Dr. Katie Brendli is a data associate for the Yang Tan Institute (YTI) on Employment and Disability in the United States. She works with special education teachers. Dr. Katie Brendli (Ph.D. ’20) serves as a co-chair of the Minority Educator Center, a center affiliated with SOE, and a program assistant in the School of Education Office of Development, Alumni & Student Engagement Transition to Adulthood Initiative (ATTAIN) to (which transitioned to Ph.D. in Policy/Leadership from the VCU School of Education in May 2022).

How did your Ph.D. program help prepare you for your current job at Cornell? What drew you to the Student Leadership Council role in special education?

It sounds like you have had so many opportunities. I attended two national conferences, as well as a state-level conference. I was also very involved on my campus. I served as a research assistant for my advisor and worked as a program assistant in the Office of Enrollment and Student Engagement. I also took part in an internship that aligned with my preferences and interests, and I volunteered at a local museum. I really enjoyed these experiences because they allowed me to see different aspects of the work that I am passionate about. I think that these opportunities helped me to develop my skills and gain experience in the field.

What would be your dream job?

I have always been interested in working with individuals with disabilities. I am currently working at a university, but I would love to work in a role where I can use my skills to help students with disabilities in a more direct way. I would also like to work in a role where I can collaborate with colleagues from different disciplines to develop new programs and initiatives that can help students with disabilities.

What advice would you give to someone who is considering a similar role in special education?

I would advise them to get involved in as many opportunities as possible. This could include attending conferences, volunteering, and working in internships. It is also important to build relationships with others in the field, as these relationships can be very helpful when looking for job opportunities. Additionally, I would recommend getting as much experience as possible in the field, as this will help to develop your skills and make you a more competitive candidate for job opportunities.

Make It Real Campaign for School of Education Exceeds Expectations

$12.82 M to inclusion and the need to better understand how we as a society can work together to create a more inclusive world. Our goal to raise $12.82 M by June 2022 was met on June 20, exactly one week ahead of our deadline! Together, we achieved a record-breaking year in fundraising, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who gave. We are proud to have raised nearly $4.8 million in new gifts to support scholarships, professorships, internships, and other initiatives that help our students and faculty succeed. We are excited to see what the next year will bring for the VCU School of Education.

The Make It Real Campaign for the School of Education exceeds all. Development. Our goal was to raise $12.82 M by June 2022, and we exceeded our goal! Together, we exceeded $12.4 M in new gifts, and raised nearly $1.9 million in new gifts to support scholarships, professorships, internships, and other initiatives that help our students and faculty succeed.

What you need to know about our program at VCU:

Your story inspires. How did your Ph.D. program help prepare you for your current job at Cornell? What drew you to the Student Leadership Council role in special education? What would be your dream job? What advice would you give to someone who is considering a similar role in special education?
Spotlight on SOE faculty research

Dr. Cormier, Xu and Gomez awarded COVID-19 rapid research grants

Studies provide resources for PreK-12 students, support systems for international students, and address needs of English language learners.

The COVID-19 rapid research funding opportunity is offered by the VCU Office of Research and Innovation, with support of VCU Child Development Center for Clinical and Translational Research. The primary goal of the grants is to advance projects that are ready for rapid development and to enhance real-time decision-making and implementation within the health system and in the local community.

Three VCU School of Education faculty members and their teams were recently awarded COVID-19 rapid research grants by the university to help better understand the pandemic and to combat it.

Dwayne Ray Cormier, Ph.D., a top-notch group of teachers and they know “These services include workforce training and development, as well as individual and community strain reduction. The grant will provide services to families in Richmond’s Court and Carver communities.”

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The U.S. Department of Education awarded the VCU Child Development Center a $1.26 million grant to provide child care services for the children of low-income undergraduate VCU students. The grant was awarded through the Child Care Access Means Families in School Programs, which supports the provision of high-quality child care services to low-income families with children enrolled in a postsecondary institution. The center will use the grant to provide child care services to low-income undergraduate VCU students, lead to an increase in the retention rate of many undergraduate students and support their persistence to graduation.

In this issue:

- Explore the newest research at the School of Education
- Meet the new School of Education Alumni Council chair
- Learn about the latest ways to give

Clara Richards, VCU School of Education Alumni Council chair, recently took over as chair of the Alumni Council. "As an alumnus, I want to be able to give back and to help future students. I truly believe that giving is good for you, it’s good for your community, and it’s good for your business."

Find affordable quality child care is often a barrier for many undergraduate students so the funding this grant provides will remove that barrier.”

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Three VCU School of Education faculty members and their teams were recently awarded COVID-19 rapid research grants by the university to help better understand the pandemic and to combat it. COVID-19 outbreak. Following that, Xu’s team will develop and implement a series of culturally appropriate support systems for international students from China cope with the world crisis. Cormier’s study will explore pandemic preparedness and response within PreK-12 quality school systems located within the Greater Richmond area. Findings from the research will have immediate impact, providing PreK-12 school systems with a preventative checklist and resources guides as they prepare for future pandemics and the implementation within the health system and in the local community.

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