

TEACCH Autism Program

SERVICES ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Happy Holidays from TEACCH!

In reflecting on the past year, the overall theme of 2014 has been "building collaborations." TEACCH made a specific commitment to support North Carolina educators this year. As the rates of Autism Spectrum Disorder continue to rise, it is only through these partnerships that we will be able to meet the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

In the past year, TEACCH has worked collaboratively with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to provide training workshops for special education teachers from across the state. Working with DPI's regional autism consultants, Jenny Eigenrauch, Dana Rusher, and Michelle Leycum, we created a 3 day teacher training program. Teachers worked in teams to develop curriculum activities specifically geared toward increasing success and decreasing challenges for students with ASD. More than 300 North Carolina teachers have registered for these workshops.



In January, we began a school-based transition to employment program supported by Autism Speaks. The TEACCH School Transition to Employment Program (T-STEP) is designed to teach pivotal employment skills to high school students in their last year of school, such as handling constructive criticism and meeting job deadlines. We will be working with Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools and Guilford County Schools to both pilot this new curriculum and test its effectiveness.

The overall theme of 2014 has been "building collaborations."

We continue to recruit fabulous new autism experts for TEACCH. In the past year, we have hired five new psychologists who are working in our Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Fayetteville, and Greensboro regional centers. Our new faculty come from across the United States and Canada and we are thrilled to welcome them to the University of North Carolina. Dr. Lauren Turner Brown is the new Assistant Director of the TEACCH Autism Program. Her expertise is in early identification and interventions with infants and toddlers. Lauren will lead our efforts to lower the age of diagnosis of autism in the state of North Carolina and expand our intensive early intervention services. Along with these new faces, come farewells and wishes for a joyful retirement for several longtime members of the TEACCH family including Dr. John Dougherty, director of the TEACCH regional center in Greenville and Dr. Nancy Reichle, director of the Carolina Living and Learning Center. New faculty and staff hires are listed on page 8.

As we look forward to 2015, we have several new initiatives planned. We are committed to creating a college transition and support program and continue this fundraising campaign to help turn this vision into a reality. We are also committed to expanding our early intervention services through our Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers program. Many thanks for supporting TEACCH through your time, energy, and fundraising efforts. Your efforts are vital to the success of TEACCH.

Wishing you a 2015 filled with peace and joy,

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE...

The Eric Schopler
Lifetime Achievement
Award Recipient

page 2

TEACCH Professional
Certification Program

page 3

Caregiver's Corner:
Preparing for the
Holidays

page 4

The Joy of Giving
Support TEACCH

page 5

TEACCH Diagnostic
Evaluation Waitlist

page 7



Eric Scholper Lifetime Achievement Awarded to Catherine Lord

Dr. Catherine Lord, Director of the Center for Autism and the Developing Brain at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York was awarded the Eric Scholper Lifetime Achievement Award. The Scholper Award is given to an individual "In recognition of Exemplary Leadership and Enduring Contributions to the Understanding and Treatment of Autism."



Cathy exemplifies the qualities of Eric: compassion and caring combined with knowledge and vision that made him a role model for others who endeavor to improve services and the quality of life for individuals with autism and their families. Cathy is the fifth recipient of the award which includes Eric, Robert Reichler, Masami Sasaki, and Gary Mesibov.

Eric and Cathy had a special relationship and close bond for three decades starting with his personal recruitment of her in 1976 as one of the first TEACCH psychology interns. Over the years Cathy has continued to remain connected to TEACCH in many ways including Clinical Director of Greensboro TEACCH Center, collaborating on papers or projects, and giving advice on clinical and research matters. She has hired some of our brightest and best, further cementing the strong ties.

She is renowned for her work in longitudinal studies of social and communicative development in ASD. She has also been involved in the development of standardized diagnostic instruments for ASD with colleagues from the United Kingdom and the United

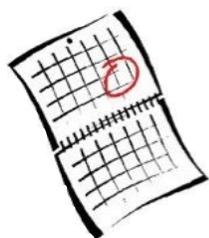
States, the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) an observational scale; and the Autism Diagnostic Interview - Revised (ADI-R) a parent interview, considered the gold standard for research diagnoses all over the world.

