

Newsletter

North American Federation of Adapted Physical Activity



President's Message

Joonkoo Yun, East Carolina University

Greeting from North Carolina! I hope each of you and your family is healthy and well during this crazy epidemic!

I want to start this message with my sincere thanks to the previous board of NAFAPA. They made outstanding accomplishments during the last two years. I have been involved in the NAFAPA since 1994, and the previous board was one of the most active boards I can remember. Special thanks to Heidi Stanish for six years of service as president-elect, president, and past president. She made a significant impact, including establishing NAFAPA as a non-profit organization (503C). I will greatly miss her cheerful and easy-going attitude. Stamatis Agiovlasis served the last four years as the president-elect and president. There have been so many initiatives and great ideas of serving each member of NAFAPA. I am always impressed by his thoughtfulness. We are so lucky he will serve two more years of the NAFAPA board. The new board needs his wisdom. Byron Lai was a member of the board for six years. He started as a student representative, and he served as a secretary for the last two years. His ability to keenly organize makes our business more manageable. Also, thank you for creating the current website and maintaining the outstanding record.

One of the unique attributes of NAFAPA is providing opportunities to our future leaders. During the last two years, we had five student representatives, and they made outstanding contributions. Emily Bremer has been a great leader of the student ambassador initiative and responsible for our election. Steven Holland and Krystn Orr were co-editors of our newsletter and served as co-Twitter masters. It is the first time in 25 years I was able to count on scheduled NAFAPA newsletters. Also, Krystn plays significant leadership in the development of virtual events.



Dale A. Ulrich
Leadership Award
Vivienne Temple



Allen W. Burton
New Investigator Award
Justin A. Haegele

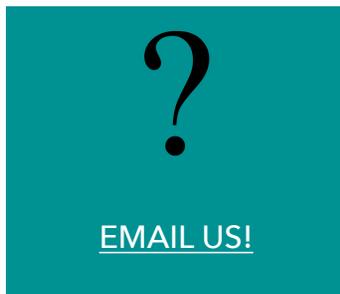
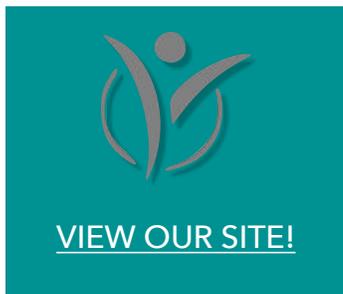


Patricia Austin
Graduate Student Award
Isabella Felzer-Kim



Tip for Young Scholars
Danielle Peers

Community Spotlight



We are lucky to have Yumi Kim and Chloe Simpson who will continue to serve as board members for the next two years. Once again, thank you for the previous board members' time and efforts to support our organization.

As many of you remember, we passed our official vision and mission in the last business meeting. The mission of NAFAPA is to advance scientific inquiry and the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge in Adapted Physical Activity, and our vision ensures equitable opportunities for meaningful participation in physical activity, sport, and exercise for individuals experiencing disability across the lifespan. Now, as we have a clear direction as a group, I want to operationalize our vision and mission in the next two years. Please share your concrete ideas of how we could operationalize our goal. I look forward to working with each of you to advance our research endeavor to ensure meaningful physical activity opportunities for individuals with a disability.

Dale A. Ulrich Leadership Award

Viviene Temple, University of Victoria

I had to select a major in the third year of my undergraduate degree, so I chose cardiac rehabilitation. At the same time, a good friend asked me to join her as a camp counsellor at a five-day camp for children with disabilities. So, I did. I was primarily responsible for two children, Elizabeth and Warrick. Warrick was an 8-year-old boy with Down syndrome who lived in an orphanage. He ran me ragged for that week and I lost him (briefly) twice. Once, I found him in the walk-in pantry, making and eating peanut butter sandwiches with a cheeky grin on his face. At the end of the five days, two nuns came to pick Warrick up. They politely asked him to collect his suitcase, put it in the trunk, get in their car and put on his seatbelt. Warrick happily did what they asked. I stood there aghast, I don't think I'd been able to get him to do anything or go anywhere on time the whole week. Clearly, I had a lot to learn. I went back to my university and changed my major to adapted physical activity.



