



# PREVENTION SCIENCE

Graduate Programs Newsletter

Fall 2025, Vol 6, Issue 1

## PROGRAM NEWS & UPDATES

This fall, the Prevention Science program led the way for 28 faculty, administrators, and graduate employees in the College of Education (including several members of the PREV program) to participate in a 2-day **Foundations of Restorative Justice Practices training**. The training was supported by an implementation grant for Inclusive and Effective Teaching in Policy and Practice received by PREV PhD student, Abbie Sanders, and PREV program director, Heather Leonard. The training was delivered by experts from the University of Nebraska Omaha.



From L to R: Jessica Marshall (2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD), Emily Lang (2<sup>nd</sup> yr PhD), Abbie Sanders (4<sup>th</sup> year PhD), Anne Hobbs (Univ. of Nebraska Omaha), Monica Miles-Steffens (Univ. of Nebraska Omaha), Avery Turner (4<sup>th</sup> year PhD), and Heather Leonard (PREV program director)

Admissions to the Prevention Science program for the 2026-2027 academic year are underway! **Applications for the MS and MEd programs are being accepted now through June 30, 2026.** Please share our program with colleagues or education departments that may be interested in sharing it with prospective students! <https://education.uoregon.edu/prevsci>

## ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations to PREV MEd graduate, **Madeline Amezcua Montano**, who recently began training in the Counseling Psychology PhD program at the University of Houston!

**Dr. Rebecca Gordon** (PREV PhD, 2025) recently began a new position as a Program Evaluation Research Associate at the Johns Hopkins Center for Research and Reform in Education. Congratulations Rebecca!

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to **Marielena McWhirter Boisen**, PREV doctoral candidate, on her recent publication:

Rochelle, J. L., McWhirter Boisen, M. R., Spafford, S. G., & Seeley, J. R. (2025). Key determinants of school-based suicide prevention: Barriers and facilitators to implementation. *School Mental Health*, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-025-09835-1>

Marielena recently proposed her dissertation: “The Association Between Active and Passive Social Media Use and Social Connectedness Across the Lifespan: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.” Her dissertation aims to challenge narratives about connectedness and social media usage, including that passive social media usage is as harmful as previously thought. In exploring social connectedness, her review also aims to understand how closely linked social media is to people's sense of community, loneliness, and belonging. She also plans to investigate specific age groups, including youth, emerging adults, middle adults, and older adults.

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In July 2025, PREV doctoral candidate, **Elizabeth Bates**, received the OSLER predoctoral fellowship (Oregon Students Learn and Experience Research) through the Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute at OSHU. The training grant functions similarly to an NIH T32 grant, and is available to doctoral candidates at UO, OHSU, Portland State University, and Oregon State University and provides 1-2 years of training.

Through additional coursework and mentorship from faculty at OCTRI, the OSLER provides training in translational research to enhance the research experience Elizabeth has gained through the Prevention Science doctoral program. The OSLER provides recipients with time and support to focus on dissertation research and pursue other projects to develop more expertise in translational research. In addition, Elizabeth is taking courses focused on topics like leadership for team science, project management, applied biostatistics, and grant proposal development. The cohort of trainees and program directors meet twice a month - once for a trainee-led journal club, and once to share 'Works in Progress', which gives trainees the opportunity to practice presentations and receive feedback from fellow trainees and faculty.



**Audrey Sileci**, a PREV doctoral candidate, received a Sylff Fellowship to advance her dissertation on Miles de Manos, a school-based violence prevention program implemented in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Her mixed-methods study examines participant experiences and program impacts through qualitative data collected during two fieldwork trips, supported by ongoing analysis with a Honduran qualitative research collaborator. These findings will be integrated with quantitative data from a randomized controlled trial to better understand the conditions that support parent engagement and program effectiveness. The fellowship will also support Audrey in disseminating results directly to the Honduran Secretary of Education, ChildFund International, and community-led organizations working to promote safety and well-being for children and families across Latin America.

PhD candidate, **Tracy Zehner**, received the Society for Research in Educational Effectiveness (SREE) Summer Fellowship. The purpose of this program is to connect educational researchers with philanthropic organizations seeking high-quality research to inform their decision-making. Tracy was paired with the Barberton Community Foundation to conduct a study on high-quality early childhood education to assess the viability of constructing an early learning campus in Barberton, Ohio. The SREE fellows were mentored by experts in their fields and presented at the SREE annual conference and the Grantmakers for Education annual conference.

### Society for Research on Education Effectiveness 2025 SUMMER FELLOWS

<p>The promise and progress of work-based learning: How are students and communities benefiting from workforce centered programs across the US?</p> <p>EdFundors Postsecondary Access and Attainment Impact Group</p>  <p>Catalina Vasquez University of Texas at Austin</p>	<p>Evaluation of the Implementation of Partnerships for an Innovative Early Learning Center</p> <p>The Primrose Schools Children's Foundation</p>  <p>Noel Kuriakos University of Maryland, College Park</p>	<p>Birth to 5: Early Learning Campus Viability</p> <p>Barberton Community Foundation</p>  <p>Tracy Zehner University of Oregon</p>	<p>Tracking Grantee Learning in the Arts and Education Leadership</p> <p>The Wallace Foundation</p>  <p>Xinghua Toby Wu New York University</p>	<p>Reengaging 40 Million US Adults That Have Some College and No Degree</p> <p>Crimsonbridge Foundation</p>  <p>Sky Duke University of Wisconsin-Madison</p>	<p>Improving First Gen Students' Persistence in College through Tech-Enhanced Support &amp; Mentoring: What Works?</p> <p>iMentor</p>  <p>Havisha Khurana University of Oregon</p>
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