



**Education and  
Technology**

# **NEWSLETTER**

**Issue 3**

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# CET NEWSLETTER

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## CET NEWSLETTER TEAM



**Dr. Anu Ogunleye**

Content Lead

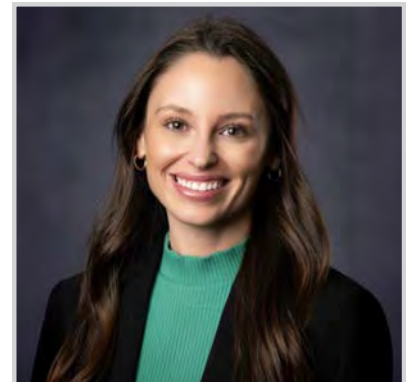
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## FROM THE DEAN'S DESK



*Dr. Lee Hurren*

As the Dean of the College of Education and Technology, I regularly visit classrooms and participate in various campus activities. Those visits also remind me of countless positive teaching and learning opportunities that I have been fortunate to experience and share throughout my life. I am also reminded that it is easy to be self-focused, especially in the world around us. It is essential to remember that all of life's adventures can help us improve the lives of those around us. Almost every time that I am in the presence of our outstanding faculty, staff, and students, I am inspired to do more and to do better. As your Dean, I encourage you to continue striving to excel in your academics, music, art, athletics, and other vital areas of your life. In all of these, don't forget to reach out to those in need and help improve the lives of those around you. You will find greater purpose and happiness in your own life as you voluntarily serve others. "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted," Aesop.

## LEADING THE WAY: DEPARTMENT CHAIR SPOTLIGHT



*Dr. Elizabeth Lester and family*

Meet **Dr. Elizabeth M. Lester**, who is the new Chair of the Department of Educational Studies. She is an Associate Professor of Early Childhood Special Education in her seventh year at ENMU. Before moving to New Mexico, she lived in sunny Florida, where she earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Special Education and autism from Florida State University (Go Noles!) and two undergraduate degrees in Exceptional Student Education and Disability Services from the University of North Florida. Her background centers on supporting young children with autism spectrum disorders and creating inclusive learning environments where every child thrives. Dr. Lester enjoys working with future educators who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of children and families.

"You belong here!" was Dr. Lester's message to the students. Her goal as the new Department Chair is for every student to feel supported, confident, and inspired. "Progress, not perfection, is what truly matters," said Dr. Lester. Some fun facts about her are that her life once entirely revolved around her sweet dog, Max, and she wouldn't change a thing. "Now, I have traded bothering and annoying Max for long Peloton workouts and NASCAR weekends," said Dr. Lester. The CET team wishes Dr. Lester a successful tenure as the Department Chair.

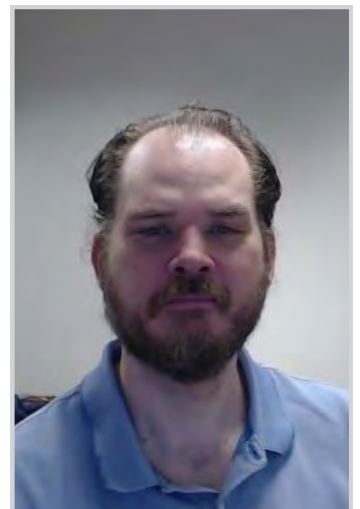
# WELCOME ABOARD: NEW FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

**Dr. Laretta Osho** holds a Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning with a focus on Early Childhood Education from Clemson University, Clemson, SC. She has a Master of Technology in Computer Science and a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from the Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria. She was a classroom teacher at the elementary and high school levels for over 15 years. Dr. Osho homeschooled three of her children for five and a half years. Her teaching and research interests center on early childhood education, child development, integration of technology in early learning environments, and homeschooling. When asked what drew her to ENMU and CET, her response was: "Naturally, I am an educator, and I do not see myself outside the classroom. That automatically places me in the CET. As for ENMU, initially, I was drawn to the small and close-knit community, which was my first attraction. Seeing the way staff and faculty support one another's growth and well-being, ENMU's strong commitment to student-centered learning and community engagement was something I couldn't resist." A fun fact about Dr. Osho is that her idea of fun is uncomplicated and straightforward. She enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends, caring for loved ones, and getting plenty of rest. On behalf of the College of Education, the CET team welcomes Dr. Laretta Osho.



