



**RUTGERS**

Douglass Developmental  
Disabilities Center

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022-2023



SERVICE.TRAINING.RESEARCH

# MEET THE DEAN

## RUTGERS

Graduate School of Applied  
and Professional Psychology



**DR. ARPANA G. INMAN**

DEAN AND DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF APPLIED AND  
PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Dear GSAPP Community,

The Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center (DDDC) is an integral part of Rutgers University's Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP). Rutgers is a powerhouse institution that is renowned for its academic excellence and scholarship, its innovative research, its efforts to foster a beloved community, and its dedication to public service for the common good. GSAPP is steadfast in its commitment to this noble mission, which the DDDC exemplifies daily. Their work clearly aligns with the Rutgers-GSAPP goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

### *Looking Back, Looking Ahead*

The DDDC was founded over a half-century ago, at a time when "autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD)," was infrequently discussed and little understood. Over many decades, the DDDC has been making an indelible mark in families' lives, at Rutgers, in our school districts, counties, and local communities, in our state, and beyond. Dedicated staff work tirelessly with patience, persistence, and practicality to address modern-day challenges and the increased prevalence of autism. According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the national rate of children identified with autism is 1 in 36 nationally; 1 in 34 in New Jersey, the third highest in the nation.

The DDDC's contributions to serving families and their children with autism, and the Center's impact, cannot be overstated. In fact, the DDDC completed its 50th anniversary this past year. What an exciting year it has been! Below are some highlights of the DDDC's remarkable accomplishments:

- Continuing to provide best practice services to the autism community
- Establishing and maintaining key campus and community collaborations
- Employing and developing the next generation of professionals prepared to meet the needs of individuals with ASD
- Providing training, on a paid or volunteer basis, to many students seeking real-world clinical experience, from GSAPP's academic programs (Clinical, School, Applied), as well as Rutgers undergraduates and advanced degree students from a variety of disciplines

- Establishing and maintaining partnerships with school districts that provide services to underserved, marginalized communities.

I encourage you to read more about these initiatives, achievements, and more in the pages that follow. My vision for the DDDC and GSAPP is to expand existing partnerships and engage our Rutgers community and beyond to advance the study and support of individuals on the autism spectrum. We know that there is more work to be done and are often asked, "How can I help?" or "What can we do?" Each of us has personal and collective gifts to offer - time, talent, experience, knowledge and expertise, mentorship, connections, as well as financial gifts and fundraising assistance. As we look ahead to the next fifty years, it is our sincere hope that one day, through continued dedication to evidence-based practices, support, and advocacy, the population of individuals on the autism spectrum will no longer be described as underserved. Thank you to the DDDC students, clients, families, faculty, campus partners, collaborators, donors, and friends!

Sincerely,



**DR. ARPANA G. INMAN**

An integral unit of the Graduate School of Professional and Applied Psychology (GSAPP), the DDDC is part of the school's Applied and Academic Autism Services (Triple A) division, which includes the Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services (RCAAS) and GSAPP's Applied Psychology department.



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# SERVICE.TRAINING.RESEARCH





# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center (DDDC) has been serving individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the autism community-at-large since 1972. Our work includes providing support to family members of individuals with ASD and training for the professionals serving them. We research and apply evidence-based best practices to meet the needs of autistic individuals, with a focus on those who have more significant support needs.

Our goal with each aspect of the work we do at the DDDC is to increase the availability and accessibility of high-quality services for individuals on the autism spectrum. We provide individualized applied behavior analysis (ABA) services in our center-based school and adult programs. We also consult with public and private school programs to ensure high quality service delivery to individuals outside our center. **Our students and clients are at the heart of everything we do.**

Training and Research are integrated within our service mission. We train Rutgers graduate students and others in the field of ABA, and from a wide variety of health and medical disciplines, ensuring that a growing number of professionals are prepared to meet the needs of individuals with ASD. Through our research, we share time-tested best practices so others can provide high quality services to autistic individuals.

We are so proud of the work we have been doing for over 50 years, and we are excited to share it with you in the pages that follow.



**Catriona Francis, Ed.M., BCBA**  
**Director of the DDDC**



# SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

OUR STUDENTS CONTINUE TO MAKE US PROUD. READ ON FOR A FEW MESSAGES FROM OUR  
TEACHERS AND BOARD-CERTIFIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSTS (BCBA'S):

*"I am so proud of how far you have come. You have gone above and beyond what I could have ever hoped for and I couldn't be any prouder. "*

*"To our graduates: congratulations! I'm so incredibly proud of each and every one of you. All of your hard work has paid off, and graduation is finally here. Today is your last day at Douglass. For some of you, it has been a literal lifetime. It has been my privilege to teach you all, and I hope you have learned as much from me as I have learned from you. Your absence from Douglass will be felt greatly, but I cannot wait to discover the remarkable things that you all will conquer in the future".*

*"Together, we have witnessed these students grow. At the DDDC they've transformed from young learners to a fantastically fun group of young adults. While all unique, they are also connected by many of the qualities they share: dancers and musicians, jokesters and hard workers, individuals, and team players. For our graduates, we hope your continued hard work beyond this school helps your goals and dreams come to fruition. We are so proud of who you all have become. Together, we celebrate these four lifelong friends. They've learned, worked, and grown at the DDDC. It is only fitting that today, together, they graduate before moving forward to tackle the next adventures in their lives."*

*You're embarking on your adventure into your adult life during a time that we all know is a little uncertain. And I know that we aren't sure what the future holds right now, however, I don't want that uncertainty to overshadow all of your accomplishments. So today, let's remember your endless positivity and love for learning. Let's acknowledge that you and your family have worked so hard to help you overcome any challenges that stand in front of you and get you where you are today. Let's emphasize the support and confidence that your team at Douglass has in you, wherever your path may lead you. And finally, let's celebrate this tremendous achievement that is your graduation today".*





# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

The DDDC has been running its Student Spotlight campaign year-round. Many of our students' and adult clients' accomplishments and infectious displays of DDDC school pride have been showcased throughout the year. We have highlighted just a few of these students below:



## KAREEM

Kareem has been a student at the DDDC since 2006. He has a bright and cheerful personality. Kareem likes to chill out in his favorite tie-dyed shirts while watching American Dad on his iPad. He also goes swimming at the Edison Elks Club and likes to use the slide.



