

# NISONGERNEWS

OSU Nisonger Center

Volume 1, Issue 1



As Helen Keller said, "When we do the best that we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another."

## Special Education and Transition Program area awarded new grants

The Special Education and Transition Program area has four new grants that are designed to enhance academic achievement and transition outcomes for students with and without disabilities.

**EnvisionIT** is a web-based curriculum that integrates Information Technology (IT) skills with career and transition planning. The result is a self-directed transition portfolio that guides students' transition from high school to either college or employment. The EnvisionIT curriculum is being piloted in 22 classrooms throughout Ohio and Michigan. Contact the project coordinator Kelly Dillon at [dillon.148@osu.edu](mailto:dillon.148@osu.edu).

**Way-to-Work E-mentoring Project**, funded by Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, is designed to develop and

evaluate a model for electronic mentoring to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Students enrolled at Ohio School for the Blind and Ohio School for the Deaf are taking the EnvisionIT curriculum, then matched with mentors to reflect on their transition plans using a safe email system. Mentors include OSU students, staff and faculty. Contact Jen Earley at [earley.37@osu.edu](mailto:earley.37@osu.edu).

Students using both EnvisionIT and E-mentoring can use a new device under development called **Web-4-All**. This device will automatically customize whatever computer students are using with the assistive technologies (AT) they need to access the Internet both inside and outside the classroom. Contact Alexa Murray at [murray.330@osu.edu](mailto:murray.330@osu.edu).

The Central Ohio **Youth For Christ** (COYFC) community-based organization serves an inner-city population identified by the Taft Administration as vulnerable youth. We have partnered with COYFC through a subcontract to provide our EnvisionIT and E-mentoring supports to this population. Contact Margo Izzo at [izzo.1@osu.edu](mailto:izzo.1@osu.edu).

Students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will need new literacy and technology skills for successful transitions from high school to college and/or employment settings. These programs, all under Dr. Margo Izzo's direction, work together to help students in all walks of life gain academic skills while improving and mastering the technological ones they need for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. **NN**

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## Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of **NISONGERNEWS**, a quarterly publication for the faculty, staff, and graduate students of the OSU Nisonger Center.

Many people participated in last year's OSU Medical Center staff satisfaction survey. Among the responses that appeared consistently were the need for more communication and a clearer sense of what different areas of

the Nisonger Center are doing. This newsletter is a direct result.

Each issue will feature grants, publications, services, and/or events for several Nisonger programs. Regular segments will announce new hires, departing staff, and other staff news as well as reminders of coming events.

**NISONGERNEWS** will be emailed as a PDF attachment

and posted on the Nisonger Center website, [nisonger.osu.edu](http://nisonger.osu.edu).

And it's still a work in progress! We want to meet your needs, share your stories, and hear your feedback. Please feel free to send me your news, ideas, and comments by email at [graff.42@osu.edu](mailto:graff.42@osu.edu) or by phone at 688-8092.

**Vicki Graff**



## OSU Nisonger Center

Editor: Vicki Graff  
257A McCampbell Hall  
1581 Dodd Dr.  
Columbus, OH 43201  
Phone: 614-688-8092  
Fax: 614-292-3727  
E-mail: [graff.42@osu.edu](mailto:graff.42@osu.edu)

## The Ohio State University **Nisonger Center**

A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

**“The mission of The Nisonger Center is to provide a comprehensive, integrated approach of training, service, technical assistance, applied research and dissemination of information in the field of mental retardation and developmental disabilities.”**

The Nisonger Center was founded in 1966 as an interdisciplinary program of the Ohio State University. The United States Administration on Developmental Disabilities has designated Nisonger Center a "University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)." Nisonger Center is part of a network of 60 such centers throughout the country.

Steven Reiss, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, has served as Director since 1991.

For more information about The Nisonger Center, contact Zhong Jiang at [jiang.39@osu.edu](mailto:jiang.39@osu.edu).



## LIVES WORTH SAVING program staff publishes new study



**“The results are encouraging, and show that transplants are as successful in people with mental retardation as they are in others,” Reiss said.**

**A** newly published literature review suggests that mental retardation does not lessen the likelihood that a patient will benefit from a kidney transplant.

Due to a severe shortage of donated organs (kidney, liver, heart, pancreas, heart-lung, intestine), authorities have had to create wait lists and prioritize patients based on severity of illness and other considerations. As a result, many people experience organ failure and succumb to their disease before a suitable organ for transplantation becomes available.

