



# The Insider

Life Span Institute at Parsons

May 2011

Patty Black Moore, Editor

## Researchers meet with student; Colleagues to collaborate



On Thursday, April 20, 2011, Hanna Rogers, a student with an interest in audiology at Missouri State University and her mother, Marcella Bentley-Salmon, contract officer, KU Center for Research, Inc., were welcomed by Sara Sack, Director, Assistive Technology for Kansans, to a day packed full of information about research and practice in the field of speech, language and hearing.

More than 20 researchers, graduate assistants, staff and others gathered at the Life Span Institute at Parsons Research Center Conference Room. Dave Lindeman, Director, LSI at Parsons, set the stage with a brief history of the

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In the picture (front row, from left): Michael Dixon (LSI/Parsons 1971-1981), Heidi Daley, Hanna Rogers, Lois Dixon (LSI/Parsons 1971-1981); (back row) Becky Dhooghe, Sheila Simmons, Marcella Bentley-Salmon, Dean Williams, Joe Spradlin (LSI/Parsons 1958-1969;1978-95), Sebastian Striefel, (LSI/Parsons 1966-67; 1970-1974), Kat Stremel Thomas, Kate Saunders, Sara Sack, Dave Lindeman.

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## “Just the STATS”

The Family Care Treatment Program diverted 103 more restrictive placements (i.e., to foster care and/or residential treatment facility) for children and youth in Southeast Kansas, resulting in a savings to Kansas of \$652,802.00.

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



### Family Care Treatment Program to the Rescue

The PSH Child Care Center is licensed through Kansas Department of Health and Environment to serve 55 children, ages 2 weeks thru 14 years of age. Children from the public are enrolled on a “first come, first serve basis”.

By Sharla Hopper  
Director, PSH Child Care Center

“Seven years ago we began implementing evidence-based

practices at the PSH Child Care Center,” says Sharla Hopper, Director. Early on, the concepts of removing televisions from the classroom and expecting written lesson plans appeared overwhelming for staff. It appeared that no amount of research could convince twenty-five staff members that applying at least one planned activity would improve both their job performance and our services to children.

A year later, a new population of staff has been employed at the Center located on the PSH&TC campus. It was at this time that I received a phone call from a parent requesting services for her son with Autism. Mom explained that her son’s current family childcare provider kept him in a playpen all day to keep him safe. I felt confident that with center-based, adult-to-child ratios and activities implemented using

evidenced-based practices we could provide quality services. I quickly discovered that center-based ratios and our then-current level of training were barely enough to keep this child safe. I immediately made a referral to the local educational cooperative and scheduled training workshops for staff with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R).

In rural southeast Kansas, enrolling a child with Autism seemed to open a door for families of children with disabilities. Within a few months, 30% of our enrollment consisted of children with disabilities. We were faced with additional challenges. The current tuition fees did not cover the cost for additional trained staff at the level that was needed to provide quality services. Parents’ work schedules required children to be in child care a minimum of 8 hours a day. Depending on the level of need, the local

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## **Family Care Treatment** ...continued from page 2

cooperative provided a maximum of three hours of educational supports daily. We had the challenge and the opportunity to provide quality care for the remaining five hours and we still needed additional training for reducing the children's negative behaviors.

I was energized when I was able to hire an employee with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education, thinking they had skills to manage children's behavior. After an increase in children's accidental injuries and a low score on an environmental rating scale, I realized I was wrong. Extremely discouraged, I began to question if it was realistic to believe that providing affordable, quality child care was possible.

The turning point came in October 2009. A few of our families received services from the Southeast Kansas Family Care Treatment Program and had success in reducing their children's negative behaviors. In addition, they personally trained PSH child care staff on their children's individual behavior plans. We were able to work together with the families to improve their children's behaviors in our setting.

I called Dr. Katie Hine, B.C.B.A., Coordinator of the Family Care Treatment Program, and begged for help. I asked her what works? How can I train staff to acquire the basic skills to provide quality services? The research project was born, Southeast Kansas Child Care Teacher Training Initiative.

