

NISONGER NEWS

OSU Nisonger Center

Volume 3, Issue 2/3



Inside this issue:

Coury new ATN Medical Director	2
Ratliff-Schaub's new positions	2
2008 NATTAP Conference	3
Nisonger, ECE extend thanks	3
Mark your calendars	3
Welcome to YATC-Ohio	4
ODDC Legislative Advocacy Day	4
ABSS team effort's success	5
LEND trainees, faculty recognized	5
Welcome new hires!	6
Farewell departing staff	6
Other staff news	6

NSF grant to promote STEM careers for students with disabilities

The Ohio State University, in partnership with Columbus State Community College, is leading a five-year program to recruit Ohio students with disabilities to enter the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields.

Ohio's STEM Ability Alliance program is made possible by a \$3 million National Science Foundation grant. Its goals are to recruit, retain and graduate students with disabilities in STEM degree programs at OSU and Columbus State in Columbus and Wright State University and Sinclair Community College in Dayton. Dr. Margo Izzo, Nisonger Center associate director, will coordinate the program at Ohio State.

The Ability Alliance officially launched the program Monday, Feb. 23, at a 5:00 p.m. reception at the Blackwell Inn. OSU President E. Gordon Gee, Vice President for Research Caroline Whitacre and Columbus State President Valeriana Moeller spoke at the event. Dr. Mark

Leddy, NSF program director of the Research in Disabilities Education program, also spoke after meeting with Ability Alliance partners earlier in the day.

"Ohio State recognizes that it takes a trans-institutional and interdisciplinary approach to expand educational opportunities for all students, including students with disabilities," Dr. Izzo said. "We are fortunate to have administrators and faculty from engineering, the sciences and the humanities joining together to create the Ability Alliance. Together, we will educate and support all students so they are prepared to solve issues of a global dimension and be the best workforce for our business partners."

Americans with disabilities are one-tenth as likely to be in STEM careers as their able-bodied peers and 50 percent less likely to pursue college. OSAA will create networks between universities, public

schools, industries and government to increase the number and quality of students with disabilities pursuing STEM degrees and careers.

The Alliance is proposing best-practice interventions for assisting STEM students with disabilities including

- student learning communities, emphasizing self-advocacy and self-determination skills.
- STEM internships.
- peer-to-peer and faculty-and/or employer-to-student mentoring.
- individual advisors, cross-trained in STEM and disability issues.

Wright State leads the nation in providing an accessible campus and education to all students, including the physically disabled. OSU enrolls 60,000 students, including 2,000 disclosing disabilities, of which more than 300 are pursuing STEM degrees. Ohio State and Wright State will partner with their local community colleges, Columbus State Community College and Sinclair Community College, and local high schools, including Metro High School in Columbus. Business partners include Battelle, AEP, Nationwide, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Mound Laser Center and Dayton IT Alliance.

Contact: Margo Vreeburg Izzo, izzo.1@osu.edu. **NN**



Valeriana Moeller and E. Gordon Gee spoke at the NSF Ohio STEM Ability Alliance

Photos by J. Kevin Fitzsimons.



Mark Leddy accepted Dr. Gee's mentoring volunteer card.



Margo Izzo welcomed guests to the event and introduced speakers.



A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

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

<http://nisonger.osu.edu>



Dr. Dan Coury is the new Medical Director for the Autism Treatment Network.



Dr. Karen Ratliff-Schaub is the new Medical Director for the Nisonger Center.

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 or 614-292-8365.

Dan Coury named Medical Director for Autism Treatment Network

Autism Speaks has appointed Daniel Coury, MD, to the new post of Medical Director for its Autism Treatment Network (ATN) program. As Medical Director, Dr. Coury will provide the clinical leadership for the ATN's clinical and research activities. He will work with Jim Perrin, MD, and the Clinical Coordinating Center at the MassGeneral Hospital for Children, Autism Speaks ATN program staff and the participating ATN centers to develop a strategic vision for the ATN.

Dr. Coury will lead the development of clinical guidelines and have a major role in the implementation of the ATN's research agenda for the recently funded Health Resources and Services Administration grant.

