BE INSPIRED
SALT CENTER JOURNAL 2014
Dear students, parents, and friends,

It is my honor to welcome you to the 2014 SALT Center Journal. This edition is special for many reasons, but perhaps most notably because it is dedicated to a revolutionary in the field of academic support – Dr. Eleanor V. Harner.

Eleanor founded the SALT Program (which would later become the SALT Center) in 1980. Eleanor believed in educational equity and access for all, and she cared deeply for those around her. She passed away in 2013, leaving behind a beautiful family and a legacy of student success.

As we continue to serve students who learn differently, we are guided by Eleanor’s spirit and passion for education, which flow stronger than ever through the halls of the Patricia A. Bartlett Building (home of the SALT Center). Her legacy will forever inspire respect, dedication, and perseverance.

Today, the University is on the precipice of embracing new methods for engaging students and delivering education. We call upon Eleanor’s authenticity and creative approach to help us trail-blaze in ways that even she could not have imagined. Students who learn differently now have greater opportunity to enter higher education than ever before; our mission is to facilitate access to the curriculum and to help students build confidence as life-long learners.

Please join us in celebrating more than three decades of success catalyzed by Eleanor Harner, and the thousands of lives that she has impacted through the SALT Center.

Warmest regards,

Rudy M. Molina, Jr.

Interested in receiving regular updates from our director?
Join our mailing list by visiting www.salt.arizona.edu/join-mailing-list

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Rudy M. Molina, Jr., Director of the SALT Center
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LEADERSHIP

ELEANOR HARNER: HONORING A VISIONARY

A visionary, a mentor, an encourager… these are the words that describe the legendary Eleanor Harner. Eleanor was a life-long educator, and the founding director of the internationally-recognized UA Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques (SALT) Center. The program, which began with a handful of students, currently serves roughly 600. From its humble beginnings in the basement of Old Main, to its current home in the three-story Patricia A. Bartlett Building, the SALT Center has emerged as a leader in comprehensive academic support for students who learn differently. This organization owes all of its success to the incredible effort and vision of Eleanor Harner. The year was 1980, and Eleanor was a tenacious employee who worked at the Student Counseling Center at the University of Arizona. She noticed the increasing needs of students who were diagnosed with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. With her extensive knowledge as a diagnostician in the field of learning challenges, Eleanor taught these students various learning strategies and offered tutoring support. Eleanor’s compassion and expertise enabled students to realize their potential by engaging in their own learning process. Her efforts promoted advocacy among students, and made instructors aware that not all students learn the same way. Eventually, Eleanor took this model of academic support and founded the SALT Program (which eventually became the SALT Center).

Word spread quickly about the existence of the SALT Program. Eleanor recognized the need to add more staff to work with the UA’s ever-increasing population of students with learning disabilities. However, office space was at a premium - operating out of the basement of Old Main, employees occupied hallways, closets, or any quiet place to conduct their tutoring sessions. Eventually, Eleanor realized that the lack of space was impacting her team’s ability to properly serve their students, so she decided it was time for a change.

In 1991, Eleanor spearheaded a capital campaign to raise funds for the construction of a new building to house the SALT Program. She rallied donors, families, and the UA community to make the campaign an overwhelming success. Two years later, when the SALT Program became an independent department known as the SALT Center, Eleanor stepped down as acting director and served briefly as the Director of Development before retiring from the UA. Although the SALT Center building (now named the Patricia A. Bartlett Building) was not completed until the Fall of 2001, Eleanor’s initial vision and perseverance brought it to fruition.

SALT CENTER TIMELINE

1980 – SALT Program founded by Eleanor Harner
1993 – SALT Program becomes new department, the SALT Center, housed in the basement of Old Main

By Rose Audretsch
The SALT Center recognized Eleanor in 2012 at the Family Weekend Award Reception. A plaque with her name and likeness now has a permanent home on the entrance wall into the Patricia A. Bartlett Building. She was honored for all of her contributions to the SALT Center; since Eleanor was unable to attend, her daughter, Amy Davidson, accepted the award on her behalf.

Because of Eleanor, the SALT Center continues to thrive, serving more and more students every year. We have gained notoriety for our innovative research and practices in the field of learning differences. In 2013, the SALT Center was recognized in a new survey as an international model for academic support in higher education. None of these distinctions would be possible without Eleanor’s commitment to students with learning and attention challenges.