## ERICA

Erica has been a student at the DDDC since 2007. She is a hard worker and likes to complete her work tasks in a timely fashion. She can easily complete 200-piece physical and iPad puzzles. Erica enjoys interacting with the staff and heartily laughs when they act out her requests. She enjoys going out for lunch at the diner with her peers and ordering pancakes and bacon.



## DREW

Drew has been a student at the DDDC since 2015. He enjoys both salty and sweet treats and also likes to watch cooking videos on his iPad. Drew likes to utilize his calendar to check out upcoming events. He has been job sampling once a week at Tavern 292 in Fairfield.



## ALEXANDER

Alex joined the DDDC school program in 2020, and immediately became an integral part of the school. He loves watching Ratatouille and home videos and enjoys playing with kinetic sand, water beads, and slinkies. He likes to snack on chocolate chips, cookies, and pretzels. He is a hard worker and loves a good schedule. He has helped bake and sell various baked treats to students and staff around the school. In the few years that he has been at the DDDC, Alex has brought so much joy to the people around him.



## CASSIDY

Cassidy is a 2023 DDDC graduate. Some of her favorite past times are watching videos, singing, and dancing along to her favorite pop music artists. She also enjoys doing arts and crafts projects. While at the DDDC, Cassidy had the opportunity to participate in job sampling at Bettaway Supply Chain Services, where she worked in the warehouse with some of her peers. She was a hard worker and enjoyed her time there.



## ISAAC

Isaac is a silly and sociable member of the US3 classroom who enjoys giving high-fives and fist bumps to others. He enjoys a variety of foods, and his favorites include Oreos, Starbursts, pizza, and french fries. Isaac enjoys listening to and watching music videos by The Weeknd, Harry Styles, and gospel music. A perfect day for Isaac includes playing with shaving cream or putty, going for car rides, and swimming.

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT (CONT'D)



**RHIANNON**

Rhiannon has been a student in the DDDC school program since 2009. She enjoys eating fruit snacks and Doritos. She especially loves wearing jewelry and different hair accessories, getting her nails and hair done by staff, and people watching. She also enjoys watching Seinfeld, I Love Lucy, Golden Girls, and ASMR videos. She has a way of always putting a smile on the staff members' faces.



**ERIC**

Eric has been a student at the DDDC since 2014. He likes to be active and outdoors, playing sports or swimming. He really enjoys watching slime videos on his iPad! Eric recently began job sampling at Bettaway Supply Chain Services, where he works in the warehouse with several of his classmates as a case picker.



**ANTHONY**

Anthony has been a student in the DDDC school program since 2012. He enjoys participating in yoga class at school and walking on the treadmill at Jersey Strong in East Brunswick. Anthony also participates in the horticulture program at school and likes to harvest, prepare, and eat some of the produce that has been grown in the garden.



**RILEY**

Riley is a 2023 DDDC graduate. He attended the DDDC school program for 19 years. Riley likes to take walks outside and is happiest when he chills out on his yoga ball. He takes trips with his classmates and recently enjoyed visiting the Rutgers Cinema to watch Super Mario Bros. movie.



**MICHAEL**

Michael is a 2023 DDDC graduate. He loves all things Toy Story. He really enjoys participating in baking and meal preparation at school and at home. Michael also enjoyed taking community trips with his friends, and he especially enjoyed lunch trips to a local pizzeria.



**ANDREW**

Andrew has been a student at the DDDC since 2009. He has eclectic musical taste that ranges from pop to rap. Andrew enjoys taking trips to the community with his classmates and loves shopping for his lunch items and spicy snacks. His favorite store is Target. Andrew has a terrific smile that lights up the room!



# ADULT CLIENTS SPOTLIGHT

The Douglass Adult Program (DAP) clients participate in a variety of activities and community integration. Some of the clients highlighted during the 2022- 2023 include:



**AMANDA**

Amanda has been attending the Douglass Adult Program for 15 years. She loves all things Disney and especially loves to chat with staff about her favorite princesses. She likes to have staff assist her in painting her nails and she enjoys going into the community, and shopping for party supplies. Her favorite song is "Piano Man" by Billy Joel.



**JASON**

Jason was a student in the school program before entering the DAP in 1999. Jason works at Longhorn Steakhouse once a week packaging and weighing food. Jason also volunteers with Meals on Wheels and delivers food to recipients. He loves to swim at the RU Werblin pool and enjoys watching the Rutgers Swim Team during their practice.



**LUKE**

Luke was a student in the DDDC school program before entering the DAP in 2001. Luke works at Longhorn Steakhouse and has been employed there for the past 15 years weighing and packaging food. In his free time, he enjoys bowling and swimming. Recently, Luke has been focusing on improving his health and consistently working out with the DAP staff.



**ZACH**

Zachary was a student in the school program before entering the DAP in 2007. Zach volunteers at the Rutgers food pantry on College Avenue. He enjoys swimming and relaxing at the Rutgers Werblin pool. He is a superfan of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders.



**JOEY**

Joey was a student in the school program before entering the DAP in 2005. Joey volunteers at a local church where he packages breakfast food items that are distributed to Rutgers students. He also helps deliver food to Meals On Wheels recipients. He enjoys riding on the Rutgers campus buses to do different activities around New Brunswick.



