

ASHLI AKINS

Unfinished; writing in progress



DIMA AMSO

Professor of Psychology, Psychology Department, Columbia University
Director, Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Lab at Columbia, and
Director of the Virtual Lab for Science Innovation & Community Engagement.

Presenting on Day 2 (July 18) in the 3:15 pm session on Developmental
Cognitive Neuroscience and Developmental Science

Dima's research examines the development of attention, executive functions, and memory beginning in infancy. She is particularly interested in how environmental variables shape these trajectories. Recently, her lab has made novel discoveries regarding numerous sophisticated learning systems available to infants. They plan to exploit these discoveries to ask innovative questions about (1) how interactive learning systems in infancy offer plasticity in the presence of risk and opportunity, and in doing so (2) how they are simultaneously shaped by experience.

Dima is also examining the impact of childhood experiences on executive function (EF) development. Working memory (WM) is an EF that allows for maintenance & manipulation of information and thus is relevant to planning, decision-making, & behavioral regulation. Previous work has suggested that family socioeconomic status (SES) may shape WM development, but it's unclear whether those findings reflect true WM differences by SES or whether they reflect how WM is traditionally tested. Dima has been examining the relation between SES & WM in children of 3½-7 years while systematically incorporating goal, reward, and choice into computerized and active play-based WM assessments.

Dima's lab is committed to global partnerships. Jordan houses just >655,000 Syrian refugees; almost 40% are children & almost 1/3 of them (~250,000 children) are not enrolled in formal education. Dima's lab partners with Taghyeer and the We Love Reading (WLR) program, a local Jordanian reading intervention, to support early childhood development. After receiving her BS in Psychology from Tufts, Dima trained in Adele Diamond's lab for 2 years, before going onto Cornell & NYU for her PhD. She served on the faculty of Weil Medical College, Cornell University, and Brown University.



AMY ARNSTEN

Albert E. Kent Professor of Neuroscience, Professor of Psychology, &
Member of Kavli Institute of Neuroscience, Yale University

Her research has led to the successful development of 2 clinical
treatments: Guanfacine for disorders of prefrontal cortex
(like ADHD & autism) & Prazosin for PTSD

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 5:30 session on Cognitive Neuroscience: Prefrontal Cortex

Amy is an international expert on the molecular regulation of higher cortical circuits involving prefrontal cortex (PFC) that make them vulnerable to stress, inflammation, & aging and increase the risk of schizophrenia and Alzheimer's.

She studies the unique molecular mechanisms that govern the higher cortical circuits that subserve cognition, and alterations in them that can lead to cognitive disorders. Amy's lab documented the narrow inverted-U in both dopamine & noradrenergic actions in PFC. She discovered how exposure to uncontrollable stress causes intracellular signaling mechanisms to take PFC "off-line," and how dysregulation of stress signaling pathways with advancing age confers vulnerability to tau pathology (as in Alzheimer's). Her work has identified mechanisms to protect and strengthen PFC, leading to successful translation into 2 treatments currently in clinical use -- the development of Guanfacine (Intuniv™) for the treatment of cognitive disorders, including recent studies treating the cognitive deficits of long-COVID, and Prazosin for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Amy was raised in Maplewood, NJ, received her BA in Neuroscience from Brown University in 1976, and her PhD in Neuroscience from UC-San Diego in 1981. She was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Cambridge University, and then Yale, where she shared an office with Adele Diamond.

Amy is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and recipient of the Goldman-Rakic Prize for Outstanding Research in Cognitive Neuroscience and the NIH Director's Pioneer Award in recognition of her ground-breaking research.



JANSEN AZARIAS-SUZUMOTO

CEO and Co-Founder of Higher Ground

Focused on empowering individuals, families and communities
Takes a multi-generational and holistic approach to REACH,
TRANSFORM and ELEVATE one life at a time

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 11:15 am session on Inspiring and
Empowering Youth: Youth Circus & Higher Ground

Growing up in destitute poverty in the Philippines, Jansen faced severe abuse in his early life. However, his experiences and the support of mentors led him to understand the importance of empowering individuals and communities. Jansen was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, or autism spectrum disorder, which he considers a superpower. This perception of his neurodivergence allows him to draw from his experiences to understand the importance of support and empowerment.

15 years ago, Jansen and his wife, Barbie, started Higher Ground. Together with their teenage stepson, who was experiencing life as a young man without advantage, it became clear to Jansen that the disparities of poverty and trauma existed in his new community. Anchored in supporting disadvantaged youth and single parents, Higher Ground's mission is to empower one life at a time to REACH, TRANSFORM and ELEVATE their community through love and building character.

Higher Ground's focus is on developing executive functions among youth, improving the wellness of families, and making a significant impact in the communities we serve through a multi-generational and holistic approach. By working with schools and communities to create a culture of support and empowerment, Higher Ground is dedicated to making a lasting impact in the lives of those they serve.