We were deeply saddened to hear of Eleanor’s passing on December 7, 2013. We are grateful to her for inspiring us to promote academic success for all students. In alignment with UA President Ann Weaver Hart’s directive of 100% engagement, Eleanor paved the way; she set an example for the way in which all constituents need to be engaged in the learning process at the University level. We are indebted to Eleanor for her compassion and commitment to all learners; her legacy shines brightly as we continue the fine work that she started.

I REMEMBER ELEANOR...

Eleanor taught me that an answer of ‘No’ is not necessarily the end of a conversation, but rather a way to engage and mediate. Eleanor also taught me never to give up one’s dreams just because they may be difficult. I believe these two pieces of wisdom from Eleanor were also the foundation that helped create the SALT Center and laid the path for all students to have the opportunity to attend college, should that be their dream.

Diedre Lamb (formerly Rapp)
Former SALT Center Employee

Eleanor was a visionary, a remarkable teacher, and a good friend. Today’s SALT Center provides a permanent legacy to her passion and dedication to student success, achievement, and graduation. There is a reason the Fiske Guide to Colleges recently named the UA one of the most supportive institutions for students with learning disabilities: it is the solid foundation for the SALT Center that Eleanor Harner nurtured with unwavering commitment.

Sylvia Mioduski
Former director of The Academic Learning Skills Center/University Learning Center

The SALT Center was my home for seven years; I started my academic and professional career there. Eleanor’s vision for a dynamic and inclusive environment is, in my opinion, what has made the SALT Center a nationally known program. She provided that environment for me and many other students and staff. Eleanor will always have a special place in my heart; I will forever appreciate her genuine and giving nature. Her impact is immeasurable!

Christine Salvesen
Former SALT Center Employee

The day I met Eleanor Harner was probably the most important day of my professional life. She inspired me to believe in myself and in others. I am proud to have known her.

Lupe Thompson
Student Programs and Services Coordinator at the SALT Center

I met Eleanor through one of my colleagues when I worked at Undergraduate Admissions. I had just had my first child, and I wanted to work part-time to spend time with my son. My colleague wanted to work part-time and work on her Master’s Degree studies. Eleanor created a job-sharing opportunity for us at the SALT Center. Eleanor was so in tune with other peoples’ needs as employees, parents, and students. I learned so much from her about the way students learn, and the importance of seeing their “weaknesses” as unique differences. She gave me a personal and professional opportunity that I will always cherish.

Rose Audretsch (formerly Wilhite)
Strategic Learning Specialist at the SALT Center

Eleanor Harner was a trail-blazer who was completely dedicated to student success. Without her vision and dedication, the SALT Center we know today could never have happened. She encouraged me to remind the University how uniquely able it was to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. She had faith not only in students’ ability to succeed, but also the University’s, while recognizing that difference can be powerful.

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In 2013, the SALT Center successfully hosted its inaugural Pre-College Summer Program with the goal of giving high school students who learn differently a taste of college life. After the program ended, we gathered feedback from students, families, and staff. By the time the fall semester was upon us, the team at the SALT Center was eager to start planning for year two. A number of changes came about because of that feedback; our Summer Program 2014 staff shared their perspective on some of our improvements.

MORE COMMUNICATION
Communication started as soon as students submitted their online application - each applicant was asked to participate in a phone interview so that our staff could get to know them and identify their unique needs: “The phone interviews offered our team a wealth of information about each student that wasn’t available to us last year,” says Paul Bastedo, Residence Life Coordinator, “we felt like we knew these students before they set foot on campus.” The communication continued with reminders and messages from the Summer Director before, during, and after the program.

MORE STAFF
This year, our overall student-to-staff ratio was roughly two to one: “We serve a student population who often benefit from more one-on-one interaction with staff members, whether it be in the classroom setting, in the residence hall, or when we’re at the beach,” says Summer Director, Sarah Sampe. “We wanted to make sure that our quality of service was really off the charts for this program.” Students weren’t the only ones receiving extra support; the SALT Center hired a Summer Program Leadership Team, comprised of a Summer Director and three Coordinators, to support staff, faculty, and resident assistants on-site.

