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Faculty and alumni from Georgia Southern University attended and presented research at the 26th Annual European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) Conference that was held in Dublin, Ireland, from Aug. 31 to Sept. 3.

Jerri Kropp, Ph.D., associate professor of child and family development (CHFD)
in the School of Human Ecology, and CHFD alumna Mary Wallace-Noe ('11), presented their research, “How to Reduce Children's Fears of Doctors Visits Using Medical Play.” Their research focused on the impact medical play has on young children and its usage in a childcare setting.

In addition, Kropp also presented research conducted with Georgia Southern alumna Mikaela Shupp ('15) titled, “Benefits of a Therapy Dog in the Classroom: A Review of Research.”

The attendees networked with many presenters at the conference from all over the world including Alexander Muela, a professor from Spain. Muela works with therapy dogs to help children who have been abused, and he discussed future projects with Kropp.

“He and I have emailed back and forth and we talked about doing a project together,” said Kropp. “I would collect data in the US and he would collect data in Spain, so I'm very excited. The whole experience was just amazing. Any time you get to meet people internationally is such a great opportunity.”

Also presenting at the conference was Nancy McBride Arrington, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Georgia Southern. Her co-presenters in the symposium “Praxeological Learning: Social Justice and Social Capital” included Vickie Lake, Ph.D., professor at the University of Oklahoma, and June O’Sullivan, director of the London Early Years Foundation in the United Kingdom.

In the session, Arrington shared research from the chapter she wrote in the recently-published book, *Praxeological Learning: Service-Learning in Teacher Education* by Christian Winterbottom and Vickie E. Lake.

Arrington’s chapter is titled “A Journey of Service-Learning: Three Different Professional Lenses.”

“It was awesome to be able to meet, collaborate and form new professional relationships with other early childhood educators from around the globe,” said Arrington. “One of the highlights for me personally was the lovely introduction to the culture of Irish music and dance provided at the conference’s opening ceremony.”

The conference, the largest childhood conference in Europe, consisted of 920 participants from six continents and 44 countries. It provides a framework that promotes networking for scholars, policy makers, researchers and practitioners.
Faculty and Alumni Present Research at 26th Annual EECERA Conference | College of Health and Human Sciences | Georgia Southern University

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