EDITH BACHMANN

Promising researcher, first-year student at Wellesley College

Multi-award-winning early scholar

Her first research projects with Adele involve storytelling, story reading, and their impacts on executive functioning.

Presenting on Day 4 (July 20) in the 2:50 session on Programs & Activities to Improve Executive Function

Edith is a 2022 Regeneron Top Scholar, a first-place winner in Behavioral and Social Science at the Westchester Science and Engineering Fair, and third-place winner in Behavioral Science at the 2022 International Science and Engineering Fair. Under the mentorship of Dr. Diamond, Edith is studying the impact of peer storytelling vs. story reading on the executive functions of fourth graders. More specifically, she conducted one of the first studies on peer-to-peer storytelling and story reading as they relate to executive functions. Five pairs of fourth-grade students read or told stories to each other during six weekly interactive video conferencing sessions. Before and after the six weeks, she assessed participants' working memory, inhibitory control, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. She found that both activities may be beneficial, but the skills they benefit may differ. For example, working memory showed more improvement in the story-reading group than in the storytelling group.

Edith's work is informed by her love for reading and her own experience of read-aloud during fourth grade. She finds storytelling and story-reading to be so compelling because they require few materials yet may hold great benefits. Going forward, she would like to continue exploring executive function interventions that are low-cost, accessible, and joyful. She is considering a career in educational research and is especially interested in storytelling and curriculum development. Edith is from Armonk, New York and just finished her first year at Wellesley College.



FATIMAH BAHRAMI

PhD Student, Neuroscience, University of British Columbia

Focused on the effects of martial arts programs on EF and autism
Founder of a start-up program for the rehabilitation of cognitive functions in Iran.

Presenting on Day 4 (July 20) in the 2:50 session on Programs & Activities to Improve Executive Function

Fatimah is studying the effect of an enriched traditional martial arts (TMAs) program on different aspects of children's development including executive functions. Fatimah's interest in TMAs and children's health did not happen by accident. She started karate as a teenager, took part in different championship events, and has instructed karate to children, including those with neurodevelopmental conditions, for many years in Iran. Her previous research showed promising effects of different martial arts on the symptoms of children with autism. She was the founder of the Treata start-up at the Business Development and Entrepreneurship Center of the University of Isfahan. In this start-up unit, her team worked on developing rehabilitation programs for enhancing different functions in humans, including cognitive and motor skills. She was also the founder and director of the Treata sports club, where she offered those programs to the public.

Having been trained in karate, sports sciences, and cognitive neuroscience, Fatimah believes that TMAs, such as traditional karate, inherently contain features that support the whole person. Its different training styles and its philosophy, which consists of 20 precepts, emphasize mindfulness, self-scrutiny, and nurturing the whole person.

In her talk, Fatimah will review the results of her previous studies, present her current research questions, and elaborate on the specific features of TMAs and their potential effects on children's holistic development.



MAHZARIN BANAJI

Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Social Ethics, Psychology Department,
Harvard University
the first Carol K. Pforzheimer Professor at the Radcliffe Institute for
Advanced Study

Studies dissociations between conscious expressions of attitudes & beliefs
about social groups and unconscious, implicit evaluations of those groups,
and the implications of that for individual responsibility & social justice

Presenting on Day 4 (July 20) in the 11:40 am session on Redressing Social Injustices

Mahzarin is from India, where she completed her BA at Nizam College & her MA in Psychology from Osmania University in Hyderabad. She received her PhD from Ohio State & was an NIH postdoctoral fellow at University of Washington. She taught at Yale from 1986-2002, where she was Reuben Post Halleck Professor of Psychology.

In 1995, social psychologists, Mahzarin and Anthony Greenwald, asserted the ground-breaking idea that implicit & explicit memory can apply to social constructs as well. If memories that are not accessible to awareness can influence our actions, then associations not consciously accessible should also influence our attitudes and behavior. The [Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#) is designed to get at such unconscious associations. Since then, their labs have explored hidden biases we all carry from a lifetime of exposure to cultural attitudes about age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, sexuality, disability status, nationality, etc. In 2013, they published the book, [Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People](#), which invites readers to question how much their likes and dislikes and judgments about people's character, abilities, and potential are affected by unconscious biases of which they are unaware. Mahzarin studies this in both adults and children, especially implicit biases in social attitudes & beliefs with regard to race, gender, & sexual orientation that have roots in group membership, relying on behavioral measures, neuroimaging, & computational approaches to analyses of large language corpora.



