



The Insider

Life Span Institute at Parsons

May, 2005

Pat White, Editor

Honors

Sara Sack was honored April 6, 2005 with the Soroptimist International of Parsons "Making a Difference for Women" Award. In years past Soroptimists have given two awards to recognize women in the community--the Woman of Distinction Award and the Women Helping Women Award. This year the two were combined into one and it was awarded to our own "Sara Sack." Sara was chosen for the many contributions she had made to helping others. She oversees \$14 million worth of federal grants. These grants focus on individuals across the life span that need assistive technology. Additionally, her work supports individuals needing low-interest loans for purchasing needed technology and modifications. She has collaborated with Kansas State University to create a project to help farmers and their family members continue their roles after an injury or a chronic health condition. Women comprise 49% of the customers that use the Assistive Technology services that are provided to individuals with disabilities. Because of Sara's success with the Kansas Equipment Exchange program implemented 2 years ago with her colleagues, the assistant secretary of the Department of Education has selected the project to be considered as a model for a national program.

Presentations

Doughty, A. H., Williams, D. C., & Saunders, K. J. (2005, March). *Performance under verbal and nonverbal transitive-inference procedures in persons with mental retardation*. Poster presented at the Gatlinburg Conference on Research & Theory in Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, Annapolis, MD.

Funkhouser, M., Calhoun, G., & Simmons, S. (2005, April). *Going to work: Personal and employer work incentives for accessing assistive technology*. Presented to the 5th Annual KansTrans Conference, Kansas State Department of Education, Wichita, KS.

Kessler, J., & Simmons, S. (2005, April). *Going to college or vocational school: How to access AT and other supports during transition*. Presented to the 5th Annual KansTrans Conference, Kansas State Department of Education, Wichita, KS.

Olson, K. M., & Black Moore, P. (2005, April). *Autism and co-existing disorders: An introduction*. Presentation at Sharing Our Best Conference, Beatrice, NE.

Olson, K. M., Hermreck, D., & Black Moore, P. (2005, April). *Three effective strategies to improve recruitment and retention of direct support professionals*. Presentation at Sharing Our Best Conference, Beatrice, NE.

Saunders, K. (2005, February). *NIH funding opportunities for students, postdocs, and new investigators*. Invited presentation at federal-funding workshop held by the Association for Behavior Analysis, Chicago, IL.

Saunders, K. J. (2005, March). *Evidence-based practice in establishing literacy in individuals with intellectual disabilities*. Coordinator/Chair of session at The Gatlinburg Conference on Research & Theory in Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, Annapolis, MD.

Publications

DeLeon, I. G., Williams, D. C., Gregory, M. K., & Hagopian, L. P. (in press). Unexamined potential side effects of noncontingent reinforcement. *European Journal of Behavior Analysis*.

Doughty, A. H., Reed, P., & Latal, K. A. (2004). Differential reinstatement predicted by pre-extinction response rate. *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review*, *11*, 1118-1123.

Doughty, A. H., Doughty, S. S., O'Donnell, J., Saunders, K. J., & Williams, D. C. (in press). Stimulus control of punishment effects: Determining the controlling variables. *Mexican Journal of Behavior Analysis*.

Doughty, A. H., Williams, D. C., & Saunders, K. J. (2005). Performance under verbal and nonverbal transitive-inference procedures in persons with mental retardation [Abstract]. *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Gatlinburg Conference on Research & Theory in Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities*, 74.

Saunders, R. R., & Saunders, M. D. (2005). In search of contingency learning: Something old, something new, something borrowed *Behavioral Development Bulletin*, *1*, 23-30.

Project Highlight

Increasing Access to Information Technology Subcontract with the Great Plains ADA & IT Center, University of Missouri

Pamela Cress

Since 2001 the LSI at Parsons has subcontracted with the Great Plains ADA & IT Center to increase access to information technology (IT) for persons with disabilities. The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research funds a network of 10 ADA and IT Centers, formerly called Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs). The Great Plains region consists of the states of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa. For the first three years of this project the efforts of the project staff were focused in Kansas, but in October 2004 the Parsons staff assumed the coordination of IT activities for the entire region.

Project staff provide information, referral, training, and technical assistance to policy makers, businesses, educators, and disability advocates with the goal of making all information technology accessible to individuals with disabilities. Project staff have played a key role in developing and implementing a policy requiring that Kansas state agency websites meet

accessibility standards, and continue to serve on the State of Kansas Web Accessibility Committee.

Staff have also worked as part of a national effort to increase the accessibility of information technology in education, including K-12 and post-secondary education settings. The project has provided considerable training to groups involved with educational technology. One of the current goals of the ADA & IT Center network is to enhance the accessibility of community college websites. In an effort to reach this goal, the KUCDD has sponsored two webcasts in 2005 to train community college web developers in accessibility awareness and techniques. The webcasts have reached over 200 trainees from 35 states and two other countries.

Project staff also play a major role at the National ADA Symposium and Expo, a conference supported by the entire network of ADA & IT Centers. This event, held annually in the Kansas City area, brings together architects, attorneys, business leaders, city and county officials, disability advocates, educators, and service providers to hear presenters that include representatives of the federal agencies that oversee disability rights laws, including the Department of Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the U.S. Access Board.

Employees

Rathe Karrer, former Life Span Institute at Parsons Researcher, passed away April 14, 2005. He requested there be no funeral, but his wife Jennifer is planning a memorial for him in British Columbia in June.

Dick Saunders recently returned from a trip to Brazil.

Adam Doughty has accepted a position for this coming fall semester as Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the College of Charleston, Charleston, SC.