changes and partner needs. These efforts are enacted by expert faculty and reflect our shared commitment to high-quality, practice-based preparation that evolves with the field. I’m humbled and energized by their work. Our alumni extend that impact daily in their classrooms and organizations, supporting candidates and strengthening the profession. Together, our community represents something distinctive.

This is also a time to shine a light on the culmination of our candidates’ efforts. For those nearing completion, the excitement is palpable as the finish line comes into sight. What matters most is not just your successful completion, but your transformation through growing confidence, refined instructional judgment, and the ability to adapt in real time to student needs and emerging challenges. However, pride in our legacy cannot mean complacency. The demands on educators are complex and evolving, and our charge is clear: we must prepare professionals who are knowledgeable, skillful, adaptable, and committed to their students. Adaptability is central to effective teaching. It allows us to plan for variability, adjust instruction based on evidence, and remain steady in dynamic and uncertain contexts.

There has been renewed national conversation about the future of education, including calls to ensure we do not “flunk the future.” In my role as chair, I often consider that the quality of our preparation directly shapes the opportunities available to the students our graduates will serve. If we take that seriously, then we must approach our work with “relentlessness”, as Dr. Anita Archer and Dr. Charles Hughes note in their seminal text, *Explicit Instruction*. As we move through the semester, I encourage us to keep that relentlessness in mind. The work we do across coursework, supervision, program development, and partnerships, is grounded in a shared dedication to making a difference. Thank you for the care, expertise, and commitment you bring each day. It reflects the strong foundation of this department and its continued impact.

Wishing you all a strong and successful conclusion to the semester.

Andrew I. Hashey, Ph.D.



Dr. Andrew Hashey
*Chair of the Exceptional
Education Department*



Dr. Kathy Doody
*Associate Chair of
Graduate Programs*



Dr. Angela Patti
*Associate Chair of
Undergraduate
Programs*

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The mission of the Exceptional Education Department is to prepare teachers, scholars, and action researchers as exemplary leaders, and to advance the profession of special education through the science and art of teaching, learning, and collaborating. Our graduates will contribute to the community by serving the needs of persons with disabilities and by broadening the general population’s understanding and appreciation of individuals with disabilities.

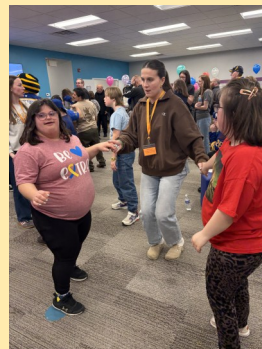
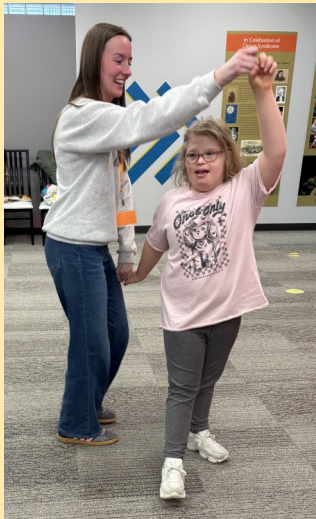
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tion.buffalostate.edu

GiGi's PLAYHOUSE "LIGHT UP THE NIGHT"

March 21st is recognized globally as World Down syndrome Day. This date was chosen because 3/21 signifies the extra copy of the 21st chromosome (Trisomy 21) that causes Down syndrome. World Down syndrome Day is to celebrate the Down syndrome community, educate other and raise awareness of the importance of inclusion.



Buffalo State graduate Exceptional Education students attended GiGi's Light Up The Night event on Saturday March 21st, to support families and individuals in attendance wherever necessary. Candidates are also able to strengthen their professional skills such as, communicating families and parents, supporting communication with individuals with Down syndrome, working on gross/fine motor skills and much more. Candidates were seen playing, dancing and communicating with members of the community who attended the event and Sabretooth!



Buffalo State graduate teacher and ABA candidates in Exceptional Education participate in numerous experiences in the community through service and experiential learning. One partnership is with GiGi's Playhouse of Buffalo which is a part of our PDP Consortium. GiGi's has a lifetime commitment of changing lives and providing hope for individuals with Down syndrome and their families. GiGi's provides free events, educational, therapeutic and career development for their members.