RADHIKA BAPAT

Cross Cultural Psychologist, PhD University of Leiden, Netherlands
Focussed on understanding the sociocultural contexts that guide my
patients' decision-making, whether it be the choice to comply with a certain
course of treatment or the choice to seek treatment at all

Presenting on Day 1 (July 17) in the 3.35 pm session on
Cultural Contexts of Mental Health Delivery

Radhika has spent twenty years as a cross-cultural psychologist, ten of which she headed a Department of Behavioral Sciences and Mental Health at a 900-bed hospital chain, the largest in the state of Maharashtra, India. The majority of patients during this time were poor; could not afford to travel to the hospital or pay the subsidised consultation fees. Some patients were from marginalised communities, such as dalit farmers and aboriginal migrant labourers. The psychology that she had been taught failed to account for the sociocultural factors that shaped her patients' lives. Instead, local wisdom was regarded as unscientific, and her training relied solely on Western therapeutic models to understand what is normal and abnormal, rational and irrational.

Her learning journey has been to better understand the sociocultural contexts that guide her patients' decision-making, whether it be the choice to comply with a certain course of treatment or the choice to seek treatment at all. She speaks with a social worker who has dedicated her life to educating a nomadic community of fortune-tellers. She meets rice-paddy farmers from a region of Maharashtra that has the highest suicides rates in all of India. She attends a ritual folk dance in Kerala wherein the performers, all of whom belong to castes that have suffered persecution for over seventy generations, are "possessed by Gods" and worshipped by their upper-caste patrons and oppressors. These experiences and others have helped her bridge the gap between science and the models of illness, on one hand, and her patients' faith and models of wellbeing on the other. By doing so, she hopes to dismantle rather than construct barriers for mental health treatment in India.



LIZ BARRETT

A teacher, originally from South Africa

Works with [JUMP Math](#), traveling across Canada, to support professional learning

Recently received the “Partner in Education” Award by [Indspire](#)

Presenting on Day 1 (July 17) in the 11:55 am session on Education

Liz emigrated to Canada in 2002 with her family, met John Mighton, and started doing outreach as a volunteer for JUMP Math. She later joined JUMP Math to support professional learning. (JUMP Math is a research-based, award-winning approach to the teaching of math, based on the belief that all children are capable of succeeding at math. It empower teachers to maximize the abilities of every student to excel in every classroom.)

Her passion for working with Indigenous Peoples takes her to many remote communities in Canada to offer schools and teachers professional learning support – a job she absolutely loves.

Liz has worked to highlight the need for supporting immersion education in Canada and the importance of teaching math in Indigenous languages. JUMP Math recently granted permission to communities to translate its resources into their languages. Liz notes that none of her work would be possible without the communities’ trust, the support of the teachers, and the wonderful Elders who have guided her journey in Canada.

Liz’s award from Indspire is particular impressive because Indspire Awards represent the highest honor the Indigenous community in Canada bestows upon its own people. The stories behind each award are shared in a nationally broadcast celebration each year that showcases the diversity and awesomeness of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Liz will discuss the journey to reclaim Indigenous languages to teach mathematics.



TAL DOTAN BEN-SOUSSAN

PhD, Cognitive Neuroscientist and Biopsychologist

Her pioneering work on the Quadrato Motor Training has led to significant understanding of the neuronal and biological mechanisms mediating cognitive improvement following movement-meditation

Presenting on Day 4 (July 20) in the 3:35 pm session on Programs and Activities to Improve Executive Function

Tal leads international studies on the neurophysiological, molecular, and psychobiological effects of training in children and adults. She has further expanded the understanding of the electrophysiological correlates of consciousness and the impact of different states of consciousness and their related meditation practices, such as focused attention, open monitoring, and non-dual states. Her recent review on the electrophysiological correlates of different states of the self, in relation to different types of meditation and higher states consciousness, emphasizes the importance of movement for accessing the embodied-self anchored in the here and now, while non-dual practices of transcending the self, allow a greater state of empathy and connection with the other. In her talk she will give several examples for these studies, and how one can transcend to a more unified, empathic state, characterized by slower EEG brain waves.

Tal serves as an editor and reviewer for several renowned journals in topics related to Consciousness and self-awareness (e.g., a recent [Special Issue](#) on this topic); Human Development; and the Neurophysiology of Silence. She has co-created several international conferences integrating theoretical, methodological, and practical approaches on various topics, such as the [International Conference on the Neurophysiology of Silence \(ICONS\)](#), [LogicaMente](#) and Neuro-education. She has dedicated over 20 years to examining the underlying mechanisms allowing cognitive and emotional wellbeing and sharing this knowledge with teachers, parents, and educators. She is also a co-founder of the [Youth of Light Project](#), bridging Israeli and Palestinians. In collaboration with Adele Diamond and Patrizio Paoletti, she has published several [educational kits](#) promoting neuroplasticity and Peace. She lives with her family in Assisi, Italy.

RICHARD BIEGEL

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JUDITH BLACK

"For a wicked good time, see Judith Black.... Black's lively presentation is more of a one woman show than a session of storytelling." – The Boston Globe

Recipient of highest honest honor a storyteller can receive, The Oracle Circle of Excellence, from the National Storytelling Network.