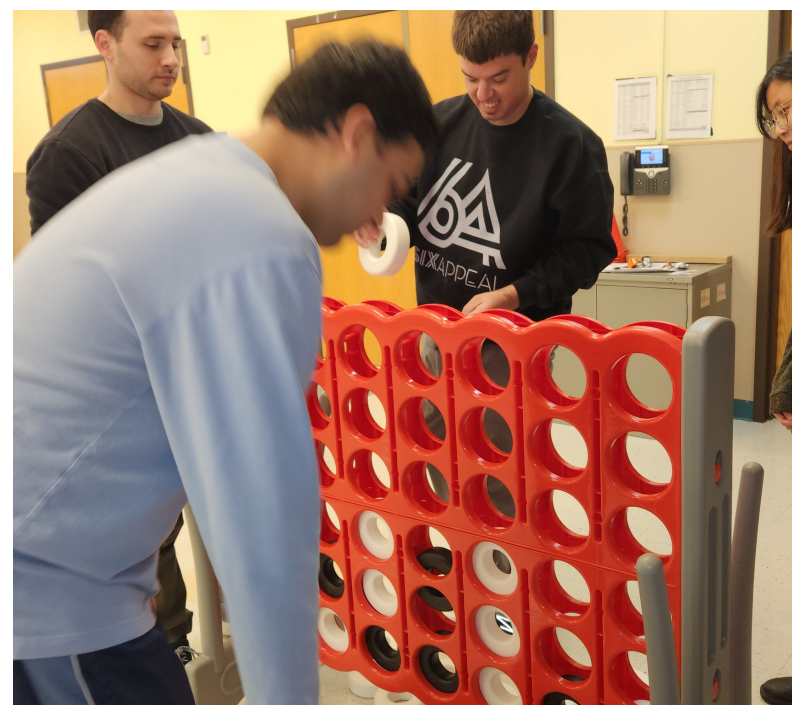
**MICHAEL**

Michael was a student in the school program before entering the DAP in 2007. Michael works with Men with Mops doing seasonal raking and outdoor cleaning for local residents and businesses. He enjoys participating in outdoor activities and especially likes roller-skating and riding on a tandem bike with the DAP staff.











# SIBLING SUPPORT

Having a sibling on the autism spectrum can present unique challenges for neurotypical children and adolescents. GSAPP graduate students and DDDC staff volunteered their time to work with Dr. Kate Fiske to facilitate the DDDC Sibling Support Groups this year. We ran two simultaneous sibling groups across eight weekly sessions. Groups met virtually on Thursdays from 5:00-6:00 pm. Dan Park and Jeannine Ederer facilitated a group for children ages 7-10, and Gabrielle Pignatelli and Tia Horn facilitated a group for pre-teens and teens ages 11-15. Eight siblings participated in the younger group, and five siblings participated in the older group.

These topics were covered in the eight-week sessions:

- Introduction to Autism
- Experience of Autism
- Coping with Emotions
- Challenging Behavior and Autism
- Friendships and Peers
- ABA at Home
- Dealing with Disappointment
- Wrap-up Session

Activities included a mix of didactics, discussion, role play, responses to videos, and games. The central skill of problem-solving was utilized throughout. The feedback received was overwhelming positive, and we plan to run the groups again next year.



## SURVEY RESULTS FROM PARENTS AND SIBLINGS ATTENDING THE GROUP

### QUALITY OF GROUPS



100% OF PARENTS  
RATED THE  
QUALITY OF THE  
GROUP AS GOOD OR  
EXCELLENT

### FACILITATORS



87% OF SIBLINGS  
RATED THE GROUP AS  
HELPFUL

### RECOMMEND THE GROUP



100% OF SIBLINGS  
WOULD  
RECOMMEND THE  
GROUP TO OTHER  
FAMILIES

### SIBLINGS



7 OUT OF 8 SIBLINGS  
SAID THEY WERE  
EXCITED TO ATTEND  
THE GROUP EACH  
WEEK



# NEW INITIATIVES



## ABA THERAPY IN THE HOME

The DDDC has launched a Home-Based Services program! This program offers behavior analytic services to learners on the autism spectrum and their families.

Home-based ABA therapy provides an opportunity for the learner to acquire socially significant skills in their natural environment.

Our team will focus on teaching skills that are a priority to the family and will increase the child's participation in the family's routines and activities. Family members will learn from our highly skilled staff how to support their learner as they are acquiring these skills.

Our home-based services team will identify the unique cultural needs of the family when creating a child's individualized treatment plan. Our compassionate board-certified behavior analysts and behavior technicians will work flexibly within a family's normal routines.

Depending on the family's needs, sessions can be held at the family's home or in another community setting. We monitor progress at every session so we can continually adjust our strategies to advance progress.

In keeping with the DDDC's mission, this program will provide opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students to learn how to provide behavior analytic services in a home-based setting.

***ABA is an evidenced-based treatment that has been shown to be effective in teaching learners with ASD a variety of skills, such as communication, play, social, academic and self-help.***



*In-home ABA therapy helps parents and caregivers take an active role in their child's autism treatment. Parents can watch and learn during the sessions, which can help better understand how to support their child's skill development.*

*-Marlene Brown, Associate Director of Consultation and Communications*



# NEW INITIATIVES

## ALUMNI MAP

As we reflected on the 50-year history of the DDDC, the most powerful indicator of our impact on our community is the network of people whose lives have been influenced. We can think about children and adult clients and their families, school districts that have contracted with us for services or consultation, and university students who have begun their careers in the DDDC. But even beyond the Rutgers students who participate in fieldwork and research training at the DDDC, the field of autism services in the state of New Jersey and beyond is filled with former colleagues and trainees across all levels who can trace their paths back to an experience at the DDDC. Our “DDDC Alumni” are more than just those K-12 students who have graduated from the DDDC.

We have often spoken in jest about the “Seven Degrees of Sandra Harris” to recognize the generations and interconnections of autism professionals who crossed paths with our founder. In more recent years, her legacy has continued to grow, and the degrees of connection to the DDDC continue to branch out and become an even more robust network than ever before.

In the past year, we began the challenging task of trying to create a visual image of the scope of impact the DDDC has had and will continue to have on our local communities and well beyond. You will see this theme in our new visual element, reflecting the exponential growth of seeds spreading far and wide. We have also developed the DDDC network map. This visual reminder of the power of our work not only helps to remind us of the greater impact of our work at the DDDC, but this image becomes a symbolic representation that highlights our reach and the importance of what we do.



*Lara Delmolino Gatley, Ph.D., BCBA-D  
Executive Director of DDDC  
Clinical Professor and Associate Dean, GSAPP  
Director, Applied and Academic Autism Services*

We have so many success stories to tell, but the map helps us show that we are more than individual success stories; one by one, we have changed the community of autism service providers.

Please reach out and put yourself on this map and recognize your part in creating a strong and amazing network of individuals who are committed to supporting the autism community. We want to stay connected and find ways to continue to support this important work.