MORE STRUCTURE
Structure and routine are very important for students who learn differently: “While we wanted to give students a taste of the freedom that they’d experience at college, we also needed to make sure that they were acquiring skills to address the hidden curriculum presented in college courses,” says Geoff Thames, Faculty Coordinator. To achieve this, the Summer Program offered four college-style courses (each student took two), as well as required skill-building courses, designed with the unifying purpose of teaching students how to implement learning strategies in their coursework. Students also met with a Strategic Learning Specialist twice a week: “The Strategic Learning Specialists helped students identify their unique strengths and challenges, and then set goals for personal growth,” says Lupe Thompson, Coordinator for Strategic Learning Specialists.

The SALT Center Pre-College Summer Program is still evolving – we plan to use feedback from year two to make year three even better. Information about Summer Program 2015 will be available on our website later this fall: salt.arizona.edu.

### 2014 COURSE OFFERINGS

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I learned how to manage my time wisely and how to make new friends.

2014 Summer Program Participant
Looking for a comfortable, quiet place to work? How about a high-tech space to collaborate with a friend or tutor? Then check out the E-Scape Lounge in the Computer Resource Lab. With convertible furniture to suit your learning style, this might become your new study hot spot.

Thea Moresco, a Junior studying Retailing and Consumer Sciences, describes how the SALT Center fits into her routine.

During the school week, you might see Thea Moresco’s bright, contagious smile at any number of locations on the UA campus. She could be in class, hanging at the Student Union with friends, or getting some extra support at the SALT Center.

With a full course load, Thea’s weekly meetings with her Strategic Learning Specialist give her the opportunity to fine-tune her schedule: “I go to my Strategic Learning Specialist to help me organize my time, plan out my days...she helps me figure out good times to eat, to study, and to hang out with friends. There has to be a balance.”

Thea uses these time-management skills to help her self-advocate. She knows how to communicate effectively with her instructors, and ask for help when she needs it: “When my group needed to meet with our mentor for my Intro to Retailing class to discuss our final presentation before it was due, I arranged a time and place for all of us to get together.”

She also has the freedom to spend quality time with friends - “My girlfriends and I found this one time during the week where all three of us are free, so we get coffee. It’s wonderful because we get to share what’s going on in our lives.”

Thea takes advantage of the SALT Center’s tutoring services, where she can book subject-specific tutoring sessions for any of her classes: “Having that one-on-one time to discuss content with a tutor (someone who knows this information), helps solidify the concepts that I learn in class. They provide an environment of understanding, support, and help.”

Thea gives back to the SALT Center by serving as a Student Ambassador, representing the SALT Center at a variety of events: “It’s nice because the parents can get the perspective of a student who actually uses SALT Center services.”

Thea’s daily life at the UA is certainly full, but she says that the SALT Center is a seamless and integral part of it: “The SALT Center enhances my over all experience at the UA. It’s not in my way, it’s not a problem, it’s not on my mind, it’s just part of my experience here, and it’s only made it better.”

To see a video of a “Day in the Life” of Thea Moresco, visit www.youtube.com/thesaltcenter

THE STUDENT STORY
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THEA MORESCO

By Eric Fergason

Looking for a comfortable, quiet place to work? How about a high-tech space to collaborate with a friend or tutor? Then check out the E-Scape Lounge in the Computer Resource Lab. With convertible furniture to suit your learning style, this might become your new study hot spot.
For years, the SALT Center has provided scholarships for students who could not otherwise afford our support. Because the SALT Center does not receive any state funding, our services are fee-based, which can be cost-prohibitive for some of our student population. Fortunately, our generous donors have stepped in and made a difference—a number of alumni, families, and friends of the program have made it possible for our scholarship recipients to get the financial support that they need to earn their college degree. With this in mind, we decided that it was time to say “Thank You” with our first annual Scholarship Reception.

INCEPTION

Last year, the SALT Center awarded over $100,000 dollars in student scholarships, which prompted David Cillo, Assistant Director of Admissions and chairman of the SALT Center Scholarship Committee, to propose an exciting new idea: a reception that would bring donors and students together for the first time: “We have incredibly loyal friends who contribute to our scholarship funds every year, and we have outstanding scholarship recipients who achieve academic success,” said Cillo. “I thought it would make sense to introduce them and give them an opportunity to thank and encourage one another.”