Presenting on Day 4 (July 20) in the 11 am session. "Storyteller Extraordinaire"

Judith is a professional storyteller, story-maker, & teacher/coach with an international following, who has been using story to motivate, humanize, entertain, and teach wide-ranging audience around the world for 35 years. Originally trained as an early childhood educator, she leapt from the classroom to stage after training at [London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts](#). During her 24-year tenure as an adjunct Professor at the Lesley Univ. Grad. School, she developed and implemented instruction in the use of storytelling to extend cognitive, curricular, social, and emotional objectives in educational settings. As a storyteller, Judith tries to embody each character in a story to better know how they feel, what they will do, what they will say, and why. *"When I allow my intellect to make a choice for them, it always backfires."*

Judith has produced many CDs and won a variety of awards, including the highest honor a storyteller can receive: being inducted into the [National Storytelling Network's](#) Circle of Excellence. Her work has been featured at the [Smithsonian Institution](#), [Montreal Comedy Festival](#), [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#),

[National Museum of American History](#), and 7 times at the [National Storytelling Festival](#), and has been commissioned by the [U.S. Department of the Interior](#), [National Public Radio \(NPR\)](#), the [Disney Institute](#), religious institutions, and non-profit organizations to create original stories that strengthen their respective missions.

Judith and Adele met when Adele was a PhD student at Harvard and Judith was developing and performing at the first adult-oriented storytelling concert series in the US. Many years later, Adele called Judith, inviting her to present at a Brain Development & Learning Conference. *"But Adele,"* Judith stammered, *"I am not a neuroscientist!"* *"Oh yes you are,"* Adele replied, *"You plant new images in people's minds."* Judith was the star of the meeting.

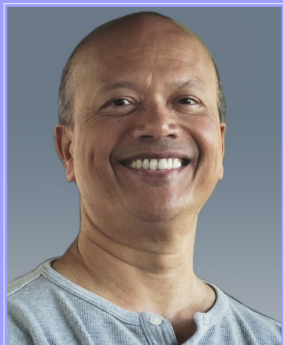


ELENA BODROVA

Drs. Leong and Bodrova started Tools of the Mind in 1996 to close the achievement gap and support the development of play and self-regulation. Tools of the Mind gives teachers the tools to ensure every child becomes a successful learner, developing the underlying cognitive, social, and emotional skills needed to reach their highest potential.

Presenting on Day 1 (July 17) in the 10:55 am session on Education

Tools of the Mind is designed to close the achievement gap and support the development of self-regulation using activities based on Vygotsky's theory of learning and development. The result is a unique PreK and Kindergarten program that is both curriculum and professional development. Tools serves over 40,000 children a year in PreK and K classrooms in public schools, Head Start, and other early childhood programs across the United States with classrooms in Canada and Chile. *Tools* teachers learn the Vygotskian approach to learning and make-believe play is a leading activity along with a set of playful learning activities for math and literacy with embedded executive functions practice. The *Tools* curriculum creates a unique community of learners where children support each other's learning as much as the teacher. Peer scaffolding and these unique multi-level learning activities ensure intellectual equity of content. Children learn how to learn—how their own memory, attention, and inhibitory control influence learning and motivation. Recent RCTs show the power of this approach in developing executive functions, closing the achievement gap, and promoting teacher efficacy. School data collected yearly by districts show that Tools children meet or exceed state and national standards for literacy and math and goals for self-regulation and social-emotional development.



BIDYUT BOSE

Founder and Executive Director, Niroga Institute, Oakland, CA.

Their core values are Empathy; Equity; Empowerment. Current research interests include the neurobiology and epigenetics of traumatic stress, strategies for positive child and youth development.

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 9.00 am session on
Mindfulness and Stress Resilience

Bidyut was taught yoga and meditation since childhood, and then trained as a computer scientist. His organization, the Niroga Institute (www.niroga.org) is a non-profit that serves thousands of children and youth annually who are dealing with chronic stress, as well as primary and secondary trauma, in a variety of settings such as inner-city schools and alternative schools, juvenile halls and jails. The institute develops and teaches strategies for positive child and youth development, and the development of cost-effective architectures for lasting social transformation. Bidyut presents Transformative Life/Leadership Skills (TLS: yoga, breathing techniques and meditation) internationally, and also conducts TLS trainings for hundreds of educators, mental health professionals, social workers, law enforcement officials and criminal justice professionals annually, helping them with stress management, self-care, and healing from vicarious trauma. Many of our children come to school not ready to learn, especially those exposed to chronic stress and trauma in their lives. Many adults around our children are also subjected to toxic stress, while absorbing vicarious trauma. And yet we often rush to teach our children, without taking the time to heal ourselves or those we serve. In this interactive presentation, Dr. Bose will explore the impact of chronic stress and trauma on brain and behavior, and he will demonstrate the power and potential of dynamic mindfulness practices that can profoundly transform the brain-behavior connection, affecting everything we do.



