

Early Childhood Studies Newsletter

Issue 33 • September 2025

Dear ECS Students,

Welcome back! I hope you had a restful summer and are ready to begin another exciting semester in Early Childhood Studies. The start of a new academic year is always filled with possibility. It's a fresh opportunity to set goals, build community, and lean into your growth as future educators and advocates for young children and families.

By now, I hope you have settled into your courses and are finding ways to tackle assignments in a way that gives each one its due time, while also keeping things manageable for yourself. Intentional planning, rather than leaving everything to the last minute will help you feel more balanced and confident as the semester unfolds.

I encourage you to start the semester with intention. Whether it's creating a study plan, carving out time at the library, or meeting up with a classmate at a coffee shop to share ideas, these small steps will help you set the tone for success. Remember strong beginnings pave the way for strong endings!

This newsletter is full of stories and resources to inspire and support you as you get started. In this issue, you'll find highlights on current topics in early childhood education, recommendations for children's books to bring into your practice, and hear about our first *Tiempo de Cuentos* (Storytime). You'll also meet one of our ECS Star Students, whose journey reminds us of the resilience and passion that make this community so special. Finally, you'll find important announcements to help you stay on track this semester.

Wishing you all a joyful, productive, and empowering start to the fall semester. ¡Feliz inicio de semestre! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Dr. Riojas-Cortez.

Thank you, and here's to a strong beginning!

Dr. Assadullah Sadiq

Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Studies



OCTOBER HEAD START AWARENESS AND NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION

Did you know that October is a special month to raise awareness about two important issues related to children, families, and education?

October is Head Start Awareness Month. Head Start and Early Head Start programs provide early learning, health, and family well-being services to children from birth to age 5 in communities across the country. These programs support children's school readiness and help families achieve their goals. You can learn more at the Office of Head Start: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>

Second, October is also National Bullying Prevention Month. Bullying can have serious and lasting impacts on children's mental health, social relationships, and school success. The organization StopBullying.gov offers resources for families, educators, and communities to prevent and respond to bullying: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>. PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center also provides toolkits and ideas for schools and families to create safe and supportive environments for all children: <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/>.

Together, these two awareness efforts remind us that children thrive when they are supported in safe, nurturing, and empowering environments, at home, at school and in the community.

Keep thinking: How are you standing up and preventing bullying in your classroom? What strategies support you in this work?



(image taken from:
<https://parentchildinc.com/ceo-message/ceo-message-head-start-awareness-month-0>)



(image taken from:
<https://hospiceatyourside.com/national-bullying-prevention-awareness-month/>)

ECS STAR STUDENT

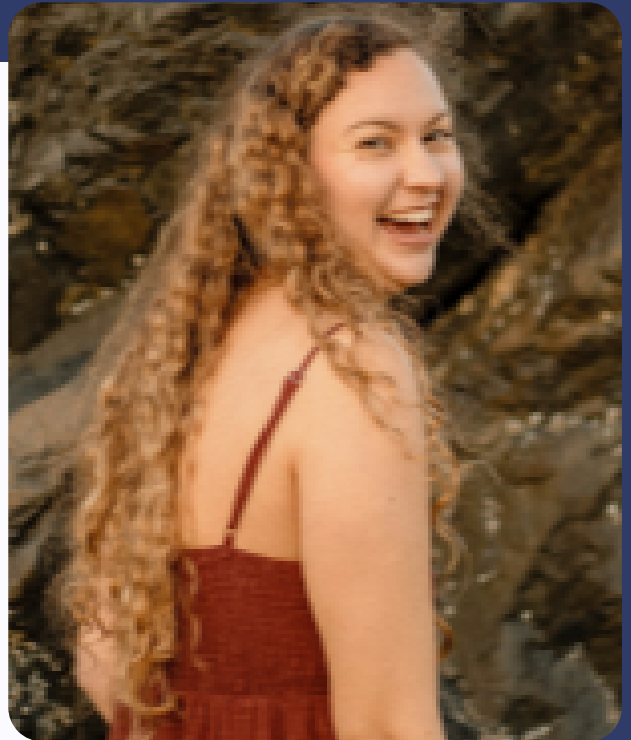
YASMINA MARTINEZ

I was born with Cerebral Palsy, left side hemiplegic, and a learning disability.

