

Award Background

In 2007, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) established the **Joseph E. Zins Awards for Early Career Contributions to SEL Research and Practice** to honor the memory and promote the work and lifelong professional passions of our beloved colleague Joe Zins. Joe cared about growing the field of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). He cared about nurturing young scholars and practitioners who would lead the next generation of SEL professionals. His work exemplified the blending of rigorous scientific research and effective practice that CASEL has upheld as an abiding standard. Thus, CASEL established an award to be presented to two outstanding SEL professionals 40 years old or younger. Each year, we give one award each for contributions to SEL Research and SEL Practice.

Research Award: This award is presented to a young researcher who has made substantial contributions to the field of Social and Emotional Learning in schools. These contributions could include basic research, theoretical contributions, or research on curriculum, policies, or practices.

Practice Award: This award is presented to a young practitioner who has contributed substantially to promoting system-level changes for SEL in schools. These contributions could include creating models of systemic change, implementing innovative programming, or influencing local, state, or federal policy.

2009 Award Winners

SEL Research Award Winner: Marc Brackett, Research Scientist, Yale University

Dr. Marc Brackett is a Research Scientist in Psychology and Deputy Director of the Health, Emotion, and Behavior Laboratory at Yale University. He is the co-developer of the RULER model of emotional literacy, which posits that teaching adults and children the skills associated with *Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating* emotion contributes to positive development. His research program focuses on the measurement of emotion-related skills, links between emotion-related skills and important life outcomes for students and teachers, and testing how SEL training can improve the lives of students and educators. In the course of this work, he has designed, implemented, and evaluated several SEL curricula for teachers, school administrators, and students of different ages. He has also made significant original contributions to key measurement issues in the field of SEL. Marc has shown, in both his basic research and in his evaluations of the SEL interventions he co-designed, that emotional literacy development promotes a wide-range of positive outcomes for students and adults. Among other positive outcomes, Marc has found emotional skills positively influence cognitive functioning (e.g., thinking, decision-making, memory), relationships and social interactions, rates of problematic behavior, and academic achievement.

SEL Practice Award Winner: Jennifer Loudon, Chicago Public Schools

Jennifer Loudon is a manager in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Office of Specialized Services. In this capacity she has worked over a number of years across multiple units in CPS to see that SEL is recognized and effectively implemented in the third largest school district in the country. In 2004, she developed a proposal for a pilot project in 30 of CPS's most challenged schools to support the implementation of social and emotional skill building for students through partnerships with community-based organizations. Over the past three years, she has authored grants resulting in over \$14.2 million to expand CPS efforts to implement and integrate universal SEL and coordinate it with more intensive services for higher-needs students. As of this year, approximately 80 schools are systematically implementing at least one district SEL strategy. With a group of creative colleagues, Jennifer has worked to overcome the many barriers to successful implementation posed by such a large urban district, and remains focused on building adult and student skills for SEL at varying levels of intensity throughout the district, as well as working with instructional colleagues to better integrate academic and SEL strategies and training.