SILVIA BUNGE

Professor, Department of Psychology & Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute,
University of California - Berkeley

Her research utilizes cutting-edge neuroimaging technology to better understand how education and demographic factors shape higher cognitive processes such as executive functions (EFs)

Presenting on Day 2 (July 18) in the 5:30 session on Executive Functions

A leader in developmental cognitive neuroscience, Silvia directs the Building Blocks of Cognition Laboratory at UC-Berkeley. There, she researches cognitive and neural processes that support higher cognitive processes such as reasoning, memory, and EFs more generally in humans. Her lab designs experiments to isolate some of these core processes. She also studies how these processes mature over childhood and adolescence, and how they are shaped by education and demographic factors – for better and for worse.

Silvia's lab leverages behavioral, brain imaging, and eye-tracking methods, and experimental, cross-sectional, and longitudinal designs. She is engaged in a large study tracking the neural changes that underlie the emergence of high-level cognition across the ages of 6-19 years.

Silvia is also studying experience-dependent brain plasticity in young adults, examining whether and how changes in mental habits can alter brain function.

She has received numerous grants and awards, both in the United States and abroad. She is an elected Fellow of the Association for Psychological Sciences and the Society of Experimental Psychologists, and the recipient of a Jacobs Foundation Advanced Career Research Fellowship and an Alexander von Humboldt Research Award.

Silvia also recently co-authored a much-needed textbook in (with Heather Bortfeld), *Fundamentals of Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).



CAROL-ANNE BUSH

An Expert in student, teacher, & parent mentorship, stakeholder communication, curriculum design, & whole-school strategy & steering. After a long teaching career in the US, UK, & South Africa, has held many leadership roles including several Assistant Headships.

Presenting on Day 1 (July 17) in the 11:55 am session on Education

Carol-Anne's work is grounded in K-12 education experience spanning 3 continents and >3 decades. Having spent over 20 years in elementary and high school classrooms, and 13 years in elementary administration, Carol's experience and training have given her insight into how to meet the needs of exceptional learners in regular classrooms. In 2022, she partnered with Laurie Faith and Peg Dawson to co-author the book, *Executive Function Skills in the Classroom: Overcoming Barriers, Building Strategies* (Guilford Press, 2022). Using case studies from 30 practicing teachers & administrators and plenty of research, the book shows educators from kindergarten through Grade 8 how to teach children to manage executive functions (EFs) such as attention, time management, and organization.

Carol-Anne is currently writing another teacher-facing work with Adele Diamond and Carol-Anne Bush – a highly practical resource for early years' teachers who wish to integrate foundational EF support into their daily pedagogy. Organized around 10 playful characters, it should support students' development of EFs, self-awareness, self-compassion, and a capable and strategic mindset. For teachers and parents, it should provide slow, steady, applied learning about how to assist the development of strong EFs in the early years.

Carol-Anne is an EF coach in San Francisco. She has training as an ADHD educator from the Professional Education Systems Institute as well as coach training from Peg Dawson, whom she continues to collaborate with at the yearly Dawson & Guare training event. Carol continuously works with adults, children, and other coaches to learn about the impact of EFs on performance and develop supportive and compensatory approaches.

Her website is: www.mulberrycoaching.com.



CALIFORNIA DANCE INSTITUTE (CDI)

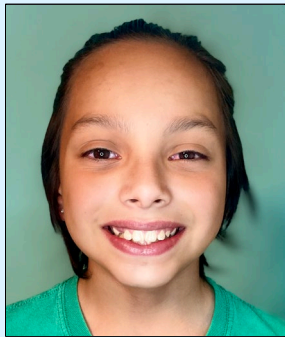
Presenting on Day 2 (July 18) in 12:30 pm session on Inspiring and Empowering Youth

CDI is an in-school & after-school non-profit arts education program that teaches life & learning skills through dance. CDI's mission is to motivate children to develop a personal standard of excellence by instilling confidence, discipline, & focus through the rigor & joy of dance.

CDI's athletic, high energy dance style appeals to all children, including those with special needs. CDI's child-friendly choreography has been carefully tailored to allow all of our students to experience success.

Founder and Director Carole Valleskey, formerly a principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, started CDI in 2001. CDI has served >21,000 children. Currently, it's serving >1,200 children in public schools in under-resourced neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. In its 22 year history, CDI has served over 21,000 Los Angeles area children. CDI is an associate of the National Dance Institute (NDI), founded in 1976 by Jacques d'Amboise.

