



# The Insider

Life Span Institute at Parsons

March 2009

Patty Black Moore, Editor

## The Good Days in the U.S.

Dr. Tavee Cheausuwantavee, Assistant Professor and Director of the M.A. Program in Rehabilitation Services at Mahidol University in Thailand, came to the United States after meeting Sara Sack, Senior Research Professor at the Kansas University Life Span Institute. Dr. Sack directs the Assistive Technology for Kansans program and has several state and federal projects related to increasing independence, employment, and education for persons with disabilities and health conditions through the use of assistive technology solutions.

Dr. Sack and Dr. Cheausuwantavee met at the International Convention on Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive

Technology in Bangkok, Thailand in the spring of 2008. The two researchers found many interests in common and began discussing how to establish a collaborative relationship between their programs. Plans were developed which included a visit to the University of Kansas. Dr. Cheausuwantavee came to the States in late January to attend the Assistive Technology Industry Association conference in Orlando and then traveled to Lawrence to meet with researchers from the Life Span Institute, the Director of Kansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Executive Director of the Kansas Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities. *(This article is continued on page 8.)*



Pictured from far left: Dot Nary, Jane Rhys, Wendy Parent, Sara Sack, Jane Wegner, Tavee Cheausuwantavee, Mike Donnelly, Glen White.

## “Just the Stats”

- The University of Kansas Life Span Institute at Parsons (LSI/Parsons) provided training or technical assistance to 12,844 Kansans last year
- The LSI/Parsons Respite Care program provided 24,332 hours of respite to 228 families in southeast Kansas
- The LSI/Parsons Project - Kansas College of Direct Support has supported Kansans in completing 43,549 web based training lessons over the last two years

## Project Highlight

### Kansas Early Learning Collaborative: Evaluation Project

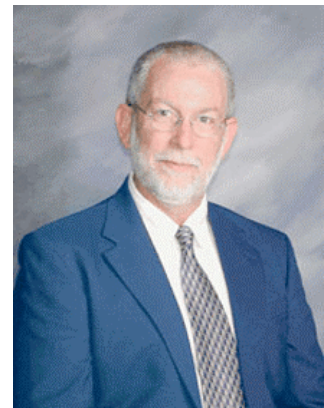


#### Collaborating Agencies:

- Kansas Association for Child Care and Resource Referral Agencies (KACCRRA)
- Kansas Head Start Association (KHSA)
- Kansas Children’s Service League (KCSL)
- Kansas Division for Early Childhood (KDEC)
- Kansas Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (KAIMH)
- Kansas Parents as Teachers Association (KPATA)

This one-year grant received by Christopher L. Smith, Ph.D., is funded by Kansas Association for Child Care and Resource Referral Agencies. The period of funding is January 1, 2009-December 31, 2009.

Todd Little, Ph.D. is co-principal investigator. Project staff include: Waylon Howard and Xan Wedel, Lawrence and Laura Cruz, Parsons.



## Project Summary

Six statewide early learning organizations (KACCRRA, KAIMH, KCSL, KDEC, KHSA and KPATA) have joined together as the Kansas Early Learning Collaborative. The Collaborative will provide leadership to support a seamless, family-friendly continuum of services, including Early Learning, Family Support, Special Needs/Early Intervention, Health, Mental Health and

Nutrition. The target population will be at-risk children and families, focused on underserved areas of the state. The Collaborative will unify, strengthen and expand services to address all five goals in the KECCS plan; enhance collaboration among the Collaborative partners and their members and bring together additional partners dedicated to a common purpose.

The KU evaluation contract will provide staff and services to effectively deliver evaluation services in the areas of data collection, management, analysis, and reporting. Three areas of work include:

- 1) In collaboration with the KELC service partners, the evaluator will develop and implement evaluation tools and processes to measure:
  - a) Target population;
  - b) Resource and inputs;
  - c) Activities to estimate numbers and types of services provided by all partners;
  - d) Program and community contexts; and
  - e) Outcomes measurement tools and processes.
  
