



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities December 2022

President's Message



Dear CLD Colleagues,

I hope everyone had a chance to rest and catch up on life after the exciting 2022 international conference on learning disabilities in Richmond, Virginia. This year's conference was one of my favorites. Not only were we engaged in deep

learning and discussion with Dr. Asha Jitendra's lecture but also critical reflection about our work from a historical perspective after listening to Dr. Kathleen King Thorius. As I had mentioned before, this work is critical and it must come with reflexive growth, collaboration, and from critical perspectives as we continue the work to lift the voices of traditionally marginalized communities and build welcoming spaces. Our diversity of thought and scholarly work was, and continues to be, important not only for our field and research but also for practitioners.

It was with great excitement that practitioner-focused sessions were included this year. I want to thank Dr. Margaret Flores for her vision and work in crafting such a diverse array of sessions and an overall stimulating and engaging conference. A big standing ovation for our Conference Planning Committee co-chairs, Drs. Maria Peterson-Ahmad and Vicki Luther, as well as our executive director, Linda Nease, as they have worked tirelessly over the past few months planning and implementing the conference. Most importantly, I want to thank all the presenters and conference participants for sharing their work and learning from one another. We look forward to seeing everyone again soon at the inaugural CLD Spring Virtual Practitioner-Focused Conference on March 25th and April 4th. The virtual spring conference is completely free for CLD members! Please make sure your membership is up to date so you can enjoy another great learning opportunity. Of course, we will also look forward

to seeing you in Denver, Colorado, in October 2023. Conference proposals will open January 2023 and will close promptly mid-February 2023.

In the meantime, we hope you continue your engagement and share your voice with the rest of the membership by joining one of our many committees. If you want to join one or more, or simply learn more about the great work they do, [please click here](#). Also, if you are interested in sharing your work on our website, we welcome manuscripts for inclusion in *LD Forum* and for the Research to Practice Corner.

As we continue to support individuals with learning disabilities, please know that your vision, voice, and work are for the growth of our organization. Take care and see you all soon.

Brenda L. Barrio
CLD President

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Candidates for the Position of Vice President on the Executive Committee of the Council for Learning Disabilities

The Nominations and Elections Committee of the Council for Learning Disabilities is pleased to announce two highly qualified candidates for the position of vice president of the Council for Learning Disabilities, to be elected in the spring of 2023. Below please find brief biographies for each of the two candidates (presented alphabetically by last name) as well as a statement of their goals for the Council for Learning Disabilities if elected.



Dr. Kathleen Pfannenstiel

American Institutes for Research

Dr. Kathleen L. Pfannenstiel is senior researcher at American Institutes for Research and provides technical assistance and professional development to states and school districts with an emphasis on improving results for students with disabilities. Dr. Pfannenstiel is the principal investigator for an Office of Special Education Programs model demonstration grant. She works with middle school general and special educators to increase the use of evidence-based practices in mathematics to promote better outcomes for students in special education. Currently, she also serves as the co-lead of the Evidence-based Practices for Teaching and Learning cross-state learning collaborative for the National Center on Systemic Improvement. Dr. Pfannenstiel also serves as a content specialist for the IDEA Data Center. In this role she collaborates with center liaisons to provide support to state education agencies (SEAs). Dr. Pfannenstiel has taught undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in special education at the University of Texas, Texas State University, and Southwest University. She has

also taught in public schools in Illinois and Texas at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Dr. Pfannenstiel earned a doctorate in special education from the University of Texas at Austin, with an emphasis on learning disabilities and behavior disorders. She also has a master's degree in education psychology from the University of Texas at Austin and a bachelor's degree in special education high incidence disabilities from Northern Illinois University, DeKalb.

Dr. Pfannenstiel has been very active in CLD and has served on the board of trustees as a committee chair since 2012. If elected as vice president, her goals include

- leveraging CLD events, such as the annual conference, to decrease the research to practice gap;
- supporting efforts to increase membership by encouraging more student chapters, supporting early career and mid-career educators and professors, and promoting possible partnerships with other organizations; and
- supporting the committees within CLD so that it is recognized as a leading national organization for the most up-to-date research, resources, and advocacy for individuals with learning disabilities across the lifespan.



