

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

students, grant, teaching, learn, physical education, field, nice, year, program, university, faculty, tw, mentor, french, adapted physical education, ap, started, texas woman's university, good, cheryl

Thanks for joining us today for another episode of What's New and adapted physical education. I'm Melissa Bittner, associate professor at California State University Long Beach. Through our US Department of Education grants were able to bring adapted physical education experts to our campus for workshops for our master scholars. We recognize the impact these experts have on the field of adaptive physical education and thank them for their continued support to train the next generation of AP specialists. I have my colleague, Dr. Amanda Young, who will introduce two of our masters scholars who will be interviewing Dr. Lisa Silliman, French hi all Amanda here wanted to introduce our OSEP scholars that are doing our interviews today. So we've gotten Nikki Nikki completed her undergraduate studies from McPherson College in Kansas, where she played for the women's tennis team, as she possesses a K 12 single subject PE teaching credential with an emphasis in special education. She is in her second semester as a project Cape scholar here at long beach state. And hi Nikki, welcome. I'm happy to be here. Thank you. We also have Anthony joining us today. Anthony is currently attending CSU lb pursuing his master's of art in Adapted Physical Education, and part of our project Cape program. He has received his undergraduate degree in kinesiology and PE and his single subject teaching credential he earned here at Cal State Long Beach. He has experience and background in strength and conditioning and personal training. And he's also currently substitute teaching in the Garden Grove Unified School District. Welcome, Anthony. Hello. Hello, everyone. Great. We're so glad that you all have joined us. So well let you take it away to introduce our guest today. All right, so I'm going to introduce Lisa Sullivan French so Dr. Lisa Sloman French is a Professor Emerita at Texas Woman's America emeritus at Texas Woman's University with over 35 years of service to the field of adaptive physical education. Dr. Samina French taught AP in a public sector for 16 years in North Texas, and taught over 20 years in higher education at Texas Woman's University. During her time at Texas University, Dr. Solomon French has was also awarded and also personal preparation grant to fund graduate scholars and AP. In addition to preparation grants, she also chaired many doctoral dissertation committees and master's thesis committees. Her outstanding mentorship and Exemplary Teaching is evident in our field and carried on by on by many. So I'm going to pass along to Nicky now. All right, Dr. Solomon, French, we would love to know a little bit more about your professional background related to Adapted Physical Education AP. Very good. Well, first, thank you for having me. It's been nice to get note to know both of you. And it's an honor to be here at the university with Dr. Bitner and young Ella. So thank you for having me. So how did I start out in a PE my little bit of background, I was a student in physical education at SUNY Cortland State University in New York College at Cortland. And I was actually just going to be a general PE teacher with athletic training. I really love that field. And I just love sports. So when I was finishing up my final year, my fourth year, my last semester, I took a class called Introduction to adapted physical education. I had no idea what that meant. So I just took the class because we're supposed to take the class and I started working with a

young student who was one on one, just like your practicums. You have here it was the same thing, their practicum there, and she just didn't talk and everything. Every time I taught taught her a skill, she just wasn't getting it. And I was just absolutely could not understand why this was happening. So that's where my life began. In the field. I just literally dropped athletic training. And I said, I want to be a physical education teacher for students with disabilities once I started understanding this process. So I heard about a program down in Texas. I'm from upstate New York, and I said, Well, I guess I could go to Texas, I would like to get my master's and learn more about this program. And I went down to Texas Women's University, and at that time out of state tuition was \$6 a credit hour.

So I was all excited because I could afford that. And so my parents sat me down in a car and I drove down to Texas, with another friend of mine, and I went to Texas women's university to get my master's and I just loved it. And I worked. I always felt that if I never really wanted to get my doctorate. So that wasn't in my plan. So I started working in the field and I worked in three different school districts, but during that process, I really felt as though it was something I really wanted to learn more about. So the next avenue for me was to earn my PhD and so I just kept going and I put a lot of years in the field and I

I received my PhD. And so that really helped me as a professor was to get that those experiences under my belt before I taught in university. So I taught part time at university, North Texas and TW until I went full time at TW.

