Welcome to the first issue of the 2021 Cultural Diversity Committee Newsletter!

This newsletter features the 2020 Research Intern spotlight, most recent research articles on the topics of cultural diversity in ASD, resources, and highlights an expert discussion on Structural Racism in Autism Research and Practice.

If you would like to be featured or would like to nominate someone to be featured in the Spotlight section of our newsletter, have any upcoming publications, or know of any resources that are related to cultural diversity and autism, let us know!

Contact email: culturaldiversitycommittee@autism-insar.org
2020 RESEARCH INTERN SPOTLIGHT
MONICA ABDUL-CHANI, MA

Educational Background
Monica (she/her/hers) is a graduate student in the Medical/Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She graduated from Skidmore College with a double major in Psychology and Spanish. In May 2020, she defended her thesis exploring the impact of acculturation and autism knowledge on autism stigma in Latinx versus non-Latinx White participants. She is currently beginning her dissertation research focused on understanding the presentation and impact of implicit and explicit stigma/bias toward ASD across sociodemographic groups, with emphasis on Latinx populations.

Interest and Background in Cultural Diversity Research
Raised in a Latinx family in rural New Jersey, Monica witnessed the difficulties her family faced in seeking adequate health care and experienced challenges accepting her cultural identity while avoiding stigmatization. As an undergraduate, she conducted clinical, cognitive, and social psychology research and later completed a clinical internship with adults with developmental disabilities. She has combined her experiences with research aimed at understanding the presentation and impact of stigma on underrepresented groups in ASD, particularly focused on Latinx and Spanish-speaking populations. She is also interested in understanding the intersectionality of gender and culture in females with ASD.

INSAR Internship Project
Monica developed a 2020 INSAR Internship project under the mentorship of Dr. Katharine Zuckerman at Oregon Health & Science University aimed at understanding the perspectives toward ASD and the potential presence of stigmatizing attitudes in the Latinx community. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Monica was unable to travel to her mentor’s university in the Summer but converted her study into a fully remote format and plans to begin recruitment this year.

Future Career Goals
Monica plans to pursue a career in academic research and direct clinical services. Her long-term goals focus on continuing her program of research, teaching, and mentoring students from underrepresented populations interested in ASD and serving their communities.
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Open Access


RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Open Access


Regular Access


RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Regular Access


RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Regular Access


**RESOURCES**

**Global Research in Autism and Neurodevelopment (GRAND)** - “GRAND is an online worldwide community enabling people working on autism and neurodevelopmental disorders to share knowledge, tools, and resources, raise awareness and develop innovative strategies and interventions.” You can visit this free resource at [https://tghn.org/](https://tghn.org/)

**Global Partnerships on Children with Disabilities (G Pc wd)**. “The G Pc wd provides a platform for collective action and advocacy to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities are included in and prioritized by both the disability and child rights agendas at the global, regional, and country levels.” For more information, please visit their website: [G Pcwd.org](http://G Pcwd.org)

**DisabilityMeasures.org** has developed a website for sharing freely available disability assessment and measurement tools. We are seeking collaborators to recommend measures for inclusion and provide feedback for the future development of this tool.

**Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All Children.** The website [http://autism.sesamestreet.org/](http://autism.sesamestreet.org/) (English & Spanish) contains videos for children and parents, along with daily routine cards, storybooks, and other resources for children, families, and friends.

**Featured Expert Discussion**


In this moderated discussion, a group of Black, Indigenous, and Latinx stakeholders share their personal and professional perspectives on how autistic people are impacted by racism. Themes within the discussion include feelings of invisibility among autistic BIPOC, the multiplicative effect of racial bias and ableism, and suggestions for addressing racism in autism science and practice.

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**Committee Co-Chairs**

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Sandra Vanegas
Gulnoza Yakubova
Meera S. Shoba

**Members and Newsletter Volunteers**

Zoe Sargent
Jasper Estabillo
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