

CURRICULUM VITAE
Ashley Ophelia Durkee Hester
7/31/2026

Contact Information Department of Psychiatry
UNC School of Medicine
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Center
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EDUCATION and TRAINING

2010-2011 **Psychology Postdoctoral Fellow**
Leadership Excellence in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Fellowship
Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine
2008-2010 **Ph.D., Clinical Psychology**
University of Mississippi
2009-2010 **APA Accredited Internship, Adult Developmental Disabilities**
University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine
2005-2008 **M.A., Clinical Psychology**
University of Mississippi
2001-2005 **B.S., Summa Cum Laude, with Honors in Psychology**
Appalachian State University

LICENSURE and CERTIFICATION

10/2011-present North Carolina Licensed Psychologist #4184
2022-present TEACCH Certified Practitioner

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS and EMPLOYMENT

Academic Appointments

2019-present Clinical Assistant Professor
Department of Psychiatry, TEACCH Autism Program
University of North Carolina School of Medicine at Chapel Hill

Clinical Appointments

2019-present Staff Psychologist
Department of Psychiatry, TEACCH Autism Program, Raleigh Center
University of North Carolina School of Medicine at Chapel Hill
2016-2019 Senior Psychologist
Department of Psychology
Murdoch Developmental Center

2011-2016 Staff Psychologist
Department of Psychology
Murdoch Developmental Center

HONORS

2008 Best Graduate Student Presentation, Psychology & Social Sciences Division,
Mississippi Academy of Science
2007 Best Graduate Research Poster Award, Mississippi Psychological Association
2005 Outstanding Senior Psychology Major, Appalachian State University
2003-2005 Alpha Chi Honor Society
2002-2005 Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society
2002-2005 Psi Chi, The National Honor Society in Psychology, *Vice President 2004-2005*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Book Chapters

1. Pretzel, RE, **Hester, AD**, & Porr, S. Self Help Skills. In: Volkmar, FR, editor. Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders – Second Edition. New York (NY): Springer, 2021. p 4137–4146.
2. Pretzel, RE, **Hester, AD**, & Porr, S. Self Help Skills. In: Volkmar, FR, editor. Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders. New York: Springer, 2013. p 2723–2730.

Peer-reviewed Articles

1. Schiff, LD, **Hester, AD**, & Benevides, T. Providing Effective Medical Care to Autistic People. New England Journal of Medicine. 2024; 391(24), 2281-2238. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMp2407467

In Press/Submitted Peer-reviewed Articles

1. Sullender, R, **Hester, A**, & Schiff, L. Improving Surgical Care of Neurodivergent Patients: Essential Knowledge for Surgeons and Their Teams. Journal of Patient Experience. 2026, 11 pages.

Peer-reviewed Published Abstracts

1. **Durkee, AO** & Christoff, KA. The influence of gender role orientation on childhood friendship patterns. Journal of the Mississippi Academy of Sciences. 2008; 53(1), 106-107.

Peer-Reviewed/Invited Presentations (state and national professional meetings)

1. **Hester, AD**. Behavior Problem Solving for Autistic Patients: Supportive Strategies. Oral presentation at the Emergent Topics in Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine Conference, 2026, May 29; Raleigh, NC.
2. **Hester, AD** & Schiff, LD. Supporting Autistic Patients in Medical and Behavioral Health Settings. Pre-Conference Workshop presented at the South Eastern Summit for Behavioral