Lovely, thank you for sharing that. Sure. And similarly, I also have, like, come across where a lot of individuals don't know what adaptive physical education is. And I know that it's, you know, when I do past it, that's kind of when adaptive physical education came about. But, you know, it's, I'm interested to see going forward in the years to come to see how much it has grown, because I want to get that word out. And, you know, just to inform people, Hey, this is a profession and like, a lot of individuals could benefit from this. So yeah, I agree with you in that. It's amazing to me that we are still we talk about this today. How are we We're still asking the same questions like What is the web and it's been around since way before 1975. You know, it's when we started with the education law and began there, but before that, it was developmental, physical education, we had recreation for individual disabilities, so developmental physical education for individual disabilities. So it's been around a long time, but it's I agree with you somehow, we need to get the word out better. And you all have the advantage now with social media, like he got such an advantage with social media. Yeah, so that really helps. We used to do snail mail and stuff. So now we're into social media. Just quite helpful. Um, you had mentioned Dr. BENNER and Dr. Jung, which, you know, Anthony, and I have the pleasure of being mentored by now. And so can you tell us a little bit more like about or tell us about your AP family tree and how they kind of tie into that? Yes, when I went to what so it started out first of all, my tree started out with a little seed with that little girl. That's how my life began. And he then I went to TW and I was influenced by three faculty doctors Jean Peiffer, Ron French, and Claudine Cheryl. And they helped me in different ways. So each one had their part in my life. And they were, they were all three were part of my master's program dissertation. But I ended up working closely

with Dr. Claudine Cheryl for a while, because she got me involved right away. When she took the first semester there, I went to the Pan American Wheelchair Games. So I really got she embedded me into the program straightaway. So she got me involved right away. And we just ended up becoming really good friends, but friends with a line because she was my professor. So she got me involved in a lot of her work. And then I started really reaching out to more pedagogy, and that would be Ron French with behavior management. And that's where I ended up doing my doctorate and in that research area, but I also was influenced by doctors, Henderson, Hester Henderson and LaVey. So you see it kind of branches out starts out here, and then I branched out. So I did work. And I'm still working with Dr. Levey on stuff. So it's really nice that you start out there and we have a small profession, and you kind of know everybody, but you start working under people's wings as an under as a doctoral student, and Esther and Barry helped me out a lot along with Dr. spreads. And Claudine Cheryl. Hey, good.

Thank you for that. So and now we're gonna get more into talking about your program and experiences at Texas Woman's University. Did you tell us a little bit more about that? Yes, it was a disaster. My first semester.

I really didn't know what I was getting myself into, except I really was intrigued by working with individuals with disabilities. So I came down for my \$6 a credit hour. And I got a little scholarship for \$200 a year which gave me \$3 a credit hour. So it was worked out quite nicely. I was not on the grant my first year. But I remember seeing all the students on a grant and I couldn't figure out what they were doing all the time. They were always busy. So I ended up working to make to make sure I could survive through my first year of my master's program. In a residential facility. Have y'all ever been in a residential facility? Probably you're too young. I can't say that. I personally. Yeah. So now what they individuals with severe intellectual disabilities generally are now in homes and communities and their supervisor that back in the 80s 87. They had a residential facility where all the students, young adults were in one facility and that's where I worked as an AP teacher. So I worked there for two years to get money to get myself through school. Then on my second year, I was on the grant, which really helped me out a lot because then it opened my world a little bit more. At my program at TW I got involved with CP sports, Special Olympics, dwarf sports, wheelchair sports, just really opened my mind to what was going on in the world. So in the back of my mind, I still liked working

with individuals with severe profound intellectual disabilities, so I would try to get that population involved. And we actually brought students with our population from that residential facilities to Special Olympics, and we just really had a successful time getting them out of that facility into the community. So we did rollerskating, we did Special Olympics, we did bike riding. So that's how I was exposed to a lot TW exposed me to a lot of sports, a lot of pedagogy in the public school teaching. And it just really helped me grow to, you know, to a field that I eventually fell in love with. Right? And how fun was really great. Well, you know, I was a student I struggled, I don't know how you all as undergraduates, I was a struggling student, like a 3.0. Student, and you're just barely i Why don't I have to take geography Oh, I

don't have to take it, you know, I don't want to take that I want to play sports. But then I finally hit a field where all of a sudden, I don't know, if you feel this way, as a dark graduate student, now, you're excelling. Because it's something that you really want. And you really are starting to understand. So that's kind of how I was I, Dr. Piper brought me in her office, she was you have a 2.99, you'd have to get a three point something or better in order to stay in our program. I got all A's. Totally. So she kept me, it does help when you know, you're doing something that really interests you. And love is behind that. So it just really captured your attention. And the result, you know, leads to better grades because I feel the same way high school, you know, I was like, oh, no, I don't know what I'm gonna do. But then college hit, and I got found a field that interested me and kind of took off from there. Luckily, I'm a great student now, like, Isn't it nice? We grow up a little bit, really like what we're doing? Yeah, it just takes a little bit for some of us, and I was one of those.