Dr. Apryl Poch

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Dr. Apryl L. Poch is an assistant professor of special education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the current editor of *LD Forum*, the newsletter of the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD). She started attending CLD as a doctoral student at the University of Missouri and as a member of Cohort 3 of the Leadership Academy. Dr. Poch has participated as a member of several CLD committees, including membership, finance, bylaws, communications, and as a liaison to the leadership development committee, and she has served as a reviewer of conference proposals. Dr. Poch also serves as an editorial board consulting editor for *Learning Disability Quarterly*, editorial board reviewer for *Intervention in School and Clinic*, and as a mentor to a Leadership Academy scholar.

Dr. Poch's research is focused on supporting the written expression needs of adolescents with learning disabilities and the instruction these students receive in writing, as well as teachers' and students' knowledge and beliefs about writing.

As vice president of CLD, Dr. Poch will be committed to fostering the use of research to (a) enhance effective and equitable instructional supports for individuals with learning disabilities and their families, (b) build opportunities for collaborative partnerships within CLD for all members, and (c) develop stakeholders' moral, ethical, and legal responsibilities when it comes to supporting students with learning disabilities. Together may we continue to look backwards on those who have helped to shape our field and continue to build a legacy for supporting students with learning disabilities and their families. Thank you in advance for your support!

2022–2023 Election Information for the Vice President of the Council for Learning Disabilities

This spring, the Nominations and Elections committee will oversee elections for the position of Vice President of the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD). The Vice President is elected into the presidential line of CLD, serving for one year in each of the following positions: (a) Vice President, (b) President-Elect, (c) President, and (d) Immediate Past President. In the role of Vice President, the elected candidate shall:

- 1) *Serve in the President's place and with the President's authority in case of absence or disability of the President and President-Elect,*
- 2) *Assist the President and President-Elect in the planning and preparing of the plan of operation, charges to committees, and annual budget,*
- 3) *Assist the President and perform such other duties as may be assigned to the office,*

- 4) *Serve as member of the Bylaws and Policies Committee, and*
- 5) *Serve as the program chair for the following year's conference.*

Ballots for the election of the Vice President will be disseminated electronically to all active members of CLD. Ballots will be disseminated by January 15, 2023, and voting will close on February 1, 2023. Election results will be verified by the immediate past president and two other members of the council prior to notification of candidates. Results of the election will be published in the April 2023 issue of *LD Forum*. If you have any questions about the election process, please contact Dr. Joseph Morgan, Immediate Past President, at joseph.morgan@unlv.edu.

AmazonSmile Announcement

How many of you are frequent Amazon shoppers? How would you like to continue shopping and know that you are supporting CLD every time you shop, at no cost to you? Now you can with AmazonSmile! When you shop AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to CLD! Plus, you do not need to be a member of CLD to identify it as the charitable organization, so please feel free to share with family and friends!

Add CLD to your AmazonSmile:

1. Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser with your Amazon credentials.
2. From your desktop, go to **Your Account** from the navigation at the top of any page and then select the option to **Select your AmazonSmile Charity** (under **Other Programs**). Or, from your mobile browser, choose **Select Your AmazonSmile Charity** (under **Other Programs**) from the options at the bottom of the page.
3. Select **Search** and type in **Council for Learning Disabilities** as your charitable organization.

4. Bookmark smile.amazon.com so you can see your generated donations to the Council for Learning Disabilities each time you shop at Amazon.

Change Your Current AmazonSmile Charitable Organization to CLD:

1. Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser.
2. From your desktop, go to **Your Account** from the navigation at the top of any page and then select the option to **Change your AmazonSmile Charity** (under **Other Programs**). Or, from your mobile browser, select **Change your AmazonSmile Charity** (under **Other Programs**) from the options at the bottom of the page.
3. Select **Search** and type in **Council for Learning Disabilities** as your new charitable organization.
4. Bookmark smile.amazon.com so you can see your generated donations to the Council for Learning Disabilities each time you shop at Amazon.

Leadership Development Committee Awards

Teachers of the Year

One of the highlights of the CLD International Conference is celebrating the careers of our Teacher of the Year recipients. We celebrated three Teachers of the Year at the 44th conference in Richmond, Virginia. These teachers continue to demonstrate a commitment to students with learning disabilities, are individuals devoted to lifelong learning, and extend service to their communities.