Health, 2026, May 20-22, Wrightsville Beach, NC

<https://whova.com/portal/webapp/TnnY5a9JGDmsH6XiiAoU/Agenda/5082432>

3. Schiff, LD, Sullender, RT, & **Hester, AD**. Neurodivergent Surgery. Video presented at the UNC OBGYN Medical Education Symposium, 2026, April 6; Chapel Hill, NC.
<https://www.med.unc.edu/obgyn/wp-content/uploads/sites/1360/2026/04/3rd-Annual-OBGYN-Medical-Education-Symposium-Booklet-124.pdf>
4. **Hester, AD**. Communicating with Neurodivergent Clients and Accommodating Disability in the Courtroom. Oral presentation at the 12th Annual Whisky in the Courtroom: Evolving Trends in Forensic Science Symposium at Duke Law School, 2026, March 6; Durham, NC.
<https://duke.app.box.com/s/ssy4gylua3dxe7z5jvy74gt3ja72cfqf>
5. Melson, V, Schiff, LD, Sullender, RT & **Hester, AD**. Improving the Surgical Experience of Neurodivergent Patients: Essential Knowledge for Surgeons and Their Teams. Session presented at the 21st Annual Academic Surgical Congress, 2026, February 3-5; Orlando, FL.
<https://www.academicsurgicalcongress.org/past-meetings/>
6. **Hester, AD**. Providing Compassionate Medical Care for Autistic Patients. Breakout session presentation at the annual Southeastern Behavioral Health Summit, 2024, May 1-3; Wrightsville Beach, NC.
7. **Durkee, AO**, Gardner, CB, & Christoff, KA. Social Relationships Within an Intellectually Disabled Population. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, 2009, November; New York, NY.
8. **Durkee, AO**, Johnson, CN, & Hill, SL. The effect of a staff training program on perceived competence and job stress. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, 2008, November; Orlando, FL.
9. **Durkee, AO** & Johnson, CN. Supporting residents through supporting staff: A model for a staff support group with behavior analysis training. Paper presented at the annual Mental Health/Mental Retardation joint conference, 2008, November; Philadelphia, MS.
10. Hill, SL & **Durkee, AO**. A direct support training model using group processes to address perceived competence and job stress. Presentation made in the NADD 2008 Teleconference Series, 2008, October.
11. Gardner, CB, **Durkee, AO**, Gadd, W, Nicholas, R & Christoff, KA. Factors related to peer acceptance in individuals with intellectual disabilities. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, 2008, November; Orlando, FL.
12. Gardner, CB, Karl, KF, **Durkee, AO**, Nicholas, R, Banahan, A, & Christoff, KA. Birds of a feather v. opposites attract: Is body size related to friendship choice? Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, 2008, November; Orlando, FL.
13. **Durkee, AO** & Christoff, KA. It really is cool to be smart! Correlates of popularity in a second-grade sample. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Psychological Association, 2008, September; Tunica, MS.

14. Hill, S, Gardner, C, Johnson, C, Surdock, A, & **Durkee, A.** Grief group therapy for adults with intellectual disabilities: Process and outcomes. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2008, May; Washington, D.C.
15. **Durkee, AO**, Karl, KF, & Christoff, KA. The effect of interracial friendship status on the evaluation of peers. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, 2007, November; Philadelphia, PA.
16. **Durkee, AO** & Christoff, K.A. The influence of gender role orientation on childhood friendship patterns. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Psychological Association, 2007, September; Biloxi, MS.
17. **Durkee, AO**, Hodgins, EL, Hester, JR, Ostertag, M, Farrell, M, Muenzer, K, & Zrull, MC. Neural activity in rat superior colliculus after light, sound, or light and sound stimulation: A c-Fos study. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, 2005, November; Washington, D.C.
18. Dravland, M, Navarro, A, **Durkee, A**, Hester, J, Gravinese, K, Kightlinger, B, Hodgins, E, Henson, S, and Zrull, MC. The midbrain superior colliculus and using seen, heard, or seen and heard cues to locate a goal. Poster session presented at Research in the Capitol, 2005, April; Raleigh, North Carolina.
19. **Durkee, AO**, Hester, JR, Navarro, AS, Gravinese, KR (Hodgins, EL & Zrull, MC). Neural activity in the rat superior colliculus evoked by unimodal and multimodal stimulation. Paper presented at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research, 2005, April; Lexington, Virginia.
20. Hester, JR, **Durkee, AO**, Navarro, AS, Gravinese, KR (Hodgins, EL & Zrull, MC). Anatomical evidence for the superior colliculus' role in sensory integration in the rat. Paper presented at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research, Lexington, 2005, April; Virginia.
21. Henson, SA, Dravland, M, **Durkee, AO**, Gravinese, K, Hester, J, Hodgins, E, Kightlinger, B, Navarro, A, & Zrull, MC. Localization of light+sound, light and sound sources after unilateral superior colliculus lesions. Poster session presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, 2004, October; San Diego, CA.
22. **Durkee, AO**, Hester, J, Gravinese, K, Hodgins, E. (Zrull, MC). Superior colliculus lesions alter lateralized responses to multimodal but not unimodal stimuli. Poster session presented at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research, 2004, April; Indianapolis, IN.
23. Hester, J, **Durkee, AO**, Gravinese, K, Hodgins, E. (Zrull, MC). Characteristics of rats' ability to locate compound light-sound cues in the Frontal hemifield. Poster session presented at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research, 2004, April; Indianapolis, IN.

