

# RENZULLI CENTER NEWS

## **The Power of One Person: The SEM in Italy**

Dr. Joseph Renzulli had the opportunity to meet Lara Milan in his travels to Italy where she told him of her goal to bring the SEM to her country. SEM Outreach Coordinator, Nicole Waicunas, reached across the many miles to meet online with her, educators, and their students as they took part in their very first enrichment clusters. Lara traveled back to Connecticut to continue her research, attending Confratute, and receiving her 3 Summers Degree. Through determination, and despite many setbacks that were beyond her control, Lara has been able to open the very first SEM school in Varese, Italy. We are so excited for her, and all of the teachers, children, families, and communities who will now focus on interests, learning styles, and preferred modes of expression, thereby offering an opportunity to create and share what they discover about themselves, one another, and the world. The following excerpt from *La Stampa* and written by Elisa Forte provides more details on this stunning accomplishment.

### **LA STAMPA**

Wednesday, January 13th, 2021

A Changing Italy

Elisa Forte

### **Providing a personalized curriculum**

Lara Milan is the only Specialist in Gifted and Talented Education in Italy since 2015. She studied at the University of Connecticut. She is the ambassador of the SEM Model: the pedagogical bible adopted in many American schools in the past 40 years, created by Joseph Renzulli, winner of the McGraw Prize, and Sally Reis. This SEM meets the educational needs of super bright students and those who struggle, in the same classroom.

### **What does a Specialist in Gifted and Talented Education do?**

The role of the Specialist is to train and inspire teachers, who become talent scouts in their own classrooms. In addition to teaching their subject matter, they build creative learning experiences that are self-selected by students to enhance their unique talents.

### **Are there already SEM classes in Italy?**

Yes, there is a middle school class in Vicenza. The first SEM school in Italy has already been opened in Varese: the Salesian A.T. Maroni Middle School.

### **Is this the school of the future?**

Yes, this is the school that I dreamed of as it applies the teaching strategies of differentiation to personalize the curriculum.

### **How does the SEM change students' school life?**

Teachers transform their classroom into a place for talent development and view students as creative producers rather than consumers of knowledge. All teaching materials are open source and in English. They will be published soon in Italian in a practical guide.

For more information, contact: Nicole Waicunas at [nicole.waicunas@uconn.edu](mailto:nicole.waicunas@uconn.edu)

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## **Improve Your Teaching with Technology**

Like the rest of the country, our lives were turned up-side-down with the arrival of COVID. **Teaching and learning with technology** took center stage. We're proud that the educators who have attended our annual iPad conference had a leg up on the monumental task educators faced and continue to face. On **May 12, 2021** we are expanding our focus to additional platforms and will hold our 9th annual conference for K-12 educators virtually on how to integrate iPads, Chromebooks, and Cloud-Based Computing devices into the teaching and learning process. We hope you will join us for this learning filled virtual day where fellow educators share how they are using technology to promote student learning. Visit <https://ipad.education.uconn.edu/> for more information.

For more information, contact: Del Siegle at [del.siegle@uconn.edu](mailto:del.siegle@uconn.edu)

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## **James Kaufman to Give Free Webinar on Creativity**

On February 20th, 2021, Dr. James C. Kaufman will be joining our free online professional learning series with a session on creativity. In this webinar, he will first cover key concepts of creativity, such as its trajectory and ways it may be "hidden." Next, he will highlight a wide range of benefits of creativity that extend beyond the classroom (e.g., positive well-being, meaning, and equity). Dr. Kaufman will wrap up (with lots of time for questions) by discussing tips for improving both student creativity – and your own.

To register visit: [Events from the Center | Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development \(uconn.edu\)](#)

For more information, contact: Stephanie Huntington at [stephanie.huntington@uconn.edu](mailto:stephanie.huntington@uconn.edu)



# NCRGE Plans Virtual Conference March 26

The National Center for Research on Gifted Education (NCRGE) will hold a free virtual conference on **Friday, March 26, 2021** from **11 a.m. to 4 p.m. EDT**. The conference (*NCRGE's First Five Years: Results, Reflections, and Recommendations*) will include four short presentations by NCRGE researchers followed by reflections and recommendation for practice and future research from panelists. [Register here by Wednesday, March 24](#) if you wish to virtually attend this free one-day event.