Schuyler Beecher, MEd, (Texas Chapter) is a special education teacher in Coppell, Texas. Schuyler graduated from the University of North Texas with her bachelor's degree in behavior analysis and her master's degree in special education with alternative certification. Along with

teaching, she is currently continuing her studies as a doctoral candidate at Texas Woman's University, studying innovative ways to educate and prepare pre-service special education teachers. Schuyler is passionate about supporting students with learning disabilities and creating an inclusive educational environment for all students. In addition, she is actively involved in the Texas CLD chapter and CLD.



Sierra Chavis, EdS, (Virginia Chapter) has an EdS in educational school leadership from Old Dominion University and a master's degree in special education. She dedicates her career to advocating for equitable and inclusive education and mentoring new teachers in the field of special

education. While motivating her students to be the best versions of themselves, Mrs. Chavis instills the values of courage, empathy, and compassion in her students. Mrs. Chavis is active in several organizations, including as a board member

for the Disability Law Center, Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, and the Virginia CLD chapter.



Kristy Klein, MA, (Colorado Chapter) has worked with students with disabilities for over 25 years. She earned a bachelor of science degree from Brigham Young University and a master of arts degree in education at the University of Phoenix. She has a deep passion for educating and advocating for stu-

dents with specific learning disabilities and is a driving force in working to educate others in the education field, providing general education teachers and administrators tools to deepen their understanding of students who have a specific learning disability. She works tirelessly mentoring teachers and acts as a master teacher and leader.

Floyd G. Hudson Service Award



The Floyd G. Hudson Service Award is presented to an individual who exemplifies leadership and service outside of the classroom in the field of learning disabilities. This award commemorates Dr. Floyd G. Hudson, a professor at the University of Kansas, who was a leader in the early

years of CLD. This year's recipient is **Jessica Toste, PhD**, associate professor in the Department of Special Education at The University of Texas at Austin. Her research is focused on methods for intensifying reading interventions for students with learning disabilities, and her work is funded by the Institute of Education Sciences. Dr. Toste is an award-winning professor and deeply committed to service in support of schools, teachers, and students with disabilities.

Congratulations to all of this year's award winners!

Have a Question About Research?

Do you have a question about research that you would like to have answered by an experienced CLD researcher? Drop us an email at AskACLDResearcher@cldinternational.org, and we'll do our best to find answers for you. We welcome questions related to theory, methodology, and logistics, including the challenges of conducting research in schools. Your questions can be specific and technical, related to your

own project, or more generally seeking advice as you begin your career as a researcher. Once we receive your question, we will provide a response or connect you with someone who has expertise in that area. Additionally, we will prepare a quarterly summary of common questions and answers that will be published on our website and here in *LD Forum*.

Leadership Development Committee Updates

The Leadership Development Committee conducted the Leadership Institute the day before the 44th Council for Learning Disabilities conference in Richmond, Virginia. Twelve doctoral scholars spent the day networking and receiving guidance on developing research lines, publishing, and entering the job market well prepared. These twelve will now be eligible for Leadership Academy 12 in spring of 2023.

Sylvia Blair Barrows Payne, *The University of Texas at Austin*

Jenna Basile, *George Mason University*

Schuyler Beecher, *Texas Woman's University*

Bess Casey Wilke, *University of Minnesota*

Jenna Gersib, *University of Texas at Austin*

Emily Johns, *University of Missouri*

Qingli Lei, *University of Missouri*

Nora Jane McKenney, *George Mason University*

Karen Marie Omohundro, *George Mason University*

Josue Otarola, *University of Maryland*

Emma Shanahan, *University of Minnesota*

Michelle Squitieri, *Lehigh University*

Leadership Academy 11 was announced at the 44th Council for Learning Disabilities conference in Richmond, Virginia. This newest Academy of future leaders in the field of learning disabilities and within CLD have each been assigned a mentor to work with them throughout the year. In their second year of the Leadership Academy, they will work together on a project. Members of Leadership Academy 11 include the following individuals:



Dr. Mona Calhoun is an associate professor and chair of the Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Health Information Management Programs at Coppin State University. She holds a PhD in psychometrics from Morgan State University. Dr. Calhoun has professional experience and interests in assessment and evaluation, data analysis, survey and instrument development, the use of universal and inclusive design for teaching and learning, health-care delivery systems, and the management and use of patient data. Her research interests are in diversity, equity, inclusion, and accommodations provided to students with learning disabilities in post-secondary education.



