



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

Norton School of Family  
& Consumer Sciences



—  
**STRONGER  
TOGETHER**  
—

A Case for Support for the Frances McClelland Institute for  
Children, Youth, and Families



## **PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES**

Thriving communities depend on strong families, and strong families are a product of thriving communities. When we support families by creating opportunities for children and youth to achieve their full potential, we build a stronger future for all of us. More and more families must now cope with longstanding stressors like economic disadvantage and bullying, and emerging stressors, such as increased access to social media, skyrocketing teen suicide rates, and a rapidly changing economy. The sheer array of challenges families face requires innovative and collaborative research in order to ensure our children, youth and families thrive.

At the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families (FMI), we are uniquely positioned to immediately impact the lives of children, youth, and families through our timely, actionable research. We actively team with community organizations to improve the lives of vulnerable children, youth, and families. FMI exemplifies how the University of Arizona and communities can come together to improve the lives of families in Arizona.

With your participation, FMI can expand critical research and impactful programming across Arizona.

## **OUR LEADERSHIP**



Melissa A. Barnett, Ph.D., Director of University of Arizona Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families, and Norton Endowed Chair in Fathers, Parenting and Families and Fitch Nesbitt Associate Professor

“I am passionate about my research and leading FMI because of my own experiences as an elementary school teacher in a high-risk, low-income community. I was struck by how some students thrived despite the odds, and the extensive support of multiple family members in the lives of young children. My goal is to understand how to leverage these strengths through research that impacts policy and program development and improves the odds of success for caregivers and young children from disadvantaged communities.”

## THE POWER OF HEALTHY FAMILIES FROM RESEARCH TO RESILIENCE

FMI bridges research and practice. We do not just study the problems facing families; we work to identify innovative solutions to help families and individuals overcome them. We serve as a hub for family and youth-focused research happening across the UA as we collaborate with faculty from the College of Education, Health Sciences, Psychology, the Museum of Art, and many more areas.

At FMI, we:

- Build innovative teams of scientists committed to tackling the most pressing issues facing families today, such as suicide, bullying, and economic pressures. In 2019 alone, FMI-affiliated researchers were awarded just over \$1,000,000 in federal grants for collaborative research projects on topics that included peer victimization and early education for children from low-income families.
- Meet face-to-face with communities through community conversations to discuss research discoveries that help children, youth and families, and seek their perspectives to enhance our research. For example, as representatives of their communities, participants talk to our researchers about the challenges they see that need to be addressed to support healthy youth, and we can apply this information to the design and interpretation of our research.
- Put our research into the hands of families, community members and practitioners who are on the front lines of building family and youth resilience. Our social media posts and publications summarizing research in everyday language reach thousands of people each month.
- Mentor and educate the next generation of scholars and community leaders by providing hands-on research experiences, opportunities for internships, and an outstanding educational experience. Our graduates become leaders in research, policy and direct service with families across Arizona and the country.





## IN THE COMMUNITY

### **COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS**

We partner with local organizations to bring together researchers and community members to tackle real issues facing families. For example, we partnered with the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona because the usual challenges of picky eaters can be especially difficult for busy families with limited resources for healthy food. In these conversations, our researchers listen to parents and others as they share the challenges they face and how they try to deal with them. These conversations lead to more impactful and relevant research and community involvement. This approach advances science and family wellbeing.

### **THE FRANCES MCCLELLAND VISION AWARDS**

These annual awards honor community members who are making significant contributions to the wellbeing of children, youth and families. The awardees exemplify the strength, dedication, vision and passion that Frances McClelland herself exhibited throughout her life.

### **PAMELA TURBEVILLE SPEAKER SERIES**

At this monthly speaker series, UA researchers and other experts present on an array of topics that impact families and youth every day. This free series is open to the public, streamed live on Facebook, and posted to YouTube to maximize our reach.



## STRONG FAMILIES, STRONG COMMUNITIES

Moving forward, we seek to increase our collective impact by sustaining and expanding everything we do. Increased funding brings new faculty, supports faculty efforts to secure grants, and encourages timely, relevant research projects. By growing our partnerships, we can learn from each other and build more productive networks to benefit communities and give community members and organizations the tools to make everyone's family more resilient and equipped to handle challenges. Then, in turn, the youth and families themselves can support their communities.

Impactful research is only effective if it is understood and applied. We aim to expand the distribution and use of our research findings by teaching students how to best communicate complex research findings in ways that families will easily understand and be able to put to use. Ultimately, as they enter the workforce, these students will create a lasting impact across the country by applying these vital skills in their future jobs.

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

By contributing to our endowment, you will help us sustain and increase our impact. Our four priority areas for growth are:



### **Program Coordination**

The success of FMI depends, in large part, on our ability to manage partnerships and outreach across the state's 15 counties and hundreds of service organizations throughout Arizona. Our Program Coordinator serves as the nucleus to all we do and works hard to keep partnerships in our community and on campus strong. Your investment supporting this position ensures our continued impact and progress.



### **Expanded Programming**

We have great potential to do more to inform and educate families so they and their communities are strong. With your gift to programming, we will increase the reach and impact of our work and forge new partnerships with community organizations. Your support helps bring relevant learning opportunities to families who need it most.



### **Innovation Fund**

As a top research institute, we rely on pursuing major funding grants from government organizations and foundations, such as the National Institutes of Health and the W.T. Grant Foundation. Your investment will provide us with the seed money to test our boldest ideas. Those results will be used to seek grants to have a major impact on the daily lives of families. Your support gives us the time and resources we need to be nimble and move quickly from concept to reality for our most innovative projects.



### **Student Support**

By supporting our students, you directly help train the next generation of researchers and community leaders. Funding will go toward summer fellowships and internships for our undergraduate and graduate students. Fellowships will support student research and provide opportunities to share research findings with families, communities, and the broader scientific community. Internships will provide hands-on experiences that tackle community and society challenges. Right now, we are developing opportunities such as working with non-profit organizations to help them more effectively evaluate their program results. This and other experiential activities will help students develop new skills that will increase their professional job prospects and help them better serve their communities.

## **THANK YOU FOR INVESTING IN RESILIENT FAMILIES AND STRONG COMMUNITIES**

Your support of the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families is helping us build a stronger Arizona. The resilience of families in our most vulnerable communities has a ripple effect and directly impacts the mental, physical, and economic health of our communities overall.

Researching important issues facing today's families and youth, translating that research into actionable language, and bringing that information into a community discussion where everyone contributes and learns from each other is what FMI is all about. We hope you will join us in making this work possible.

Thank you.



**For more information, please contact**

Michael Celaya



Director of Development  
520.621.7883  
[michaelcelaya@email.arizona.edu](mailto:michaelcelaya@email.arizona.edu)



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

**Norton School of Family  
& Consumer Sciences**