Dr. Coury is chief of developmental and behavioral pediatrics at Nationwide Children's Hospital and a professor of clinical pediatrics and psychiatry at OSUMC. He will maintain a portion of his effort in clinical service to families of

children with developmental disabilities. He will step down as Medical Director of the Nisonger Center and director of the LEND training program, while remaining as a LEND faculty member.

Autism Speaks is dedicated to funding global biomedical research into the causes, prevention, treatments, and cure for autism and raising public awareness about autism and its effects on individuals, families, and society. **NN**

Karen Ratliff-Schaub, LEND co-director, Nisonger Medical Director

With Dan Coury taking on his new duties with the ATN (see story above), Karen Ratliff-Schaub, MD, developmental-behavioral pediatrician on the LEND faculty, will become co-director of the LEND training program and Medical Director of the Nisonger Center. In this role, she will continue to work

with Dr. Coury and the clinical programs of Nationwide Children's Hospital to further strengthen the clinical, training and research relationships of the two institutions. Dr. Ratliff-Schaub joined Nationwide Children's Hospital and Nisonger Center in 2005, coming to OSU from the Medical College of Ohio in

Toledo (now University of Toledo Medical School). She was chief of developmental and behavioral pediatrics.

Dr. Coury said, "Dr. Ratliff-Schaub is an ideal physician to lead the Nisonger Center ... and a role model for trainees in the LEND program and elsewhere on campus." **NN**

Nisonger faculty, staff participate in 2008 NATTAP Conference

The Network of Autism Training and Technical Assistance Programs (NATTAP) held its 2008 conference Nov. 19-21 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Nisonger faculty and staff were well-represented:

Dr. Jane Case-Smith presented *Evidence-Based Review of Interventions Used in Occupational Therapy for ASD*. Dr. Case-Smith is a LEND faculty member and provides occupational therapy evaluations for children with autism.

Vicki Graff, Dr. Tom Fish and Jeffrey Strasser presented *Next*

Chapter Book Club: Community Literacy and Friendship Program for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Ms. Graff is a program manager and chairs the Nisonger Center Marketing Committee. Dr. Fish is director of social work and family support services. Mr. Strasser is a book club member.

Jeff Siegel, Dr. Angela Suell Denny, Melanie Yergeau and Tom Fish presented *Women of Aspirations – A Support Group for Adult Women with High-Functioning Autism*. Mr. Siegel is the coordinator and facilitator

of the Aspirations program. Dr. Denny co-facilitates Aspirations and is a LEND parent advocate trainee. Ms. Yergeau is a member of Aspirations.

The Nisonger Center Marketing Committee designed a large, three-panel poster highlighting all Nisonger programs and services for a booth display. LEND trainees Hillary Spears, Abby Basbagill and Jody Wall helped create the poster and took turns at the booth to answer questions. One panel of the poster was later adapted for the Ohio STEM Ability Alliance. **NN**



Melanie and Jeff at the Women of Aspirations presentation Nov. 19.



Hillary, Brutus and Abby at the Nisonger Center display booth. See a photo of the OSAA version, page 1.

Nisonger and ECE thank OSUMC Service Board and others

The Nisonger Early Childhood Education program thanks the OSU Medical Center Service Board for its \$2,747 grant for new waiting room furnishings. The second floor "living room" consists of a sofa, two chairs, a coffee table, bulletin board, display pockets and frames. See top photo on the right.

The ECE also thanks everyone who helped the Avon Fall Fund Raiser raise \$800 to purchase classroom supplies. The playground has a new merry-go-

round and an airplane teeter totter, thanks to the generous gifts of ECE alumni family Bob, Tammy and Abigail Boring.

The ECE extends very heartfelt thanks to Girl Scout Troop 178, directed by Karen Scott. The troop painted the swing set, playhouse and picnic tables; cleaned the grounds; and assembled the blue cabinets in the hallway and playground equipment. They also bought a new park bench and flowers for the playground area. The girls

will earn The Girl Scout Silver Award for their project. **NN**

The Nisonger Center Executive Committee approved funds for new furniture on the first and third floors of McCampbell Hall. See middle and bottom photos.

The Nisonger Center received \$8,186 in audio visual equipment for conference rooms and clinical observation rooms from the OSU Board of Regents – 20 percent of the allocation to the Office of Health Sciences for FY 2007-08. **NN**



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 need to take HAZCOM as well as annual **HIPAA** training (contact Sherry.Feinstein@osumc.edu) and **CPR** training (contact Susan.Thompson2@osumc.edu).