Dr. Danielle Feeney is an assistant professor of instruction in special education at Ohio University. She holds a BS in early childhood education from Kent State University and an MEd in special education from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She earned a PhD in special

education from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, with areas of expertise in learning disabilities, emotional behavioral disorders, and teaching English as a second language. Her research interests include humanizing pedagogy in both PreK–12 and higher education, and self-monitoring interventions to improve academic and behavioral outcomes.

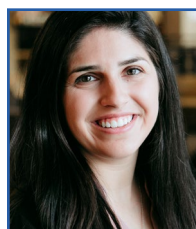


Sarah King is a doctoral candidate at the University of Texas at Austin. She received her BA in English literature and elementary education from Southern Methodist University and her MEd in special education from the University of Texas at Austin. Prior to returning to UT

Austin to pursue her doctorate, Sarah taught special education at the elementary and middle school levels in Dallas and Austin. Her research interests include the identification of mathematics interventions for culturally and linguistically diverse learners with learning disabilities or mathematics difficulties and developing pre-service teacher capacity to support diverse learners who struggle in mathematics.



Dr. Jennifer Kong is an assistant professor of special education in the Attallah College of Educational Studies at Chapman University. Her research focuses on the mathematical and cognitive development of elementary age children who are culturally and linguistically diverse, with the goal of developing effective interventions for these students.



Cassandra M. Smith is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Special Education at the University of Missouri. Her research interests include mathematics instruction, interventions, and support for secondary students with disabilities, specifically in the area of algebra.



Courtney A. Toledo is a clinical instructor at Georgia Southern University in the Elementary and Special Education Department as well as a doctoral candidate at the same university. She specializes in special education law and procedures as well as undergraduate teacher preparation. Her research interests include teacher self-efficacy, role play simulations for learning, and new teacher retention. She is currently exploring the impact of an IEP role play on pre-service teachers' understanding of and self-efficacy regarding the IEP process and IEP meeting.

Membership Committee Updates

The Membership Committee has been developing strategic plans for increasing membership enrollment, which is an ongoing strategic goal for CLD. In addition to this, the committee has discussed ways in which to retain current members. During the 2022 CLD conference in Richmond, Virginia, the committee met to discuss how it might work toward these goals. The meeting was open to all CLD members, and several new members joined in on the discussion as well as expressed interest in continuing to be a part of the discussion in future Membership Committee meetings.

Ideas discussed at the meeting included sending emails to both members and non-members who attended the conference, working alongside other committees in encouraging more outreach for our doctoral level members, and developing ways in which academic members who are later in their careers might be retained. A thorough discussion of how the committee might encourage greater membership at the professional level also was discussed. These discussions will continue during upcoming meetings. In addition to the meet-

ing, the Membership Committee had a table next to registration at the conference to provide more information to both non-members and members who had questions about being a member of CLD. We also provided a poster containing information about the various committees within CLD.

Currently, the membership in CLD is at 320 active members, which reflects a decrease from last year. The Membership Committee has welcomed a new co-chair, Dr. Jennifer Smith. She and co-chair Dr. Jackie Chovanes, previous members, and new members will continue during the 2022–2023 academic year to work toward the goal of building membership, retaining current membership, and helping to provide more outreach. Any CLD member interested in joining the Membership Committee, please contact Dr. Jennifer Smith at smit3863@purdue.edu or Dr. Jackie Chovanes at jchovanes@ship.edu.

