

# NISONGER NEWS

OSU Nisonger Center

Volume 2, Issue 4

## Foster grandparent celebrates fifth year at Nisonger ECE



**Foster Grandparent Joann Cunningham.**  
Photo courtesy of Hurt Photography.

The Early Childhood Education program (ECE) would like to recognize Joann Cunningham. Ms. Cunningham has volunteered at the ECE since March 2003. She was the first retired citizen with mental retardation to be accepted into the Foster Grandparent Program, breaking the ground for several others to follow in her footsteps.

Joann enjoys seeing the children and talking with the adults. Her responsibilities include visiting the children, cleaning items and organizing the flyers for the Scholastic Book orders.

Joann has reduced her volunteer hours for next year and no longer qualifies to participate in the Foster Grandparent Program but will continue to spend one-half day a week at the ECE.

Most days Ms. Cunningham attends Sage Senior Services through Goodwill Columbus. She also enjoys volunteer work at the animal shelter, amusement parks (she makes an annual trip to Cedar Point) and weekly shopping trips. Joann's favorite activity is creating artwork at the Goodwill Art Studio and Gallery.

Contact Deborah.Schenerlein@osumc.edu or 292-9605 for information about the ECE Foster Grandparent program.

\* \* \*

The Nisonger ECE would like to thank the OSU Medical Center Service Board for granting funds for a new reception and welcome area on the second floor. The funds will be used to purchase a sofa, two chairs, coffee table, bulletin board, display pockets and frames for student-created artwork. More details and photos will appear in an upcoming issue. **NN**

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## Lives Worth Saving program highlighted at Chicago conference

The Lives Worth Saving (LWS) program was highlighted in a breakout and poster session at an international conference called, "Frontiers of Ethics in Transplantation: Dilemmas and Struggles," April 4-6, 2008, in Chicago. The sponsors were Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, the Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine, the American Society of Transplant Surgeons and the Chicago Transplant Ethics Consortium.

Linda Jones, RN, LWS program director, presented the rationale and goals of the program and

the importance of IDD people's equal access to organ transplantation. She included the transplant outcome data from an international literature search showing the success rate of 94 percent among IDD people transplanted. Dr. Marilee Martens conducted the literature research, published by Martens, Jones and Dr. Steven Reiss in *Pediatric Transplantation* September 2006.

The conference covered many ethical issues of organ transplantation, such as patient selection and survival, donor selection, living and unrelated

living donation, medical utility and medical urgency, altruistic non-directed donation, paired donation, and quality of life post transplant. Outcomes of the policy sessions will be shared with the transplant organizations, including the United Network of Organ Sharing (UNOS). UNOS coordinates the nation's organ transplant allocation system, providing vital services to meet the needs of men, women and children awaiting lifesaving organ transplants.

Contact Linda Jones at 292-5482 or linda.jones2@osumc.edu. **NN**



A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

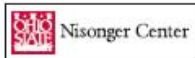
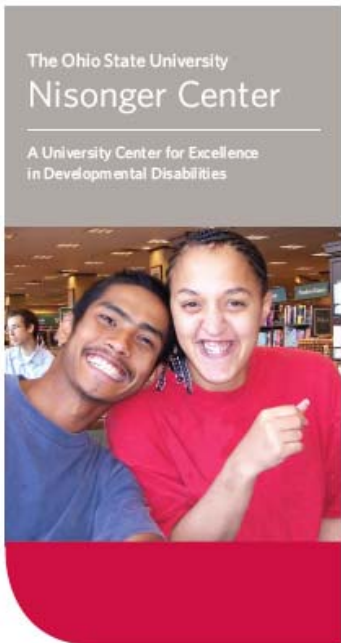
## OSU Nisonger Center

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**The mission of The Ohio State University Nisonger Center is to work with communities to value and support the meaningful participation of people with disabilities of all ages through education, service and research. The Center provides assistance to people with disabilities, families, service providers and organizations to promote inclusion in education, health, employment and community settings.**

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)." L. Eugene Arnold, MEd, MD, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry, is serving as Interim Director while a search is under way for a permanent Director. For more information about The Nisonger Center, contact Maureen Meck at [meck.1@osu.edu](mailto:meck.1@osu.edu) or 614-292-8365.



## Marketing Committee produces new tools

**U**nder the leadership of chair Dr. Margo Izzo, the Nisonger Center Marketing Committee is starting to see results.

When Interim Director Dr. Gene Arnold commissioned the group last fall, its first task was to create a general marketing brochure. Starting with basic program information from the website, plus statistical data from the Annual Report, the tool (cover left) can be used in a wide variety of ways to summarize the Nisonger Center history, mission, clinics and services, interdisciplinary training programs, special education and transition programs, research, and family and social services.

