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Transforming Education



Center for Autism and Related Disabilities Transforms Lives

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FAU Hall of Fame Inductee Joins COE Advisory Board

Desmond K. Blackburn, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer of the [New Teacher Center](#), joined the College of Education (COE) Advisory Board in September 2018. A Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Alumnus, he earned a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership in 2006 from the COE's Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology (ELRM). Blackburn was a guest speaker at the COE commencement ceremony in May 2018 and was inducted into the FAU Alumni Association Hall of Fame in June 2018 for his career accomplishments. Having begun his career in education in 1996 as a high school math teacher, Blackburn has been an assistant principal, principal, district trainer, director of school improvement, area superintendent and chief school performance and accountability officer for Broward County Public Schools. He served as Superintendent of Brevard Public Schools from 2015 to 2018 prior to joining the New Teacher Center, a nonprofit organization that "improves student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders."



Florida Atlantic University (FAU) President John W. Kelly, Ph.D., congratulates Desmond K. Blackburn (right), Ph.D., a College of Education alumnus, on being honored as the 2018 inductee into the FAU Alumni Association Hall of Fame.



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Center for Autism and Related Disabilities Transforms Lives



The iRISE² Mentoring Program provides high functioning individuals diagnosed with autism the opportunity to engage in a supportive one-to-one mentoring relationship. It is one of many programs offered by Florida Atlantic University's Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD).

By Josephine Elliott | OCTOBER 31, 2018

About one in 59 children has [autism spectrum disorder](#) (ASD) in the United States, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. As part of its community outreach, Florida Atlantic University (FAU)'s [Center for Autism and Related Disabilities](#) (CARD) provides more than 5,000 families in five counties expert counseling, training and support at no charge, according to Maryellen Quinn-Lunny, Ed.S., CARD Director, in the College of Education (COE)'s Department of Exceptional Student Education (ESE).

Identification and intervention are critical in helping individuals with autism and related disabilities maximize their potential to lead a full life, explained Quinn-Lunny. Autism interferes with the normal development of the brain in the areas of learning, problem-solving and social-communication skills. The CARD Center is staffed with

“The annual CARD fundraiser allows us to do a lot of the work so needed and important that our grants do not cover.”

*-Maryellen Quinn-Lunny,
Ed.S.
Director of the Center for
Autism and Related
Disabilities*

caring, trained [professionals](#), who help individuals and their families learn skills and cope with a variety of issues. Among them are bullying, isolation, drowning, wandering, behavior control, social skills development and underemployment.

The inability of children with autism to communicate poses challenges to first responders and police officers. To address this issue Jack Scott, Ph.D., CARD Executive Director and ESE Professor, secured a grant called, *Missing Persons*, from the Florida Department of Education to purchase drones and other equipment to search and find children and individuals with autism who have wandered. Additionally, Scott has written another grant for funding from the *Night of a Thousand Stars*, in collaboration with the City of West Palm Beach,

West Palm Beach Police and the Palm Beach School District Police and schools in West Palm Beach to provide training to law enforcement and school district staff on implementation of safety and prevention procedures, as well as training for wandering and elopement for children with autism and effective search procedures. However, donations are needed to purchase electronic tracking systems and bracelets to aid in the location of missing children.

Donations are also needed to cover the mobile clinic used to screen children and adults across the age span in Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Okeechobee and Indian River counties, as well as to add programs. For example, CARD would like to offer social skills groups to middle and high school students, as well as coaching and support, regarding dating safety, to 18 to 28-year olds. To that end, CARD is holding its annual fundraiser in spring 2019.

Presently, CARD, one of seven agencies in the State, is supported by seven grants and the generosity of [sponsors](#) and [corporate partners](#). “We are incredibly grateful to all of our sponsors and grant funders,” stated Quinn-Lunny. Among them are “the Mangurian Foundation, the Taft Foundation, the Stein family, Denis Crowley, Audrey Stahl, Delray GMC, Dr. Aronson Ramos and Mariella Gonzalez, with Florida Peninsula Insurance.”

Other [services](#) CARD provides includes consultation and technical assistance to schools and agencies, training programs for families and professionals, and public education events to raise awareness. In fact, CARD held 282 trainings attended by 4,571 people and 130 public awareness events attended by 48,905 people from July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018. Each year 450 - 500 families register with CARD, bringing the total number of families served to 5,027 as of June 30, 2018.

For more information about services offered by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD), contact Maryellen Quinn-Lunny, Ed.S., CARD Director, at mqlunny@fau.edu. To explore ways to give, contact Jorene Jameson, Ph.D., Director of Development, College of Education, at jameson2013@fau.edu.

[Back to Front Page](#)

Pine Jog Reaps Student Support from Benefactor



Ray Coleman (standing, left), Executive Director of Florida Atlantic University's Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, welcomes Connie McEvoy (seated, centered), a retired journalist and supporter of the Center, who established the "Pine Jog Student Endowment Fund" this past summer.