Tentative schedule for Friday, March 26 (all times are Eastern Daylight Savings Time)

- 11:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m. Welcome and Overview of the Day
- 11:15 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. Presentation: **Identification of Underserved Populations**
- 11:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Panel Feedback
- 12:00 p.m. – 12:25 p.m. Presentation: **Overview of What Gifted Education Looks Like**
- 12:25 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. Panel Feedback
- 12:45 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Break
- 1:15 p.m. – 1:40 p.m. Presentation: **Different Curriculum vs Differentiated Curriculum**
- 1:40 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Panel Feedback
- 2:00 p.m. – 2:25 p.m. Presentation: **The Role of Teacher Autonomy in Serving Gifted Students**
- 2:25 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Panel Feedback
- 2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Demonstration of NCRGE Shiny app
- 3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Small Table Discussions
- 3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Whole Group Discussion: Moving Research in the Field of Gifted Education Forward

For more information, contact: Del Siegle at [del.siegle@uconn.edu](mailto:del.siegle@uconn.edu)

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## Free Event: Tech. Roulette in the Age of COVID-19

Stacy Hayden will be joining us next in our online parent series on February 18th, 2021. In this fast-paced session, she shares several websites parents can use with their children while they are home. Quick overviews of websites are provided, to be used for enrichment in all areas. Participants walk away with something new to “beat the boredom” at home!

To register for this event visit: [Events from the Center | Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development \(uconn.edu\)](#)

For more information, contact: Stephanie Huntington at [stephanie.huntington@uconn.edu](mailto:stephanie.huntington@uconn.edu)



# Renzulli Featured by New Jersey Gifted Group-NJAGC

Over the years, Joe has been asked many times where his ideas have come from. In the following YouTube interview, he tells some stories about influences on his early life and teaching experiences. Pass it on to interested colleagues in your social media.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDZFpy7xDE&feature=youtu.be\[ML1\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDZFpy7xDE&feature=youtu.be[ML1])

## Rodriguez and Thom Named Outstanding Neag Alumni

[Three Summers](#) MA graduates Lauren Rodriguez and Melissa Thom have been named 2021 Outstanding Neag Alumni. Rodriguez, who is a principal at Southeast Elementary School in Mansfield, CT, is the 2021 Outstanding School Administrator. Lauren received her MA in 2003 and Sixth Year in 2006. Thom, who is a library media specialist for Bristow Middle School in West Hartford, CT, was named 2021 Outstanding Professional. Melissa received her MA in 2015. The pair will be honored at a virtual celebration on Saturday, March 13, 2021. Learn more about Lauren and Melissa and the virtual celebration on Saturday, March 13. Learn more about Lauren and Melissa and the virtual celebration at <https://education.uconn.edu/2021/01/13/announcing-the-2021-neag-school-alumni-awards-honorees/>

For more information, contact: Del Siegle at [del.siegle@uconn.edu](mailto:del.siegle@uconn.edu)



## Neag School Ph.D. Student's Research to Combine Sport, Education

Luis Ferreira will begin his Ph.D. studies in educational psychology this spring after facing unforeseen obstacles in obtaining a visa to study in the United States. Accepted to UConn's Neag School of Education in February 2020, he has made tremendous sacrifices to pursue his doctorate, including moving away from his wife and family in Brazil.

Ferreira was unsuccessful in obtaining a visa in Brazil due to COVID-19 regulations, so he moved to Portugal for four months, where he holds dual citizenship. He secured his student visa while in Portugal and arrived in Connecticut in late December.

"It makes me feel very special to be able to go there," said Ferreira while anticipating his arrival at UConn. "I'm going there to learn and to translate what I learn to other people."

Read more ...  
<https://education.uconn.edu/2021/01/15/neag-school-ph-d-students-research-to-combine-sport-education/>