PLANNING

Once Director Rudy Molina signed off on the idea, David and the Scholarship Committee got to work. They wanted the event to be a memorable and elegant “thank you” to the donors who give so generously, and a celebration of our hard-working and dedicated students. The team decided to host a luncheon at the historic Arizona Inn, with ample time for mingling, a short presentation, and a small gift of thank-you notes to show our appreciation. A date was set, and invitations went out to students and supporters.

GIFTS

Daniel Linden, a Strategic Learning Specialist and member of the Scholarship Committee, coordinated a thank-you note-writing campaign.

Nicole Venn, a UA and SALT Center alumna who graduated in May 2014, was one of the student speakers selected to share what her SALT Center scholarship meant to her: “I am so humbled and thankful for the trust and encouragement that this award signifies.” Nicole always had to work hard to achieve academic success because of her learning challenge, but her first year of college presented some additional hurdles. After her grandfather’s untimely passing, her mother fell ill, all while Nicole was overcoming a physical injury of her own. These compounding tragedies had a significant impact on her confidence and her grades, and she even considered dropping out of school. Nicole credits a few good friends and the SALT Center with keeping her at the UA: “I started to really engage with SALT Center services, and they made a huge difference in my academic life.” With hard work and determination, Nicole was soon excelling in her courses, and regained her confidence.

In addition to providing her with academic support, Nicole said her scholarship also gave her increased accountability: “I owe it to the generous donors who support me to give 110% on every assignment and every exam.”

Nicole, who is now pursuing a career as a Nurse Practitioner, expressed eternal gratitude to both the SALT Center and our generous friends for their unwavering support: “I believe that education is the most transcendent gift one could be given. It allows an individual to grow, to be guided and shaped into a professional who’s ready to conquer the world.”

GRATITUDE FIRST ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP RECEPTION

By Hilary Cummins

SAYING THANK YOU

Nicole Venn, Psychology and Nutritional Sciences major, Class of 2014
workshop for our scholarship recipients. They had access to a plethora of stationery, a template to help them get their ideas onto paper, and delicious snacks. "I was expecting students to keep their notes short and sweet," says Linden, "but the majority of them spent the better part of an hour composing a heart-felt ‘thank you’ to their donors." Some students even invited their supporters to stay in touch by including a phone number or an email address in their letter.

**STUDENT SPEAKERS**

During the workshop, Daniel and David asked if any students would be willing to give a short speech on behalf of their peers at the event. Several students volunteered, and four were selected. These students spent the next few weeks carefully crafting their speeches with the help of Hilary Cummins, Coordinator for Development & Strategic Initiatives: "Our student speakers took their task very seriously – they were candid, thoughtful, and very polished."

**THE EVENT**

After months of planning and preparation, the SALT Center hosted its first annual Scholarship Reception. Students and donors shared a table and got to know one another. Director Rudy Molina welcomed everyone, followed by David Cillo, who introduced each student speaker, and presented thank-you notes to our donors. It was an incredibly special event for both students and supporters. We are very excited to make the Scholarship Reception an annual celebration of philanthropy and student success.

I believe that education is the most transcendent gift one could be given. It allows an individual to grow, to be guided and shaped into a professional who’s ready to conquer the world.

Nicole Venn

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE: THE LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

Thanks to a generous donation by the Stool family, we are excited to announce the endowment of our new Legacy Scholarship Award. This award guarantees qualified incoming freshmen full coverage of their SALT Center fees for each semester that they are enrolled in our program. We are prepared to make our first Legacy Scholarship Award in Spring 2015.

If you are interested in expanding this opportunity to other deserving SALT Center students by making a contribution, please contact Hilary Cummins, Coordinator for Development & Strategic Initiatives:

PHONE: (520) 626-7656

EMAIL ADDRESS: hilaryn@email.arizona.edu
As a freshman, Lindsey Wilson used to walk past the SALT Center every day as she left her residence hall to go to class. She didn’t discover the opportunity to become a tutor until her junior year, when a friend recommended that she apply for an open position. She said working as a SALT Center tutor would be a great job for Lindsey because the schedule offered flexible hours, and was a good way to sharpen her own skills.