See <http://www.californiadanceinstitute.org/dr-adele-diamond-information.html>



PICHÍN ACUÑA

Pichín is a 5th grader at Eagle Rock Elementary. He enjoys reading and learning about Greek Mythology, mastering the art of Aikido, and hiking. He relaxes by hanging out with his black cat, Raven. But most of all, he loves CDI and all his dance friends!



ALONDRA ESQUIVEL

Alondra is an 11-year-old 6th grader at Eagle Rock Elementary school. Her first experience in CDI was in 1st grade, when her class was fortunate enough to participate in the big End of the Year CDI show. I loved it! Next she had the opportunity to join CDI in 4th grade, eventually moving up to the SWAT team, followed by the Celebration Team. Each year brings different challenges as movements get more and more complex. Throughout it all, CDI has been a fun, challenging, and exciting journey!



ORLANDO GABRIEL GRILLO

Orlando has a wide variety of interests including musical theater, dance, Dungeons & Dragons, reading and writing fiction, cooking, drawing, languages, math, science, engineering, and karate. He has passed 9 belt promotions and currently wears a blue belt in Tang Soo Do. This August, Orlando will begin 6th grade at the Portola Highly Gifted Magnet in Los Angeles. He would like to thank his family for their incredible support and also gives much thanks to Carole, Susan, Susanna, and the CDI team for a truly life-changing experience!



ERIN MADDOX

Erin is 10 years old and in 5th grade at Eagle Rock Elementary in Los Angeles. She started with CDI when she was in 4th grade and loved it. She was excited when she was invited to join the after school SWAT team as well. Being part of the SWAT performance at the Ebell Theater was the highlight of her year. Erin loves dancing and thinks it makes her a more creative person. She also feels that it gives her more confidence. She is so grateful to be a part of CDI.



PEDRO REYES

Pedro is 10 years old. He is a 4th grader at Carson Gore Academy of Environmental Studies. He discovered dancing during the pandemic back in 2020. He and his sister love dancing and they danced together all through lockdown. Pedro loves dancing, baseball, and soccer. He's a Dodger fan and loves going to Dodger stadium with his family.



AISHA SHAMASUNDER-KOPPULA

Aisha is a rising 6th grader at Eagle Rock Elementary. In addition to her participation in CDI, she is also learning a classical Indian dance form called Kathak. She lives in Los Angeles with her parents, elder sibling, and younger puppy. Gryffindor all the way.



SUSAN GLADSTONE

Susan came to CDI from a career in professional dance, both ballet (Pacific Northwest Ballet & Ballet British Columbia) and Broadway (Phantom of the Opera). Susan never imagined herself teaching dance. She stumbled upon the National Dance Institute (NDI) and Carole Valleskey, a former Joffrey dancer, was starting an associate program in California and invited Jacques D'Amboise (NDI's founder/artistic director) & master teachers to conduct a teacher training in LA. Susan was blown away. Prior to watching NDI methodology in action, Susan knew little about the positive impact this style of dance and music education could have on children, and was especially struck by how much joy the students were experiencing while learning, and the level of personal success that NDI was enabling them to achieve. Susan began teaching with CDI in 2005 and hasn't looked back.



BJ CASEY

Professor of Neuroscience in the Department of Neuroscience and Behavior at Barnard College - Columbia University.

Member of The Justice Collaboratory at Yale Law School

Pioneered the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to examine the developing human brain particularly during adolescence.

Presenting on Day 2 (July 18) at 10:10 Restoring Justice to Criminal Justice

BJ is the leading expert on adolescent brain development and self-control. She has proposed a prominent model of adolescent neurobiology known as “the imbalance model,” a foundational theory for many developmental neuroscience studies, which posits that the brain’s limbic system, associated with reward and emotion, develops earlier than prefrontal regions responsible for self-regulation and self-control. Given that, adolescents are especially sensitive to rewards, to threats, and to their peers. The presence of peers or emotional contexts can cause sharp declines in the decision-making performance of adolescents. Recently BJ has gotten interested in the implications of this for legal proceedings where youth are on trial.

BJ’s scientific discoveries have been published in over 225 journal articles including in *Science*, *Nature Medicine*, *Nature Neuroscience*, and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. She has been cited over 65,000 times and highlighted by *NPR*, *PBS*, the *New York Times*, and *National Geographic*. She has received many honors and awards including the Association for Psychological Science Lifetime Achievement Mentor Award, the American Psychological Association Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award, the Cognitive Neuroscience Society George A. Miller award and she has been elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Science.

BJ has served on scientific advisory boards including the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Law and Neuroscience, the NIMH Advisory Council, and the National Academy of Sciences committees on *Assessing Juvenile Justice Reform* and *The Science of Adolescent Risk Taking*.