*Dr. Laretta Osho*

**Dr. Geoffrey Kellogg** holds a Ph.D. in Reading and Literacy Education from the University of Florida. He also has a Master's in Secondary English Education from the University of Southern California and a Bachelor's in English from Wake Forest University. Before coming to ENMU, he taught secondary school English and Social Studies in New York City, his hometown. His research and teaching interests focus on disciplinary literacy, including describing the culture and inquiry practices of various academic disciplines (with implications for teacher training and classroom practice). Dr. Kellogg is specifically interested in exploring the benefits of students' initiation into the culture of the humanities. Dr. Kellogg said, "These disciplines offer students language and methods to support inquiry into values and human experience. As a teacher educator, I hope to help teachers recognize that they can enhance the academic rigor of class discussions about values in interesting ways." Dr. Kellogg said one of the things that caught his attention about ENMU was the faculty members he met, as well as the opportunity to teach classes that would draw on his interests. Additionally, he was excited to experience a new part of the country. "Fun facts about me are that I enjoy writing poetry, I am a lover of movies (all genres and eras), I am 6'8", and I haven't played basketball in years," said Dr. Kellogg. On behalf of the College of Education, the CET team is pleased to welcome Dr. Geoffrey Kellogg.



*Dr. Geoffrey Kellogg*

## DR. WOO LEADS ENMU'S STEMInNM MINI-GRANT PROJECT

The New Mexico STEM Innovation Network (STEMInNM), established through state legislative funding in partnership with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED), aims to strengthen STEM education across the K-12 system, align with NMPED priorities, and prepare students for 21st-century careers by connecting systems and fostering innovation statewide. Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) has been awarded a \$12,000 STEMInNM Mini-Grant for a project led by **Dr. Jihyun Woo**. The initiative will host a regional, one-day event in Spring 2026 to connect K-12 schools, higher education, industry, and the community. The event's goal is to align education with New Mexico's STEM industries by expanding Career & Technical Education (CTE) and Work-Based Learning opportunities, including internships. Unlike traditional career fairs, this event will feature hands-on exploration, career-readiness workshops, and direct engagement with local industries. All faculty are invited to participate in or join the project leadership team by contacting Dr. Jihyun Woo ([jihyun.woo@enmu.edu](mailto:jihyun.woo@enmu.edu)).



*Dr. Jihyun Woo*

## FRID GRANT FUELS DR. JUGE'S RESEARCH ON ANGORA RABBITS

**Dr. Aiden Juge** received a FRID grant to acquire Angora rabbits for research in nutrition and behavior, as well as for use in teaching. He is investigating whether protein supplementation can increase hair growth in Angora rabbits, as well as how the rabbits' behavior changes throughout the year. The rabbits have also featured in several course activities. In ANSC 1120, students completed live behavior observations of the rabbits and will learn to spin yarn using rabbit fiber. In AG 320, students used rabbits to practice positive reinforcement training techniques. There will be opportunities for students to complete directed studies projects involving the rabbits during the Spring semester, as well as a summer internship position in rabbit behavior research.



*Rabbits in the Agriculture (AG) Building*



## HISTORIC \$7.5M GIFT TO CET

The College of Education received a transformational \$7.5 million gift from Dr. Gay Su Pinnell, the largest in our institution's history, impart to the outstanding efforts of **Dr. Tsitsi Nyabando** and **Dr. Elizabeth Lester**. This extraordinary contribution will be used to establish the Eastern New Mexico Learning Academy and employ an Endowed Associate/full professorship in Language and Literacy Education, which will be housed within our college. Dr. Pinnell, a nationally recognized leader in literacy education, has a long-standing history of generosity to ENMU; her previous support led to the naming of the Dr. Gay Su Pinnell Education Building in her honor. Her latest gift will have a powerful and lasting impact by advancing literacy skills and education through research, outreach, and direct services. The Learning Academy will house a year-round reading clinic for K-12 students in our region, and the Endowed Professor will lead efforts in literacy research, educator preparation, and community engagement.