- 2) Collection, analysis, and reporting of evaluation data
  - a) Target population data;
  - b) Resource and inputs data (cost/impact information, return on investment, etc.);
  - c) Activity data to estimate numbers and types of services provided by all partners;
  - d) Program and community context data including standard community assessment documents for all counties and programs served by partners. These documents will include state-of-the-art (GIS) mapping technology to produce visual demonstrations of geographic dispersion of a variety of indicators; and
  - e) Outcomes data.
  
- 3) Facilitation of evaluation capacity building processes
  - a) Provide overall evaluation leadership and facilitation for the KELC project.
  - b) Collaborate with the KELC partners to create and maintain all data collection, analysis, and reporting tools and systems.
  - c) Collaborate with the KELC partners and stakeholders to create and maintain systems of evaluation data utilization and sense-making.

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## Professional Service and Activities

**David Lindeman** provided an overview of the LSI/Parsons program to members of SEK, Inc., an organization of businesses in southeast Kansas focusing on economic development.

**Sara Sack** served as Assistive Technology Reuse Strand Advisor for the 2009 Assistive

Technology Industry Association (ATIA) Conference in Orlando, FL, January 28-31.

**Chris Smith** was invited to participate in the Winter 2009 Leadership Institute, sponsored by the National Leadership Consortium on Developmental Disabilities, at the University of Arizona in Tucson, January 11 through January 16.

## Project Update

### AAA & ATK Work Together to Expand Vision Solutions

Kansas Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) are working together to inform Kansans who need vision solutions that free vision aids for daily living are available for eligible Kansans. ATK project staff, Sharon Morton, Kansas Equipment Exchange (KEE) Coordinator, recently presented this opportunity to a regional AAA meeting in Seneca, KS. Assistive technology for vision solutions includes a wide variety of items

including: magnifier with reading light, check writing guide, wrist watch with alarms, color-coded pill organizer, magnifying prescription bottle reader to name a few. If you are interested in more information about vision solutions available through this project funded by Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services, please contact Sheila Simmons, ATK program coordinator at 620-421-8367.

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## Staff News

### Sara Major Earns BCBA Certification

I completed my M.S. in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Developmental Disabilities at Pittsburg State University in December 2003. I became acquainted with behavior analysis during my practicum and internship at PSH&TC. It was a great match for me, because I like black and white... antecedent-behavior-consequence is much more my style than "how does that make you feel?" I studied and sat for the EPPP (Examination for the Professional Practice in Psychology) immediately after graduation, and became a LMLP (Licensed Masters Level Psychologist) by passing the exam. After about 6 months of a "break" I was ready to dive into more studying. My project supervisor, Dr. Katie Hine, is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), and since behavior analysis was my area of interest and a large component of my job as a behavior therapist on the Southeast Kansas



Treatment Foster Care Project, it was a natural progression to get my BCBA certification.

To obtain the certification, I took five online courses, and passed the Behavior Analysis Certification Board Exam. The coursework was very informative to me, and I feel that it enhanced my contributions to my work project and my scientific knowledge. While my LMLP license is just valid in the state of Kansas, my BCBA certification is recognized nation-wide and in many other countries. In my free time, I enjoy distance running and am always training for a marathon or half marathon. I also enjoy reading fiction, scrap-booking, weight-lifting, swimming, vegetarian cuisine, traveling, and spending time with my wonderful family, friends, boyfriend, and Siamese cat. ~ Sara Major

## New Grants/Contracts



**Chris Smith** received a second year renewal for his contract, Southeast Kansas Community Action Program Technical Assistance Project (Data Management and Early Childhood Mental Health). Funded by the Southeast Kansas Community Action Program, Inc. for FY 2008-2009.