Prior to the 1990s, IQ level may have been a significant factor that precluded patients with mental retardation from access to transplantation. According to a national survey

conducted in 2004, many people with mental retardation question whether they have equal access to organ transplants.

Drs. Steven Reiss, Linda Jones, and Marilee Martens, in The Nisonger Center’s LIVES WORTH SAVING program, co-authored a study that has been published in the September 2006 issue of *Pediatric Transplantation*.

They surveyed worldwide published cases and found that the one-year survival rate for people with mental retardation who received kidney transplants was 100 percent, and the three-year survival rate was 90 percent. Those are comparable to national survival rates for the overall population, Reiss said.

This study is the first to compile outcomes from around the world among transplant patients with mental retardation. The results help answer concerns about whether transplants would be successful in these individuals.

LIVES WORTH SAVING is the nation’s largest program of outreach, education, and research dedicated to reaching the national goal of equal access. It is developing an international registry of organ transplants among the mentally retarded and a “Hotline” for general information on transplantation and on donation. Contact Marilee Martens at [martens.22@osu.edu](mailto:martens.22@osu.edu). **NN**

## Behavior Support Services offer programs for both children and adults

People with developmental disabilities experience high rates of behavior problems, from inappropriate social interactions to severe aggression. Two programs at the Nisonger Center develop, implement, and monitor behavior support plans to help meet the needs of these people and their families.

The Behavior Support Services serves children and adults who are referred from the Franklin County Board of MR/DD. Dr. Betsey Benson directs services for the adult population; Dr. Luc Lecavalier directs services for children and adolescents.

Staff in both units includes psychologists, full-time behavior specialists, and graduate students. Nisonger staff meets with families, service providers, day program, transportation, and residential personnel at the person's residence or other location to conduct functional assessments. In consultation with the person's team, they then develop a behavior support plan that aims to decrease behavior problems and increase prosocial and adaptive behaviors.

Nisonger Behavior Support staff trains personnel in plan implementation and monitoring according to guidelines provided by the Ohio Department of MR/DD and the Franklin County Board of MR/DD. As the program operates under contract with the County board, there is no cost to individuals or their families.

Contact Kathleen Kraft (adults) at [kraft.5@osu.edu](mailto:kraft.5@osu.edu) or Christy Fischer (children) at [fischer.69@osu.edu](mailto:fischer.69@osu.edu) for more information.  
**NN**



**Behavior Support Services help adults and children of all ages develop prosocial and adaptive behaviors.**

## Next Chapter Book Club receives unusual donation

When Dr. Tom Fish started the Next Chapter Book Clubs in 2002, Cara Schauer was one of the first volunteer facilitators. She and Jason Williams recently got married and requested that in lieu of wedding gifts, invitees consider making a donation to the OSU Nisonger Center to support the NCBC!

Thanks to the generosity of Cara, Jason, and their family and friends, we subscribed to News for You®, published weekly by New Readers

Press, as a pilot project at the classroom rate. Each Columbus club is receiving 10 copies for 16 weeks.

The 4-page newspaper features stories based on articles from the Associated Press and the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service, rewritten for adults with lower reading skills. It covers a wide variety of topics and uses colorful photos and graphics. A teachers guide with tips accompanies the package.

Now located in nine states with more than 35 clubs, the NCBC promotes literacy, social connectedness, and community inclusion for adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities. Groups meet with volunteer facilitators weekly to read aloud together for one hour in bookstores and cafés such as Borders and Caribou Coffee. To become a facilitator or refer someone for membership, contact Jillian Ober at [ober.7@osu.edu](mailto:ober.7@osu.edu). **NN**

*“Our members are really excited about getting the News for You paper. Some even want to subscribe on their own after the pilot project ends.”*

## Mark your calendars for these upcoming events

Nisonger new hires since May 2005 need to sign up for two mandated generic safety training programs:

- EOEP (Emergency Operations & Evacuation Plan)
- HAZCOM

Current Nisonger employees only need to take HAZCOM. See 8/9 email from Zhong Jiang.

Renew parking permits online by Aug. 21, in person by Aug. 31.

