

Audience Participation Contributes: Megan Hamilton to Participate in “Shark Tank” Research Funding Competition for AERA 2019

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Megan Hamilton

Megan Hamilton will compete against graduate students from across the nation for \$1,500 in a “Shark Tank” presentation on April 8th in Toronto. This event is a part of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting and is hosted by the Equity and Inclusion and Graduate Student committees.

Those familiar with [ABC’s television show “Shark Tank”](#) know how tough the judges, “the sharks,” can be on entrepreneurs seeking for investment deals of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The AERA session Hamilton will be participating in will follow the theme of ABC’s show. According to the [event description](#), “During this session, graduate student finalists will present a 5-minute ‘pitch’ of their equity and inclusion focused research proposals to a panel of Sharks. Following each presentation, the Sharks will ask questions and offer feedback ... Sharks, along with a live vote from

audience members will determine which proposal will be funded.”

Hamilton, a doctoral student in the Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences (ITLS) Department, will be aiming to receive funding for her dissertation research. Her presentation is titled, “Culturally-Responsive Video Game Design with Off-Reservation Indigenous Youth and Communities.”

“I am encouraged that AERA Division C is expanding its session offerings to include this unique session format for graduate students to pitch their idea to a live audience and potentially receive funding to do the work,” said Dr. Breanne Litts, “Megan’s acceptance to present at this competitive event signifies the importance and potential impact of the work she aims to do with Indigenous youth around the state. This is an incredible accomplishment!”

Hamilton’s competitors include students from Texas A&M University, the University of Pennsylvania, and New York University, all pitching their “Equity and Inclusion–Focused Research Designs” ([see the event description for more information](#)). Hamilton said, “Thanks to the support of outstanding faculty here at USU, I was able to submit and be chosen for this awesome experience. I can’t wait to get up on stage to try to win funding towards my research with Indigenous youth. I hope to see you all at the Shark Tank competition. Your vote could really make a difference!”

The session will be happening in the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, Mezzanine, Birchwood Ballroom on Monday April 8th at 8 a.m.

You can [see a list of all ITLS faculty and student participation at AERA on the ITLS news page](#). According to the [2019 AERA Annual Meeting website](#), “The American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting is the world’s largest gathering of education researchers and a showcase for groundbreaking, innovative studies in an array of areas.”

