Staff Profile: Angela Morrell

Angela Morrell is the person who holds our program together. As the program’s secretary, Angela helps you along the way from the time you are interested in the program all the way until you walk across the stage at graduation.

The glue that holds us together, Angela has been with the department for seven years. During this time, she has assisted with the growth of the program as we welcomed and graduated more and more students. Responsive and caring, Angela is always there to support the Literary Studies students in anything they need help with.

If you know anything about Angela, you know that she is a determined worker, colleague, and friend. In her personal life, she made a huge weight loss transformation by losing over 150 pounds through exercise, lifestyle changes, and a team of supportive family and friends. She has shared her inspirational story with many others, including speaking to students at MTSU, local media, seminars with her coach/trainer, and conferences. She is truly an inspiration to those at MTSU.

Because of her passion for health and wellness, she plans to pursue her master’s degree in Health and Human Performance. She wants to study the latest research, information and resources available. This knowledge, coupled with her own personal experience, will be valuable tools as she continues to help others on their journeys to healthier living.

Angela has been married to Allen, a local worship leader and singer/songwriter, for 31 years. They have two adult children. Her family is no stranger to MTSU. Angela previously worked at MTSU’s TN Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia and graduated from MTSU in 1997 with a bachelor’s degree in nursing. Allen graduated from MTSU and is currently working on his master’s degree in Liberal Arts. Both of their children are working on degrees at MTSU as well.
This year’s conference welcomed Dr. Peter Sayer from the University of Texas at San Antonio. His keynote presentation, Linguistic Funds of Knowledge: Building on Bilingual Students’ Home Language Resources, was of great interest for teachers who teach diverse learners.

An important topic for teachers in the Middle Tennessee area, teachers left the presentation with more knowledge and information to take back to their classrooms and districts.

Afterward, Dr. Sayer sat in on many presentations and was impressed by the research.

The 5th Annual Literacy Research Conference saw a variety of presentations in the area of literacy. Spoken presentations included a review of mindfulness and exercise in schools, embedding working memory training in an intervention program, Common Core, and a review of Specific Learning Disabilities as defined in Tennessee.

Upcoming Conferences & Proposal Deadlines

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<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Proposal Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education Division of CEC</td>
<td>November 7-10, 2017</td>
<td>Savannah, GA</td>
<td>Proposal deadline past</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA)</td>
<td>November 8-10, 2017</td>
<td>Starkville, MS</td>
<td>Proposals due by July 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeastern Psychological Association</td>
<td>March 6-9, 2018</td>
<td>Charleston, SC</td>
<td>Proposals due by October 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee Reading Association</td>
<td>December 10-12, 2017</td>
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<td>Proposals due by August 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Dyslexia Association</td>
<td>November 8-11, 2017</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>Proposal deadline past</td>
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Presentations


Magne, C. (2016, November 30). Music training, speech rhythm and reading skills. In D. Dickinson (Chair), Exploring the relationship between music, language and literacy. Symposium conducted at the 66th Annual Conference of the Literacy Research Association, Nashville, TN.


Reed, K. N. (2017, January). Super librarians: Cultivating the mindset of school librarians who go above and beyond. Paper presented at annual meeting of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE), Atlanta, GA.

Important Reminders For Students

- Students wanting to complete the preliminary exam must complete the registration form during the first two weeks of the semester.
- For students planning on working on their residency requirements, don’t forget to fill out the residency contract.
- When requesting a POD for LITS and DYST courses, remember to email both Angela and the professor with your M #, course number, and CRN number.
- Program Orientation is mandatory for ALL Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program students (current and new). This year it will be held on August 26, 2017 (see page 6 for more details). Mark your calendars!!
Publications


Recent Program Graduates

Joanne Coggins
Measurement of Morphological Awareness Use of Fourth and Fifth Grade Students with Reading Difficulties
Dr. Eric Oslund, Chair
Dr. Amy M. Elleman
Dr. Cyrille L. Magne

Heechun Moon
The Influence of Implicit Speech Rhythm Sensitivity on Reading Comprehension
Dr. Cyrille L. Magne, Chair
Dr. Amy M. Elleman
Dr. Jwa K. Kim

Andrea Milligan
A Psychometric Analysis of Teacher-Made Benchmark Assessment in English Language Arts
Dr. Jwa Kim, Chair
Dr. Amy Elleman
Dr. Cyrille Magne

Sang Hee Jung
Metrical Stress Sensitivity and Reading Skills in Adults
Dr. Cyrille Magne, Chair
Dr. Amy Elleman
Dr. Aleka A. Blackwell

Holly B. Marshall
The Effectiveness of Readers’ Theatre on Fluency, Comprehension, and Motivation on Primary Students
Dr. Amy Elleman, Chair
Dr. Jwa Kim
Dr. Alyson Bass
Dr. Joan Boulware

Melanie Maxwell
Examining Professional Development and Teacher’s Learning About Literacy Instruction
Dr. Cyrille Magne, Chair
Dr. Terri Tharp
Dr. Joanna Durham-Barnes
Dr. Amy Elleman

Casey Brasher
Beyond Screening and Progress Monitoring: An Examination of the Reliability and Concurrent Validity of Maze Comprehension Assessments for Fourth-Grade Students
Dr. Amy Elleman, Chair
Dr. Jwa Kim
Dr. Aimee Holt

Laura Clark Briggs
A Comparison of Narrative and Expository Text Comprehension for Students at Varying Levels of SES: A Latent Growth Curve Analysis
Dr. Jwa Kim, Chair
Dr. Amy Elleman
Dr. Ying Jin
The Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program

Outstanding Students & Scholarships Recipients

The program’s outstanding students for 2016-2017 were Weon Kim and Adam Rollins (pictured next to Dr. Kim).

The following received $500 scholarships from the Ethel Bowden Stricklin Endowed Scholarship: Tess Fotidzis, Zahya Ahmed, and Daren Li (Pictured above).

Stacy Fields was awarded a Research in Progress award at the Mid-South Educational Research Association.

Daren Li, Jwa Kim, and Zaya Ahmed were awarded second place, for graduate students in College of Education, for their presentation Analyzing Growth and Change Between ELL and non-ELL Examinees: Latent Growth Curve Modeling Applied to Reading Comprehension Test at MTSU Scholar’s Day.

Leticia Skae was the runner up teacher of the year for Metro Nashville Public Schools.

Dr. Tim Odegard was awarded the Luke Waites ALTA Award of Service for his contributions to improve services for students with dyslexia.

Dr. Amy Elleman was recently awarded tenure. She will be promoted to Associate Professor this fall.

Faculty and Student News

Sawyer-Rudler Research Fellowship in Literacy

Dr. Diane J. Sawyer held the Katherine Davis Murfree Chair of Excellence in Dyslexic Studies from 1989 until her retirement in 2010. During that time, the TN Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia was established in 1993. Dr. Sawyer also proposed the establishment of the Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program and she served as the first director of the program.

The Spring 2017 award recipients were Tess Fotidzis and Collin Olson.

The fall application deadline is August 31, 2017.