Digital and other novel forms of scholarship

1. Sullender, R, **Hester, A**, Melson, V, & Schiff, L. Improving the Surgical Experience of Neurodivergent Patients. Educational Video, 2025. <https://www.laurenschiffmd.com/autism>

Other products of scholarship

1. Accommodations Form (Schiff, L. & **Hester, A.**) in use at UNC TEACCH Outpatient Clinics and UNC OBGYN Hillsborough and guiding EPIC accommodations tab contents
2. Surgery Accommodations Checklist (Schiff, L. & **Hester, A.**) in use at UNC OBGYN Hillsborough MIGS Division
3. Patient Discharge Requirements Checklist (Schiff, L. & **Hester, A.**) in use at UNC OBGYN Hillsborough MIGS Division

TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Teaching Presentations

10/2023 **Guest Lecture:** “Cognitive Assessment” (graduate students)
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC

Grand Rounds/Invited Talks

Outside UNC

10/2025 **Invited Talk:** “Supporting Patients with Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Throughout Pregnancy and Postpartum” (professionals), Mommas Village, Fayetteville, NC

11/2023 **Invited Talk:** “UNC TEACCH Autism Program: Clinical Services Overview” (professionals), Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Brenner Children’s Hospital, Winston-Salem, NC

7/2022 **Invited Talk:** “Early Signs of Autism: When to Make a Referral for Evaluation” (professionals), Harnett County Health Department, Lillington, NC

4/2018 **Invited Panelist:** “Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System” (undergraduate and graduate students) presented by Alpha Phi Sigma, the Criminal Justice Honor Society, North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC

Grand Rounds/Invited Talks

Inside UNC

7/2025 **Invited Talk:** “Caring for Autistic Patients in the ED” (professionals), UNC Rex Emergency Department, Raleigh, NC

9/2020 **Invited Talk:** “Autism Learning Styles and Considerations for Emergency Services” (professionals), Wakebrook Crisis Stabilization Center, Raleigh, NC

Continuing Education Lecture/Workshops

5/2026 Supporting Autistic Patients and Their Families in Healthcare Settings. Webinar presented by UNC Health Community Health & Engagement

2/2026 Supporting Autistic Patients Seeking Medical Care. Live Webinar Presented by the UNC TEACCH Training Department

9/2025 Supporting Autistic Patients Seeking Medical Care. Live Webinar Presented by the UNC TEACCH Training Department

5/2025 Continuing Education Workshop: Managing Challenging Behaviors in ASD, Virtual, Presented by South Piedmont AHEC

11/2024	Continuing Education Workshop: Complex Cases in ASD: Diagnosis and Treatment, Virtual, Presented by Wake AHEC
4/2023	Continuing Education Workshop: Autism Spectrum Disorders and Behavioral Planning for Children and Adolescents, Virtual, Presented by Southern Regional AHEC
1/2023	Continuing Education Workshop: Autism and ADHD: Commonalities, Co-Occurrence, Key Differences, and Intervention Strategies, Presented by Wake AHEC/Wake County School Nurses, Raleigh, NC
2/2022	Continuing Education Workshop: Complex Cases in ASD: Diagnosis and Treatment, Virtual, Presented by Southern Regional AHEC
2/2021	Continuing Education Workshop: Managing Challenging Behaviors in Autism Spectrum Disorder, Virtual, Presented by Wake AHEC

Professional Trainings

Trainer, *Fundamentals of Structured TEACCHing*, UNC TEACCH Autism Program

7/2026	Monroe County Schools, Forsyth, GA
6/2026	Fayette County Schools, Lexington, KY
4/2026	Virtual, Barnet Education Learning Service, London, UK
4/2026	Prince William County Schools, Manassas, VA
3/2026	OCM BOCES, Syracuse, NY
5/2025	Knox County Schools, Knoxville, TN
8/2024	County Schools, Knoxville, TN
2/2024	WSWHE BOCES, Wilton, NY
2/2024	Virtual, CVENT
12/2023	Virtual, CVENT
10/2023	Virtual, Buenos Aires, Argentina
8/2023	Virtual, Athens, Greece
6/2023	Virtual, Orange County Schools, FL
2/2023	Virtual, Orange County Schools, FL
1/2023	Virtual, Athens, Greece
9/2022	Virtual, Buenos Aires, Argentina
7/2022	Virtual, Orange County Schools, FL
6/2022	Virtual, Craven County Schools, NC
5/2022	Virtual, Stafford, VA
4/2022	Virtual, Synergy Ireland
2/2022	Virtual, CVENT
11/2021	Virtual, Harnett County Schools, NC
8/2021	Virtual, Anson County, NC
7/2021	Virtual, CVENT
4/2021	Virtual, Northern Ireland
1/2021	Virtual, CVENT