Alright, thank you, Lisa, for sharing your story with us. So I'm gonna move on to the next question. So looking back, specifically on the higher education teaching aspect of your career, what have you found to be the most rewarding?

For me in higher ed, number one would be teaching, I absolutely love being in a teaching environment. I just feel like I'm in another world. But my focus is the students. And I'm trying, I try to figure out how to make sure everyone is learning, whether it's me walking around, moving you around in my philosophies, every seven minutes, we're going to do something together, whether it's break into little groups like we did today. So you don't lose teaching a class. Truly, if you get a class right after lunch. It's like the worst nightmare of all. So

it is. So you have to figure out ways to be really creative to make sure that people are learning, that's what you want. Whether it's like Dr. Britton, who was telling me and Dr. Young Ellis was telling me that you have a gymnasium right off your teaching class here in your lab, or you have a gymnasium so you could teach and then we go in the gym and move you around. And that application is so fantastic here. So we did the same at the University where I came from, I would teach in the classroom and go right to the gym. And most of the times I've taught in the gym, because if to keep you moving academic games we talked about a little bit today keeping moving and that is the better way to learn. So application is how I tried to make sure you learn. So all those years of experience, even though we have a book for the class, I can say that I use it to guide me. But most of the time I used examples like the movie posters, and go into those things really make a difference. You'll listen at stories as opposed to let's read this law.

Give me an application to the law, and then we'll learn you know, or like, give me a lawsuit and I'll learn I won't do that again. So, so teaching was no second thing was what as I was growing with teaching, I started to learn to work with duck teaching was duck, I'm sorry, mentoring students with getting earning their PhD writing their dissertations. It's considered teaching at our university. So that was the next most rewarding thing for me, because that was a challenge. And that was really hard for me to learn how to

mentor doctoral students, because they're getting smarter. And I always need to be smarter. So you. So you just have to make sure you're up to date on the literature because they start reading and learning and they become really bright in the field. And that's good. And you just mentor them and the relationship is really nice. So that is extremely rewarding. Working with our doctoral students, in learning about their study, their research study, and watching them go through that process is extremely rewarding. And the last thing is student learning your students and it's just when you're on campus, I don't know how your faculty feel. But when we see you and you say hi to us, you have no idea the impact that puts on us, we love it. And just like little like Dr. Young would come into my office and bring me little snacks and it's just like, Oh God, this student is wonderful. And then Dr. Bitner would bring her daughter over and I love kids and she knows I love kids and I would play with her daughter and just things like that if you gave me all the dark chocolate

here, right. So that interaction

MIT students is really fun, from undergraduate to graduate to documents really, really extremely rewarding. I love the University had a great time there. Yeah, it was good time.

Yeah, I agree with you at least, that building rapport with your, your staff and like teachers really like, like builds a bond with you. Yeah.

And it creates like a more engaging learning environment to, it does, because then you have the students want to learn, they like you, as a professor, you're not getting there to try to you're not getting them to like you. Because you're they're focusing on how to make this a learning environment for the student in the environment. You're trying to figure out how to make this a really good learning environment. And all of a sudden, the students start liking this environment. So they like to be there. And they like to be there with you because they want to learn from you. So that's a nice way to put that I really appreciate you saying that. Yeah, that was nice. Yeah. All right. So I'm gonna move on to the next question. So during your career, you also had a personal preparation grant, would you be able to tell us more about your experience with it?

Yes, I, when I was working in the public school, we worked collaboratively with Texas Woman's University. I wasn't I was teaching there part time. But the grants were there through Dr. French. And so he, I ran his grant, kind of like you are all part of there. I did what you did, but in a different aspect. I was paid through the university. So similar. So I help run it with the students and help manage that. So I've learned a lot about it. So when it was my turn to write the grant, I didn't we didn't get it the first time around. It's a collaborative effort as a team. So it's like you have two faculty here, they probably did other faculty write it together. So that's a, that's a couple, like three to five faculty that write this grant together. But then one is, there's one person that's in charge of it. So I wrote it, we wrote it the first time we didn't get it. So then the next year, during that year, I went to Chicago and learned how to

strategically right a little bit better. And I went for one week, it was, it was phenomenal. And then I came back and we rewrote that grant and we got that grant. And that's just was really inspiring. So we got that grant for five years, and you get, you'd have much money we get for those grants to help fund you all.

You probably just know your paycheck, right?

So it's like 1.2 million for five years. Yeah, but we divided up we have to justify every single bit of that money. Okay, just a sidebar when I was on the grant back in 1989. I got \$500 A month, that was what I received. So I don't know what you're receiving now. Don't say? No.