The bookmark on the right (not to scale) has the history and mission on one side and a bulleted list of programs and services on the other side. Its focus is to send readers to the website for more information.

Both items were developed with Christy Patton in the OSUMC Communications and Marketing Department. During their production, the committee approved the new logo design that appears on each piece and at the top of this page. A folder is under way, and other items are pending.

Other committee members are Vicki Graff, Linda Jones and Maureen Meck. **NN**



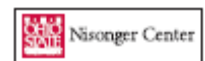
**History**  
The Nisonger Center was founded in 1966 as an interdisciplinary program of The Ohio State University through funds from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Bureau. MCH funds also built the building we occupy on the OSU campus. The U.S. Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) has designated Nisonger Center a "University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)," one of 67 in the nation.

**Mission**  
The mission of The Ohio State University Nisonger Center is to work with communities to value and support the meaningful participation of people with disabilities of all ages through education, service and research. The Center provides assistance to people with disabilities, families, service providers and organizations to promote inclusion in education, health, employment and community settings.

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For information, contact Nisonger Center administration at (614) 292-0775.

Donations to Nisonger Center are tax-deductible.



## YATC hosts King tribute workshop, now recruiting new members

In honor of Martin Luther King Day and Black History Month, the Young Adult Transition Corps hosted *Inspiring Equality: A Disability and Cultural Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* on Feb. 22, 2008. Lois Burke, MA, Director of Disability Services at OSU, was the keynote speaker.

Speakers presented on how disability is viewed in different cultures and some of the issues and disparities in providing disability services to people in various cultural groups. Dr. King was recognized for laying the foundation for many equality movements.

Students, professors, service providers, and adolescents and adults of all abilities and cultures were invited to participate. All who attended the event gave wonderful feedback.

YATC is committed to improving the quality of life for youth with disabilities who are transitioning from school to adult life through activities that promote community service, community access and social skill development. Here are the programs:

- **Aspirations** is a discussion group for young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- **Community Connections** offers many types of community-based recreational and educational activities.
- **Community Habilitation Assistant Program** leads to the Columbus State Certificate in human services.
- **Dessert and Discussion** allows parents and young adults to talk with professionals and advocates in the disability community.
- **Friendship Connection** offers social skill building and networking through recreational activities
- **YATC mentors** help young adults learn how to use their community to be more independent and expand their social support network.
- **Next Chapter Book Club** is a community-based program that promotes literacy, social connectedness, and community inclusion for adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities.
- **Partners Achieving Learning and Support (P.A.L.S.)** is a support group for young adults with Down syndrome.
- **Service-Learning Program** helps students in special education classrooms around Columbus to work with YATC members to

create ongoing community service projects.

- **Sibling Support Groups** are for children and teens who have a brother or sister with a disability.
- **What's Next?** is an information and support program for families of individuals with disabilities who are transitioning to community-based services and supports.
- **YATC on the Move** gives young adults with disabilities opportunities to engage in physical activity and learn about health and wellness.

YATC is recruiting for fall 2008! Contact Jillian.Ober@osumc.edu or 247-6392, [www.YATCOhio.org](http://www.YATCOhio.org). **NN**

## Buddy Walk raises over \$2,000 for Down syndrome awareness

More than 100 walkers laced up and many more showed up to support Down Syndrome Awareness at the Buddy Up for Fitness 5K "Take the Challenge" race on April 24 at the Franklin Park Conservatory.

Over 30 children participated in the fun run, many with Down Syndrome. Gail Cook, who helped coordinate the Nisonger

Center's sponsorship, said, "This was the best part of the race. They all received ribbons and shoelaces with some yummy treats when they crossed the finish line."

Craig McMillen organized the Nisonger team, which included Maureen Meck, Leigh Bookwalter and Bianca McArrell.

The race raised \$2,200 in net proceeds, all of which went to the Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio (DSACO). Gail said the group hopes that it grows bigger and better every year. "We could not have done it without the support of the Nisonger Center and all the people who participated. Thank you!!" **NN**



**Maureen Meck, Leigh Bookwalter, Bianca McArrell and Craig McMillen "buddied up."**

## Mark your calendars for these upcoming events

Nisonger new hires since May 2005 take 2 mandated safety training programs:

- EOEP (Emergency Operations & Evacuation Plan)
- HAZCOM

Current Nisonger employees only need to take HAZCOM.