Throughout my life, I have had to work twice as hard in my studies, creating Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) from elementary school through high school. As I entered college, the school provided me extra time to take tests, note-taking devices to assist with my studies, and recordings of my lectures. In the beginning, I relied heavily on these tools. However, over time, I have adapted and now primarily use the extra time for tests.

I have learned to take my own notes using note-taking devices and have figured out what is important to include in my notes. It is possible to achieve anything you set your mind to. One of my goals was to stop relying on these extra supports and learn to manage independently, and I succeeded! I am grateful that I still have the option of assistance from the Disability Accommodations Support Services (DASS) if I need it. DASS is an excellent program for students with diverse disabilities.

In the fall of 2014, I was determined to pursue a career in Business Administration because I wanted a good-paying job and I loved math. I enrolled at Moorpark College to complete my associate degree, taking classes such as entrepreneurship, accounting, and management. After six years, I graduated with my associate degree in Business Administration in 2021.



ECS STAR STUDENT

YASMINA MARTINEZ

I wanted to take a break from school, so I worked at my church's school, where I worked with young children, for about two years. After that, I was accepted at California State University, Channel Islands, to start my bachelor's degree in business administration.. I spent a year trying to study; however, I found myself skipping classes because I was not interested in or happy with this field of study. Since I had been working at my church's school since 2019 and loved working with kids, I decided to change my major to Early Childhood Development in 2024 to pursue my passion. I had to start over, but I knew I wanted to work with children in my heart!

Currently, I am proud to say that I am one year away from graduating with my bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development! After that, I plan to earn my teaching credential, as I aspire to work at a private school or preschool. One of my goals is to get my master's degree, but one thing at a time. I am always thinking ahead of the game, as my dad always preached to me. Yes, it has been a long journey to get to this point, but it is worth it! Never be afraid to follow your passion. I am so happy that I made this decision because choosing a job you love will make you feel as if you never worked a day in your life.

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING:

TIEMPO DE CUENTOS (STORYTIME) SESSION #1

OVERVIEW AND REFLECTIONS

On Sunday, from 1–2 pm, we launched our first *Tiempo de Cuentos* (Storytime) of the semester at the Broome Library. This service-learning experience, held once a month, offers our ECS teacher candidates the opportunity to engage directly with children and families through shared literacy practices. For this session, we read two classic children's books: *Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina and *The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins. Teacher candidates took turns reading aloud in pairs, with two students sharing the responsibility for each book.

During *Caps for Sale*, the teacher candidates invited the audience to think mathematically. For example, one candidate asked, "How much does each cap cost?" The audience eagerly responded with "50 cents!" prompting the follow-up: "So with one dollar, how many caps could I buy?" At the end of the story, the group decided to take the math a step further by asking: "How much would it cost to buy all of the peddler's caps?" Together, the participants counted the caps—16 in total. With each cap costing 50 cents, they reasoned that the total would be \$8. Participants explained how they arrived at their answers and showing their thinking.

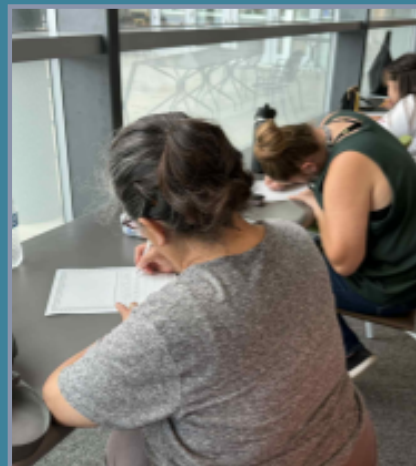
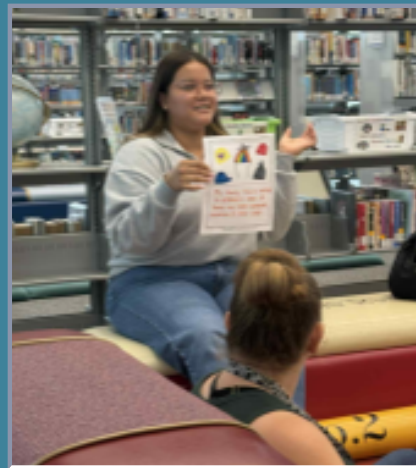
As we transitioned to *The Doorbell Rang*, the focus shifted toward prediction and inference. The children were asked, "Who do you think might be at the door?" With each knock, the audience guessed that more visitors might arrive. This set the stage for mathematical idea about division and sharing. Teacher candidates posed the question: "If there are more people at the door, do you think each person will get more cookies, or fewer?" The children correctly reasoned that each person would have fewer cookies to share.