Trainer, *Strategies for Success in the General Education Setting for Individuals with Autism*, UNC TEACCH Autism Program

8/2026	Virtual, CVENT
8/2025	Virtual, CVENT
2/2025	Chatham Charter School, Siler City, NC

11/2024 Virtual, NCSE, Ireland
8/2022 Virtual, CVENT

Trainer, *TEACCH Five Day Hands-On Classroom Training*, UNC TEACCH Autism Program

7/2025 Chapel Hill, NC
10/2024 Pittsboro, NC
7/2024 Chapel Hill, NC
4/2024 Pittsboro, NC

Trainer, *Coaching Strategies*, UNC TEACCH Autism Program
8/2024 Knox County Schools, Knoxville, TN

Trainer, *Fundamentals of Structured TEACCHing for Middle School Students*, UNC TEACCH Autism Program

1/2022 Virtual, Lowrance Middle School, Winston-Salem, NC

Trainer, *Learning Styles in Autism*, UNC TEACCH Autism Program
8/2020 Virtual, Pasadena TX

Trainer, *Psychiatric Diagnoses and Treatment*, Murdoch Developmental Center
8/2019 Butner NC

Trainer, *Behavior Management and Intervention*, Murdoch Developmental Center
7/2019 Butner, NC

Clinical Teaching

8/2025-4/2026 Robert Perkins, MSW Candidate, NC Central University
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2024-5/2025 Maya Bracy, Ph.D. Candidate, School Psychology, UNC Chapel Hill
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2023-8/2024 Kaitlin Cummings, Ph.D. Candidate, Clinical Psychology, UNC Chapel Hill
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2022-12/2022 Christy Sharer, Ph.D. Candidate, School Psychology, NC State University
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2021-7/2022 Tiffany Dangleben, Ph.D. Candidate, School Psychology, NC State University
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2021-11/2021 Natasha Kalra Newson, Ph.D. Candidate, School Psychology, NC State University
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2020-5/2021 Logan Hartley, Ph.D. Candidate, School Psychology, UNC Chapel Hill
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
8/2019-5/2021 Juliana Vanderburg, Ph.D. Candidate, School Psychology, UNC Chapel Hill
UNC TEACCH Raleigh Outpatient Clinic
Murdoch Developmental Center, ICF/IDD inpatient care facility

8/2017-5/2018 Meghan Adams, M.A. Candidate, Counseling, Antioch University New England
Murdoch Developmental Center, ICF/IDD inpatient care facility

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Service to University of North Carolina

2025-present	TEACCH Collaboration with UNC Health Strategic Action Planning Team Co-Leader
2023-present	TEACCH Raleigh Practicum Coordinator with UNC Clinical Psychology
2020-2024	TEACCH Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Planning Team Member
2022	Search Committee Member , Clinical Assistant Professor (Staff Psychologist) - Charlotte
2020-2022	TEACCH Diverse Workforce Strategic Action Planning Team Leader
2020-2022	TEACCH DEI Liaison to UNC School of Medicine
2021	Search Committee Member , Clinical Assistant Professor (Staff Psychologist) - Asheville
2021	Search Committee Member , Clinical Instructor (Autism Specialist) - Asheville
2020-2022	TEACCH Telehealth Evaluations Workgroup Chair

Service to Profession

Clinical Supervision of Other Professionals

3/2020-6/2022	Corey Shaw, M.A., LCMHCA, Autism Specialist, UNC TEACCH Autism Program
7/2012-10/2020	Shiquita Hyman, M.A., LPA, New Leaf Behavioral Health
5/2018-10/2019	Sequoia Mangum, B.A., Behavior Specialist, Murdoch Developmental Center
5/2018-10/2019	Lakiesha Alston, B.A., Behavior Specialist, Murdoch Developmental Center
2/2016-10/2019	Christine Dykeman, M.A., BCBA, LPA, Murdoch Developmental Center
7/2012-10/2019	James Hartley, M.A., LPA, Autism Services; Murdoch Developmental Center
5/2018-5/2019	Laura Quinn, MA, LPA, Murdoch Developmental Center

Service to Community

2023-present Community Health Fair Committee **Member and Psychologist**
Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Hillsborough, North Carolina