WINTER 2025 DR. HORACE MANN RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The Buffalo State Exceptional Education Department hosted the Winter 2025 Dr. Horace Mann Graduate Research Symposium on December 6th. Dr. Budin's and Professor Blask's EXE 690 students proudly shared their Master's projects with their colleagues, fellow teachers, and other members of the community.

Buffalo's State Exceptional Education Department hosts the symposium every semester to highlight the incredible work our graduate students complete for their capstone Master's Project. The project takes one year which allows students to research their project, implement and intervention and analyze/discuss their data.



Presenters

Jackie Ceccarelli
Lindsay DeBoth
Katie Dixon
Erin Dunn
Julissa Ellis
Collin Filippi
Maia Gioeli
Andrew Heppner
Janat Inqiyad
Hope Kammery
Ashley Keuning
Syrena Kohlman
Juliana LaBruna
Sydney Lauricella
Melanie Mazur
Megan McKie
Julia Miller
Ashley Schneegold
Jillian Serrano
Shelby Sodeur
Matthew Waack
Marie Whitney
April Wright



Andrew, Megan and Matthew presented on increasing on-task behavior by using a check-in/check-out system. **Ashley, Melanie and Jillian** presented about how visual schedules impact morning routines. **Lindsay, Jackie and Shelby** presented on increasing on-task behavior by using class wide function-related intervention teams. **Katie, Maia, Hope and Marie** presented on increasing on-task behavior through the use of Plickers. **Julissa, Ahsley and Sydney** presented on a self-monitoring app's effect

on on-task behavior. **Collin, Janat and Juliana** presented on reducing prompt dependency by using most to least prompting and constant time delay. **Erin, Syrena, Julie and April** presented on the effect physical activity has on on-task behavior.

Dr. Stephen Anderson served as our keynote speaker for this year's symposium. Dr. Anderson was the Chief Executive Officer of The Summit Center for 28 years. Under his leadership, The Summit Center grew from a small agency to a renowned center for autism spectrum disorder research and treatment. He continues to serve children and families as a specialized consultant for The Summit Center. In the past, Dr. Anderson has taught behavior analytic coursework for Buffalo State and currently serves as faculty and an expert consultant to our ABA program. Dr. Anderson is a prolific author and researcher, contributing many articles published in premier ASD journals. He also has presented at professional conferences nationally and internationally for nearly three decades. Dr. Anderson is passionate about his work within the field of ASD and behavior analysis; it was truly an honor having him provide the keynote at the winter 2025 symposium.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATING STUDENTS!!

We would like to honor our August & December 2025 and January 2026 graduates!
Your efforts and hard work have not gone unnoticed!
We wish you nothing but the best!!

GRADUATES

Christina Arroyo
Jacob Broder
Rebekah Calhoun
Jackie Ceccarelli
JaLisa Conyers
Kristy Crouse-Siedlecki
Lindsay DeBoth
Katie Dixon
Erin Dunn
Julissa Ellis
Collin Filippi
Alyssa Fronckowiak
Tanya Gallagher
Brandon Garcia
Maia Gioeli
Andrew Heppner
Janat Inqiyad
Hope Kamery
Ashley Keuning
Syrena Kohlman
Lucas Kubasiak

Juliana LaBruna
Sydney Lauricella
Stacy Madej
Melanie Mazur
Megan McKie
Marissa Mergler
Julia Miller
Brigette Ortiz
Anna Rockower
Brenna Schiling
Ashley Schneegold
Jasmine Scott
Jillian Serrano
Chelsea Sinicki
Shelby Sodeur
Meagen Trimper-Oquendo
Matthew Waack
Marie Whitney
Jessica Wier
April Wright

UNDERGRADUATES

Uzma Ashfaq
Emilee Backstrom
Alexa Groh
Abigail Guarino
Emilee Josker
Kaitlyn Krauss
Hannah Kwasniewski
Abbigail Ryan

TESOL/BILINGUAL

Sarah Breen
Kristin Buckingham
Claudia Bueno
Gabriela Castillo
Lisa Cavallero
Jocelyn Diaz-Gonzalez
Emily Felong
Lidia Fuego
Laura Gandulla Smith
Edwin Gonzalez
Kesley Larson-Weber
Miranda Lee
Stephanie Mongielo
Jelyn Moyler
Austin Nagelhout
Faye Panagopoulos
Melissa Rodriquez Morales
Viani Saez-Acevedo
Naimadys Soto Collazo
Miriam Valdovinos
Alejandra Zamora