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING:

TIEMPO DE CUENTOS (STORYTIME) SESSION #1

OVERVIEW AND REFLECTIONS

We followed the session with reflective writing, where participants were invited to jot down their thoughts. Some wrote about the value of sharing, others described their favorite kinds of cookies, and still others shared personal memories that the stories brought to mind. Finally we gathered in a circle and shared our writing and drawing or stories with each other. Sitting in this circle reminded us how powerful stories, cuentos, and kesas can be. It brings us together. We look forward to families and children joining us in the upcoming Tiempo de Cuentos sessions. Please see the flyer included in this newsletter for future dates and details.



(Some images from our first session. Note: Not all participants are photographed).

VOICES FROM THE FIELD:

STUDENT TEACHERS REFLECT ON STUDENT TEACHING

Come join us for Storytime at the Broome Library (see flyer for dates and times)

Early Childhood Studies & The Libray Present

Children's Storytime

Tiempo de Cuentos

Broome Library, Children's Section

Sunday, September 8
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Sunday, October 26
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Sunday, November 23
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

**Open
to the
community!**

 **EARLY
CHILDHOOD
STUDIES**
Extending
community

CHAMBERLAIN

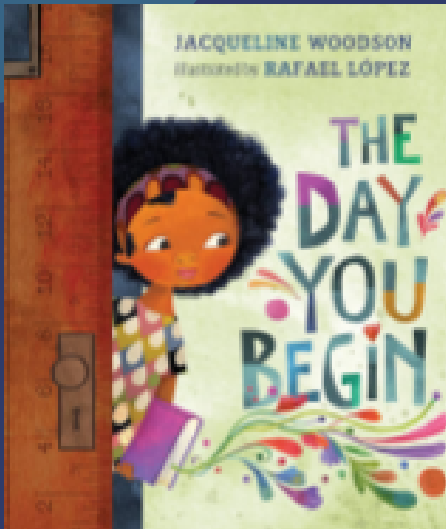
The University encourages people with disabilities to participate in its programs, events and activities. if you anticipate needing any type of commomodation or have questions about the phsical access provided, please contact the respective area noted below as soon as possible.

cSUCI Students: accommodations@csuci.edu | CSUCI Employees
christine.girardot@csuci.edu | Members of the Public: titix@csuci.edu

El Rinconcito De Los Libros/ Children's Book Corner

THE DAY YOU BEGIN

By Jacqueline Woodson & Illustrated by
Rafael López



This powerful story captures the feelings many children experience when starting school, especially when they feel different from their classmates. With poetic language and vibrant illustrations, the book shows how courage and vulnerability open doors to connection and friendship. Teachers can use this book to help children see that everyone has a unique story worth sharing, and that differences make a classroom stronger.

ALL ARE WELCOME

by Alexandra Penfold & Illustrated by
Suzanne Kaufman



This uplifting book celebrates the first days of school as a place where every child belongs. With rhythmic text and colorful illustrations, it highlights diversity, kindness, and community. Children see themselves reflected in a classroom where traditions, families, and cultures are embraced. This story is a wonderful way to begin the year with a message of inclusion and acceptance that sets the tone for the months ahead.