Note these other events:

- The Columbus Foundation and donors have committed \$400,000 in matching funds for a Critical Need Alert. They will match every dollar with fifty cents. Donate \$20 or more by credit card thru PowerPhilanthropy@. Register at www.columbus-foundation.org (no hyphen).
 - Ohio Disability Legislative Event rally, 11 AM, April 1, Ohio Statehouse, Broad & High Sts. Register at 800-875-2723, The Arc of Ohio.
 - 8th Annual OSU Medical Center Research Day, April 2, 2009. Faculty needed to serve as judges. Contact researchday@osumc.edu.
 - ADA-Ohio Multiple Perspectives Conference, April 28-29, 2009, Blackwell Inn Conference Center.
- 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. Each quarterly issue will appear approximately six weeks from the end of the calendar quarter (May, August, November and February).

NISONGERNEWS

Welcome to the 2008-09 Young Adult Transition Corps members



Chris, Megan, Victoria, Alison E (back row); Allison G, Mary and Miranda (Cap) hosted a 2008 "Ghostly Ghouls Gala" for Next Chapter Book Club members and facilitators Oct. 26.



Angela, Alex, Renee, Charles and Jennifer (front), costume winners.

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

1. mecamlamine (Inversine) for core symptoms of autism
2. melatonin for sleep disturbance
3. risperidone (Risperdal) for irritable behavior (mood swings, tantrums, yelling/ screaming, aggression)
4. pilot explorations of neurofeedback in ADHD
5. atomoxetine and parent training in behavior management (ADHD symptoms in ASD, including Asperger's)
6. stimulant, risperidone and parent training for ADHD and aggression

Visit psychmed.osu.edu for more information or contact Krysti Wilson at 292-7022.

If you've noticed some enthusiastic new faces at Nisonger since September, you've most likely encountered the 2008-09 YATC members!

An AmeriCorps program of the Nisonger Center, Young Adult Transition Corps (YATC) is committed to improving the quality of life for youth with disabilities who are transitioning from school to adult life. It does this through activities that promote community service, community access and social skill development.

Since September, YATC members have created, coordinated and/or assisted a variety of programs, including Career Chat, Dessert and Discussion, YATC On the Move, Aspira-

tions, the Next Chapter Book Club, Friendship Connection, Best Buddies and more. For more information about YATC and its partner programs, please visit their website, www.YATCOhio.org.

YATC members also collaborate with high school students in six area Special Education classrooms to develop service learning projects. Students and YATC members have created and delivered activity books to children in the hospital, celebrated the holidays with the Westminster-Thurber Community, collected hundreds of items for care packages for the residents at United Methodist Children's Home, and provided numerous other services to their local communities.

The creative and dedicated team includes these new YATC members:

- Miranda Capuano
- Alison Eakin
- Mary Flickinger
- Allison Gibson
- Victoria Mason
- Christopher Miller
- Megan Strahler
- Tim Wilson

YATC project staff include Tom Fish, Jillian Ober and Jerra Knicely. Contact Jillian Ober at 247-6392 or Jillian.Ober@osumc.edu for more information. **NN**

YATC is committed to the inclusion of members, participants and volunteers with all levels of ability.

ODDC grant supports Legislative Advocacy Day Coordinator

Amy Hess and Pat Cloppert applied for and received a grant to support a person with a disability named Carmen Shelton. The grant they received from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council is for a Legislative Advocacy Day, which will be April 1 this year.

The goal of the Legislative Advocacy Day Coordinator project is to involve individuals with disabilities, their family members and the general public in an advocacy day to promote efforts to change public policy. Such changes will effect system change in an effort improve service delivery to people with disabilities. Here are the major activities of the

project that Ms. Shelton will coordinate:

1. Recruit individuals with various disabilities from various racial and ethnic backgrounds to participate in an annual advocacy day event to promote public policy and systems change.
2. Distribute materials that will be provided by the Developmental Disabilities Council on specific issues that impact individuals with disabilities and their families.
3. Coordinate and participate in legislative visits that promote advocacy efforts which will impact public policy change and effect system

change. Activities will also include collecting data to determine the success of the legislative visits. Media coverage of the event will help educate the general public about public policy issues. These activities will impact advocacy efforts to promote system change, so that individuals with disabilities can live more independent lives and contribute to their communities.