*Dr. Tsitsi Nyabando and Dr. Elizabeth Lester*

## DR. ANU OGUNLEYE LEADS FEED THE HOUNDS INITIATIVE TO BOOST LOCAL FOOD SECURITY

**Dr. Anu Ogunleye** pioneered the Feed the Hounds Initiative (FHI), which began in the summer of 2025 as a campus-driven effort to provide fresh, organic, and nutritious food to ENMU faculty, staff, students, and the Portales community. This project not only addressed immediate needs but also generated valuable insights into community engagement, particularly through the community pumpkin harvest, where faculty, staff, students, and members of the Portales community came to pick their pumpkins for free. She also extended the community spirit to Mesa Elementary, the 4th-grade class in Clovis, elementary students from Elida, the Food Band of Eastern New Mexico, and the Senior Center at La Casa in Portales. Dr. Ogunleye distributed over 19,000 pounds of organic, fresh vegetables, over 350 watermelons, and over 450 pumpkins across a one-acre plot of land. Her endeavor made the cover page of the Eastern New Mexico News. By leveraging data collected through FHI from produce distributed, volunteer engagement, local partnerships, and testimonials, Dr. Ogunleye hopes to provide practical frameworks that rural communities can adopt to enhance resilience, improve nutrition accessibility, and strengthen local food systems across Eastern New Mexico.



*Fourth Graders at Mesa Elementary*



*Dr. Anu Ogunleye in the GSSC*

## ALLISON GUERRERO REPRESENTS ENMU IN GLOBAL EDUCATOR PRESENTATION

**Allison Guerrero** had the honor of representing the ENMU College of Education in a presentation for educators in Nepal, where she discussed the importance of classroom management alongside the incorporation of creativity to 70 educators. In her presentation, she emphasized that educators are the managers of the classroom and must remain aware of their learning environment while modeling creative thinking. According to Allison, “A well-managed classroom has simple processes in place that allow students a level of independence while working within the established routines and procedures.” She emphasized that when students are given the freedom to explore, engage, and direct their own learning within those clear boundaries, the results include greater success, deeper understanding, and genuine enjoyment. Allison said that, being only 2.5 years into her teaching career, it was a true privilege to share her experiences and successes with others. “This opportunity reminded me that what I’ve accomplished has made an impact worth sharing. It also strengthened my confidence and professional growth, reinforcing my belief that education is a collaborative, ever-evolving field,” said Allison. Allison reiterated that her experience at the College of Education further encouraged her to continue supporting fellow educators and fostering creativity in classrooms worldwide.



*Allison Guerrero*

## DR. THAPA AWARDED NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE STAR FELLOWSHIP

**Dr. Amrit Thapa**, Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education, was awarded the nationally competitive Service, Teaching, and Research (STaR) Fellowship by the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE) and participated in the program’s 2025 Summer Institute held in Park City, Utah. The AMTE STaR Program is a prestigious early-career induction initiative that supports new faculty in mathematics education at institutions of higher education across the United States. He also received a CPM Travel Scholarship in support of his participation. As one of twenty-six scholars selected nationwide, Dr. Thapa joined a vibrant community of early-career mathematics educators to engage in collaborative sessions focused on developing research agendas, enhancing mathematics content and teaching methods, and cultivating leadership and service skills. The week-long Summer Institute, facilitated by senior and mid-career education faculty, provided opportunities for intensive professional learning, mentorship, and networking. Dr. Thapa’s participation in the AMTE STaR Program reflects his strong commitment to advancing excellence in mathematics teacher education and contributing to the broader community of mathematics education scholars nationwide.



*Dr. Amrit Thapa at the 2025 Summer Institute*

## THREE-DAY FACULTY RETREAT ADVANCES TEACHER PREPARATION EXCELLENCE

The College of Education organized a three-day retreat at the Inn of the Mountain Gods in Ruidoso from May 27 to 29. The event was specially designed to review and revise the methods curriculum and scheduling to ensure full alignment with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and the Teacher Residency program.