[Connect with Viviene here!](#)

Since then, curiosity and collaboration have driven my career. I'm curious about how things are now and what can be done to make things better; and I know that I can't do that by myself. As I said in my acceptance speech for NAFAPA's inaugural Dale A. Ulrich Leadership Award, I've been lucky in my colleagues. Especially, I would like to acknowledge Drs. Heidi Stanish, Georgia Frey, John Foley, Pauli Rintala, and Meghann Lloyd, who have helped make the research meaningful and fun. But, perhaps my most important colleagues have been the staff and families in organizations I've worked with. Working with organizations to help answer questions they have, has been particularly rewarding. I love evaluating programs for groups who want to improve their practices and/or outcomes. I've evaluated programs in adapted rock climbing, dragon boating, bike riding, using active video games in therapy, and most recently in adapted equestrian vaulting. I didn't know anything about equestrian vaulting, but curiosity and collaboration have carried the day. The Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association and I now have a flourishing partnership that has taken both them and me into uncharted, but fascinating waters... well, stables and paddocks!

About Viviene

Viviene Temple PhD is a Professor in the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. She teaches courses in adapted physical activity, research methods, and professional practice. Viviene's research has two inter-related objectives 1) to explore and document the positive and negative impact of the physical and social environment on physical activity, movement skill development, and the health of children and individuals with disabilities, and 2) to implement measures to enhance those environments.



Viviene has been awarded more than five million dollars in research and projects funds as a principal or co-investigator. She has been successful in securing funding from both the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. She has also received funding from Special Olympics Canada, The Canadian Centre on Disability Studies, and the British Columbia Child and Youth Health Research Network. These funds have supported 40 collaborative research projects, the development of her research laboratory, and the employment of 9 staff and 20+ graduate students. She has published 90 peer reviewed manuscripts, 9 resource manuals, 15 non-refereed papers, 6 reports, 6 video/electronic resources, and a book chapter. She has given more than 200 conference presentations and has been invited to present 25 times. Viviene is a Past President of the NAFAPA, was an Associate Editor of APAQ, and is currently a member of the APAQ editorial board. Dr. Temple received the 2019 Journal of Motor Learning and Development. Excellence in Research Award.

About Dale A. Ulrich:

Dale Ulrich is a leading scholar in the field of adapted physical activity. He received his PhD from Michigan State University in 1981 and is currently a professor at the University of Michigan. Dr. Ulrich has published extensively and provided numerous invited talks and keynotes over the course of his career. He is a board member on five scholarly journals (including twice as Associate Editor of Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly).

He was the NAFAPA president (1994-1996) and hosted our symposium twice. Over 40 years, he has significantly impacted graduate student education, the quality of APA research, and created the Test of Gross Motor Development, which is in its third iteration and widely used throughout the United States.

2020-2022 NAFAPA Board Members:

Joonkoo (JK) Yun, East Carolina University
(President)

Justin Haegele, Old Dominion University
(President-Elect)

Stamatis Agiovlaitis, Mississippi State University
(Past President)

Shannon Ringenbach, Arizona State University
(Secretary)

Chloe Simpson, West Virginia University
(Student Representative)

Kristen Morgan, Southeastern Louisiana University
(Student Representative)

Roxy O'Rourke, University of Toronto
(Student Representative)

Yumi Kim, University of Alabama at Birmingham
(Student Representative)

T. Nicole Kirk, University of Georgia (Representative to Affiliate Organizations)

Allen W. Burton New Investigator Award

Justin A. Haegele, Old Dominion University

Justin A. Haegele, PhD, CAPE, is an associate professor in his sixth year at Old Dominion University, in Norfolk, Virginia (USA). Justin earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from SUNY Brockport, and his doctorate from The Ohio State University in 2015. Prior to pursuing his doctorate, he served as an adapted physical education teacher at a school for children with autism within the New York City Department of Education.

Broadly defined, Justin's research centers on examining how individuals with disabilities, mostly centered on those with visual impairments, experience physical activity participation. This line of inquiry has included: (a) exploring the meaning individuals with visual impairments ascribe to their school-based physical education experiences, (b) examining determinants and outcomes of physical activity participation among adults with visual impairments; and (c) utilizing nationally represented data to understand trends in physical activity and other health behaviors among those with various disabilities.

In addition to regularly publishing peer-reviewed articles, Justin was the lead editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Adapted Physical Education* and editor of *Movement and Visual Impairment: Research across Disciplines*. Among his current projects, Justin was awarded funding from the Spencer Foundation to further explore the inclusiveness of integrated physical education experiences among youth with visual impairments. He is also the co-director of a national consortium of doctoral training universities that is funded through a grant through the U.S. Department of Education. Justin currently serves as associate editor for *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly* and *Quest* and was recently elected as President-Elect for NAFAPA. He is looking forward to the opportunity to serve the organization in this role.