Dr. Hine scheduled brainstorming sessions to identify a set of targeted skills that caregivers need to provide quality care. Together we began addressing teaching skills related to the development of positive adult-child interactions, such as, rotation of attention to all children in the area and providing descriptive praise for good behavior. We recorded how often staff demonstrated the identified skills. Staff names were not recorded and individual staff members were not identified.

Once those skills were identified, a center-wide Behavior Skills Training (BST) process was implemented that includes verbal instruction, modeling, rehearsal and feedback.

Overall Center performance was monitored with direct observation. The Director, Assistant Director and research personnel observed staff in the classrooms. In each 10-minute observation, five staff members were observed for 2 minutes each. We recorded either Yes, targeted skill was demonstrated or No, it was not demonstrated.

The Center Director and/or the Assistant Director conducted training sessions with all staff members in small groups every four weeks. Teaching skills were addressed one at a time. Using a data sheet that lists only the first skill, staff watched a 20-minute video, recorded data and discussed the results. Training videos featured the Center Director, Assistant Director or research personnel working with children in a classroom.

A graph of the previous week's data for the first skill was posted in the lobby of the Center each Monday. Criterion performance (80-100%) was highlighted. Mastery was a center-wide average of between 80-100% for 3 of 4 weeks. Training sessions with different videos were conducted every four weeks until criteria were met for each skill. Once mastery was demonstrated the entire process was repeated for each identified skill.

Averages of staff observations were recorded per week. During the course of this project a total of 31 staff participated. Twenty-two staff worked at the Center throughout the project. Ongoing training for newly hired employees is now provided weekly. New staff view video demonstrations on the currently identified skill. With the Director or Assistant Director, the new staff member will then record data on all seven skills during three observations of previously trained staff.

The procedures for training and monitoring staff performance have resulted in improved performance of target behaviors. Although more gradual, staff performance of untrained skills has also improved. Dr. Hine says, "The teachers have done an exceptional job of demonstrating skills that promote pro-social child performances."

Despite low wages and limited formal education, caregivers at PSH Child Care can now  
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**Family Care Treatment** ...continued from page 3  
obtain the skills needed to serve as impromptu behavior specialists through the BST process. Prior to the research project, the primary source for staff training was workshops and lecture style college classes. It was clear to me that it was not enough to know the information; we needed a process for demonstrating mastery of a range of

targeted skills. Given the impact teachers have on both children and parents, it is imperative that a training process is in place to prepare teachers for their role in early childhood education. In my experience, the BST process has demonstrated to be far more effective for caregivers to implement their skills.

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## SIX LSI/PARSONS COLLEAGUES HONORED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

**The Second Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony was held on Wednesday, May 25 at 2:00 p.m. in the Research Conference Room.**

Laura Hanigan, emcee, presented the University of Kansas service award pins. This year's honorees are: Katie Hine, 5 years; Chelie Nelson, 5 years; Kathy Olson, 20 years; Diane Salyers, 20 years; Muriel Saunders, 20 years and Roger Stanley, 5 years.

This ceremony recognizes colleagues for their years of service to the University. Service pins are given to all honorees with 5-45 years of service, and gifts are given to honorees with 20-45 years of service.



**KATIE HINE, Ph.D., 5 Year Pin**, is the Project Coordinator for Family Care Treatment, and a Research Assistant for Kate Saunders' translational research.

“Jerry Rea asked me to coordinate the grant he was receiving. Kate Saunders asked if I wanted to spend part of my time coordinating her grant. I said yes to both.

I like the rural setting of LSI Parsons and the pace of life Parsons offers. My colleagues on the Family Care Treatment team and I have accomplished a lot, and I like being a member of a team of people who have worked together for several years. I've been in the area long enough that I have social and professional

networks well established. I particularly appreciate that my supervisor encourages me to seek new projects.