<https://go.rutgers.edu/nlyqzc9m>

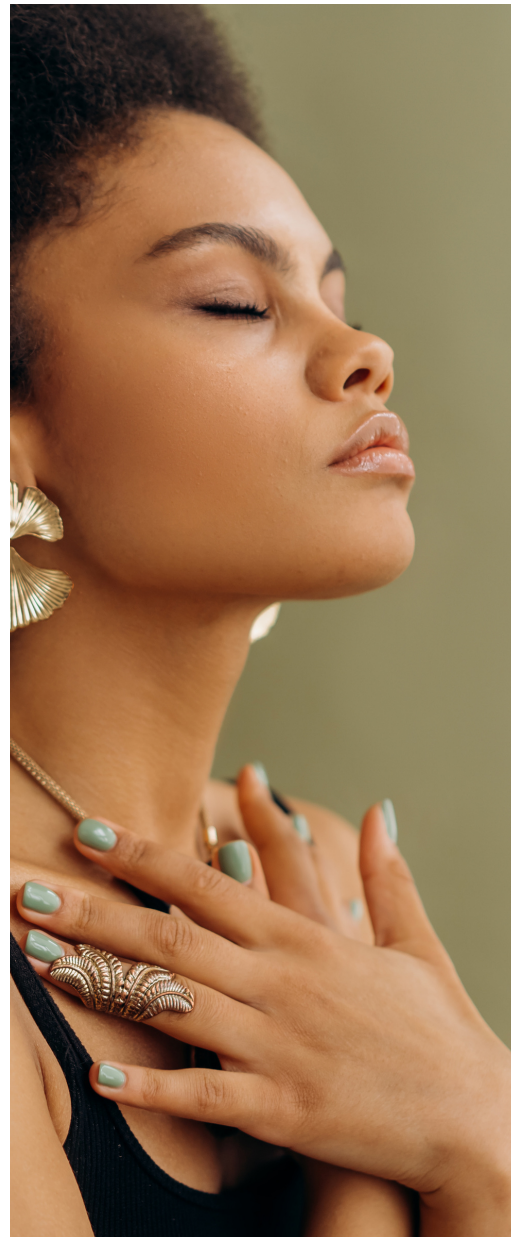


# GSAPP COLLABORATION SUPPORTS WELLNESS

Directors Catriona Francis and Debra Paone are making an impact!

To combat stress and burnout, the DDDC has partnered with Margaret Swarbrick, PhD, FAOTA, Center of Alcohol and Substance Use Studies, Research Professor, GSAPP Applied Psychology Department, and Susan Gould Fogerite, Ph.D., MT, CYT to provide DDDC staff and families with a program that focuses on self-care and wellness. The program teaches simple strategies that can be used at work, at home, and in the community to maintain or restore personal wellness. Feedback received from both staff and parents has been overwhelmingly positive!

The team has created an asynchronous program to make stress-reducing strategies accessible to even more DDDC staff. Given the level of stress and burnout in the field of ABA, the program will expand and offer the benefits of self-care to others working the field of ABA, including staff at the Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services (RCAAS) and the Rutgers University Center for Autism Research, Education, and Services (RUCARES).

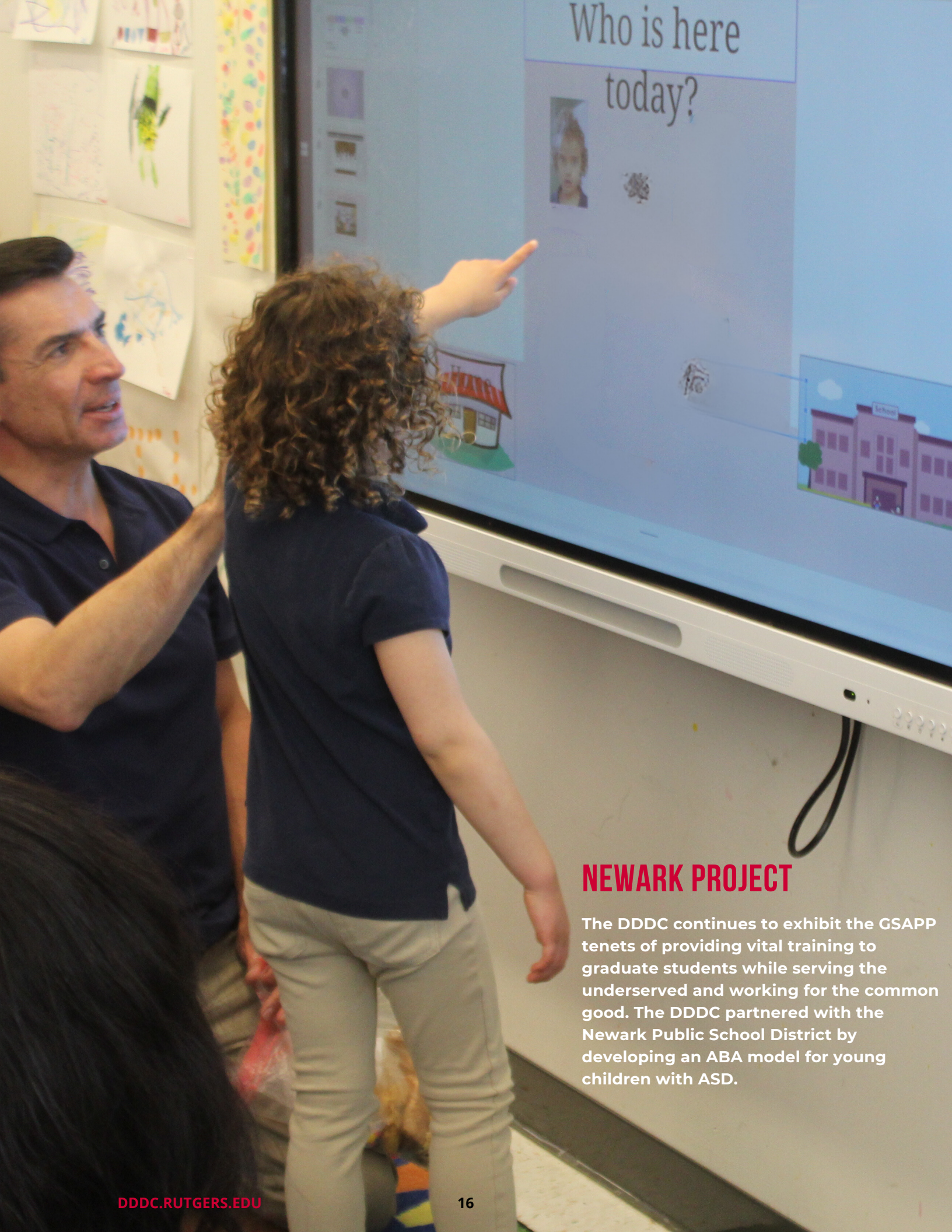


*We have embodied health and well-being at the heart of the DDDC because our staff are our greatest asset, and we recognize that a healthy, happy, and committed workforce is vital to providing the best clinical services to our students and clients.*

*-Dr. Debra Paone, Director of Consultation and Training*







Who is here  
today?