But so then when I had the when we had the grant, it was collectively at the university. We funded the students on their tuition was paid, which was quite nice. You get a stipend for that. So that was really that was real nice out there that grant worked out. So. But to make that work, you need a really good students to help run the grant. You can't run it without y'all. You need a really good grant secretary or administrative assistant, you need to have someone that knows what they're doing paperwork wise. I had Dr. Bitner was my like,

Grant coordinator, even though we named you what was your title? Oh, that sounds fancy enough. Yeah, we'll put her in that. But she kept me squared away on, because it's a really big project. And you have to justify everything. So everything you do on your grant, we have to monitor and make sure we do everything. So in the end of this five year grant, I only turned back let's see if Dr. Bitner can beat this. I turned, I turned back only \$1,000. Yeah, some people turned back a lot. That's pretty good. And if it wasn't for my administrative assistant, I would have spent it but she kind of kept the reins on he wouldn't let me spend it. So it's a lot of money that you spend, but it's on the students. And it's purposeful, and it's functional. It's what we need to help our field, just like you said earlier is how are we going to be known in our field? And that's why you guys go to these conferences and learn and talk about our field. So yeah, exactly. I know, I'm very grateful for the grant that they work so hard in getting for us. Yes, it's not easy to get the grants, I can tell you that. So it's nice when they get it because we have funding to support you to train you. For the children out there. You have a high need for adaptive PE in your state here. So it's really you need it. So it's really nice that you have the grant here. It's quite nice. Yeah. So thanks, doctor, veteran doctor. Yeah, yeah, very nice. Yeah, I didn't know that. There was like so many other component that goes into like writing a grant and like getting it all process. Yeah. Thank you for sharing that. Sure. And you have to have a really good rapport with the person that does the budget too, because they want to know where the money goes every single second. Yeah. Yeah. All right, next question. So is there anything that worries or excites you about the future of the profession? Let's go with excites me because we can tell probably, you know, just being around students that are positive that want to learn, just learning about your project and just what you just said today, you have a young adults here, it's so fantastic that you do that and you had your guests come

into your classroom today. So really nice practicum things you have really nice faculty. And I love I follow you on Twitter and I'm not so great on it, but I do know all about it.

Just now that I'm doing other things in life, like making hummus and falafel, I know I like to follow you also, I see what you do. So that's really exciting to see what other programs not discussing, but other programs, what they're doing in the field for all children and disciplines. So that's really exciting to see that our program is still running. What worries me, I think just one thing that worries me is communication that we don't, we get on our little we leave, we do our own thing. And we don't we we lose that we were just came from here, wherever we came from, and we don't communicate, and collaborate. So collaboration is really important. So whatever we do in the field, whether you continue on in your education, just try to keep collaborating with people. So you do best for students with disabilities. That's what our main goal is. That's our goal. Whether we do it is best to do it as a team. Yeah, definitely. Not to just go off on your own. This is my program, I do this, if you don't want that style. We did this to get like, we wrote this grant together, we do this together. It's it's a collaborative approach, and collaboration and just like professional growth, just because things are always changing. And like you mentioned earlier, when you are mentoring, you know, they're all their education is always improving. So kind of just saying, when you get on to the field, it's important not to stay stagnant. And just keep learning and keep growing with the things. Keep in touch with your faculty, your professors that you wherever you come from, keep in touch, like when I left when I graduated from TW I still kept in touch with like Dr. Cheryl, she was a big we met every month for lunch. I always met with her. I know that y'all don't know her. But she was a wonderful researcher and mentor and I met with her and we traveled together and that, that collaboration. And that was a really nice thing to keep. And it kept me because she was always researching that kept me what was going on in the field. So I knew what was going on in the field.

So this next one might be a little bit difficult to answer because you've accomplished so much in your career. But what is one accomplishment that you're very proud of? Okay, I have two is that okay? Okay.

So here's the book that this is booked with Claudine Cheryl and I just picked it up out of Dr. Yong Yong Ellis Ellis, Joan is her office in that she I know she did this. But she dedicated this book to my husband and I and her family, which was really, really nice. But one thing that we did is, I wrote a chapter two chapters in this book, which and one I wrote with Dr. Cheryl and one I wrote with Dr. French and Cheryl. So that was a really great accomplishment. That I can just tell you this as a quick little story. I was in her house typing up this entire book with her spending the night and doing this. And then she went off to Hawaii. And she left me with everything that may allow I was such a nervous wreck. But I finished typing it and fixing it for tabbing and all tabs everywhere. And I mailed it out for her. The next day, I was so exhausted, they left to go to Hawaii while I was still in the house. And I finished it up. But this was a great accomplishment. The second little one was, of course receiving that federal grant. That was really nice accomplishment. Yeah, those are the two.