Faculty members checked in on Tuesday evening, May 27, and gathered for a welcoming dinner to review the schedule and objectives for the coming days. On Wednesday and Thursday (May 28–29), participants engaged in collaborative discussions and workshops focused on curriculum requirements, alignment, and program improvements. In addition to the formal sessions, attendees enjoyed evening visits to the Spencer Theater and the Flying J Ranch, providing opportunities for cultural enrichment and collegial bonding. The retreat successfully combined professional collaboration with community building. Thanks to grant funding, all travel, lodging, and meals were provided. Participants left with renewed commitment to advancing excellence in teacher preparation and student success.

## ENMU STUDENTS CELEBRATE SUCCESS AT EDUCATORS RISING CONFERENCE

June 29, 2025, was an extraordinary day for Eastern New Mexico University's Collegiate Educators Rising Chapter. During the state conference, our students actively participated in a variety of breakout sessions alongside chapters from across the region and competed in seven events. In addition to showcasing their talents, members engaged in recruitment efforts, encouraging several high school seniors to apply to ENMU's Education Program, and graciously volunteered as judges for multiple competitions. Congratulations to all chapter members who placed in their respective events for their hard work and dedication. Participants reported gaining valuable experience in teamwork and collaboration through their participation in the Children's Literature competition. One of our members delivered an outstanding performance in the Public Speaking competition, supported by enthusiastic cheers from fellow members. According to **Dr. Vetterly**, one of the faculty members involved, the most memorable and surreal moments included forming celebratory tunnels for their competitors as they exited their events, and hearing ENMU announced during the awards ceremony. Our chapter extends sincere appreciation to Dr. Christine Reyes, State Director of Educators Rising, for providing us with this incredible opportunity to learn, grow, and represent Eastern New Mexico University.

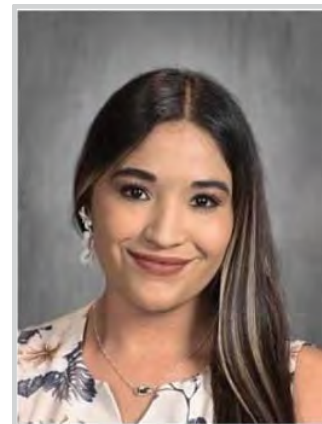


*ENMU Educators Rising chapter members with Dr. Matthew Vetterly and Dr. Tracie Campbell*



## VANESSA MACIAS REFLECTS ON ENMU'S ROLE IN HER TEACHING SUCCESS

**Vanessa Macias**, a proud graduate of Eastern New Mexico University's Teacher Preparation Program who is now entering her fourth year of teaching and continuing her journey in education, shared how the Teacher Preparation Program at ENMU provided her with the strong foundation she needed to succeed in the classroom. Through rigorous coursework, meaningful field experiences, and supportive faculty, Vanessa said she developed the skills and confidence necessary to meet the diverse needs of her students. "ENMU not only prepared me as an educator but also equipped me with the knowledge to earn my endorsement in mathematics and bilingual education, and both areas that have greatly enriched my teaching practice," said Vanessa. Vanessa said that these certifications opened the door for her to support and connect with not only her students but also their families on a deeper level, bridging language and cultural differences within her classroom community. Vanessa has earned a Level II license and currently serves as the Building Mentor Teacher at Pecos Elementary in the Roswell Independent School District, where she guides and supports new educators as they begin their teaching careers. "These accomplishments are rooted in the preparation, mentorship, and encouragement I received from ENMU's dedicated professors and staff," said Vanessa. Vanessa is currently pursuing a master's degree in educational administration at Eastern New Mexico University, with the goal of one day stepping into a leadership role and continuing to make a positive impact in education. "I am deeply grateful to ENMU for the opportunities it has provided me, especially the Greyhound Promise Scholarship, which made it possible for me to pursue my dream of becoming an educator," said Vanessa.