After she was hired, Lindsey began training to become a certified tutor. So far, she has completed CRLA Level 1 Tutor training (15 hours of training, and 25 hours of tutoring). After two semesters at the SALT Center, she says the most important thing that she has learned is to understand a student’s needs in order to find the best way to approach their tutoring session: “You have to meet a student where they are at; you have to get to know them.”

Lindsey works predominantly with students in the Math and Science Lab, as well as in individual sessions, where she specializes in Math, Philosophy, and general education courses. She says that the most rewarding part of her job is when she sees a student learning, “Their eyes light up when they finally understand [a concept] that we’ve been working on.” According to Lindsey, when her students succeed, she succeeds.

Lindsey says that another great part of her job is the SALT Center community: “The staff is warm and supportive, and I feel comfortable talking to any of them.” Moreover, Lindsey says that her fellow tutors are always happy to see each other and their students.

In addition to working at the SALT Center, Lindsey also works as a photographer. In her spare time, she enjoys attending live music shows on 4th Avenue and Congress, and riding her bike, “though it’s kind of hot [in the summer].”

Lindsey is scheduled to graduate from the UA with a B.S. in Public Health and a minor in Mathematics in May of 2015. She plans to attend graduate school for a degree in Public Health, with a focus on Global Health and working in the field of Infectious Disease Epidemiology.

We are so grateful to Lindsey for her hard work and dedication to our students, and we know that she will achieve success in all of her future endeavors.

**DEDICATION**

**TUTORING AT THE SALT CENTER**

By Samantha Becker

You have to meet students where they are at; you have to get to know them.

“Lindsey Wilson, Tutor at the SALT Center”

**DID YOU KNOW...**

450

The **AVERAGE NUMBER** of **WEEKLY TUTORING VISITS** hosted by the SALT Center

82%

Percentage of tutors who are **CURRENTLY UA STUDENTS**

**SCOTTISH GAELIC**

Just one of the many languages for which we have a tutor at the SALT Center

**ENGINEERING AND PSYCHOLOGY**

The most popular majors among our tutoring team

18%

Percentage of tutors who are **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** or **RECENT GRADUATES**

1 PM

**OUR BUSIEST HOUR FOR TUTORING – ESPECIALLY ON WEDNESDAYS**
When Devin Slack was looking at colleges, he knew he needed a school that would give him additional support for his learning challenge. He applied to the University of Arizona because the SALT Center would do just that: “My family and I discussed ‘highs’ and ‘lows’ for institutions that provided good academic support, and, after touring two other campuses, I knew that the University of Arizona was 100% the place I wanted to go.”

Reflecting on the transition from high school to college, Devin describes the college experience as one continuous transition: “Having to go above and beyond on assignments, transitioning from general education classes to classes within my major…it all served as a wake up call.” One skill Devin knew he would need to learn quickly in order to ease this transition was time management. Working with his Strategic Learning Specialist, Devin was able learn strategies to help him manage his course load, using tools like the “Semester at a Glance,” a one-page document outlining every due date for each class that students can reference throughout the semester.

With his new-found time-management skills, Devin was encouraged and emboldened to get involved with extra-curricular clubs and activities. His Strategic Learning Specialist recommended that he become a SALT Center Student Ambassador, which would give him the opportunity to share his experiences with prospective students and families: “Working as an Ambassador at the SALT Center has really grown my confidence. It’s great being in a position where people are interested in my opinion.” Devin is even considering becoming a SALT Center tutor because of that confidence; he believes he can help other students who learn differently navigate the transition to college, just as the SALT Center helped him.

SALT Center Ambassadors are student workers who serve as an extension of the Admissions team, representing the program in a variety of contexts. Devin often helps facilitate weekly “Taste of SALT” events, during which prospective students and families can learn about SALT Center services and tour the Patricia A. Bartlett Building. Ambassadors may also accompany our admissions team on high school campus visits, and they always help with our summer enrollment events.

When he’s not giving tours at the SALT Center, Devin is usually studying. Majoring in Electrical Engineering, with a Math minor, he has plenty of schoolwork to keep him busy: “I like all of the material - it’s fascinating. It’s also nice to know there is a job waiting for me; that provides a little security.” While his fields of study might require that he be at the UA for an extra year, it doesn’t bother Devin in the least – “I love it here, so I don’t mind taking another year. There is no point in rushing if you’re having a good time.”