Lovely. Yeah. And so kind of to wrap this up a little bit. What advice and you can give a few pieces of advice would you give master students studying adopted, adapted physical education? This is going to be a zinger on Yeah, but I really think right important. If you can travel internationally, whether it's during your program or after your program, and somehow get you'll make it in life, don't worry about money, somehow, you'll make it just go study for one semester, one summer, or a year, if you can collaborate with another program, if you could go somewhere, because it will open your eyes to a whole nother world. And it's fascinating to get out of your element and not stay in the state that you're in and go somewhere else and see, especially internationally, that is such a great experience. And if you can't do that, then try to do it through a conference like go to your professors and say, there's a really great conference in Turkey next May and I would really like to go, is there a way I can get funded to go when we are on our grant, we funded the students we went to Alaska, we went to Trinidad or I'm sorry, not Trinidad, Alaska and one other.

I went whether it may hit me in a minute, I can't believe I can't think of it. Anyway, I took the students to Norway and one point we went to Norway. We funded it ourselves. I didn't do it off the ground. And but we went we found money and we all went so if you could find a way to go just to see something else International, it's really good. That would be a really, really great experience. The second thing is experience as much as you can here if this is your program here, get out there and go is just I know that you're working you're trying to survive but take the time to go see other things that are happening.

hang in the field. Because that will really make your mind think and you'll think and you'll get better and better and better. Yes, we do actually have an opportunity. It's called best in the business where each month we go observe an AP teacher out in the field in different districts. And yeah, it's definitely a great learning experience. Because every district does things differently. Every teacher has their own teaching style. So it's, it's really cool to be able to sit in and kind of just learn from the best, right? Yeah. And what you talked about going international and seeing different places. It's I personally haven't had the opportunity yet. But I know in Long Beach, Dr. BENNER and Dr. Yang kind of push us to go like camp abilities, I believe, is what it's called. And, you know, I'm, I'm hoping that I can spend a summer in Alaska or wherever just I know, a few of us in the cape program to have been discussing it, they won't graduate. We do want to participate in that. You know, I think there's one down or at least Columbia doesn't have one down in South America somewhere. I think so. Yeah. Yeah, check, check around shuttle. Yeah, it's international. So that'd be a great experience.

And is there anything else that you would like to discuss with us that we haven't gone over already? The last thing I would recommend is don't. I don't like to say the word don't try not to

hesitate on asking your mentors, your faculty mentors or questions. Sometimes you'll see him in the hallway, their, their their mind is on the next class or on the next thing, they're busy. That's okay. But they have office hours. And even if you go in there, and just have a question about this law, can you explain 504 versus I DEA, I just can't figure that out? It doesn't make any sense to me. Have them

explain that to you. Just Just give them that time. Because you'll learn more, I would say I would say try to really spend that time with the faculty and try to ask questions, even if it's in the middle of class, just ask a question. If you don't know what I know, it's easy to say that and you don't you walk out, you're like, Yeah, I should have asked that question. So then make an appointment, they have the time with the appointment times. And they'll give you that time. They they enjoy working with students, I know they do. So they would give you that time, and they'd like to teach. So that wouldn't be a problem at all. And they would help you understand and learn. So that would be my advice is to work with your faculty. Yeah. Because sometimes as professionals, we think like, oh, we kind of get embarrassed to ask a question or something like that, like, oh, we should already know this. And I know that's like kind of a wall that I've had to break down and like, No, it's okay to ask questions. Yes, you shouldn't, you know, you can't expect to know everything. And you know, you won't know everything. So well. Sometimes faculty will say, Well, I had office hours this week, and I didn't have any students come in. So I just sit here for eight hours, you know, they, they just come in for two hours. No one's there. So it's use those user user office hours, they would prefer to have a student there. You know, to ask questions to help. Yeah, it's, it's a good thing to do. It's a nice thing. Well, thank you for sharing all of that great insight and information about yourself and your program at Texas University. And, yeah, we appreciate you coming to visit with us. It's my pleasure. It's really nice here. I really like it here. I'm thank you for taking the time, your time to ask me questions. Really nice interview. I appreciate it. Thank you. All right. And we are so grateful and so honored to have you Dr. Lisa, join us. Dr. Lisa was our mentor at Texas Woman's University. So it's very fun to to connect our family tree and so that our students can see who we learned from and some of our tips and tricks come from Dr. Lisa and, and Dr. French. So it's been it's been a pleasure to have you with us and talking to our students. Thank you very much. All right. Thanks all until next time.

Hello