## NEWARK PROJECT

The DDDC continues to exhibit the GSAPP tenets of providing vital training to graduate students while serving the underserved and working for the common good. The DDDC partnered with the Newark Public School District by developing an ABA model for young children with ASD.



# DDDC OUTREACH SERVICES WORKS WITH UNDERSERVED POPULATION

The DDDC has been working with Newark's South Street School in Newark, NJ in their preschool and kindergarten through first-grade classrooms to use ABA with students who are on the autism spectrum. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the state of New Jersey now has the third highest rate of autism in the nation: 1 in 34 children. The Newark Public School District, the state's largest, serves over 6,000 students with special needs.

"This collaboration has allowed for straightforward and compassionate dissemination of the fundamentals of ABA and best practices in promoting successful, functional outcomes for students," said Shelley Bertino, a Behavior Analyst at the DDDC and Consultant for this program. She is taking the science of ABA and implementing it in the classroom to provide an enriched learning environment for the students. ABA is a data-based method of treatment for improving, managing, or reducing socially significant human behaviors.

In this case, the team uses interventions supported by research on behaviors that are important to a child's development, such as social skills, language, academics, daily living, and self-care. Said Mr. Baron, a teacher at South Street School, "Every staff member I have encountered has been welcoming, friendly, professional, and informative. They have outlined a model of what servicing students should look like through ABA. This partnership has provided me with a greater and expanded understanding for the value of strategic scheduling, classroom arrangement and management,



*James Barron, teacher from Newark Public Schools, working with Shelley Bertino, BCBA on student programming.*

allocation and use of resources, diverse data collection, delivery of instruction, and much more!" Relatedly, Dr. Meghan Deshais, GSAPP Assistant Professor and Dr. Debra Paone, Director of Training and Consultation, DDDC, are Co-Principal Investigators in a research study, "A Pilot Investigation of Emergent Multi-Class Imitation Training," and are working with preschoolers with autism attending Quitman Community School in Newark. Many children with ASD have difficulty learning to imitate, which is important because it helps children learn new skills such as communication and socialization.

The study's purpose is to evaluate a comprehensive intervention protocol designed to rapidly teach imitation to young children diagnosed with ASD. The DDDC-Newark School District partnership will also provide Rutgers graduate students (master's, doctoral, and pre-doctoral) in psychology and education with practical, on-site training. This is truly a win-win. Their integration into the model school program increases the classroom staffing ratios, delivering the intensive instruction that is needed for students with autism, while simultaneously providing graduate students with valuable experience in a public school setting.



# A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

Donations and pledges below were made between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.



## RUTGERS GIVING DAYS - \$27,955

In 2023, Rutgers Giving Days (RGD) evolved from a single-day campaign to a weeklong fundraising effort driven by President Holloway's ABC initiatives. Collaborating with foundation and university partners, the Rutgers University Foundation (RUF)'s Engagement Communications team promoted many opportunities to support university programs. This outreach occurred through the RGD website, daily emails, social media, and volunteer champions who helped spread the word.

Our intent was to create a fundraising campaign that not only expanded access across Rutgers, provided students with service experiences, and supported our programs for the common good, but also drove engagement for our alumni in non-monetary ways. This included a range of opportunities, from mentoring students, volunteering at food pantries, attending Rutgers events, and sharing internship and externship openings.

## MATCH DONORS - \$14,000

During the campaign, three DDDC families generously provided a dollar-for-dollar match for the first \$14,000 raised to support the students and clients at the DDDC. We are extremely grateful for this gift and appreciate all thoughtful contributions received from our loyal supporters.

## DDDC GENERAL FUND - \$10,165

Ms. Marlene P. Brown  
Mr. Scott D. Brown  
Ms. Christine Carducci  
Mrs. Bernadette Flores Cariaga  
Ms. Karen Cascio-Harford  
Ms. Robyn Cohen  
Mr. Leonard Delmolino  
Ms. Benecia Emiliano  
Ms. Andrea Escoffery  
Mr. Harrison Escoffery  
Ms. Sue Ann Evans  
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Ms. Lynn Wald  
Ms. Marguerite Walsh  
Ms. Regina Wdowiak  
Mrs. Debra A. Weber  
Mrs. Julie White  
Ms. Haley Wintercoff

## GRADUATE STUDIES IN AUTISM SCHOLARSHIP - \$3,790

Ms. Marlene P. Brown  
Mr. Robert T. Buscher  
Ms. Catriona B. Francis  
Dr. Lara D. Gatley  
Ms. Ritu Khandelwal  
Ms. Mary Ann Policastro  
Ms. Donna L. Sloan  
Mr. Michael F. Storer



# A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS (CONT'D)

Endowments were made between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.



## DONORS

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Mr. Donald Bennetti  
Mr. Robert T. Buscher  
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C&C Club of Somerset Run  
Greenwich Autism Alliance  
New Jersey State Federation of Women's  
Clubs of GFWC



## ENDOWMENT FUND DONORS

Alderman Family Adult Services Fund

Edith Neimark Dissertation and  
Research Endowment

Sandra Lee Harris Endowment

Jan Handleman and Susan Arlen  
Endowment for Autism Education

Joseph and Kristin Mannello  
Endowed Scholarship



For more information contact:  
Catherine Emery,  
Associate Director of Development  
[catherine.emery@gsap.com](mailto:catherine.emery@gsap.com)



## PLANNING YOUR GIFT

An endowment fund provides a source of annual income to the DDDC. Endowments are designed to function in perpetuity, because the original gift amount (the principal) is invested, and the earnings are used to provide long-term financial support to a school or program about which you care most.