Some people don't know that Treatment Family Care has a project at the PSH Child Care Center. We've been working with the Center for almost 80 weeks. During that time we've conducted observations, recorded teacher performance data, and provided teacher training. The teachers have done an exceptional job of demonstrating skills that promote pro-social child performances.”



**CHELIE NELSON, Ph.D., 5 Year Pin**, returned to the KITS team in mid-2010 as an Early Childhood Technical Assistance Specialist just in time to be recognized for her accumulated five years of service to the University of Kansas. Chelie was profiled

in the September 2010 issue of The Insider, archived at

<http://parsons.lsi.ku.edu/html/Newsletters/Archive.shtml>.

Chelie continues to enjoy her work as part of the KITS team. One of the things she likes best about her job is the opportunity she has to work with early childhood special educators across the state. Chelie says there are some amazing people and programs for young children with special needs in Kansas and she feels privileged to work with others who are committed to improving services for young children and their families.

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## COLLEAGUES HONORED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

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**KATHY OLSON, Ph.D., 20 Year Pin.** “Currently I work as an associate scientist serving as the principal investigator on the College of Direct Support and on grants to increase college opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities and to

support self-determination.

In 1991 I moved to Parsons as I was finishing my Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota. I had the opportunity to be the coordinator on a project to develop the direct support professional workforce. My intent was to stay for a year or two to develop some research skills before moving on to another position. Opportunities to move into an investigator position encouraged me to stay.

I enjoy working with the University Center on Developmental Disability network. Contributing to the development of the Kansas direct support workforce is very rewarding.

I appreciate working with the Kansas community in this rural setting with easy access to university resources and a host of colleagues and professional supports that is hard to match elsewhere. Living in southeast Kansas also enables me to enjoy the beautiful sunrises and sunsets on my Chetopa farm.”



**DIANE SALYERS, B.S., 20 Year Pin,** is the Southeast Kansas Respite Services, Inc. (SEKRS) Coordinator responsible for managing: Respite Services; Coordinator Resource and Support Services; the Payee Program, and is in the

process of adding Homemaker Services.

“I first heard about the respite program twenty years ago through a dear friend who has a son with Cerebral Palsy and then I learned more about it while serving on the Labette

County United Way Board. Getting this job was an answer to my prayers and twenty years later they can’t get rid of me!!!

It has been an honor to have the opportunity to provide respite to hundreds of caregivers. They are such an inspiration to me and I have often wondered if I could be as selfless as they are... totally devoted to the care and welfare of their loved ones.

This job has been a true blessing to me and my family and I have loved every minute... well, almost every minute!!!



**MURIEL SAUNDERS, Ph.D., 20 Year Pin.** “How can I describe twenty years at Parsons’ Research Center? I guess some people are asking, ‘Where has she been the last 10 years?’ My husband Dick and I and our two children

lived in Parsons for 20 years and toward the end of our time there, we realized that we needed to shift research gears and study new areas.

One shift was to study adaptive switches in adults with limited motor movement. I became interested in that area when my funding dried up in 1996 and I took an interim job in Seattle where several psychologists had developed early switch and data collection technology. We began living part time and working at Johnson County Developmental Supports (JCDS) in Lenexa in order to pursue research in that area.

At JCDS, I became involved in various health issues in persons with developmental disabilities, including ergonomic issues in the workplace and oral healthcare.

At the KU campus Dick and I met with Joseph Donnelly at the Center for Physical Activity and Weight Management and decided to join him in conducting some research on weight management in persons with developmental disabilities.

This series of interests has kept us quite busy. In the past year, Dick and I have been investigators on two NIH grants studying

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## COLLEAGUES HONORED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

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adaptive switch use in toddlers, children and adults, a contract with Special Olympics studying follow-up to referral in dental screenings at Special Olympic events, and a NIDRR funded weight management project for persons with physical disabilities.

We are just beginning a 5-year NIH project studying weight management in persons with developmental disabilities with Joseph Donnelly. All of these projects are supported by the wonderful Parsons' administrative staff. “

**ROGER STANLEY, M.S., 5 Year Pin**, is a Behavior Therapist with the Southeast Kansas

Family Care Project and works with parents and their children providing an individualized, consumer driven, home based service.