**Chris Smith** received a new contract, Kansas Head Start Association Dental Health Technical Assistance Project (Delta Dental). Funded by the Kansas Head Start Association and Delta Dental Foundation for FY 2008-2009.

**Chris Smith** received a new evaluation contract for the Demonstration Learning Communities for the Kansas Preschool Program. Funded by the Kansas Head Start Association for FY 2009-2010.

**Sara Sack** received a two-year grant, Assisting Medicaid Beneficiaries in Accessing Assistive Technology, funded by Kansas Health Policy Authority for 11-1-08 through 6-30-10.

**Sara Sack** received a one-year grant, Assistive Technology Services for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Customers, funded by Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services for 10-1-08 through 9-30-09.

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## Staff News

### KU Welcomes Dr. Renee Patrick

Dr. Renee Patrick, Director of the Dual Diagnosis Treatment & Training Center Outreach Program at PSH&TC has accepted a courtesy appointment with the University of Kansas. In her work with people who have a dual diagnosis of developmental disabilities and mental illness, Dr. Patrick recognized a need for increased services for those with Autism. She has submitted a proposal to Autism Speaks entitled *The Efficacy of Implementing Behaviorally Based Parent Training in Rural Settings*.

This study will focus on the development of parent training that will improve parent skill in developing and implementing behaviorally based interventions for their children with Autism. The goal for this project is to increase capacity of parents in rural areas where access to services can be limited.

## Presentations

### Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)

Morton, S. (2009, March). *Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) Work Together to Expand Access to Vision Equipment*. Presentation at AAA Regional Meeting, Seneca, KS.

### Assistive Technology

Brodey, J., & Sack, S. (2009, January). *Reuse and the Convergence of Telecommunications and Multimedia Devices*. Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, Orlando, FL.

Moore, P., Jones, C., & Simmons, S. (2009, January). *Use of Podcasts to Support Learning and Memory Issues with New Technology*. Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, Orlando, FL.

Moore, P. & Simmons, S. (2009, January). *Increasing Donations of Targeted Equipment to Your Reuse Program*. Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, Orlando, FL.

Sack, S., Moore, P., Simmons, S., & Brodey, J. (2009, January) *AT Reutilization and Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities*. Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, Orlando, FL.

Sack, S. & Simmons, S. (2009, February 11). *Assistive Technology for Kansans Federal Report Outcomes and Futures Planning*. Presented to Statewide Advisory Council, Webinar.

Sack, S. & Simmons, S. (2009, February 12). *WORK, Working Healthy & Low Visions Aids for Daily Living*. Presented to regional AT Access Sites, Webinar.

Simmons, S. & Sack, S. (2008, February 12). *Database Tracking of Customer Needs & Equipment Inventory*. Presented to multiple state assistive technology programs and RESNA, Webinar.

### Behavior Analysis

Saunders, K. (2009, March). *The Science of Discrete-Trial Training: Why Some Procedures for Teaching Arbitrary-Matching-to-Sample Are More Effective Than Others*. Invited Presentation at the Regional Conference on Behavior Analysis, Texas Association for Behavior Analysis, Houston, TX.

Saunders, R. R. (January, 2009). *Possible productive directions for new research on stimulus equivalence*. Paper presented at a Research Symposium, Department of Psychology, Federal University of Sao Carlos, SP, Brazil.

Saunders, R. R. (January, 2009). *Application and extension of the synchronous reinforcement contingency*, Paper presented at a Research Symposium, Department of Psychology, Federal University of Sao Carlos, SP, Brazil.

Saunders, R., Saunders, M., Donnelly, J., Smith, B., Sullivan, D., & Erickson, B. (October, 2008). *Reducing the incidence of obesity in adults with developmental disabilities in Kansas* <<http://apha.confex.com/apha/136am/webprogram/Paper179734.html>> . Paper presented at a Research Symposium, Department of Psychology, Federal University of Sao Carlos, SP, Brazil.

