

Minority Retention Funds Report

Name: Kwangwon Lee

Department: Education

Conference: Conference on Research Innovations in Early Intervention, San Diego, CA

Dates of Attendance/Travel: February 26th-29th

To the Attention of: Dr. Stacey Close

The funds awarded me by the Minority Retention and Recruitment Committee were integral in helping me attend the biannual Conference on Research Innovations in Early Intervention (CRIEI) held in San Diego, CA on February 27th through the 29th, 2020. CRIEI is a unique gathering of early intervention researchers from around the world coming to share current research agendas in topics such as autism, inclusive early care and education, research methodologies, social communication and language, and family engagement in intervention. CRIEI is one of the leading international conferences in early intervention. It was an honor to represent Eastern Connecticut State University, one of the few universities represented at the conference from New England and the Northeast.

During the CRIEI 2020 and prior to my own presentation, I had the opportunity to attend oral presentation sessions. The first session I attended was on the influence of measurement choices in intervention on intervention effectiveness outcomes. The presenters discussed different meta-analyses of early interventions to find conclusions of studies and how effectiveness was determined, ultimately showing that intervention effectiveness could be considered context specific. The second session I attended was on the current status and future of mixed methods in early childhood special education. The presenters discussed the current status of mixed methods research and how to conceptualize mixed methods research in early childhood special education.

On the second night of the conference, I presented in the General Poster Session in the cluster of topics on Autism Spectrum Disorders. My presentation was titled *Analyzing the Relationship of Social and Instrumental Turn Taking to Joint Attention*. I co-presented with my doctoral advisor, Dr. Hannah Schertz. Poster sessions were divided into two days, so that researchers could present one day and view posters on the other day (all conference attendees were required to present). During my poster presentation, I spoke to researchers from other universities about the importance of my study and plans for my research agenda. I had the opportunity to network with a few researchers from universities in the Southwest and Midwest, who were pursuing similar research to my own.

After my presentation, I was able to attend the keynote speech by Dr. Hiro Yoshikawa of NYU on supporting early childhood development and family resiliency in humanitarian crises. This presentation was particularly relevant to me as I am currently teaching a course very similar to what was discussed, but the insight I gained at the keynote was new. The presenter discussed how family resiliency is not just about reducing risk factors and supporting protective factors in a general sense, but it is also about supporting families through the context of the individual family unit.

The Minority Retention Funds (MRF) assisted me in my travel expenses to the conference and in conference attendance fees. I not only had the opportunity to present my research, but to also

network with professionals from around the United States. Perhaps the most important part of attending this conference was advancing my knowledge in current practices and future progressions in the field of early childhood special education, knowledge that can enhance my teaching to students at Eastern and could further my research agenda.