The ODDC grant is renewable for two more years. They are collaborating with the Arc of Ohio and the Autism Society of Ohio. Contact Amy.Hess@osumc.edu for details. **NN**

Adult Behavior Support Services team effort results in success

At the time that 'Annie' was referred to Nisonger Adult Behavior Support Services, she had been physically restrained for several years in order to brush her teeth twice a day. Due to Annie's severe and frequent challenging behaviors, her supported living home had sought additional funding to increase the number of staff to care for her.

Annie is diagnosed with autism and profound intellectual disability. She had a long history of not cooperating with hygiene tasks and would scream and be aggressive during them. At the time she was referred to the Nisonger Behavior Support program, Annie was non-compliant up to 645 times and physically aggressive up to 391 times per month during tooth brushing attempts alone.

Nisonger behavior specialist Jennifer Gallaway completed assessments and a modified functional analysis of Annie. She verified that the function of Annie's behaviors was to escape the tasks she disliked. Gallaway developed a behavior plan with the input of Annie's team. The goals were to create an opportunity for her to learn the basic expectations involved with tooth brushing and to associate completion of those tasks with reinforcement. By gradually increasing the expectations as she progressed, Annie was able to move from requiring physical restraint and total physical assistance with tooth brushing, to a level of prompted and monitored independence. Her progress

"Annie shows 'beaming pride' as she is praised and reinforced at the end of her tooth brushing sessions."

was evident within the first few weeks of the program. Within five months, all steps involved with tooth brushing were completed.

At present, a staff person prompts Annie to a specific tooth brushing area of the home, which is free of competing stimuli. The staff person hands Annie the toothbrush and prompts her to brush. Annie brushes her teeth with no hands-on assistance. The staff sings familiar nursery rhyme songs to help Annie know how long she needs to brush. Staff people offer verbal prompts of "more" to encourage Annie to continue brushing. They sometimes guide the toothbrush to new quadrants of the mouth to ensure all teeth are cleaned. The session ends with staff praising Annie. Then they prompt her to an area of the home filled with sensory activities that Annie prefers.

The success of the intervention is evident not only through the elimination of physical restraint, but by other measures as well. Annie shows "beaming pride" as she is praised and reinforced at the end of her tooth brushing sessions. Her team and family see her in a new light, glimpsing potential that they may have overlooked before. And, at an economic level, no additional staff is needed in her home.

The Nisonger Center Behavior Support Service is funded by the Franklin County Board of MR/DD. Referrals are made by the Franklin County Service Coordinator. **NN**

LEND trainees and faculty receive well-deserved recognition

Liz Terelle, a second-year LEND PT trainee, has been selected by the Association of University Centers on Disability as its 2008-09 "Virtual Trainee." The Virtual Trainee works with AUCD remotely from his or her home center or program for one year to build a network among AUCD trainees.



Molly Edwards, a 2006-07 LEND social work trainee, received the Outstanding Clinical Social Work Student of the Year Award at a ceremony held by the College of Social Work.

Patricia Cloppert, Nisonger parent advocate and a LEND faculty member, won one of the OSUMC Excellence in Community Health Education Individual Awards. Pat was honored on Oct. 29 for her continued efforts to provide exceptional educational services to families with children who are newly diagnosed with autism.



Dr. Karen Ratliff-Schaub, developmental-behavioral pediatrician on the LEND faculty, received special recognition Jan. 31 as the 2008 Nationwide Children's Hospital Physician of the Year. This award recognizes exemplary service in providing high-quality care that is centered around the patient and family. **NN**

NISONGERNEWS

Welcome new hires! (July – September, October – December)

Congratulations to Amy Hess, who received a \$3,000 Act Early Mini-grant from Nov. 1, 2008, to Oct. 31, 2009. The funds are supported by the Learn the Signs. Act Early. Campaign (LTSAE) of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Tom Fish, Jillian Ober and Kim Oyer at the VIA BRAVO luncheon Oct. 3.

