Subject: June Newsletter
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From: College Autism Network
To: Jackson, Brittany 1.

Here's your monthly update filled with research, resources, and news related to college students with autism.

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COLLEGE AUTISM NETWORK
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In The News

The positive impact of having someone proudly autistic in the spotlight

Greta Thunberg is a teenage climate activist inspiring activism for the environment and for autism. You can learn more about how Thurnberg is helping others on the spectrum here.

I'm Autistic: Here Are 5 Ways You Can Support Me at Work

This article features tips for employers and neurotypical peers on how to support employees with autism.

He couldn't speak as a child. Now this autistic student is giving a commencement address

Learn more about Bruno Youn's journey to success.

Resources for Students

Institutional Initiatives Highlight

The College Success Program

for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

The College Success Program for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (CSP) at Eastern University is a comprehensive support program providing social, academic, and residence life support. The CSP is designed to meet each student where they are and to support them toward growth in all areas of functioning as they live and learn within a caring Christian community that is welcoming to students of any (or no) religious preference.

The CSP begins with a **pre-fall-semester orientation** for new students, providing a more ASD-friendly move-in environment and time for students to acclimate to the campus and to program staff prior to the start of university-wide orientation programs. During the semester, students participate in **weekly meetings** with the program Coordinator, a **weekly skills group** (**focusing on social, academic, self-care, self-regulation, and career-readiness skills)** facilitated by the Coordinator, **weekly meetings with an assigned Peer Mentor** (a fellow undergraduate student trained and supervised by the Coordinator), **supervised study sessions** (available 2 hours per night, 5 nights per week), **planned social events on and off campus** (at least monthly), and a **weekly support group led by the Graduate Mentors** (graduate students trained and supervised by the Coordinator). The Graduate Mentors live in the residence hall alongside students to provide support with residence life skills and to provide **after-hours emergency on-call services**. The CSP also offers liaison support, training, and consultation with university faculty, staff, and

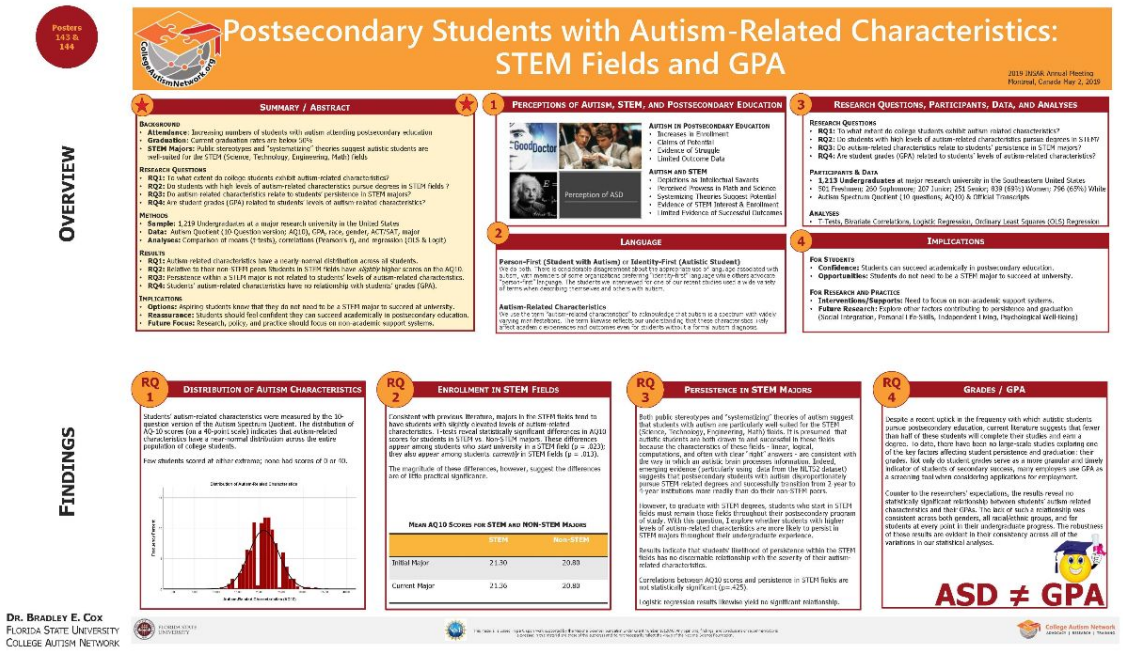
departments in order to develop and strengthen awareness of autism spectrum disorder and the implementation of ASD-friendly practices across campus. As students move toward graduation, the CSP supports them with accessing services through the university's Office of Career Development and through resources in their home communities in order to **facilitate the transition** into the workforce.

The program is small and relatively new so outcome data is very preliminary. Since the current Coordinator took over the program in 2014, 85% of students who entered as freshmen returned for their second year, which is higher than the overall university's freshman retention rate. With only one exception, students who have successfully completed their first year have persisted to graduation, resulting in a higher graduation rate than the university overall. (This data does not include one student who transferred to another university after the first year in order to pursue a preferred major not offered at EU.)

Research Update

Mark your calendars for our next CANVAS meeting: **Tues, July 16 at 4pm - 5pm CST** on Google Meet**.** Our featured presenter is **Anastasia Anderson**(Macquarie University), who will be discussing her recent research projects. Indicate your attendance on our meeting agenda.

If you want to check out materials from our Spring 2019 meetings, check them out on the CANVAS page on the CAN website.



Increasing numbers of students with autism are attending postsecondary education, but current graduation rates are below 50%. Public stereotypes and “systematizing” theories suggest autistic students are well-suited for the STEM fields. Within a population of 1,219 undergraduates at a major research university in the United States, data was gathered through the Autism Quotient (10-Question version; AQ10), GPA, race, gender, ACT/SAT, and major.

This research addresses 4 research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent do college students exhibit autism-related characteristics?
- RQ2: Do students with high levels of autism-related characteristics pursue degrees in STEM fields ?
- RQ3: Do autism-related characteristics relate to students’ persistence in STEM majors?
- RQ4: Are student grades (GPA) related to students’ levels of autism-related characteristics?

You can learn more about the results on our website.

Training and Resources

College Inclusion Summit

We are hard at work planning the third College Inclusion Summit which will take place at Vanderbilt University October 23-25. We will have a preconference workshop led by Jane Thierfeld Brown and Laurie Ackles of College Autism Spectrum for those interested in starting a new program or taking an existing program to the next level. Jane will do double duty as our opening speaker as well, and we're thrilled to have this internationally-recognized expert on student success bring her knowledge and experience to the Summit.

The Summit is designed to bring together practitioners and scholars working on behalf of college students with autism. Visit our website for more information.

This is a fact sheet for professors who are seeking to become more autism friendly in their teaching practices. Tips include creating a relationship with the disability services office and meeting with students privately.

A Spectrum of Possibility: Tips for Professors of College Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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We are always looking for new resources to share. If you have any resources related to ASD in college, please email us at info@collegeautismnetwork.org so we can share the knowledge!

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