Transcript
VL2 Knowledge Festival
May 9, 2016

Ph.D. in Educational Neuroscience: Geo Kartheiser and Adam Stone

Geo: Hello everybody. My name is Geo Kartheiser. I'm a third-year PhD student. Actually, now I'm technically a fourth-year PhD student in Educational Neuroscience, which we call the PEN program under Doctor Professor Petitto. She's my primary adviser.

Adam: Hello. I'm Adam Stone, and like him, I'm also entering my fourth year now in the PhD in Educational Neuroscience program and Dr. Petitto is also my advisor.

Geo: Three years ago, Gallaudet made history. They established the PEN program, and now three years later in the blink of an eye here we are today. The family has grown. We have the steering committee listed up here. Then we have three faculty, new faculty, and each of them have their own lab. Beneath that, you can see we have four PhD students; two fourth-year, one third-year, and then one new second-year. Our family has grown quite fast, and it gets stronger by the day.

Adam: Many people may be at a loss to know what exactly educational neuroscience is. There are three important principals guiding this area of study. We are looking at the science of learning, human learning throughout life from the cradle to the grave, right? Educational Neuroscience hones in on that early period of life and up to about infancy to age 15 and is looking at how language is acquired when a child enters the world and has to learn language and learn to read. How are these tasks accomplished? How are they learning all of the domains of science and math and all of these kinds of cognition?

Geo: PEN also is committed to a two-way communication and growth. What we mean by that is that the community supports us. They come to us, they participate in our science, they help us collect data, we analyze it, we publish it then and then we give it back to the community. They judge the value that we offer to them. We make an immediate application to their daily lives through our research.

Adam: We're fortunate in that Gallaudet gives us a unique lens into visual language, hence the Visual Language and Visual Learning Center being here, but we have to ask questions about what is happening in the brain, what is optimal for learning and gives us a much better picture of how we interact in our lives and go about our lives day-to-day.

Geo: Over the course of the three years, the PEN students have accomplished quite a lot of accolades. We've listed a few up here on the screen.

Adam: First of all, the National Institute of Health awarded us an F31 award of fellowship there which is very difficult to get, incredibly competitive. As a first in Gallaudet history, Geo, in his work, was awarded the F31. I've submitted mine with revisions and so far has been very high-scoring, and we're very hopeful.

Geo: We've submitted several papers for publication for peer review in journals, and we also have a few manuscripts that are in revision right now to be sent soon.

Adam: In addition to that, we have attended a number of educational conferences, neuroscience conferences and have been able to partake in this at a national and international level.

Geo: We, the PEN students, get a lot of sophisticated training here. It's not for the intention of staying, but in fact to go to other places; to go to Hong Kong, to go to universities. For example, Yale or UCSD where they do neuroimaging as well. Eventually the goal is to get further training.

Adam: In the three years since the PEN program was established, we've drawn the eye of the world and in fact been emulated by people looking to model their own programs after Gallaudet's. Gallaudet's program is the first of its kind in the world and is indeed a model that is highly sought after the world over.

Geo: Our program has continued to grow, and we're thrilled to tell you that we've accepted three new students this fall and we will continue to draw in the top-tier students from all over the nation and from different universities all over the US. We provide both undergraduate and graduate training in very sophisticated neuroimaging science. We look forward to the next generation that will bring here to Gallaudet.

Video available at https://youtu.be/WxVSAVbjfJs

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