



Elizabeth Primero (center) presents her research in a poster session at the 2016 Leadership Symposium. Primero will be traveling to Montreal, Canada to present this poster at the ACPA conference. // File Photo by Valerie Osier

Students prep to share their work

As conferences pack their schedules, some EDLD students are packing their bags to present.

Conference season is upon us and some of the Educational Leadership doctoral students will be heading out to present their research or research they've assisted with. From Costa Mesa to D.C. to Germany, our students are off and running.

"[Presenting at conferences] is really a creative way of taking what you've learned academically and sharing your ideas with everyone," Elaine Bernal of Cohort 7 said. "And it's a really great feeling to be able to do that, that you're contributing to unique research ideas."

Elaine will be presenting a full-paper at the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Training conference in March, as well as a poster session at the National Association for Research in Science Teaching (NARST) conference in April.

She has been working with Dr. Steven Adams and Dr. Lisa Martin-Hansen for the past several years in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) of Long Beach. They have been offering professional development for credentialed teachers in which they design and implement

lesson plans at the BGC based on the "Engineering is Elementary" program from the Boston Science Museum.

"The model that we studied and evaluated, it's a unique program, it's an informal setting: a community-based organization like the Boys and Girls Club," Elaine said. "Because often with teachers in Higher Ed and K-12, there isn't much opportunity for an informal setting, everything is typically in a classroom ... but with the Boys and Girls Club, it's a dynamic environment."

Elaine will be presenting on what the teachers' experiences have been and what they've learned in that professional development. At NARST, her poster session will be more focused on the youth data.

"With the participants I interviewed, they expressed that it's a unique experience that kept them on their toes and really stretched them as an educator," Elaine said. "Because it's a different model in such that they're able to collaborate with other teachers from other disciplines of all different experiences. My participants ranged from newly credentialed teachers

... to veteran teachers who've taught for 15 years."

Rosean Moreno, also of Cohort 7, will be presenting research findings for the first time at the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education and the American Educational Research Association annual conferences.

Last summer, Rosean worked on a fellowship with Dr. Angela Locks and Dr. Dawn Person, where they obtained data from a GEAR Up program in Orange County. Each year, students who had completed 7th grade to 12th grade filled out an exit survey. Based on the years of survey responses and data, they looked at the students' perceptions of college, particularly Latino students.

"One of the things we found that was helpful to us and me personally ... was the importance of actually motivating and encouraging Latino students and trying to raise their self-confidence," Rosean said. "Because it's essentially the self-confidence and intellectual engagement that we found in higher levels in the students that were more likely to go to college."

Perhaps venturing the furthest, Lynda McCoy of Cohort 7 will be traveling to Hamburg, Germany to present at two conferences: Classroom Teaching Research for All Students and the 13th International Congress of Mathematical Educators.

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UPCOMING CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education

“Evaluating a Program of Teacher Training in Educational Technology and STEM Using Two Measures of TPACK”

March 24, 4:45 PM-5:15 PM

National Association for Research in Science Teaching

“Student Perceptions of STEM and Attitudes Toward STEM Workshops at a Youth Organization”

April 15, 3:15-4:15PM

Elaine Bernal
Cohort 7

American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education

“Holistic Perspectives on Latina/o Students’ Pre-College Experiences and the Transition to College”

March 10 - March 12

American Educational Research Association

“Understanding Latina/o High School Students School Engagement, Academic Self-Perception and Anticipated High School Extra Curricular Engagement and their Degree Aspirations”

April 8 - April 12

Rosean Moreno
Cohort 7

Classroom Teaching Research for All Students

“The Effects of Experiential Learning Theory on Elementary Teachers’ Mathematics Content Knowledge for Teaching and Self-Efficacy”

July 21- July 22

13th International Congress of Mathematics Educators

“The Effects of Experiential Learning Theory on Elementary Teachers’ Mathematics Content Knowledge for Teaching and Self-Efficacy”

July 23 - July 31

Lynda McCoy
Cohort 7

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Although still in the recruiting stage of her study, Lynda should have her data to present by July, she said. She will be studying using experiential learning theory to teach elementary teachers math content up until Algebra 1 by combining experiential learning with content knowledge for teaching.

The study will consist of a 6-week course called “Common Core Math for Elementary Teachers,” with Lynda teaching foundational math up to and including some Algebra 1 topics. The participants will explore the topics in “a collaborative situation using experiential learning.” They’ll be given some information and they will be allowed to experience the situation and then reflect upon it at the end of the lesson.

This won’t be Lynda’s first time presenting at conferences, domestic or international, but that doesn’t hamper her excitement.

“Being able to get input and feedback from other educators and scholars that are attending these conferences is what excites me the most,” Lynda said. “It’s been very helpful, because there’s always a question and answer after the presentation and you get feedback from people from other countries who are experiencing similar problems.”

Student spotlight: Arvin García

Using intervention to support students and schools in special education.

Arvin García’s job is to help schools help students by making sure special education isn’t over-referred. He is from Cohort 7 and he is an intervention coordinator within the division of special education for the Los Angeles Unified School District.

“We want to change [school’s] thinking in that special education shouldn’t be seen as the only way to support students,” Arvin said.

In his role as an intervention coordinator, he helps schools that have been identified as needing additional assistance in supporting students in special education. The coordinators try to give the schools the resources to provide intervention prior to students needing special education.

The coordinators use referral data to see which schools over-refer students for special education. They identify these schools or go assist schools that have asked for their help in stopping the seeming trend. The eventual goal is to reduce the number of students who get referred for special education, unless they really do need it.

Arvin didn’t plan on going into the education field, he “fell into it” after getting his bachelor’s degree in psychology. He saw himself in the psychology field, but after graduating he didn’t have the energy

at the time to pursue a master’s or doctorate, which is what he would’ve needed to move forward in the field. He had always enjoyed working at schools and was able to find a job as a teacher quickly after he graduated because there was a large need for bilingual teachers.

Arvin started as a 3rd and 4th grade teacher, a position he remained in for eight years. He decided to get his Master’s degree and become a school psychologist when his mentor, who was also a school psychologist, inspired him to pursue that path.

“I thought: ‘Hey, that would be a cool mix, I would still be working with schools, I could practice or bring in aspects of psychology in the work that I did and what not,’” Arvin said. “She recommended the program and I fell into pursuing that as a natural blending of my interests in education and psychology.”

As a school psychologist, Arvin worked with students sometimes over a span of years, not always seeing what his effect would have on students until maybe years later, if ever.

“I think that our work, while at the moment you may not see the immediate



benefits of what we do, both as teachers and school psychologists, I think our work is appreciated later on, so we should be mindful of that,” Arvin said.

After that position, Arvin went on to explore the more administrative side of school psychology, and became an intervention coordinator at LAUSD.

“As an intervention coordinator, I’m able to use all those experiences with the goal of providing support to schools as much as possible.”