MICHELE CHABAN

Matriarch, Founder (18 years ago), & Former Director of the Applied Mindful Meditation community (AMM-MIND), University of Toronto (U of T)

Also Founding Director of the Temmy Latner Centre for Palliative Care, Family Counseling Programs at Mt. Sinai Hospital, Toronto

Presenting on Day 2 (July 18) in the Cabaret setting which begins at 6:45 pm

AMM-MIND was a catalyst in shifting mindfulness from primarily being a clinical intervention for mental health to applying the practice to cultivate social change. AMM-MIND has trained 1,000s in this applied version of contemplative science. Michele continues to teach in the AMM-MIND program and to mentor generations of instructors.

During her time at U of T, Michele was simultaneously cross-appointed to the Faculty of Social Work, School of Public Health, Dept. of Family & Community Medicine, and Centre for Bio-ethics. She taught interdisciplinary healthcare and brought humanities-based intent into all interactions.

The impetus for much of Michele’s work was a car accident - a drunk driver hit her car head on when Michele was 23. The resultant spinal injuries caused catastrophic loss, pain, and suffering. In the 49 years since, Michele has had several spinal surgeries including one in 2022 that lasted >11 hours. Michele has had to laboriously learn to walk again 5 different times. In 2021, it was determined that Michele's spine had been collapsed, pressing on spinal nerves, for years & years during which Michele worked full-time at U of T & was a national speaker. Asked how she endured all those years with such pain & loss of function, Michele replied, "Mindfulness & mindfulness meditation." Mindfulness taught Michele how to drive her attention first to, then away from, the pain - to see it as it was, then take her attention elsewhere through attention, intention, & attitude. This convinced her that each of us has the capacity to train our minds & awaken the potential that lives within & beyond our body. She has dedicated her life to helping people discover that. It was the foundation of her work in end of life care. As a change agent, Michele worked in person-centered, family-focused care with people who had AIDS or cancer and were dying. Drawing from evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence, Michele helped shift mindsets about how people know, see, purpose and "are" in the world as they are living and dying.



EVELINE CRONE

Professor of Developmental Neuroscience in Society, Erasmus University, Rotterdam

Award-winning scientist, highly engaged with societal partners and youth across several projects

Author of the popular book, [*The Adolescent Brain*](#)

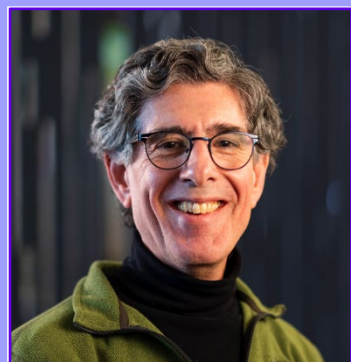
Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 2:50 pm session on Social-Emotional Development: Human Flourishing

Eveline's Lab, called "*Society, Youth and Neuroscience Connected*," examines the psychological and neural processes involved in self-regulation and social development from birth to adulthood, with a special focus on adolescence.

Her research relies heavily on neuroscience and translational approaches, involving societal partners and youth in all aspects. One of her special interests involves enrichment of cognitive and social experiences of children and adolescents using longitudinal, training, and intervention designs. She currently leads the 10-year "*Growing Up Together in Society (GUTS) Gravitation Program*," a large-scale multi-site study of adolescent neural and social development.

In addition to her scientific work, Eveline also communicates her findings to the general public. In 2018 she published the revision of the book, *The Adolescent Brain*, for a wide audience; >100,000 copies have been sold and it has been translated into 6 languages. In the book, Eveline explains the influence of brain development on adolescents' learning, risk-taking, social relationships, and friendships.

Eveline is a member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy. She is Vice President for Social Sciences and Humanities of the Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC), the European Commission's flagship program for excellence in science. Eveline has also been awarded many prestigious research grants and recognitions including the Spinoza Award (the highest recognition in Dutch science) for her research on the adolescent brain. She was one of the youngest recipients ever of that award.



RICHARD DAVIDSON

William James and Vilas Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Founder, Director, and Chief Visionary, [*Healthy Minds Innovations*](#)

Advocate of, and a leading researcher on, meditation and related contemplative practices.

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 2:50 pm session on Social-Emotional Development

Richie received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in Psychology in 1976. From the earliest days of his career, he has been interested in one fundamental question – why is it that certain people are vulnerable to life's slings and arrows while others seem more resilient, and how can we help to nudge people along this continuum of resilience?

In 1992, his Holiness the Dalai Lama challenged Richie to use the tools of modern neuroscience to investigate not only anxiety, fear, and depression but also kindness and compassion. This was a "wake-up call" that started him on a path towards a focus on well-being and healthy qualities of mind. One of the founders of contemplative science, Richie has been a Board Member of Mind & Life since its inception.

In 2014, Richard founded the non-profit, *Healthy Minds Innovations*, which translates science into tools to cultivate & measure well-being. Research in his laboratory focuses on cortical & subcortical substrates of emotion, emotional style, & affective disorders, as well as methods to promote human flourishing, using methods such as quantitative electrophysiology, positron emission tomography, & functional magnetic resonance imaging.