By Josephine Elliott | OCTOBER 31, 2018

A long-time supporter of Florida Atlantic University (FAU)'s [Pine Jog Environmental Education Center](#) established the "Pine Jog Student Endowment Fund" this past summer. The goal of the fund is to provide at least one \$7,500 stipend annually to a graduate student awarded a [FAU Pine Jog Graduate Assistantship](#). The assistantships extend students accepted into the M.Ed. Environmental Education, offered through the

"I like the idea of permanently having a fund to support the students that I have been helping with annual gifts. This gift will go on forever."

— Connie McEvoy,
retired journalist

Department of Teaching and Learning in FAU's College of Education or accepted into other graduate programs at FAU, the opportunity to delve into the environmental field by integrating academic coursework and theory with practical work experience at the Pine Jog Center.

Connie McEvoy, a retired journalist, began donating to the Pine Jog Center in 2009 after touring the facilities at the 135-acre nature preserve and discovering the collaborative effort between a state university, a public elementary school and an environmental education center, at the same site, to expose learners to nature. After more than eight years of supporting graduate students annually, McEvoy decided to make her annual giving permanent, by establishing the "Pine Jog Student Endowment Fund." Why an endowment? By establishing an endowment, annual stipends for graduate assistants at Pine Jog will be awarded in perpetuity. McEvoy hopes that others too will support the new student endowment fund.

The stipends McEvoy has made possible through the endowment will continue to support graduate students, especially international students, who apply for assistantships at Pine Jog. These assistantships provide FAU graduate students the opportunity to lead programs for students in Palm Beach County and maybe assist Pine Jog staff. In fact, this past year, McEvoy's generosity helped two graduate students from China pursue the master's degree in Environmental Education at FAU.

The mission of Florida Atlantic University's Pine Jog Environmental Education Center is to develop, provide and model environmental programs and services, which foster awareness and appreciation of the natural world, promote understanding of environmental concepts and instill a sense of stewardship. The facilities are utilized by students, educators and the community at large and includes the Pine Jog Elementary School, Florida's first green elementary school, in the School District of Palm Beach County. Pine Jog administers the after-school program at the school, other student programs and professional development opportunities for educators.

For more information about Pine Jog, contact Ray Coleman, MSW, Executive Director, Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, at colemanr@fau.edu. To explore ways to give contact, Jorene Jameson, Ph.D., Director of Development, College of Education, at jameson2013@fau.edu.

[Back to Front Page](#)

Artist Donates \$50K to A.D. Henderson University School



Award-winning artist and poet Helen M. Salzberg (seated, center holding book) reads one of the books she illustrated to first grade students during her visit to Florida Atlantic University (FAU)'s A.D. Henderson University School on April 13, 2018.

By Josephine Elliott | OCTOBER 31, 2018

"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

—Albert Einstein

Thanks to award-winning artist and poet Helen M. Salzberg's generous donation, Florida Atlantic University (FAU)'s [A.D. Henderson University School](#) (ADHUS) is able to enhance its arts education program and add funds to its "Let's Build This Together" capital campaign, which seeks to raise \$41.5 million to build a new state-of-the-art facility for ADHUS/FAU High students. Half of her financial gift of \$50,000 will go toward purchasing supplies and equipment for the art education program and the other half toward supporting the construction of the new building with a named room in her honor.

"My visit to A.D. Henderson University School and the first grade class was one of the most exciting experiences in a long time and one I will never forget"

—Helen M. Salzberg,
M.B.A.
Award-winning artist and poet

During her visit to ADHUS on April 13, 2018, Salzberg was so impressed by the school and its students that she was inspired to contribute to benefit the students by providing the teaching support they need for creative expression and the joy of learning. Salzberg met Sherry Bees, the Principal and Director, ADHUS and FAU High School, and read to first graders from one of the books she illustrated, "Selfish Sally" by Adrienne Falzon. Just as the book provides a lesson on the value of sharing, Salzberg hopes that her gift will provide students many lessons on the value of art.

Having earned an M.B.A. from New York University, Salzberg, who always loved art, was encouraged to pursue her craft after taking an art class at the local YMCA, a nonprofit organization for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Over the years, Salzberg illustrated several children's books and won many awards. Her artwork has been displayed in many private and public collections, including the Jaffe Center at FAU's Wimberly Library on the Boca Raton campus. Salzberg continues to paint and recently completed a series of paintings on Greek mythology.

ADHUS, a public developmental research school at FAU Boca Raton, was one of 12 schools in Florida to be recognized as a [National Blue Ribbon School](#) for 2018 by the U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos on Oct. 1, 2018. The essential role of a developmental research (lab) school is to enhance instruction and research in specialized subjects to improve outcomes for all students in the country. Moreover, Niche, the largest website for researching public and private K-12 schools, recently ranked ADHUS the No. 2 Best Public Elementary School and the No. 8 Best Public Middle School in America in its [2019 Best Schools in America rankings](#). In the State of Florida, ADHUS is ranked No. 2 for both Best Public Elementary School and Best Public Middle School.

For more information about A.D. Henderson University School, visit its website at www.adhus.fau.edu. To explore ways to give, contact Mickey Zitzmann, Development Officer, Office of PK-12 Schools and Educational Programs at FAU, at mzitzmann@fau.edu.

[Back to Front Page](#)