Once established, anyone can make additional contributions to the fund in any dollar amount. Many endowment funds are created through gifts from wills or trusts; however, a significant number of donors choose to fund their endowments while they are still living so they can see the impact of their gifts. There are numerous ways to fund an endowment with the Foundation, including gifts of cash, securities, property, distributions from retirement accounts and more.

No matter what your "estate" includes, everyone needs a plan. We're sharing a free estate planning resource with our DDDC community to make this important task simple and 100% free. If your plan includes a legacy gift to the DDDC, we can help ensure your gift creates the impact that you and your family desire.

[PLAN YOUR GIFT](#)

[DONATE TODAY](#)







# YOUR IMPACT

Donations and pledges were made between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.



## ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

The newly purchased preference assessment materials have been used to create a comprehensive preference assessment kit for each school building for learners of all ages at the DDDC. This wide variety of items will enhance our ability to identify preferred items and potential reinforcers for our learners.

The categories included in the kit are tactile items (kinetic sand, water beads, putty, etc.), visual items (light up spinning wand, bead necklaces, ribbons, etc.), auditory/visual combined items (musical book, rotating light-up music box, dancing toy, etc.), and gross motor items (yoga ball, scooter, balls for catch, etc.).

We believe these kits will provide opportunities to identify potential preferences for some of our hardest-to-motivate learners, identify the most preferred preference category for learners, and expand interest to new/novel items in their most-preferred category.

## HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

There's no doubt about it: gardens engage and inspire youth, allowing educators to reach students in fun, effective ways. There's something contagious about the feel of dirt under your fingernails and the excitement generated by watching a living thing sprout, grow, and bloom under your care. As an educational tool, the garden offers the flexibility to develop and implement activities and programs for learners of all ages and abilities.

"We try to teach our students the full circle of food: from seed, to harvest, to the kitchen, and finally the table," says Jenna Budge, BCBA.



## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The DDDC recognizes that healthy students are better learners and that many factors can impact a student's academic attainment and overall health.

The DDDC identifies promising practices and research to support school health and wellness programming. Our health and wellness programming includes providing each student with at least 60 minutes of adaptive physical education class.

Activities include, but are not limited to: individual sports skills, technology (Nintendo Wii and XBOX Kinect), fitness circuit, recreation activities, yoga, and an introduction to lifetime sports activities (bowling, biking, skating, etc.). In addition, both buildings have exercise rooms equipped with treadmills, stationery bikes, and light weights for all students and clients to use on a daily basis. Some of our students and clients attend a local community gym weekly, where they utilize a variety of fitness equipment in a community setting.

Health and wellness programming is incorporated into our students' and clients' daily routines. They are taught how to shop for healthy food items for lunch or cooking groups. Many of our students shop for and prepare their own lunches.



# TIMELINE 2022- 2023

## JULY

The Douglass Adult Program (DAP) working at the Rutgers Student Food Pantry. The Rutgers Student Food Pantry strives to address food insecurity by creating access to healthy food for Rutgers students in New Brunswick. The DAP is proud to partner with this wonderful organization in serving the greater community! Visit their website: <http://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/food/>.



*Student volunteering at the Rutgers Student Food Pantry*

## AUGUST

Staff Appreciation Lunch - Thanks to the generous support of the DDDC's Founder, Dr. Sandra Harris, to show our appreciation for everyone's hard work over the past year, we provided a delicious, nutritious deli box lunch for all DDDC staff.



*Dr. Sandra Harris, founder of the DDDC, 1972*

## SEPTEMBER

Our annual Triple A Fall Training took place Monday, August 29th through Friday, September 2nd. Dean Inman welcomes back DDDC staff and faculty. On September 2nd the DDDC hosted a 50th anniversary event at Gibbons. Former faculty and staff also joined the day of celebration.



*The GSAPP's leadership team and some of the 50 Faces of the DDDC honorees at the DDDC's 50th anniversary celebration, September 9th.*

## OCTOBER

Happy Golden Anniversary! The DDDC celebrates with a [reception at the Autism NJ Conference](#) and is featured in a *Rutgers Today* article recognizing its 50 years of excellence!

Learn more about the DDDC's groundbreaking accomplishments over the years and future plans in the *Rutgers Today* article link here: <https://www.rutgers.edu/news/douglass-developmental-disabilities-center-commemorates-50-years-supporting-autism-community>



*Dr. Lara Delmolino and graduate student*

## NOVEMBER

Supporting a Family in Need - It has been a DDDC tradition over the past years for us to come together to support a family in need during the holiday season. Once again, this year, the DDDC Spirit Committee sponsored our participation in the Rutgers Against Hunger Adopt-a-Family Program.



## DECEMBER

The DDDC's Spirit Committee hosted a dessert-making challenge. Desserts created by students and staff were displayed at our two locations. The winners are the US4 winter cake (Gibbons) and the Training Coordinator winter cake (Ryders)! Everyone who made a dessert had a blast. Honorable mention to the IS1 RU Stadium and Karen H's Christmas tree. NAILED IT!



# TIMELINE 2022- 2023

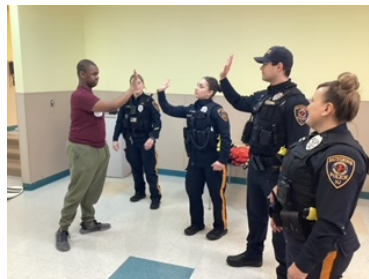
## JANUARY

Year-end 2022 marked the official end of the milestone year the DDDC turned 50. What an exciting year it has been! We celebrated the last 50 years of work at our center and the work you all continue to do to serve children and adults on the autism spectrum.



## FEBRUARY

RUPD provided valuable training for its officers as well as an opportunity for our students and clients to have positive interactions with members of the law enforcement community. Officers received a brief training from Catriona Francis, Director of the DDDC, about autism and the needs of the individuals we serve. Then, RUPD officers spent two mornings at the center interacting with students and clients along with support staff.



RUPD and a DDDC student.

## MARCH

March 20 - 24 was Rutgers Giving Days Campaign. We had the support of 90 individual donors to our DDDC General Fund and raised a total of \$24,165. We raised an additional \$290 thanks to six individual donations to our DDDC Graduate Student Fund. See page 18 for more details.



## APRIL

To commemorate Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month, the DDDC hosted a door decorating contest, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to engaging individuals on the autism spectrum. Check out the creativity!