Richie has published almost 600 articles, chapters, and reviews and edited 14 books. He is the author (with Sharon Begley) of the book, *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*, and co-author (with Danny Goleman) of the book, *Altered Traits*. Richie has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine and appointed to the Governing Board of UNESCO's Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP).



JACKIE DAVIS

Youth Circus education pioneer, teacher, scholar, advocate, and author.
Founding Executive Director of the Flying Gravity Circus.

Prior to that, she was a professional mime, having studied with Marcel Marceau, and performed over 4,000 shows at Disney World's EPCOT Center.

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 11:15 am session on Inspiring and Empowering Youth: Youth Circus & Higher Ground

Jackie began her career in youth circus as the movement education teacher at the Pine Hill (now High Mowing) Middle School in Wilton, NH, where in 1996 she created a circus arts curriculum. In 1999, she founded the [Flying Gravity Circus](#) (for which she remained Executive Director for >12 years) to enrich young people's lives through circus arts training, entwining performance and education, and including community workshops to help other schools start their own circus education programs. In 2007, Jackie was named Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year in NH. Jackie was also a founding member of the [American Youth Circus Organization](#) (AYCO), which honored her in 2020 with the American Circus Educators Association Excellence in Education Award.

Impressed by the positive impact of circus on her students, Jackie went on to pursue a M.Ed. degree in Human Development & Psychology from Harvard's Graduate School of Education. Adele Diamond then invited her to pursue a PhD with her at UBC to research the benefits of circus arts on children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, for which Jackie received a prestigious Killam Doctoral Scholarship.

Youth circus builds character, expands community, and inspires youth of all ages, cultures, abilities and backgrounds. It helps them develop confidence; learn to cooperate, respect, and trust one another; defy social barriers; and succeed in life. Many arts or sports activities have either a gender or race bias. Circus combines arts and sports aspects, involving kids who might not normally consider doing anything or attempting anything physical. Whoever you are and wherever you are from, there is some circus skill that you can accomplish because circus is an art made up of a variety of skills.



RENA DEL PIEVE GOBBI

PhD Student focused on the intersection of art-making and justice
Interdisciplinary photographer, film-maker, contemporary artist
interested in using art to empower marginalized lives and tell important stories about humanity

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 7:25 pm short talks session

Rena graduated twice from Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECUAD). She first attained a BFA and then went back to attain a Master of Applied Art in 2011. Her thesis, *The Transmutation of Visceral Desecration: I made a film to contextualize marginalized women, sex-trade, murder and the urban environment*, is about the missing and murdered women of the Downtown Eastside in Vancouver, British Columbia. The accompanying 35mm film, *reinsertion*, resulted in her receiving the first-place graduate student award in Fine Art.

Rena's department at UBC is Interdisciplinary Studies with supervisors in psychiatry and education. Her art making is an integral part of her dissertation research. Her PhD research inquires whether people with mental health disability can create art to aid in their success despite stigma and other significant barriers to employment and education. Rena is currently researching her life and art practice in an autoethnographic and a/r/tographic dissertation about her experiences of mental health disability. She is telling a story about herself in order to tell a story about her people. Rena's a/r/tographic works include a series of six purple jumpsuits (about finding courage), composite photographs of her daily dinners (about resilience), and a project about depression in which she turns her duvet into a quilt by photographing it and printing it onto fabric.

Rena is also involved in peer support for students with mental health disabilities.

DON DRUIN

Unfinished; writing in progress



SILVIA DUBOVOY

Director of Training, Montessori Institute of San Diego
who developed an Inclusive Education Course
Consultant to the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI)
board for three decades

Presenting on Day 3 (July 19) in the 12:10 session on
Early Child Development

Silvia has a B.A. from International College in Los Angeles, as well as an M.A. and a Ph.D. in Psychology from Universidad de Barcelona, Spain. Silvia has worked as a teacher trainer in Mexico, Canada, Argentina, Costa Rica, Spain, and the U.S. for more than 40 years. As a lecturer, she has given workshops and seminars all over the world.

For the past 10 years, Silvia was the Montessori Instructor of the Master in Montessori Pedagogy from 0-6 years at Universidad de Vic, Spain, a faculty member of the University of San Diego, and an associate professor at Loyola University in Maryland. She worked closely with Dr. Carl R. Rogers, a renowned humanistic psychologist who heavily influences her everyday work. Silvia continues to consult for various Montessori projects, including the San Diego public school system.

Silvia has been an AMI member of the Scientific Pedagogy Committee and an alternate AMI representative for the United Nations. She also served on the AMI-USA Board from 1995 to 2001 and in the Consultation Committee for 15 years. Silvia lives in La Jolla, California, where she keeps learning and working every day while enjoying the company of her children, grandchildren, and great granddaughter.