Williams, D. (2009, March). *Schedules of Reinforcement and Applied Behavior Analysis – Awakening the Sleeping Giant*. Invited Presentation at the Regional Conference on Behavior Analysis, Texas Association for Behavior Analysis, Houston, TX.

## Early Childhood

Ayres, C., Stuber, G., Newton, J., Smith-Birk, T., Miksch, P., & Rinkel, P. (2009, February). *Kansas state early childhood initiatives*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Catlett, C. (2009, February). *Doing what works for every child and family*. Keynote at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Catlett, C. (2009, February). *Explicit and intentional: Strategies for supporting young children who are culturally and linguistically diverse and their families*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Catlett, C. (2009, February). *Preparing personnel to support each and every child: Resources and strategies for higher education faculty*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Catlett, C. (2009, February). *Putting evidence-based practices related to inclusion into action*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Hoffmeier, S., Rinkel, P., Chambers, L., & Miksch, P. (2009, February). *Autism: The importance of talking to parents*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Hornback, M. (2009, February). *The link between accountability reporting and implementation of evidence based practices*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Miksch, P., Hornback, M., & Rinkel, P. (2009, March). *Planning for Successful Transitions for children with ASD from Infant-Toddler (Part C/tiny-k) to Preschool Services (Part B/619)*. Presentation at Leadership in Autism Spectrum Disorders Conference, Wichita, KS.

Pfanestiel, D., Spencer, A., Harris, S., & Rinkel, P. (2009, February). *Evidence based practice: Four big ideas in early childhood service delivery*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

Pope, E., Bracciano, D., Rentier, V., Miksch, P., & Harsh, S. (2009, February). *Evidence based practice update: Working in the context of real lives*. Presentation at Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference, Wichita, KS.

## Staff Profile

### Research Assistant: Gabriella Yates



One often wonders what they'll do once they graduate: grad school, work or go home to mommy and daddy while you figure it out. In May of 2008, I was no

different than many other seniors who had failed to apply for graduate school, proficiently procrastinated in sending out resumes, and avoided applying for jobs. That left me with option number three, that I unwillingly embraced as I diligently began searching for a job.

While I was at the University of Kansas, studying Applied Behavioral Sciences with an emphasis in early autism intervention, I was a research assistant for an experimental behavior analyst, Dr. Greg Madden. In the

angst of my senior year, he suggested that I contact Drs. Dean Williams and Kate Saunders at the Life Span Institute (LSI) with whom he was collaborating.

Around the middle of July, I swallowed my pride and applied. It was the best decision I ever made! While I may not be the biggest fan of small town life, the learning opportunities here far outweigh that minor detail. At LSI, I get to do the nitty-gritty things that make research so exciting.

My love of research has grown while working at LSI; I want to go on to grad school, study to be a professor and do research of my own. I am very interested in learning more about verbal behavior and teaching language acquisition to children with autism. Although I am an "applied" person, my time here has given me a deep appreciation for "basic" research and an even deeper awareness of the need for translational research. In addition to these broad lessons, I am also learning to be a better writer, to code videos for different behaviors, enhance my professional skills, interact with human research subjects and expand my knowledge of the reading literature. ~ Gabriella Yates

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## The Good Days in the U.S., continued from page 1:

During his time in Lawrence, Dr. Cheausuwantavee visited the Pardee Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Resource and Research Laboratory in the Schiefelbusch Speech-Language- and Hearing Department. He presented his research on Policy and Implementation: Assistive Technology for Disabled Students in Thailand and heard about disability policy development in the United States.

The discussions were spirited and far too soon Dr. Cheausuwantavee was on the 29 hour flight back to Thailand. While in the air he sent his regards and titled his message The Good Days in the U.S. Communication is continuing between the researchers and LSI staff have an invitation to come to Thailand. For a copy of Dr. Cheausuwantavee's presentation, contact [ssack@ku.edu](mailto:ssack@ku.edu).