## MAY

Dr. Robert LaRue received the 2023 Professor of the Year for Excellence in Teaching Award at GSAPP's Commencement Ceremony in May. Bob said it is a tremendous honor to be recognized by the students who nominated him. Congratulations and well-deserved!



*Dr. LaRue, Clinical Professor, Applied Psychology, GSAPP; Director of Behavioral Services, DDDC and RCAAS  
2023 Professor of the Year*

## JUNE

In June, we celebrated the graduation of four of our students. We have seen their tremendous hard work over the years turn into great skills that have prepared these students for adulthood. We have cheered on numerous accomplishments and breakthroughs. We hope that their continued hard work beyond the DDDC helps their goals and dreams come to fruition.





## 56 Students

served in the  
Douglass School Program



## 17 Clients

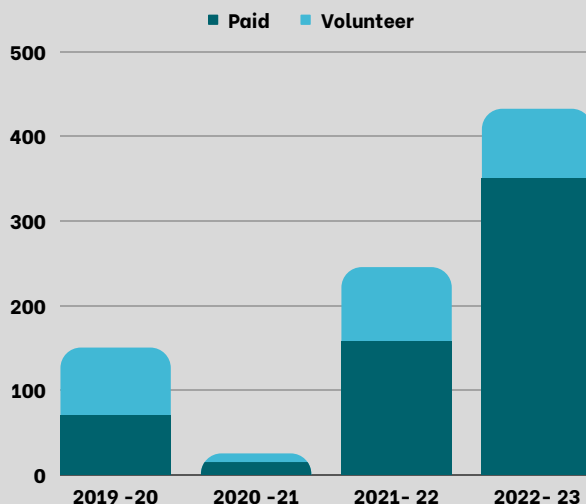
served in the  
Douglass Adult Program  
(DAP)

## 2377 Hours

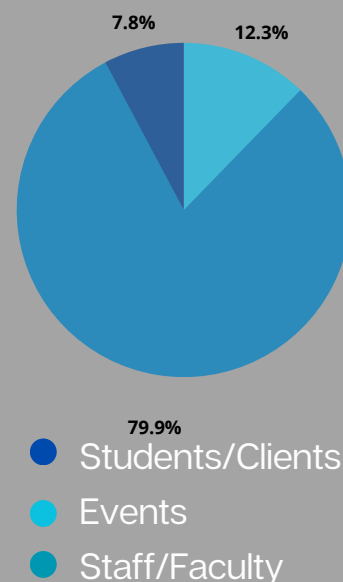
of consultation services to  
schools and programs



## DAP PROGRAM VOLUNTEER & PAID WORK HOURS



## Social Media Popular Post



data from July 1, 2022  
through June 30, 2023

## 30-40

School districts served  
in the  
Douglass School Program

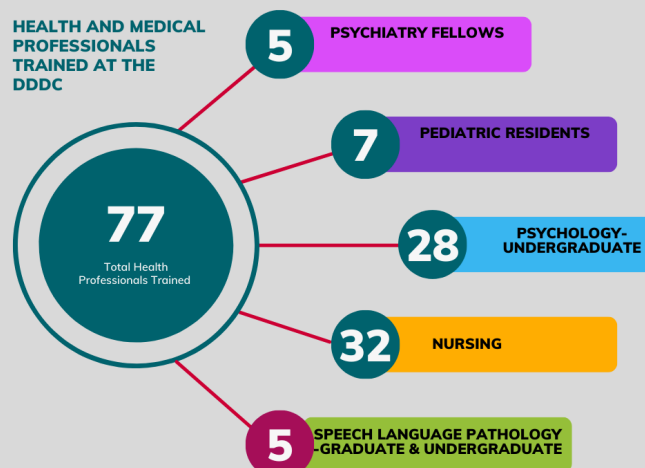


## 300+

Participants  
attended trainings  
presented by  
Outreach Services staff



HEALTH AND MEDICAL  
PROFESSIONALS  
TRAINED AT THE  
DDDC

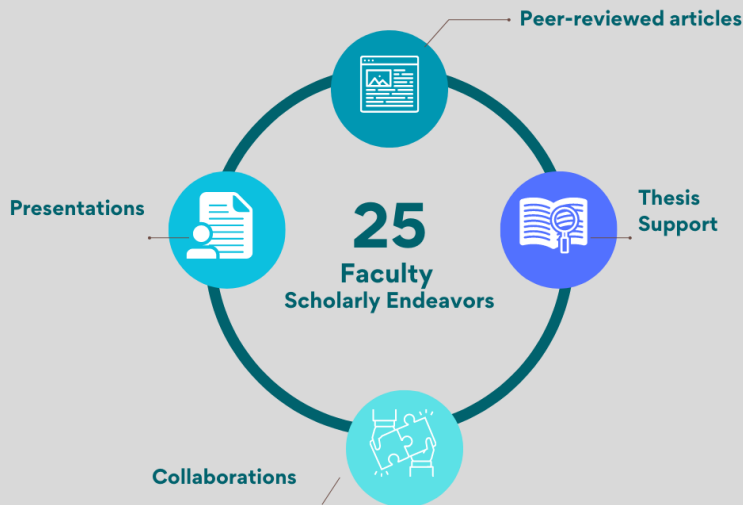


All health professionals trained are a  
combination of Rutgers University trainees  
and non-Rutgers University trainees

