



**Division on  
Autism and  
Developmental  
Disabilities**

**Press Release: Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities Announces 2025 Early Career Research Award Recipient**

*(For Immediate Release)*

January 10, 2025

The Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) is pleased to announce Dr. Emily Gregori as the 2025 Early Career Research Award recipient. This award honors individuals who demonstrate exceptional promise in research related to students with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities at the early stages of their careers.

Dr. Gregori is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education and a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst. She earned her Ph.D. from Purdue University. Before pursuing graduate studies, Dr. Gregori was a special education teacher and behavioral therapist. Her research promotes positive behavioral outcomes for adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities, specifically exploring methods to improve the sustainability of behavioral interventions and effective staff training in natural settings. She also works to identify evidence-based interventions for supporting challenging behaviors in adults with developmental disabilities. Dr. Mandy Rispoli, Quantitative Foundation Bicentennial Professor at the University of Virginia, highlighted the practical impact of Dr. Gregori's work, noting, "her research promotes independence and social-communication skills for adults with significant disabilities, especially through interventions that are feasible for direct care staff to implement. This work is desperately needed in the field today."

Dr. Lisa Sharon Cushing, Associate Professor at the University of Illinois Chicago, praised Dr. Gregori's accomplishments: "In fewer than five years, Emily has published 45 peer-reviewed papers in top-tier journals and secured over \$5 million in funding. Her innovative research has dramatically impacted the field and continues to improve access to quality services for individuals with IDD."

This distinguished award is presented by DADD, a special interest association within the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the largest international professional organization dedicated to supporting students with disabilities. Since 1963, DADD has been a leading voice in educating students with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities, contributing to research dissemination, developing professional practice standards, and fostering robust professional networking.

The award ceremony is scheduled for January 22, 2025, at DADD's annual conference in Clearwater Beach, Florida. For further information, please contact Dr. Melissa Savage, DADD Awards Chair, at [mns029@uark.edu](mailto:mns029@uark.edu). Additional details about the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities can be found at <http://www.daddcec.com/>.