[Connect with Justin here!](#)

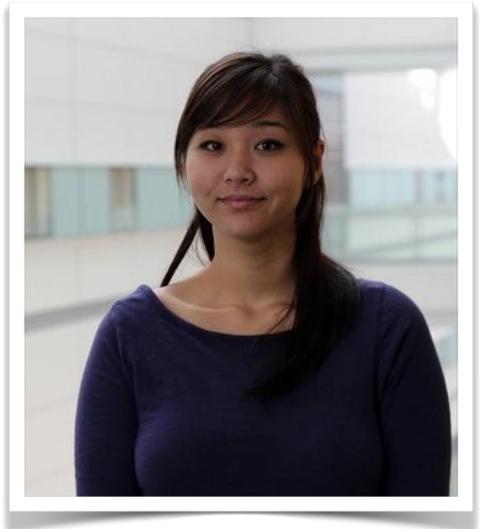
About Allen W. Burton:

Allen W. Burton was a prolific researcher and educator in the field of adapted physical activity. Dr. Burton received his PhD from the University of Oregon and became a professor at the University of Minnesota, where he hosted the 1998 NAFAPA symposium. He was dedicated to the advancement of the field of adapted physical activity through interdisciplinary partnerships and the professional growth of his students. Dr. Burton was elected NAFAPA president in 2000 until his death from cancer in 2001.

Patricia Austin Graduate Student Research Award

Isabella T. Felzer-Kim, Michigan State University

Isabella Theresa Felzer-Kim is the 2020 recipient of the Patricia Austin Graduate Student Research Award. She is a sixth year MD-PhD student at Michigan State University and her major professor is Janet Hauck. Isabella graduated from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan with a Bachelor of Science in 2012. She worked for two years at the University of Michigan as a research technician in cell and developmental biology. She began her graduate work as a dual-degree student at Michigan State in 2014 and finished the PhD in Kinesiology portion of her program in 2020. Her dissertation was entitled "Fundamental movement skills in children with and without autism spectrum disorder, and the multi-domain effects of an early motor intervention". As part of her research, she designed a motor skills training program that could be delivered by Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapists during routine autism spectrum disorder therapy. She trained technicians (without motor backgrounds) to teach motor skills for 15 minutes a day using ABA techniques, and their clients improved dramatically despite notable difficulties. This was the first study to facilitate the direct collaboration between the Adapted Physical Activity and ABA worlds. She hopes the results can inspire others to provide similarly accessible motor training to children with ASD. Other research addresses sleep, physical activity, and development in two populations: individuals with disabilities and children at risk of obesity. She has published her research in journals such as *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *Infant Behavior and Development*, *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, *Consultant*, and *Community Mental Health Journal*.



[Connect with Isabella here!](#)

She is a Michigan Leadership in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Long Term Trainee; as part of that work she has published with several child psychiatrists in their areas of expertise. Isabella has been awarded internal and external funding to support her research. Although she has received fellowships within Michigan State, the Patricia Austin award is the first she has received outside of her university. She is honored and humbled to receive the award. An enthusiastic member of NAFAPA, she is forever grateful to the NAFAPA community for their continued involvement in her training. NAFAPA is a very special community that she holds close to her heart. She knows she will continue to be an active participant in the NAFAPA community.

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About Patricia Austin:

Patricia Austin was a pioneer in the field of adapted physical activity in Canada. After completing her PhD at Michigan State University, she became a faculty member at the University of Alberta for 31 years prior to her death from cancer in 1978. Dr. Austin developed the first undergraduate concentration in adapted physical activity in Canada and contributed significantly to the development of physical activity programs for persons with disabilities. She also made a major contribution to the development of Special Olympics in Canada.

Community Spotlight

Exercise Connection and David Geslak (Founder)

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) continues to be a leader and innovator in exercise science. ACSM partnered with Exercise Connection to create the Autism Exercise Specialist Certificate (AESC) that is helping professionals bring exercise to individuals diagnosed with the world's fastest growing developmental disability. And most recently, the AESC was approved for 12 professional development credits through the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology (CSEP).

After Exercise Connection founder, David Geslak, shared with ACSM the exercise challenges for both those with autism and the many professionals that serve them, they felt a responsibility to find research, protocols, and methodologies that would give professionals the tools to make a difference.

In 2004, as a personal trainer, David experienced first-hand the challenges of teaching exercise to those with autism and recognized that innovative exercise protocols were desperately needed. On a newfound mission, David became a para-educator and eventually the Fitness Coordinator at a therapeutic day school for children with autism. There he developed group protocols and a paper-based Visual Exercise System for students of all ages (K-transition) and ability levels. This led him to create the award winning and research supported ExerciseBuddy (EB) app. EB has been adopted into multiple university curriculums and both public & private schools throughout the world.