Roger says, “My favorite thing about my work is the challenge of trying to figure out what causes a particular child's behavior and then giving parents tools they can use to



effectively modify their own behavior which in turn changes their child's behavior. Funny how that works. Our parents become "mini" behavior analysts in their own right and are a key component to the success of the project.

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## PRESENTATIONS

**Hine, K. M., Rea, J., & Hopper, S.** (2011, March). Changing the culture of a rural child care center with low intensity teacher training. Poster presented at the bi-annual Organizational Behavior Management Conference, Tampa, FL.

**Lindeman, D.P.** (2011, April). *Early childhood training and technical assistance: A statewide system approach*. Poster presented at the 2011 Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention and Expo, National Harbor, MD.

**Patrick, M. R.** (2011, April). Autism resources for diagnosis and treatment. Presentation at World Autism Awareness Day: Light it Up Blue Autism Speaks Event at Class LTD, Parsons, KS.

**Patrick, M. R.** (2011, April). Ethical decision making in disability services. Presentation at the Ethical and Legal Practices in Disability and Autism Services Conference, Parsons State Hospital and the Lifespan Institute at Parsons, Parsons, KS.

**Rush, D., & Sheldon, M.** (May, 2011). Evidence Based Practices in Early Intervention and the Primary Coaching Model. Topeka, KS.

**Saunders, K.** (2011, April). Studies in the Development of Instructional Programming for Early Reading Skills. Presentation at II Simpósio sobre Comportamento, Cognição e Ensino (II Symposium on Behavior, Cognition and Teaching) - sponsored by the National Institute on Behavior, Cognition and Teaching (funded by the Brazilian Ministry of Science and Technology - CNPq and FAPESP). Sao Carlos, Brazil.

**Saunders, K.** (2011, April). Studies in the Development of Instructional Programming for Early Reading Skills. Presentation at the University of Brasilia (Universidade de Brasília), Brasília, Brazil.

**Stremel Thomas, K.** (2011, April 18). Documenting outcomes for children who are deaf-blind with cochlear implants using LENA technology. Presentation at the Second LENA Users Conference, Denver, CO.

## REGIONAL CONFERENCE SPONSORED

Ethical and Legal Practices in Disability and Autism Services Conference was held April 15, 2011 in Parsons Kansas. Renee' Patrick, Ph.D. and Katie Hine, Ph.D. coordinated the regional conference for disability service providers, parents, and educators.

The purpose was to provide information about ethical issues in obtaining, and providing disability services and receive an overview of

those ethical practices that are highly effective. Thirty-five individuals attended the conference.

Presentations were given by Renee' Patrick, Ph.D., Director, Dual Diagnosis Treatment & Training Services; Kansas Statewide Positive Behavior Supports; Kansas Center for Autism Resource and Training; Class LTD case manager and Donna Bowin, parent of a child with autism. Funding was provided by the Southeast Kansas Family Care Project and space was donated by the Life Span Institute at Parsons.

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## LSI/PARSONS Co-SPONSORS E-WASTE DRIVE



On April 16, 2011 more than 20 volunteers representing University of Kansas Life Span Institute at Parsons, The City of Parsons, K-State Research and Extension Labette County, Southeast Kansas Recycling, WCA Waste Corporation, CUSD #101 and Higher Calling Technologies gathered at Parsons' Marvel Park on a Saturday morning to collect and sort discarded televisions, computers, monitors, printers, and other electronics at the E-Waste Recycling Event.

Kari West, Parsons' Public Information Officer, said, "First of all, thank you all for a VERY successful e-waste collection on Saturday! Total weight of what we collected in Parsons was right at 25,000 pounds." Volunteers and donors alike commented that it was hard to believe that

there was so much electronic waste in Labette County. At the end of the day, more e-waste was collected than would fit into the semi-trailer and a significant amount of material was diverted from the landfill! West reported that 113 people from 14 area communities participated in the event.