The families that she has helped, the students she has taught and mentored, and the colleagues she has supported and collaborated with, would say all of those accomplishments are secondary to her personal qualities of warmth, compassion, thoughtfulness, and integrity. Cathy is an unparalleled researcher, clinician, mentor, innovator, colleague and well deserving of the 2014 Eric Scholper Lifetime Achievement Award.

35th Annual TEACCH Conference 2014

Nearly three hundred participants from throughout North Carolina, the nation and the world attended the **35th Annual UNC TEACCH Autism Conference** on Thursday and Friday, September 18th and 19th. "*Promoting Positive Outcomes in Individuals with ASD*" was the theme which included talks by Laura Schreibman from the University of California, Lindee Morgan from Florida State University, Catherine Lord from Weill Cornell Medical College, and Deborah Fein from the University of Connecticut. In addition to the general sessions, TEACCH held two workshops: Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers presented by Lauren Turner Brown and Kara Hume, and Growing, Living and Learning with Autism: A Parent-Assisted Intervention Model presented by Linda Varblow and Erin Musson. The conference concluded with Maureen Morrell and Ann Palmer, parents from the Chapel Hill community, sharing their personal experiences as parents who supported one another during the years after their sons were diagnosed with autism.

SAVE THE DATE



36th Annual UNC TEACCH Autism Conference
Thursday, September 10th - Friday, September 11th, 2015
at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina

2015 theme will focus on Adolescence and Adulthood



Professional Certification Program

In February, 2014, the TEACCH Autism Program launched its new professional certification program. The development process, which took about 18 months, involved TEACCH faculty and staff across the state and also included consultation from business and marketing experts outside of UNC. The new program contains elements of an earlier project developed and implemented by Dr. Roger Cox, former TEACCH Director of Training.

As stated in the program description on our website, the goals of the program include:

- Teach professionals across a number of disciplines how to use Structured TEACCHing to enhance the effectiveness of their programs (educators, psychologists, speech language pathologists, social workers, counselors, etc.).
- Provide educators and clinicians with a professional certification that allows them to document their use of evidence-based practices.
- Protect the integrity and promote the quality of TEACCH intervention approaches.
- Provide an opportunity for professionals interested in conducting their own training programs to receive an advanced certification.

There are two levels of certification: Practitioner and Advanced Consultant with the primary difference being that the Advanced Consultant has been trained by TEACCH staff to give lectures on our principles and practices and conduct workshops. At this time, TEACCH faculty and staff remain the sole provider of the Five-day Classroom Training. Within the Practitioner level, there is the opportunity for professionals to become independent trainers as part of a TEACCH training team after going through the shadow training process.



Prior to the official launching and announcement of the program on our website and based on recommendations from TEACCH directors, over one hundred and fifty professionals from around the world were invited to apply for certification at either the Practitioner or Advanced level. Many of these professional colleagues have worked collaboratively with us for 20 years or more. Of those invited, nearly one hundred have completed the process and many others are pending. All currently certified professionals are listed on our website.

The second phase of our certification plan is to encourage new TEACCH professionals to become certified. Eligibility includes completing the TEACCH Five-Day Classroom Training, an Advanced Topics Seminar, and applying the TEACCH practices in the work setting for at least one year. Once the applicant has submitted the required materials and is determined appropriate for further consideration, the candidate will take a written and oral examination before being awarded certification.

With the leadership and guidance of Lee Marcus, Director of Training and Jill Thompson, Training Program Manager, many TEACCH faculty and staff contributed to the development of the certification program and deserve recognition and appreciation for their time and effort: Janette Wellman, Kathy Hearsey, Susan Boswell, Tom Wiebe, Gladys Williams, Michelle Jordy, Edie Hughes, Colleen Quinn, Doug Demeyer, Rebecca Mabe, and Laura Klinger.

For more information about the certification program, go to our website www.teacch.com.