ACSM felt strongly that David & Exercise Connection had developed the tools and expertise to teach people with autism how to lead healthier lifestyles. ACSM assembled a team with David to develop the AESC, meeting ACSM standards & qualifications, which could be offered to a variety of professionals. Those who qualify to earn the certificate are NCCA-accredited fitness professionals, licensed adapted or general physical education teachers, special education teachers, nurses, and the following therapists: physical, occupational, recreational, & speech-language pathologists. Now students in these respective fields are also able to earn the certificate.

AESC's Supporting Research

The Certificate has drawn the attention of leading researchers in autism & physical activity. This collaborative research team includes; Scott McNamara, Ph.D. (University of Northern Iowa), Melissa Bittner, Ph.D. (California State University, Long Beach), and Sean Healy, Ph.D. (University of Delaware) who's study was recently published in *Advances in Autism*.

Their descriptive research study of the Online Modules (prerequisite to the virtual workshop) found that the frequency at which participants reported using evidence-based practices (EBPs) increased significantly from pretest to posttest ($p = .031$). More specifically, the participants reported using three of the nine EBPs more frequently post-course completion (all p 's $< .05$). Overall, participants' perceived self-efficacy in using EBPs significantly improved from pretest to posttest ($p = < .001$). The most commonly reported occupation was general physical educator (26.7%), fitness trainer (23.3%), and adapted physical educator (20.9%). Most participants had previous experience working with individuals with ASD (87.2%).

Having CSEP Approval

It is the hope of both EC and ACSM that with CSEP approval, Canadian exercise professionals, and beyond, will be encouraged to earn this Certificate so they are more equipped to bring exercise to the many Canadians diagnosed with autism.

Autism Exercise **SPECIALIST** CERTIFICATE



THE HIGHEST STANDARDS IN BOTH SCIENCE AND PRACTICE



STEP 1 - ONLINE MODULES: 6 ACSM CECs



- Five webinars & two research articles
- \$120 USD
- Sign up at ACSM.org

STEP 2 - VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: 6 ACSM CECs



- Three, 2-hr workshops & case study exam
- \$350 USD
- Sign up at AutismExerciseSpecialist.com



APPROVED FOR 12 CSEP PDC'S

UPCOMING VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS: **NOVEMBER & DECEMBER**

PUT MORE PRO IN PROFESSIONAL • AutismExerciseSpecialist.com

Announcements

Opportunity to Submit Announcements

In an effort to support our members and ensure important adapted physical activity information and opportunities are distributed equally, we would like to invite members to submit information regarding employment opportunities, master's and/or doctoral student recruitment, or other relevant information for publication in the newsletter. Submitted announcements will be featured in this section as space permits and promoted through our Twitter account and website. The newsletter is published three times a year (March, July, and November). Please contact Kristen or Roxy if you have any questions or would like to share information to be distributed.

Webinar Series Feedback

Thanks to all who took part in our webinar series. We were thrilled to see the turnout for each one. If you have not already, please complete the feedback survey sent by Dr. Emily Bremer. This will assist us moving forward as we explore ways to engage the APA community.

Meet the New Editors

Roxy O'Rourke

Roxy is a first-year doctoral student in the University of Toronto's Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education working within the Mental Health and Physical Activity Research Centre. Working with Dr. Kelly Arbour-Nicitopoulos and Dr. Catherine Sabiston, Roxy's research, broadly, focuses on the relationship between physical activity and mental health in individuals with disabilities. For her doctoral program, she is looking to understand the manifestation of body-related self-conscious emotions in adolescent and young adult athletes with disabilities. As a side project, Roxy is the project coordinator of a collaborative research project, working with Special Olympics Ontario and the Department of Occupational Therapy to understand feelings of belonging in sport for young adult Special Olympics athletes. Outside of academia, however, impacting her research interests, Roxy is a retired ballet dancer and current long-distance runner.



Kristen Morgan

Kristen is a Doctoral Candidate collecting data for her doctoral research through the Department of Kinesiology & Nutrition at The University of Southern Mississippi. Kristen's dissertation research examines instructional adaptations and inclusion practices provided in physical education for children with language disorders. Other research areas include specially-designed instruction in a physical activity setting, fundamental motor skill development, and physical activity among children with autism spectrum disorder and communication impairments. Kristen was recently hired as the Adapted Physical Education Coordinator and an Instructor in the Department of Kinesiology & Health Studies at Southeastern Louisiana University.