Devin has made quite an impact in his short time at the SALT Center and the UA, and we are so grateful for his willingness to give back to our program as a Student Ambassador. This intelligent, dedicated, and gracious young man has an incredibly bright future ahead of him, and we can’t wait to see what he does next.

Update: Devin was recently hired as a SALT Center tutor for the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 Semesters.

Students utilizing SALT Center services can become eligible to apply for a position as a SALT Center Ambassador by being nominated by their Strategic Learning Specialist. Nominees complete a formal application and interview with our Admissions team. If selected, they represent the SALT Center at a variety of events, and share their stories with prospective students, families, and friends of our program.
Currently, the SALT Center employs six graduate assistants. Employment at the University, and particularly at the SALT Center, helps these students prepare for their post-graduate careers by giving them work experience related to their field of study. It also benefits the SALT Center by providing the program with skilled researchers and practitioners who serve important roles in learning support, student programs and services, and specific research projects. In this issue, we meet Katie Stoll, a graduate assistant working on a self-determination study that has been underway since 2012. Katie is a doctoral candidate in school psychology. She took a break from her research to answer a few questions.

SALT CENTER: Can you tell me a little bit about your background? Where did you grow up? Where did you earn your undergraduate degree, and what was your major?

KS: I was born in Tucson, but spent the first 10 years of my life in the White Mountains of Arizona in a small town called Show Low. My family moved back to Tucson when I was in the 5th grade. After finishing high school, I was fortunate enough to attend the UA, where I earned my bachelor’s degree in elementary education in 2001.

SALT CENTER: And your Master’s degree?

KS: I continued my education at the university up north (not to be named here), where I earned my master’s degree in counseling in 2004. For the next several years, I worked as a school counselor at the elementary and high school levels.

SALT CENTER: You are currently pursuing a Ph.D. Can you tell me about your major and why you decided to pursue it?

KS: After spending over a decade working with children and adolescents in the school setting, I decided it was time to pursue one of my own educational goals. I was accepted into the doctoral program in school psychology at the UA, and was excited to return to my roots. I chose to pursue my degree with a focus on school psychology not only because it was a great fit with my educational and career background, but also because I knew it would provide me the opportunity to expand my career choices in the future.

SALT CENTER: When do you expect to graduate, and what do you hope to do after you graduate?

KS: I am currently in the 4th year of the program and I am expected to graduate in May 2016. After graduation I plan to pursue a post-doctoral fellowship and a career either in academia or private practice as a licensed psychologist.

SALT CENTER: When did you start working as a graduate assistant at the SALT Center?

KS: I first began working as a graduate assistant at the SALT Center in the spring semester of 2012.

SALT CENTER: Can you describe the research project that you are working on?

KS: The current research project I am working on is looking at the concept of self-determination at the post-secondary level. Self-determination is defined in many ways, but can be thought of as the ability to express curiosity.

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Research at the SALT Center helps us refine our practice by providing us with valuable information about students, their learning differences, and our approach to academic support.

At the SALT Center, we use research to answer big questions about students who learn differently, and generate solutions that allow them to unlock their full potential.

Rudy M. Molina, Jr.

We start by identifying each student’s strengths, skill gaps, and/or level of self-determination.

Then, we add personalized, researched-based academic support tailored to help each student achieve success.
one's needs, interests, and abilities; make choices and plans to pursue one's goals; and follow through with one's actions. Overall, our goal is to discover if self-determination is a predictor of academic success among first year college students with attention and learning challenges.

**SALT CENTER:** Is there a trend or finding that you've observed so far?

**KS:** Although this research project is still in the data collection stage, we are seeing some interesting preliminary results. Specifically, we have found that the majority of incoming students enrolled at the SALT Center identified as having a lack of knowledge (e.g., understanding his/her needs and setting goals), abilities (e.g., making choices and following up with actions), and perceptions (e.g., being motivated and optimistic) to be self-determined. This trend may be related to a student's perceived difficulties in transitioning from high school to college. However, half of the students who participated in our project identified as having a greater opportunity to be self-determined through his or her support systems (e.g., school, family, and community).