Jennifer Smith and Jackie Chovanes
Co-Chairs

Finance Committee Updates

The Finance Committee met in person and virtually during the CLD 2022 Annual Conference in Richmond, Virginia. Members of the committee include Beverly Weiser (treasurer), Joseph Morgan (past president), Steve Chamberlain (past president), Linda Nease (executive director), Rebecca Shankland, Sharon Ray, Beth Jones, Yan Wei, and Pakethia Harris. During the conference and throughout the year, the finance committee

- (a) monitors the fiscal practices of the organization,
- (b) develops guidelines and makes recommendations for management,
- (c) creates procedures for use of reserve funds that are consistent with the objectives of CLD’s Mission Statement,
- (d) reviews the annual budget prior to being submitted for approval by the Board of Trustees (BOT),

- (e) serves in an advisory capacity to the BOT regarding matters that would affect the revenues and expenditures of the organization, and
- (f) assists with review and feedback of the biannual internal reviews completed by the treasurer.

The finance committee, along with the BOT and other committees, supports leadership development among professionals who serve individuals with learning disabilities and other challenges in learning. Additionally, the finance committee collaborates with other CLD committees on ways to build membership and further help special educators, researchers, university and college students, and parents of children experiencing learning difficulties. Any CLD member wishing to be part of this committee would be welcome; please contact Beverly Weiser at beverlyweiser@gmail.com for more information.

Beverly Weiser
Treasurer

Chapter News

Georgia CLD Announcements

Through the hard work of our CLD members across the state of Georgia, the Council for Learning Disabilities now has a new Georgia chapter (GCLD). This statewide organization has dedicated itself to promoting evidence-based teaching, collaboration, research, leadership, and advocacy within Georgia. Their members represent diverse disciplines and are committed to enhancing the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities, as well as others who experience challenges in learning. The chapter's vision is to increase and improve educational opportunities for these students by fostering collaborative relationships with professionals who serve them.

The Georgia chapter's goals include encouraging evidence-based practices through high-quality professional development sessions for individuals who serve these students, developing collaborative relationships and supporting leadership development among these practitioners, and expanding their audience to stakeholders. Their first conference, *Empowering Educators*, is planned for Friday, February 24, 2023, and will be held on the Armstrong campus of Georgia Southern University in Savannah, Georgia. Interested presenters are encouraged to complete this brief proposal form, found here: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gcld/>. For more information, please reach out to the chapter's president, Dr. Cynthia Massey, at cynthiamassey@georgiasouthern.edu. Finally, if you live in Georgia, please consider joining this chapter when you renew your membership this upcoming year to help support the chapter's goals.

Virginia CLD Announcements

The Virginia Council for Learning Disabilities (VCLD) hosted their spring symposium in May at Virginia Wesleyan

University. The theme, *Educational Partnerships: Yours + Mine = Ours*, included 26 regular sessions, two roundtable sessions, with nine presentations total, and a panel presentation with Dr. Paul Riccomini. Plans are underway to identify a location for the 2023 spring symposium.

The Virginia Joint Coalition of Learning Disabilities and Literacy (VJCLDL) is an organization composed of the presidents of state organizations (i.e., VCLD, Decoding Dyslexia VA, Virginia Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, Fairfax and Prince Williams NAACP Education Committees) whose mission is to provide free professional development targeting a greater understanding of learning disabilities and literacy as identified by K–12 general and special educators, pre-service teachers, higher education faculty, and parents.

VJCLDL hosted its first webinar in September. Colby Hall and Karen Kehoe described the results of two systematic reviews. The first looked at the impact of reading interventions on outcomes for diverse samples of students with or at risk for word reading difficulties. The second looked at the impact of reading interventions on outcomes for English learners with word reading difficulties. The most recent VJCLDL webinar was November 17, and the author of *Raising Confident Readers*, Richard Gentry, demonstrated science-of-reading activities from his newly released *Spelling Connections: A Word Study Approach*. He explained how research-based spelling books are supported by cognitive science and neuroscience. All of his content relates to LD teachers and how important it is to monitor each child's spelling development and to be aware of symptoms of dyslexia. Check out the [VCLD website](#) or find us on social media to see our upcoming events.

Diversity Statement

The Council for Learning Disabilities is committed to celebrating and enriching the field of special education through its diversity. As a group, we pursue the best practices, research, and policies that exemplify enhancing the lives of individuals with learning disabilities, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As a diverse group of professionals in the field of special education, we believe that this work cannot be completed in a silo, but rather, it must be embedded within every part of what we do. As an organization, we are committed to welcoming, understanding, learning about, and honoring individual diversity.