

Caro C Wolfner

Curriculum Vitae

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University of Alabama at Birmingham

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Lifespan Developmental Psychology Anticipated 2022

University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama

Thesis title: *Consequences of COVID-19 on university student and postdoctoral fellow mental health: A mixed methods study/implications for coping strategies*

Thesis Chair: *Robin Lanzi, Ph.D*

Masters in Lifespan Developmental Psychology July 2020

University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama

Thesis title: *Autism Friendly Alabama: Identifying Key Criteria to Support an Inclusive Environment*

Thesis Chair: *Fred Biasini, Ph.D*

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology May 2017

University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

Minors: *Applied Behavioral Science, Sociology*

Honors Thesis: *Endocrine Disruptor Awareness: Message Framing & Application of the Health Belief Model.*

Thesis Chair: *Nancy Hamilton, Ph.D.*

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CEDHARS Strategic Planning and Implementation Committee February 2021 – Current

Center for Engagement in Disability Health & Rehabilitation Science (CEDHARS)

- In collaboration with UAB Lakeshore Foundation, working with team in developing and refining goals and strategic objectives for CEDHARS' community engagement activities.
- Meeting monthly to discuss implementation and development of metrics to help assess the center's success in attaining community engagement goals.
- Writing literature review that focuses on inclusion science, partnership and engagement with people with disabilities, and translational science.

Autism Friendly Alabama Initiative: Development and Marketing Employee December 2020

- Working with ASA staff and website developer to write and create program content for use on the AFA website.
- Assisted with resource materials needed to promote AFA; including brochures and other promotional material.
- Collaborate with ASA Executive Director, Program Director and Community Resource and Marketing Director on all aspects of the AFA grant implementation.

Autism Society of Alabama (ASA) Representative Fall 2018 – Present

- Volunteered at the 2019 Autism Friendly Birmingham Baron's Baseball Game (*Spring 2019*)
- Headed Touch-a-Truck event alongside Foundations, Inc. (*Fall 2018*)
- ASA representative for Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) National Conference (*Summer 2018*)
- Collaborated with People First organization to develop information pamphlet on restaurant inclusivity in downtown Birmingham (*Summer 2019*)
- Volunteered at the 2018, and 2019 Autism Shines Gala

Disability Policy Seminar: UAB Maternal and Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Representative Spring 2019

- Composed policy briefs and resource packets on Autism CARES Act & UCEDD-LEND program.
- Organized & coordinated meetings with each AL senator & congressman to advocate for re-authorization of Autism CARES Act.

- Attended training seminars on law regulation, key issues in education & employment legislation, disability rights, long term support services, and what to expect when meeting with members of congress.
- Delivered presentation to Sparks trainees and staff on DPS, public policy, and Autism CARES Act.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Psychology Research Assistant, Dr. Robin Lanzi

October 2020 - Present

- COVID-19, Race, and Student and Postdoctoral Mental Health Study Team Member
- Assisted with a project seeking to examine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on students and postdocs mental health and well-being.
- Collected data, conducted in-depth interviews, coded transcripts, and assisted with quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Supervisors: *Robin Lanzi, PhD MPH, Angela Stowe, PhD, and Lisa Schwiebert, PhD*

Primary Investigator, Master's Thesis

Spring 2017 – Present

- Investigated the themes that constitute an inclusive or “autism friendly” business environment.
- Implemented a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach by assessing the perspectives of parents and/or caregivers of individuals with ASD, adults with ASD (self-advocates), and medical providers for individuals with ASD and their families.
- Designed study protocol, recruited participants, completed IRB approval and collected data.

Committee Members: *Fred Biasini, Ph.D, (chair), Maria Hopkins, Ph.D, Sarah O'Kelley, PhD, Martha Wingate, DrPH*

Psychology Research Assistant, Dr. Fred Biasini & Christian Clesi, M.A

October 2019 – February 2020

Doctoral Dissertation: Examining the Efficacy and Parental Impact of a Novel Program for Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Assisted with a project seeking to examine the efficacy and parent impact of a novel psychoeducation program for parents and caregivers of individuals with ASD.
- Collected data, conducted in-depth interviews, coded transcripts, and assisted with quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Autism Spectrum Disorders Database Lab

Fall 2017 - Present

Project: *Sensory Processing Abnormalities among Children referred for an Autism Spectrum Disorder Evaluation*

- Completed retrospective chart review, data collection, and data entry from Civitan-Sparks clinical database.
- Queried variables from database, analyzed and interpreted results.
- Translated findings into poster for presentation at Alabama Autism Conference (AAC).