Congratulations to Jillian Ober, who was selected to receive the "Values In Action" BRAVO award at a luncheon at the OSU Faculty Club October 3, 2008. The award recognizes OSUMC staff members who exemplify our values:

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Leadership

Congrats also to these staff members, who have completed their 2008/2009 BRAVO hangtags:

Bryan Droesch (25)
Craig McMillen (25)
Kim Oyer (25)
Steve Rosensweig (too many to count...)



Lindsay Alfano started Sept. 5 as pediatric resident in physical therapy in the LEND program.

Dr. Anthony Hall started July 28 as part-time dentist with the Dental Clinic.

Elizabeth Hurt started Sept. 5 as post-doctoral researcher with the RUPP group.

Sarah Hersch started Aug. 4 as clinical research coordinator in the RUPP group. She has a BS from OSU in business administration. Sarah was an educational counselor at the University of Illinois, Chicago, working with children with ADHD and related disorders. She previously worked as a classroom assistant at the Franklin County Board of MR/DD, among other internships. Sarah enjoys spending time with her family and friends and her cat, Millie.

Kathleen Kassouf started as clinical research coordinator and exercise specialist with the RUPP group on Aug. 11. She earned a BS in psychology from OSU. Kathleen was previously an administrative assistant at the OSUMC dept of psy-

chiatry and a personal trainer and fitness instructor in the OSU dept of recreational sports. Kathleen enjoys dance classes, working out, watching sports, traveling and reading. She has a family in Brecksville, Ohio, and a kitty, Butterscotch.

Stacey Langsner started Sept. 8 as clinical research coordinator with the RUPP group. She holds a BS in psychology from James Madison University in Virginia and expects to receive an MA in clinical psychology in May from the University of Dayton. Stacey was previously a psychology intern at the Children's Medical Center of Dayton and performed Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy with a boy who has autism. Her many loves include music, a cat named Frankie, hiking and kayaking in the mountains, ethnic foods and foreign travel.

Kristin Page became a part-time clinical research data coordinator with the RUPP group on Aug. 11. She earned a BS degree in human development and family studies at The Pennsylvania State University. Previously Kristin was child watch

coordinator for a YMCA and a substitute teacher (K-4) in Richmond, Va. Her research experience was at Carnegie Mellon University and Allegheny Singer Research Institute in Pittsburgh. Kristin is happily married with two children (Cameron, age 9, and Jake, age 7½), a big dog, two cats and a fish. She enjoys reading, volunteering at school, sports events and thrift shopping.

Pam Sayre started Aug. 11 as clinical research coordinator with the RUPP group. She earned a BS degree in psychology from Otterbein College in December and has been an early childhood educator for 25 years. She and her husband Mike have two adult daughters and three indoor cats. They have been members of a book group for 24 years and a Euchre club for 20 ears. Pam's other interests include her vegetable garden, walking in parks for exercise, and the preservation and protection of Big Darby Creek.

Dr. Jennifer Stern became a part-time dentist in the Dental Clinic on Sept. 10.

Farewell to staff...

Kelly Dillon left the Special Education and Transition group to be office admin associate in the OSUMC Research Education Administration.

Jill McQuaid left the Special Education and Transition group to pursue other interests.

Jessica O'Rielley resigned as an early intervention specialist at the ECE to stay home with her growing family full-time.

Karin Xander left the Dental Clinic to attend OSU Dental School.

and other staff news...

Pat Cloppert was promoted from program assistant to program manager community development on Oct. 1, 2008.

Bianca McArrell was promoted from program assistant to research associate-1 soc. on July 1, 2008.

Dr. Paula Rabidoux is now a LEND co-director. She will continue as director of training.

Dr. Eugene Arnold answers questions for OnCall+ Autism at <http://abcnews.go.com/Health>.

Dr. Karen Ratliff-Schaub is now LEND co-director and the Medical Director of Nisonger Center (see story on page 2).

Kalin Palmer and her husband Ira Graham welcomed a baby boy, Brice Julian, on Nov. 19, 2008. He was 7 lb. 6 oz. and 20 inches long.

Karen and Nick Rediger (who both work at Nisonger) welcomed a baby boy, Elijah Jack, on Sept. 24, 2008. He was 6 lb. 4.9 oz. and 20 inches long.