**SALT CENTER:** How do you feel that the research might someday benefit students using SALT Center services?

**KS:** Previous research suggests that self-determination is a predictor of success in a student’s transition from high school to college. Self-determination has also been positively correlated with higher levels of academic achievement in students with attention and learning challenges. It is our hope that this research project will extend this body of literature at the post-secondary level. Ultimately, this project can be used as the foundation for developing effective interventions that may increase the academic success and retention of first-year college students enrolled at the SALT Center.

As students progress at the UA, the academic support they receive from the SALT Center empowers them to grow into independent learners.

There might be some bumps along the way, but with perseverance, targeted support, and a dash of encouragement, students who learn differently can achieve their goal of earning a college degree.
We recently interviewed Ramon Gaanderse, Executive Director of Arizona Transportation Builders Association, and UA alumnus who utilized SALT Center services. We asked him to reflect on his college experience and his involvement with our program.

Q) WHAT STANDS OUT ABOUT YOUR UA/SALT CENTER EXPERIENCE?
A) The extra support that I received from the SALT Center. My Strategic Learning Specialist guided me by providing skills, like how to prioritize my workload and how to communicate my needs. I was really impressed by the support of the SALT Center by former University President, Peter Likins. To this day, when I see him (which is often), I thank him for that. He knows me and laughs it off, but his support of the SALT Center and his understanding of my learning disability meant and still means a lot to me. The other thing that stands out is the tutors - they were not always graduate students, but students who were actually taking the class with me, or had taken it recently. They kept the information I was learning fresh and relevant.

Q) HOW WERE YOU ENGAGED AT THE SALT CENTER AND ON CAMPUS WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT?
A) I made sure I went to my weekly appointment with my Strategic Learning Specialist, and used the tutoring provided by the SALT Center. I tried Greek Life, but it wasn’t for me. When I first got to the UA, I was a Media Arts major, and I quickly went to the student union and volunteered my time for the student radio. I started by joining two guys and talked about sports. After becoming familiar with the board and studio, I got my own show and played reggae music. This helped me learn more and understand the media side of things outside of the classroom.

Q) IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU EXCEL HERE? WHAT CHALLENGED YOU?
A) Communication was one area that was both challenging and rewarding for me. Sometimes, I wasn’t sure if I was on the same page as the professors, so I would discuss it with my Strategic Learning Specialist. We would talk through the problem, and they would give me advice on how to better communicate with my professors.

THANK YOU!

Thank you, Alumni! Your giving has increased over 200% in the last three years. We appreciate your continued support. Visit salt.arizona.edu to explore giving opportunities that will benefit the SALT Center.

STAY CONNECTED

CALLING ALL ALUMNI! WE WOULD LOVE TO CATCH UP WITH YOU.
HERE’S A LIST OF WAYS TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE SALT CENTER:

Interested in sharing your SALT Center story, or filling us in on what’s happened since graduation? Contact Eric Fergason:
Phone (520) 626-8736 | Email fergason@email.arizona.edu

Join the mailing list by clicking the link at salt.arizona.edu

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube:
 facebook.com/uasaltcenter | twitter.com/uasaltctr | youtube.com/thesaltcenter
The SALT Center gratefully acknowledges the generous contribution of the following friends from July 2013 to June 2014. We will use these gifts to support both programming and scholarships. We are fortunate to receive these expressions of respect and appreciation; the impact of your generosity is truly boundless.

MICHELLE COMBS ENDOWED FUND

Michelle was an extraordinary young woman who lived her life with unbridled enthusiasm. She had achieved her dream of pursuing a college degree with the help of the SALT Center, and was a sophomore at the UA when her life was tragically cut short – she was killed in a motorcycle accident at just 20 years old. In order to commemorate her legacy, Michelle’s friends and family created the Michelle Combs Endowed Fund through the University of Arizona Foundation. Income from the fund will be awarded to students enrolled in the SALT Center who exhibit adventurous, energetic, and goal-oriented characteristics, and it will provide financial support for study abroad and/or leadership development opportunities for students who learn differently.

We encourage you to contribute to the Michelle Combs Endowed Fund to help make more dreams come true – visit salt.arizona.edu to give online.