

# Autism Diagnostic Center

## New Mexico State University

Heike Lehnert-LeHouillier, PhD, CCC-SLP  
Interim Department Head

Victoria Almaguer, MA, CCC-SLP  
ADC Clinic Director



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# Mission

The ADC's mission is to offer state-of-the-art autism evaluations to families in Southern New Mexico by a multidisciplinary assessment team.

We are dedicated to offering community support and outreach through evidence-based parent training, support groups for individuals with autism and their families, and opportunities to participate in research studies.

As part of the ADC's service and outreach mission, we are committed to educating and training graduate students with the goal to develop future health and education professionals who are prepared to work with individuals with autism and their families.



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# Evaluation Process

## Intake (2 hours)

Interview with diagnostic  
team

## Evaluation (2-3 hours)

Clinical Observation/  
Assessment Administration

## Feedback (2 hours)

Results / Individualized  
Service Plan

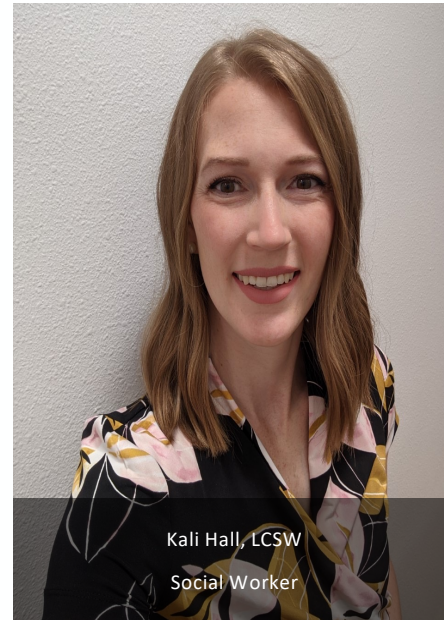
# Diagnostic Team

- Clinical Psychologist
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Pediatrician
- Graduate Student





# Diagnostic Team (English)



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# Diagnostic Team (Spanish)

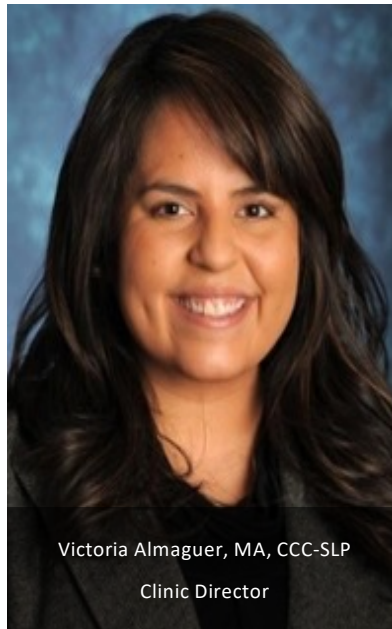


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# Administrative Team



Heike Lehnert-LeHouillier, PhD, CCC-SLP  
Interim Department Head



Victoria Almaguer, MA, CCC-SLP  
Clinic Director



Marie Salazar  
Program Coordinator



Smith Frederick, PhD, OM  
Grant Writer



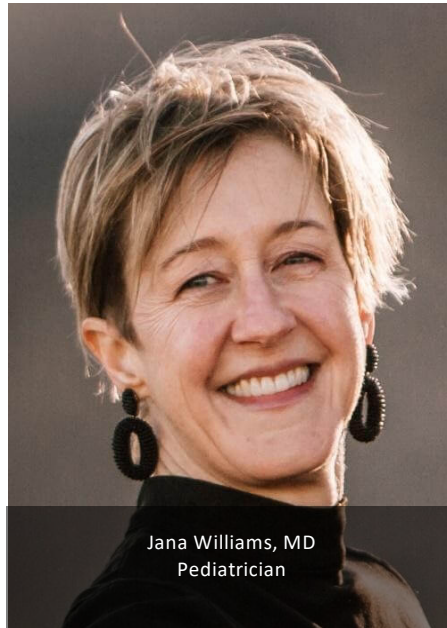
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# Evaluation Support Team



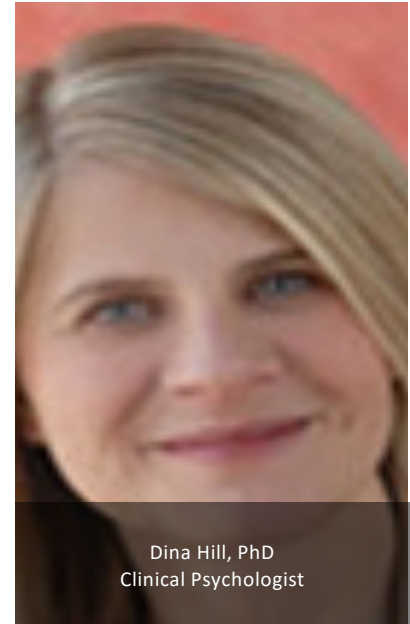
Lauren Parks, PhD  
Clinical Psychologist



Jana Williams, MD  
Pediatrician



Ann Branscum, PhD  
Clinical Psychologist



Dina Hill, PhD  
Clinical Psychologist



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# Two Diagnostic Teams

- Increased number of evaluations from two per month to twenty-six per month
- Increased our ability to evaluate and support families with specialized needs, such as feeding, trauma-informed care, and other secondary diagnoses
- Supported our ability to expand community outreach and seek out additional funding for these areas of need in our southern NM community



# Demographics of Families

- 34% Dona Ana County
- 23% Otero County
- 4% Luna County
- 4% Fulton County

The ADC offers diagnostic evaluations in person and remotely via telehealth. We also utilize a hybrid model with portions of the evaluation performed in the center and others, such as intake and feedback via telehealth.



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# Need for Services

- 208 currently on our waiting list
- UNM reports greater than 700 with a wait time of over two years
- 11 referrals received weekly on average
- Proactive planning in place to avoid increased wait times



# **Building Infrastructure to Support the Autism Community in Southern New Mexico**



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# Impacting New Mexico's Workforce

- Graduate Students in
  - Psychology
  - Speech-Language Pathology
  - Social Work
- Graduate Student Training
  - 22 students have or will be joining the workforce with specialized knowledge of evaluating, treating, and supporting individuals with autism and their families.
  - To date 91% of students who have graduated joined the southern NM workforce.





# Community Outreach

- Events for the Autism Community
- Community Trainings
- Evidence based support services



# RUBI – Parent Training for Disruptive Behaviors: 12-16 weeks

## Core Sessions:

Behavioral Principles ● Prevention Strategies ● Daily Schedules ● Reinforcement 1  
Reinforcement 2 ● Planned Ignoring ● Compliance Training ● Functional  
Communication Training ● Teaching Skills 1 ● Teaching Skills 2 ● Generalization



## Optional Sessions:

- Crisis Management
- Feeding Problems
- Imitations Skills
- Sleep Problems
- Time Out
- Toilet training
- Token Economy Systems



# PEERS - The Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relationship Skills: 16 weeks

Teens learn to:

- Use appropriate conversational skills
- Use humor appropriately
- Use electronic communication
- Enter & exit conversations
- Be a good host during get-togethers
- Be a good sport
- Handle arguments and disagreements
- Change a bad reputation
- Handle rumors and gossip
- Handle rejection, teasing and bullying

Parents learn to reinforce skills across social setting and support their teens social independence.



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# Funding Sources

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NM HED - Research and Public Service Project (RPSP)

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NM Department of Health

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NM ECECD

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Paso Del Norte

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Private Donations



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# Future Endeavors

**Support group for  
newly diagnosed**

**Caregiver  
support group**