Caregiver's Corner - Preparing for the Holidays

Holidays can be a stressful time for individuals with ASD. Lights, music, and seasonal decorations are magical for some people but may lead individuals with autism spectrum disorder to experience sensory overload and anxiety. The key to preparing for the inevitable changes that come with the holidays is to provide the individual with information about an event or activity. WHAT will be happening? WHEN it will be happening? WHO will be involved and WHERE it will be happening?

VISUAL SCHEDULES

- Make a daily schedule to help the individual anticipate the activities, places and people involved.
- Because the holiday is a season and not just one day, a weekly or monthly calendar can be created to highlight the events throughout the season. The calendar could include when decorations will be put up (or taken down), when family and friends will visit and or a count down for when the gifts will be opened.



CHANGE IN ROUTINES

- Discuss with family how to minimize disruptions to established routines.
- Prepare the individual for upcoming events or changes in routine by writing a story that describes what will happen in language that is understood by the individual. When possible include photos of the activities, places or the people who will be involved.
- Identify a quiet and calm area where the individual with autism can go and relax if the activity becomes too overwhelming.

FEW OF THEIR FAVORITE THINGS

- Create a "Mary Poppins" bag to take along when traveling or attending events or holiday celebrations. Pack the individual's favorite things that will keep him or her entertained. When possible have the individual select the items and help pack the bag.



GIFT EXCHANGE

- When selecting presents, focus on the joy that the individual gets from what he or she loves.
- Wait until just before the holiday to set out gifts.
- Practice unwrapping gifts ahead of time, to help the individual with autism understand the process and meaning of gift exchange.
- When opening gifts, try passing around a visual cue such as a reindeer hat to signal whose turn it is to open the next gift.
- Being surprised is fun for some but causes anxiety for others. Some individuals might need to know what they are opening: a small part of the item can be left visible when wrapped or the individual might be given a list of the presents he or she will receive.





The Joy of Giving



As you reflect on 2014 and prepare for the new year, please support **TEACCH Autism Program's** mission of providing community based autism services, professional training programs, and research dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. TEACCH has seven regional centers throughout the state of North Carolina that provide lifespan diagnostic and intervention services from infancy through adulthood. As a global leader in autism education, TEACCH provides training programs locally, nationally and internationally.

Your gift will allow the TEACCH Autism Program to expand its clinical and training programs, and pilot innovative research projects. Gifts support our ability to develop new programs for individuals with autism across the lifespan – funds are needed to support our early intervention programs and to support the development of a college program for adults with ASD.

If you would like to donate to the **TEACCH Autism Program**, please visit www.teacch.com. If you prefer to mail your contribution, please make your check payable to TEACCH Autism Program and mail to the following address: TEACCH Autism Program - Attention: Development Office, Campus Box 7180, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27599. For questions about your gift, please call 919-966-2174

Many thanks for your support!

Five-Day Classroom Training Summer 2015 Dates & Locations Announced

SUMMER 2015 DATES

Early Childhood (ages 3-8)

July 27-31, August 3-7,
August 10-14 in Chapel Hill, NC

Elementary - High School (ages 6-21)

July 6-10 Asheville & Chapel Hill
July 13-17 Asheville & Chapel Hill
July 20-24 Chapel Hill & Charlotte
July 27-31 Chapel Hill & Charlotte
Aug. 3-7 Charlotte & Greensboro

The TEACCH® Five-day Classroom Training provides a theoretical foundation as well as hands-on opportunities to assess and teach children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in a demonstration classroom setting. The premise of this foundation is an understanding of the learning styles of individuals with ASD and how to use teaching strategies that capitalize on learning strengths. An emphasis is placed on the use of Structured TEACCHing principles to teach children with ASD, skills in the areas of academics (literacy and numeracy), communication, independence, play, social and leisure, vocational, relaxation and coping strategies.

Participants will have an opportunity to apply these strategies with individuals of varying ages and functioning levels in a classroom setting and in the community. The training includes presentations, small group discussions, classroom activities and hands-on experiences for five consecutive days. Continuing Education Units (CEU's) are

available with the completion of the training.