Supervisors: *Sarah O'Kelley, Ph.D. and Kristi Guest, Ph.D.*

Autism Friendly Alabama & People First Collaboration Project

Spring 2018 - Fall 2018

Project: *Inclusivity Overview: How Disability Friendly are Restaurants in Birmingham, AL?*

- Designed research protocol and survey materials for data collection
- Facilitated communication with collaboration organization (I.e., People's First)
- Lead data collection, entry and analysis.
- Established informational pamphlet using findings as a template; distributed 300 copies at SABE conference.
- Translated findings into poster for presentation at AUCD conference.

Supervisors: *Fred Biasini, Ph.D, Bama Hager, Ph.D.*

Behavioral Health Lab Research Assistant

October 2015 – May 2017

University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

Project: *Freshman 15: Behavior, Life Events and Sleep Amongst College Students*

- Utilized attention to detail by accurately assisting and collecting data from participants including: height, weight, and body mass index.
- Operated technical data collection equipment (i.e. Tewameter); Entered data and executed protocols.
- Discussed and problem solved with lab members on more effective data collection strategies.

Supervisor: *Nancy Hamilton, Ph.D*

Brain and Mind Research Institute Research Assistant

May 2016 – August 2016

University of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

- Managed data for multiple youth mental health studies;
- Analyzed with SPSS regarding data collected through clinical trials

- Shadowed and assisted in the scoring of neurological and clinical assessments for adolescents.
- Wrote literature review on proton magnetic resonance spectroscopy.
- Trained and assisted in autism spectrum disorder diagnostic assessments.

Supervisor: *Django White, Ph.D*

CONFERENCE POSTERS and PRESENTATIONS

- Stowe, A., Estep, C., **Wolfner, C.**, Upshaw, K., Black, L., Chatham, A., Garner, S., Schwiebert, L., Lanzi, R. (2021) *Events around Racism and Racial Injustice during COVID-19 and Impact on University Student Mental Health*. Public Health Virtual Research Poster Session, Birmingham, Alabama
- Estep, C., Boitet, L., **Wolfner, C.**, Stowe, A., Schwiebert, L., Lanzi, R. (2021) *Mental Health and Coping Mechanisms of Gender Minority University Students and Postdoctoral Fellows in the Deep South During COVID-19*. Public Health Virtual Research Poster Session, Birmingham, Alabama.
- **Wolfner, C.**, Biasini, F., Hager, B., Cofield, S., (February 2020) *An Autism Friendly Alabama”: Identifying Key Criteria to Support an Inclusive Environment*. Poster presented at the 19th Annual Alabama Autism Conference, Tuscaloosa, AL.
- **Wolfner, C.**, Root, H., O Kelley, S., Guest., (February 2019) *Sensory Processing Abnormalities among Children referred for an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Evaluation*. Poster presented at the 18th Annual Alabama Autism Conference, Tuscaloosa, AL.
- **Wolfner, C.**, Yu, S., Biasini, F., (November 2018) *Inclusivity Overview: How Disability Friendly are Restaurants in Birmingham, AL?* Poster presented at the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) Conference, Washington, DC
- **Wolfner, C.**, Hamilton, N., (April 2017) *Endocrine Disruptor Awareness: The Role of Message Framing and Application of the Health Belief Model*. Poster presented at the Symposium for Undergraduate Psychology Engagement and Research at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS .
- **Wolfner, C.**, Kandlur, R., Boddy L., Hamilton, N., (March 2017) *Freshman 15: The Pressure to be Thin*. Poster presented at 38th Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine, San Diego, CA.

APPIED CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

- **UAB Civitan International Research Center Sparks UCEDD-LEND Clinics**

Early Intervention Autism Clinic

August 2019 – 2020

Conducted psychological evaluations for young children referred for the diagnostic question of ASD aged 2-3. Interviewed caregivers, and both administered and interpreted gold-standard instruments for ASD assessment, including the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule – Second Edition (ADOS-2) and the Childhood Autism Rating Scale, Second Edition (CARS-2).