- First International Autism Summit, Oct. 10-12, 2008, Renaissance Hotel, Cleveland, 866-838-3687, [www.AutismSummit.org](http://www.AutismSummit.org).
- 8th Annual Ohio Adult Sibling Conference, Nov. 7-8, 2008, Columbus Airport Marriott Hotel. Register by fax to Tom Fish at 614-292-3727 or [www.ohiosibs.com](http://www.ohiosibs.com).
- Network of Autism Training and Technical Assistance Programs (NATTAP) conference of the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), Nov. 19-21, 2008, Greater Columbus Convention Center. Contact 614-410-0321 or the web, [www.nattapconference.org](http://www.nattapconference.org).

See other news and events lists at OneSource; use your OSU Medical Center ID to log in. **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 six weeks from the end of the calendar quarter (May, August, November and February).

# NISONGERNEWS

## Research Unit on Pediatric Psychopharmacology in the news

RUPP is now accepting participants with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) for four different clinical trials:

1. fluoxetine (Prozac) for repetitive behaviors
2. mecamylamine (Inversine) for core symptoms of autism
3. melatonin for sleep disturbance
4. risperidone (Risperdal) for irritable behavior (mood swings, tantrums, yelling/ screaming, aggression).

Visit [psychmed.osu.edu](http://psychmed.osu.edu) for more information or contact Ashley Reno at 688-8214.

**Ashley Kulju**, a 3rd year physical therapy trainee, was featured in a video on the OSU "Do Something Great" website in May about her service learning trip to Merida, Mexico. She and eight fellow students spent 10 days working with local residents. **Erin Enright**, 2nd year LEND trainee, was among them.



Two Nisonger Center research studies were featured on the National Institute of Mental Health website June 16, 2008. See [www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/).

"New NIMH Research to Test Innovative Treatments for Children with ADHD" describes a pilot study by Dr. Gene Arnold and Dr. Nicholas Lofthouse on the use of neurofeedback, also called EEG biofeedback, an alternative therapy sometimes used to treat ADHD and other disorders.

"NIMH Funds Research to Find Best Treatments for Children with Autism and ADHD Symptoms" outlines a 10-week clinical trial led by Dr. Michael Aman, Dr. Benjamin Handen (University of Pittsburgh) and Dr. Tristram Smith (University of Rochester). The trial will assess the safety and effectiveness of two treatments: (1) atomoxetine (also called Strattera), a nonstimulant medication for treating ADHD, and (2) parent management training (PMT), in which parents learn how to use behavioral interventions

(another conventional ADHD treatment).

\* \* \*

Dr. Arnold will also receive a grant for ADHD and reading disorder research from the Ackerman Foundation this summer.

The RUPP team has successfully completed the study that compared Risperidone alone with Risperidone plus PMT and is analyzing the results. **NN**

## Welcome new hire! (January, February, March)... and a farewell...

**Charles Dailey** started on January 22 as a Behavior Support Specialist in the Adult BSS program. He previously worked at ResCare in Columbus as a home manager and later as a Qualified Mental Retardation Professional. He received a BA degree from Ohio University and served in the Army National Guard.

### **New director update:**

*Prospective directors for the Nisonger Center are currently being interviewed. Two candidates have already visited and more are scheduled to visit soon.*

**Jennifer Kerns**, MPH, left the Adult Behavior Support Services program in February to work for Humana, a health agency serving people with chronic medical conditions.

## Other staff news...

Congratulations to **Cristan Farmer**, who got Best in Poster Division at the Hayes Graduate Research Forum in April. The name of her interdisciplinary poster was "Development and Psychometric Characteristics of the Children's Scale of Hostility and Aggression: Reactive/Proactive."

Congrats to **Dr. Margo Izzo**, who received the Oliver P. Kolstoe Award at the Council for Exceptional Children's Annual Conference in Boston in April. This is the highest award given by the Division of Career Devel-

opment and Transition. Margo was DCDT president 2002-03.

Congratulations go to **Dr. Luc Lecavalier**, who won an award given by Division 33 for intellectual and developmental disabilities of the American Psychological Association (APA) for early career research.

Congrats to **Deborah Schenerlein**. The Sphinx Senior Honorary and Mortar Board Senior Honor Society recognized Deb's "extraordinary efforts" at the faculty and staff recognition and reception in February.

Congratulations to **Andrea Witter**, who received a grant from the Graduate School's Alumni Grants for Graduate Research and Scholarship fund. Andrea also received a research grant to study psychiatric disorders in youngsters with ASD from the Ohio Department of Mental Health.

**Amanda Calanche**, Dental Assistant for Nisonger Johnstown Road, and her husband Mario welcomed a New Year baby boy on Jan. 1, 2008. Luca Carlo weighed 8 lb. 4 oz. and was 21-3/4 inches long.