*Vanessa Macias*

## HANDS-ON LEARNING: HORTICULTURE STUDENTS VISIT WAGNER FARM

To foster hands-on and beyond-the-classroom learning, **Dr. Anu Ogunleye** led her horticulture class on a field trip to the farm of **Dr. Kathleen Wagner** and Mr. David Wagner, situated on a 5-acre property where they successfully practice mixed farming. The students walked around the orchard, the organic vegetable and herb garden, and the animal pens. According to the students, one of the most memorable experiences was visiting the llamas and sheep. A huge thank you to the Wagners for opening their property to Dr. Ogunleye and her students. It was an inspiring hands-on experience for the students.



*Dr. Anu Ogunleye and Dr. Kathleen Wagner with students*

# REVITALIZING SOCIAL STUDIES AND CIVICS EDUCATION IN NEW MEXICO

**Dr. Presley Shilling** has recently been appointed Executive Director of the New Mexico Council for the Social Studies (NMCSS). The organization had paused operations around the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since arriving in New Mexico last year, Dr. Shilling has worked closely with social studies professionals statewide to revive NMCSS as an affiliate of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). As a strong advocate for advancing social studies education, Dr. Shilling is honored to lead the organization's next chapter. She aims to expand social studies programs across New Mexico and provide ongoing professional learning opportunities for P-12 teachers.



*Dr. Presley Shilling*

In addition to her leadership at NMCSS, Dr. Shilling was invited to join a steering committee formed by the Secretary of State's Office and the Public Education Department. This group will develop a Civics Diploma Seal for New Mexico high school graduates. The Civics Diploma Seal recognizes students who demonstrate excellence in civic knowledge and engagement. She looks forward to supporting civics education and helping New Mexico students become informed, engaged citizens ready to participate fully in democracy.

## SCHOLARLY SUCCESSES: RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND HIGHLIGHTS

**Dr. Shaughnessy**, as the corresponding author, published an article with his student **Natasha Provost** in the Journal of Anxiety and Depression. The title of the article is "The Interplay of Emotional Intelligence and EMDR (Eye Movement and Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy)." The article appeared in Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 174-179. <https://www.yumedtext.com/storage/jad-174.pdf>

**Dr. Anu Ogunleye** published two articles with other collaborators from different institutions in the Grassland Research and Agronomy journals.

Solomon, J. K., Opoku, A., & **Ogunleye, A. M.** (2025). Nitrogen fertilizer requirements of silage maize and sorghum-sudangrass grown after 4 years of alfalfa production in a semi-arid environment. Grassland Research, 4(3), 194-208.  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/glr2.70018>

Acharya, P., **Ogunleye, A.**, Marsalis, M. A., Bell, J. M., & Ghimire, R. (2025). Enhancing forage production and quality under resource-limited conditions by alfalfa-bermudagrass interseeding. Agronomy Journal, 117(5), e70174.  
<https://acsess.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/agj2.70174>



# CET Costume Chronicles: Snapshots from Spirit Week



*CET Faculty and Staff Spirit Week*



*Dr. Stewart, Dr. Lester, Dr. Nyabando, and Dr. Shilling dressed for Disney day*



*Dr. Stewart, Dr. Shilling, and Dr. Lester dressed for college colors day*



*Dr. Shilling, Dr. Lester, and Dr. Stewart dressed for Halloween*



*Dr. Viner, Dr. Cumby, Dr. Lester, Dr. Petrone, and Dr. Stewart dressed for decades day*





*Students Dana Gay, Emiliana Calvillo, Renise Hollaway, Savana Heflin, and Hannah Dixon dressed as grandparents*



*Mrs. Massey, Dr. Nyabando, Dr. Osho, Dr. Shilling, Dr. Lester, Dr. Campbell, Dr. Shaughnessy, Dr. Wagner, and Dr. Stewart dressed as students*



*Dr. Campbell, Dr. Lester, Dr. Stewart, Dr. Hurren, Dr. Davis, Dr. Cumby, and Dr. Wagner dressed for Decades Day*



*Dr. Wagner, Dr. Shilling, Dr. Lester, Dr. Davis, Dr. Nyabando, Dr. Campbell, Dr. Stewart, Mrs. Massey, & Dr. Cumby dressed for Halloween*



*Dr. Davis, Dr. Stewart, and Dr. Lester dressed as students*