Supervisor: *Sarah Ryan, Ph.D., Fred Biasini, Ph.D*

Newborn Follow-Up Clinic

January 2019 – 2020

Participated in a multi-disciplinary team clinic for high-risk infants from birth to age 4. Conducted developmental assessments using the Bayley Scales of Infant Development - III & the Differential Ability Scales – II. Provided direct feedback to families and recommendations based on assessment findings.

Supervisor: *Kristy Domnanovich, Ph.D.*

Child Development/Autism Combination Clinic

April 2019 – August 2019

Conducted autism spectrum disorder-specific evaluations of school-age children (ages 4-18). Administered, scored, and interpreted gold-standard instruments for ASD assessment: Autism Diagnostic Observation Scale-Second Edition (ADOS-2) as well as cognitive assessments on a case-by-case basis.

Supervisor: *Sarah Ryan, Ph.D*

Child Development Clinic

January 2019 – April 2019

Conducted psychological evaluations for young children referred for various cognitive, motor, social, behavioral, and language concerns. Scored and interpreted assessment data to be integrated in clinical reports. Attended interdisciplinary team meetings to discuss findings, and treatment planning for child & family.

Supervisor: *John Houser, Ph.D.*

SELECTED SPECIALIZED TRAINING

- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Program (October 2020)

- Active Listening Training (October 2020)
- Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Related Disabilities (LEND) Seminar Series (*Fall 2018-2019*)

AWARDS, GRANTS, & FELLOWSHIPS

Predoctoral Clinical/Translational Research Fellowship Program (TL1) (applied)	February 2021
The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (Final Round of Candidates, Rejected)	January 2020
Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities Federal Grant, \$2,000 <i>Autism Friendly Alabama Business Initiative, Grant Assistant</i>	2018 - 2020
UCEDD-LEND Training Fellowship, \$26000 <i>Maternal and Child Health Bureau</i>	2018 - 2019
AUCD Trainee Conference Scholarship, \$500 <i>Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)</i>	October 2018
Blazer Fellowship, \$26000 <i>University of Alabama at Birmingham</i>	August 2017 - December 2018
Dean's List, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences <i>University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS</i>	August 2015 - May 2017
Undergraduate Travel Award <i>Center for Undergraduate Research, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS</i>	March 2017
Undergraduate Research Award (UGRA) <i>Center for Undergraduate Research, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS</i>	December 2016
International Report Acknowledgement <i>Brain and Mind Research Institute; University of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia</i>	August 2016
Research Experience Program Certification (REP) <i>University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS</i>	May 2016

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Developmental Psychology (PY 212) – 250 students Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.	Spring 2021
Developmental Psychology (PY 212)- 30 Students Instructor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham	Spring 2020
Developmental Psychology (PY 212) – 150 students Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.	Fall 2019
Developmental Disabilities (PY 783)- 30 students Guest Lecturer at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. <i>Title: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</i>	Spring 2018
Seminar in Social Development (PY 712) – 20 Students Guest Lecturer at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. <i>Title: The Dynamics of Family & Parenting Styles</i>	Spring 2018

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Society for Community Research and Action , Student Associate Member	2020
Sibling Leadership Network , Alabama Chapter Member	2019
American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities , Member	2019
Alabama Psychological Association , UAB Chapter Member	2018
Association of University Centers on Disabilities , Member	2018
Society for Research in Child Development , Member	2017
Society for Behavioral Medicine , Member	2016
Nu Rho Psi The International Honor Society in Neuroscience , KU Chapter Member	2015

REFERENCES

Robin Gaines Lanzi, PhD, MPH, Professor and Director of Graduate Program; Department of Health Behavior; School of Public Health (UAB); Co-Director of Behavioral and Community Sciences Core; **Address:** RPHB 227D | 1665 University Boulevard | Birmingham, AL 35294 **P:** 205.975.8071 | rlanzi@uab.edu

Despina Stavrinos, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Psychology, Lifespan Developmental Program Director (The University of Alabama; UAB), **Address:** 916 Building | 1720 Second Avenue South | Birmingham, AL 35294-2916 USA; **P:** 205.934.7861 | **F:** 205.934.2378 | dstavrin@uab.edu

Bama Hager, Ph.D, Program Director of Autism Society of Alabama (ASA); Address: 4260 Cahaba Heights Court Suite 188, Birmingham, AL 35243; **P:** 205.383.1674 | bamah@autism-alabama.org