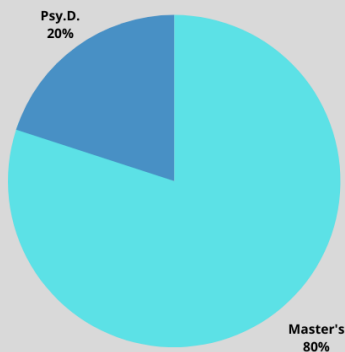


# SERVICE . TRAINING . RESEARCH

# HIGHLIGHTS



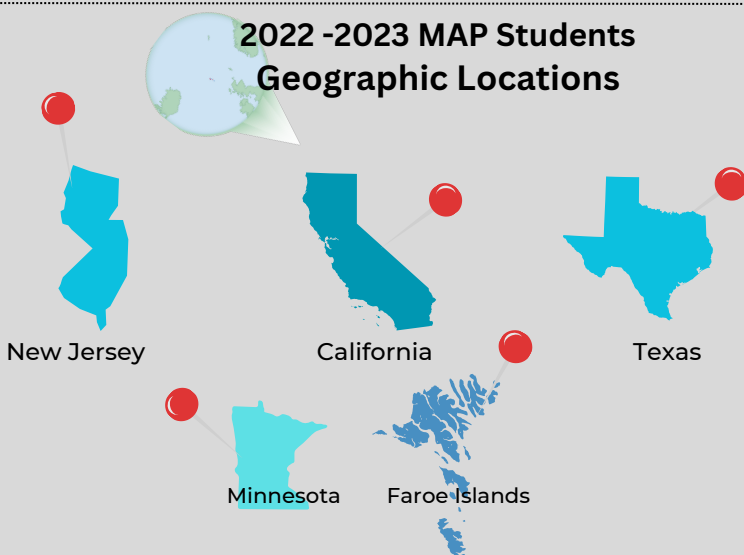
## University Student Training



**MASTER'S STUDENTS**

**PSY.D. STUDENTS**

## 2022 -2023 MAP Students Geographic Locations



## FACULTY LEAD PRESENTATIONS

### Research Synopses

Ederer, J., & LaRue, R. H. (2023). Research Synopsis: Using a picture activity schedule treatment package to teach toothbrushing to children with autism spectrum disorder. *Science in Autism Treatment*, 20(7).

Budge, J., & LaRue, R. (2022). Research Synopsis: A multisite randomized controlled trial comparing the effects of intervention intensity and intervention style on outcomes for young children with autism. *Science in Autism Treatment*, 19(9).

Austin, A., & LaRue, R. (2022). Research Synopsis: School based cognitive behavioural therapy targeting anxiety in children with autistic spectrum disorder: A quasi-experimental randomised controlled trial incorporating a mixed methods approach. *Science in Autism Treatment*, 19(7).

Park, D., & LaRue, R. (2022). Research Synopsis: Adolescents with autism spectrum disorder and social skills groups at school: A randomized trial comparing intervention environment and peer composition. *Science in Autism Treatment*, 19(6).

### Symposium Chair

Advances in Transition Planning: Preparing Autistic Adults for Life after Graduation (March 2023). R. H. LaRue (Chair). Symposium presented at the 18th New Jersey Association for Behavior Analysis Conference. Somerset, NJ.

Improving Employment Outcomes in Adolescents and Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (April 2022). R. LaRue (Chair). Symposium presented at the 17th New Jersey Association for Behavior Analysis Conference. Somerset, NJ.

Development of Behavior Analytic Treatment Packages to Address Diverse Clinical Problems. (May 2023). R. H. LaRue (Discussant). Presented at the 49th Annual Convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis. Denver, CO.

LaRue, R. H. (February 2023). Best Practices in Functional Assessment and Treatment Development for Individuals with Special Needs. Presented at the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (NJLEND) Training. New Brunswick, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (January 2023). Evaluating the Effectiveness of Pharmacological Interventions for Individuals with Special Needs. Presented at the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (NJLEND) Training. New Brunswick, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (November 2022). Ethical Considerations in Functional Assessment and Treatment Development for Individuals with Special Needs. Keynote presentation for the New York State Regional Centers for Autism Spectrum Disorders sponsored by the State University of New York/Old Westbury. Virtual Conference.

LaRue, R. H. (October 2022). Assessment and Treatment of Problem Behavior in Public School Settings. Presented at the 38th Annual Issues in Autism Conference presented by Autism New Jersey. Atlantic City, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. & Budge, J. (October 2022). Employment and Vocational Skills for Individuals with Autism. Presented at the 38th Annual Issues in Autism Conference presented by Autism New Jersey. Atlantic City, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (October 2022). Best Practices in Functional Assessment and Treatment Development for Individuals with Special Needs. Graduate School of Education. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. New Brunswick, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (July 2022). Best Practices in Functional Assessment and Treatment Development. Presented at the Camden County Family Support Organization. Audubon, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (June 2022). Ethical Considerations in the Integration of Choice into the Lives of Individuals with ASD. Keynote address at the 2022 Applied Behavior Analysis New York City Conference/Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC). Virtual conference.

LaRue, R. H. (May 2022). Ethical Considerations in Functional Assessment and Treatment Development for Individuals with Special Needs. Presented at Connect Plus Therapy. Cherry Hill, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (April 2022). NJABA Presidents' Message. Presented at the 17th New Jersey Association for Behavior Analysis Conference. Somerset, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (February 2022). Best Practices in Functional Assessment and Treatment Development for Individuals with Special Needs. Presented at the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey. Piscataway, NJ.

LaRue, R. H. (January 2022). Evaluating the Effectiveness of Pharmacological Interventions for Individuals with Special Needs. Presented at the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (NJLEND) Training. New Brunswick, NJ.





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DEVELOPMENTAL DIS  
CENTER!

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# LEADERSHIP

## Faculty

**Arpana G. Inman, Ph.D., ABPP**  
Dean and Distinguished Professor  
Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology

**Lara Delmolino Gatley, Ph.D., BCBA-D**  
Executive Director of DDDC  
Clinical Professor and Associate Dean, GSAPP  
Director, Applied and Academic Autism Services

**Robert H. LaRue, Ph.D., BCBA-D**  
Clinical Professor, Applied Psychology, GSAPP  
Director of Behavioral Services, DDDC and RCAAS

**Robert Isenhower, Ph.D., BCBA-D**  
Associate Teaching Professor, Applied Psychology, GSAPP  
Director of Graduate Student Training, DDDC

## DDDC Leadership

**Catriona Francis, Ed.M., BCBA**  
Director

**Debra Paone, Ph.D., BCBA-D**  
Director of Training and Consultation

**Marlene Brown, M.S., BCBA, LBA**  
Associate Director of Consultation and Communications

**Sarah Levine, M.A., M.Ed., CCC-SLP, BCBA**  
Assistant Director, Principal (School)

**Donna L. Sloan, M.A., BCBA**  
Assistant Director of Douglass Adult Program and  
Douglass School

**Jill Atschinow, MSHR**  
Senior Department Administrator



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Douglass Developmental  
Disabilities Center

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Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center  
151 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
25 Gibbons Circle, New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
[www.dddc.rutgers.edu](http://www.dddc.rutgers.edu)

Explore our socials @RUDDC and @rutgersgsapp