Highlight:

Hearty congratulations to Dr. Annie White for receiving the prestigious Presidential Medallion Award from Emeritus President Yao for her work with Learning Stories and cohosting the 2024 Learning Stories conference on campus.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are you READY FOR MA in ECS? These are great sessions to join from the comfort of your home and hear about this wonderful program... designed just for you!

Please register for one of our upcoming information sessions to learn more about the Master of Arts in Early Childhood Studies! Check the flyer on the next page!

- Wednesday, September 17, 2025 from 6pm to 7pm
- Wednesday, September 24, 2025 from 6pm to 7pm
- Wednesday, October 15, 2025 from 6pm to 7pm
- Wednesday, November 5, 2025 from 6pm to 7pm

Guest Speaker Series: Conversations With Authors of Diverse Children's Books Virtual Event!

We are excited to invite you to a special virtual event with award-winning Colombian American author Alexandra Alessandri (Feliz New Year, Ava Gabriela!, Isabel and Her Colores Go to School, Lupita's Hurricane Palomitas, Our World: Colombia).

Alexandra will share her journey, her books, and the power of stories!

Date: Monday, October 13, 2025

Time: 6:00–7:00 PM (ET)

[Click here](#) to register for the Guest Speaker Series event!

Thank you for reading. For feedback, please contact Dr. Mari Riojas-Cortez, Professor & Chair, Early Childhood Studies at mari.riojas-cortez@csuci.edu

"Teaching is the one profession that creates all other professions."
~Unknown

Master of Arts in Early Childhood Studies

Designed for Working Professionals

Take your early childhood education career to the next level with our fully online Master of Arts in Early Childhood Studies program. This flexible degree allows you to advance your expertise while maintaining your current professional commitments. Join a community of passionate educators and transform your career in early childhood education.

Join Us For An Upcoming Information Session!

All sessions will be held from
6PM - 7PM PST via Zoom.

- September 17, 2025
- September 24, 2025
- October 15, 2025
- November 5, 2025



To register please visit our website by scanning the QR code down below. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming session!

Applications for Summer 2026 open October 1, 2025



Contact:

Dr. Mari Riojas-Cortez
Professor & Chair
Early Childhood Studies
mari.riojas-cortez@csuci.edu

Gissell Toxqui Admin
Support Early Childhood
Studies
gissell.toxqui@csuci.edu

Visit Us At:

<https://education.csuci.edu/programs/ecs/ma-ecs/index.htm>

GUEST SPEAKER SERIES: CONVERSATIONS WITH AUTHORS OF DIVERSE CHILDREN'S BOOKS



EARLY
CHILDHOOD
STUDIES
C H A N N E L
I S L A N D S

JOIN USTHROUGH ZOOM AS AWARD-WINNING
COLOMBIAN AMERICAN AUTHOR ALEXANDRA
ALESSANDRI (FELIZ NEW YEAR, AVA GABRIELA!, ISABEL
AND HER COLORES GO TO SCHOOL, LUPITA'S
HURRICANE PALOMITAS, OUR WORLD: COLOMBIA)
SHARES HER JOURNEY, HER BOOKS, AND THE POWER OF
STORIES!

GUEST SPEAKER:
ALEXANDRA ALESSANDRI

MONDAY,
OCTOBER 13, 2025
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

REGISTER HERE



THE UNIVERSITY ENCOURAGES PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN ITS PROGRAMS,
EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES. IF YOU ANTICIPATE NEEDING ANY TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION OR HAVE
QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PHYSICAL ACCESS PROVIDED, PLEASE CONTACT THE RESPECTIVE AREA
BELOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN SEVEN BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO THE
EVENT/ACTIVITY: CSUCI STUDENTS CONTACT DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS & SUPPORT SERVICES:
ACCOMMODATIONS@CSUCI.EDU | CSUCI EMPLOYEES CONTACT HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE:
HUMAN.RESOURCES@CSUCI.EDU OR CALL 805-437-8490 | MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
CONTACT TITLE IX & INCLUSION: TITLEIX@CSUCI.EDU



School Of
EDUCATION
C H A N N E L
I S L A N D S