Previous e-waste events were supported with grant funding administered by Southeast Kansas Recycling, Inc., however, that funding has ended and future events will be funded through sponsorships and individual donations.

On Saturday, donations were accepted and individuals generously contributed \$711.78 to support future events. University of Kansas volunteers included: Dave Lindeman, Sara Sack, Dean Williams, Kathy Olson, Diane Salyers, Pam Cress and Patty Black Moore.

## PROJECT NEWS

### Three members of the Southeast Kansas Family Care Treatment program attend conference in Kansas City.

Mary Pat Paschetti, Stephanie Camp, and Roger Stanley attended the two-day conference, "Developing a Verbal Behavior Analysis Program" hosted by Nancy Champlin, BCBA, Executive Director of Autism Concepts, Inc.

The Kansas City workshop focused on understanding the components and assessment of

the Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP) developed by Mark L. Sundberg, Ph.D BCBA. This highly structured and specialized language and social skills program for children with Autism or other developmental disabilities is based on B.F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior (1957), a landmark analysis in the study of language.

Participants were able to observe VB-MAPP program being implemented at Autism Concepts, Inc.

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## GRANT SUBMITTED

Kate Saunders, Dean Williams and Yusuke Hayashi submitted a Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Children with Disabilities application on 4/21 titled: "Improving Outcomes for Young Children with Hearing Impairment and Other Disabilities: Technology for Audiometric Assessment"

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## PUBLICATION

**Saunders, K. J. & Hayashi, Y.** (2010). Although visually cued imitation training may increase peer imitation, the preexisting skills necessary for success should be identified. *Evidence-based communication assessment and intervention*, 4(2), 78-82.

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### Researchers meet with student; Colleagues to collaborate

Life Span Institute at Parsons highlighting current research and funding levels, as well as Parsons' more than 50-year history in communication research.

Becky Dhooghe, PSH&TC audiologist, opened the discussion with her experiences with individuals with intellectual disabilities who are difficult to test. Becky described some of the challenges to determine hearing loss in an aging

population and strategies her team and colleagues use to support the best quality of communication for each resident.

Heidi Daley, a school-based audiologist and Director of Audiology for the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center at Greenbush in Girard, continued the topic of difficult to test individuals with discussion on providing services through the



public schools for difficult to test students and babies.

Following a break for lunch, LSI/Parsons Research Center alumni, Joe Spradlin, Sebastian Striefel, Michael Dixon and Lois Dixon joined the group.

Kathleen (Kat) Stremel Thomas, Project Director, Influencing Outcomes for Children Who Are Deaf-Blind with Cochlear Implants, Teaching Research Institute, Western Oregon University and a University of Kansas courtesy appointment, presented preliminary findings of her project's Cochlear Implant research and her interest in more effective ways to prepare individuals for hearing testing. She then introduced Kate Saunders, Research Professor; Dean Williams, Senior Scientist & Yusuke Hayashi, Research Associate of the Parsons Research Center, who have written a new

Steppingstones grant proposal to meet these challenges.

Dean Williams presented the proposal submitted that morning. A lively discussion ensued highlighting the broad range of expertise among the participants in audiology, behavior analysis, assistive technology, cochlear implants, and research design and methods. As good byes were offered, Hanna expressed her increased interest in coordinating an off-site clinical experience at Parsons.

Marcella Bentley-Salmon responded to the day by email: "We appreciate so much meeting yesterday, and hearing about the research and different areas of focus you each bring related to communication disorders. It is hard to express in words the dimensions we now realize come together from the different areas of concentration."

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## SNAPSHOTS



More than twenty Parsons' colleagues braved the stormy weather to applaud this year's KU Years of Service honorees. In the picture left: Laura Hanigan, emcee for the second year (in a row!), presents Katie Hine with her 5-year pin. Below: Honorees in attendance were Roger Stanley, Katie Hine and Kathy Olson.



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Parsons website at  
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