Tip for Young Scholars

Research “Bias” in APA: A Matter of Perspective

Danielle Peers, University of Alberta

There is one statement in APA research that seems to me to be as paradoxical as bragging about your humility: “I reflected on and removed my biases.” The belief that one can remove all of one’s biases strikes me as demonstrating an immense lack of reflexivity. The metaphor of removal makes it seem as though biases are a set of sunglasses, and we just need to look in the mirror (reflection), notice we are wearing them, remove them, and see with the objectivity and clarity of full sunlight.

I propose an alternative metaphor. Imagine we are all sitting in a circular room and in the middle is an abstract statue. The goal, in our research, is to try to represent the statue (the phenomenon under study) in as holistic, useful, or meaningful way as possible. Your “bias,” in this situation, is essentially the unique **perspective** that comes from your position(ality) in the room. No matter where you are in the room, how close or far, front or back, seeing or touching,

there is no position from which you can understand the statue in its fullness. There is no position of unbiased neutral objectivity. Your perspective is not necessarily good or bad, but it is necessarily partial. It cannot be impartial. It cannot be removed, and you cannot simply move to try on another positionality (despite what those still running disability ‘simulations’ might think). We can only grow and challenge our perspective by engaging deeply with the work of those who can witness the statue from *different* perspectives, to which we do not have access.

Your perspective, or “bias,” includes your paradigmatic assumptions, your disciplinary knowledges, and the literatures you are embedded in. It includes the ideas that have shaped your research questions and methodologies, and how your questions and methodologies are shaping your ideas. It includes your (un)conscious discriminatory attitudes **and** those circulating in your families, communities, and cultures (don’t think you have these? [Try this test](#)). It includes your personal experiences of oppression and privilege and the ways that these shape and (de)legitimize your interactions, beliefs, and knowledges. And it includes the degree to which you are surrounded by those with deeply divergent perspectives, and the degree to which you allow your thinking to be questioned, challenged, and enriched by them.

This positionality impacts many things. It impacts the research questions you ask and what you find important about the phenomenon. For example, neurotypical researchers tend to ask how to cure and control autism, while Autistic scholars tend to write about affirmation, hacks for neurotypical structures, and flourishing. Your positionality impacts the literatures you find relevant for framing your study. How many disabled or BIPOC authors were included in your last literature review or syllabus? I dare you to count. It impacts the method/ologies you choose, and how people craft and answer even the most straightforward interview questions. How differently would you tell the same story to your mom, your best friend, your doctor, and someone you have a crush on? It impacts which data we extract for analysis, how we analyze it, and what we report. And it impacts the words we use to describe and justify our research and its findings (e.g., 25% **chance** of having blue eyes, but 25% **risk** of having muscular dystrophy).



[Connect with Danielle here!](#)

So, if we can't remove the sunglasses of bias, how can we account for more of the statue? This is worth an entire special issue. Here are a few helpful prompts to get you started. Acknowledge the positionalities of those whom you are citing and the texts you are teaching. Their claims come from very specific places; acknowledge that. Ask yourself what perspectives and positionalities are missing from your literature review/ reading list/ syllabus/ research/ panel/field? Reflect on structural reasons that they may be un(der)represented. What are you doing that perpetuates this erasure? What are you doing to acknowledge and change it?

I argue for spending far less energy trying to 'remove' our biases. I suggest we spend much more time acknowledging, welcoming, and deeply engaging with the many marginalized perspectives that might destabilize and enrich our own.

Farewell from the Past-President

Stamatis Agiovlasitis, PhD, Mississippi State University

The NAFAPA business meeting held on October 16th, 2020 concluded the service period of our 2018 - 2020 Board and my term as President. Despite our disappointment for having to cancel the 2020 symposium, I am very happy and proud of the achievements of the departing Board. All Board members worked hard to advance the NAFAPA mission and strengthen our organization. From a personal standpoint, I am very thankful for the opportunity to lead NAFAPA and collaborate on the Board with outstanding colleagues and wonderful individuals. I can attest that our field has numerous leaders whose work will advance NAFAPA and Adapted Physical Activity at large. Among them is Dr. Joonkoo Yun who will lead us as President for the next two years. Dr. Yun has tremendous experience and knowledge that he assiduously shares, and I am confident that NAFAPA will take steps forward under his leadership. I will continue to serve NAFAPA as Past President, but I would like to thank all of you for your support and encouragement over the last two years that I served as President.



[Connect with Stamatis here!](#)

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