



**Press Release: Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities Announces 2024 Tom EC Smith Early Career Award Recipient**

*(For Immediate Release)*

January 12, 2024

The Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities is pleased to announce Dr. Sarah Douglas as the recipient of the 2024 Research Award. This award recognizes exceptional effort and involvement in furthering the cause of persons with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities through research.

Dr. Sarah Douglas, an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Michigan State University, is dedicated to research on the development and implementation of interventions for communication partners of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Regarded as a hardworking, organized, and detail-oriented researcher, Dr. Douglas has earned praise from nominators, including Dr. Yijie Wang, who lauded her AAC work for its "profound impact" and "numerous innovations through state-of-the-art, community-based, online interventions for teachers, paraeducators, parents, and siblings of children with developmental disabilities." Beyond her research, Dr. Douglas is recognized for her contributions to knowledge translation and student mentorship through various training and engagement activities.

This distinguished award is presented by The Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD), a special interest association within the Council for Exceptional Children—the largest international professional organization dedicated to supporting the needs of students with disabilities. Since its establishment in 1963, DADD has been a leading voice in the field of education for students with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities, actively contributing to research dissemination, the creation of nationally recognized professional practice standards, and fostering robust professional networking. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place at DADD's annual conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, on January 18, 2024.

For further information, please contact Dr. Jordan Shurr, DADD Awards Chair, at [j.shurr@queensu.ca](mailto:j.shurr@queensu.ca). Additional details about the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities can be found at <http://www.daddcec.com/>.