### Note these other events:

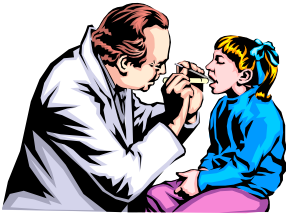
- 2006 Heart Walk at COSI/Genoa Park, Aug. 26.
  - 9th Ave. Garage closes for renovation Sept. 1–Dec. 31.
  - Ackerman Library opens Sept. 15; Thompson Library closes Sept. 17 for three-year renovation.
  - Three walks set for Sept. 30: Asthma at Easton, Diabetes at Northbank Park, Leukemia and Lymphoma at OSU's Fred Beekman Park.
  - 2006 Down Syndrome Assn. Buddy Walk at Franklin Park Conservatory, Oct. 1.
  - Community Star Award dinner takes place Nov. 1.
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Ohio Adult Sibling Conference at Columbus Airport Marriott, Nov. 3–4.
- See other news and events lists online at OneSource; you need your OSU Medical Center ID to log on. **NN**



Send notices of upcoming events to NISONGERNEWS editor Vicki Graff by email at [graff.42@osu.edu](mailto:graff.42@osu.edu). Each quarterly issue will appear approximately 4-6 weeks from the end of the calendar quarter (May, August, November, and February).

# NISONGERNEWS

## Welcome new hires! (April, May, June)



**RUPP is the Research Unit on Pediatric Psychopharmacology.**

**Kelly Dillon**, full-time Research Associate in the Special Education and Transition Program area, started on May 31. Kelly was previously a Clinical Interviewer in the Program for Genetics and Psychoses at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Her M.A. in Psychology is from Vermont College at the Union Institute. Among the highlights of her education is a semester as a Study Abroad Scholar at Murdoch University in Perth, Australia. Kelly is married to Eric Kelly, who works in the MRI department at the OSU Medical Center.

**Ashley Jones** is a full-time Clinical Research Associate in the Research Unit on Pediatric Psychopharmacology (RUPP) as of June 26. She graduated from OSU this June with a B.A. in German and a B.S. in Psychology. Ashley recently served an internship with the American Red Cross Blood Services in Columbus. While at OSU she was a research assistant in the Clinical Psychology and Developmental Psychology departments. Ashley is fluent in German and has studied abroad in Germany.

**Cynthia Klutznick** joined the Special Education and Transition Program area as part-time Office Manager on June 12. Cindy has extensive previous experience in marketing, market research, corporate and foundation relations, sales and consulting. Her most recent position was with Lambs Farm in Libertyville, Ill., which provides residential, vocational, and recreational programs and services for adults with developmental disabilities. Cindy holds an MBA in Marketing from the University of Wisconsin. She is married to Matthew Klutznick.

**Steve Rosensweig**, formerly Office Assistant and reclassified as System Specialist A&P on June 26, is now our official computer support person. He will assist Nisonger employees with computer/technology-related needs; he will also take care of day-to-day building maintenance service requests. You can reach Steve by phone at 247-7170, email at [Rosensweig.2@osu.edu](mailto:Rosensweig.2@osu.edu), or pager at 250-1029.

**Danielle Lynch** became a full-time Research Associate in the Special Education and Transition Program area on June 14. For several years Danielle has been an English teacher in various middle and high schools from Utah to Ohio in Gahanna, Lake, and New Albany districts. She brings extensive experience with special-needs and at-risk students. Her B.A. in English Teaching is from Brigham Young University in Utah. Danielle just welcomed a six-year-old beagle named Bounce into her life.

**Kristina Seifker** joined the RUPP project June 12 as full-time Clinical Research Associate. Prior to this she was a self-employed private tutor in Upper Arlington and a Clinical Dietitian at Villa Angela Care Center in Columbus. Before graduating from OSU with an M.S. in Human Nutrition, Kristina was a student research/teaching assistant in the Dept. of Human Nutrition and a research assistant/lab manager in the Dept. of Internal Medicine.

**Olivia Walter** became a part-time Office Assistant in the Special Education and Transition Program June 26. Olivia graduated in 2005 as valedictorian at the Ohio State School for the Blind and now attends Columbus State Community College. Using assistive technology such as the JAWS screen-reader program, Olivia helps with testing readability and accessibility as well as curriculum development for the EnvisionIT grant.

## Other staff news...

**Dawn and Nan Bozzolo**, both Research Associates, welcomed baby boy Julian on June 19.

**Jessica O'Reilly**, teacher ECE, welcomed baby boy Hyde James on July 26.

**Stacey Yoder**, Dental Assistant at Johnstown Road, married Richard Grubb on May 4.

## Farewell departing staff...

**Andrea Scarpino** left the Special Education and Transition Program area in May to resume a previous position teaching literacy in Columbus. She is soon departing for a year in Los Angeles with her partner, Zac, who has a fellowship there.

**Kristina Torres**, formerly a research assistant on the EnvisionIT and E-mentoring programs, left the Special Education and Transition Program in April and joined the Office of Information Technology at OSU in May as a Communications Manager for Buckeye Secure.