For more information about TEACCH and our many training opportunities, please go to our website at www.teacch.com.





T-STEP

Using Structured TEACCHing to Promote Pivotal Employment Skills in High School students with ASD

According to current estimates, only 18% of young adults with ASD are reported to be employed. Currently serving over 300 adults with ASD, the TEACCH Supported Employment program has a long history of assisting adults with ASD to obtain and successfully maintain employment. Along the way, the staff of supported employment have noted that issues such as difficulty maintaining on-task behavior, poorly developed job-related social skills and difficulties coping with job related stressors, all pose particular challenges for individuals with ASD and much time and effort is given by staff to address these areas of concern.

As high schools across the country work to help high functioning students with ASD meet traditional academic goals, much less emphasis is placed on curriculum targeted at promoting later employment success. Recognizing the need to better prepare adolescents with autism for the employment setting, the TEACCH School Transition to Employment Program (T-STEP) was developed by Glenna Osborne, Assistant Director of TEACCH Supported Employment, in collaboration with personnel from Guilford County Schools. With the support of two community service grants i.e., Autism Speaks Family Service Grant and Vocational Rehabilitation/Community Rehabilitation Programs, the collaborators developed the T-STEP to address the specific skill deficits that most often lead to loss of employment for adults with ASD in the work place.

ONLY 18% OF YOUNG ADULTS WITH ASD ARE REPORTED TO BE EMPLOYED.



The T-STEP encompasses six employment skills modules grouped into three intervention areas. In the intervention area of Organization and Executive Function Skills, two modules target approaching tasks in an organized manner, and time management. In the intervention area of Emotion Regulation Skills, two modules address coping with being upset in the moment and accepting corrective feedback. Lastly, in the area of Social Skills, two modules target asking for

help and engaging in social niceties. The program encompasses 19 group intervention sessions that are implemented over the course of 12 weeks. The curriculum includes group instruction and hands-on practice within a classroom environment. Further, student participants are required to complete a weekly individual internship within their school setting in which they practice and implement the skills they learn during the group sessions. Each module integrates the use of evidence-based and best practices including cognitive behavioral techniques, elements of Structured TEACCHing e.g., visual instructions and routines, social narratives, and video-modeling to name a few.

The TEACCH Autism Program recently received a \$120,000 grant from Autism Speaks in order to investigate the effectiveness of the T-STEP curriculum. In keeping with our long-standing tradition of collaboration with local schools, TEACCH has partnered with Guilford County Schools and Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools in order to offer this intervention to 30 high school students with high functioning autism between the 10th and 12th grade. The Principal Investigator, Mark Klinger, TEACCH Director of Research, is leading this research initiative along with Co-Investigator, Laura Klinger, Director of TEACCH Autism Program, who will provide clinical supervision of the intervention. Glenna Osborne, Assistant Director of TEACCH Supported Employment and Tammy Dawkins, Associate Director of the Chapel Hill TEACCH Center, who assisted with further developing the T-STEP curriculum, will work as interventionists on the project.

The T-STEP research project provides an exciting opportunity for both the teachers and students who participate in the project to learn the strategies and skills that the TEACCH Supported Employment team have noted to be pivotal for successful maintenance of employment in individuals with autism. TEACCH hopes that through this research, it can continue to develop and enhance the T-STEP curriculum in order to increase the likelihood of employment success for young adults with ASD who are transitioning from school into an employment setting.



Diagnostic Evaluation Update

The waiting time for families seeking diagnostic evaluation at TEACCH centers is shorter than many people realize! Over 230 diagnostic evaluations have been conducted by TEACCH in 2014, with individuals ranging in age from 2 years to 60 years. The process families go through when wondering whether their child has an autism spectrum disorder can be lengthy and frustrating at times. At TEACCH, we have tried to streamline this process for families and reduce waiting times over the past year. Many of our centers around the state can see families within 2 months of receiving completed information. We are particularly focused on decreasing waiting time for infants and toddlers as we recognize the importance of early intervention services. To make a referral for a diagnostic evaluation, please contact the TEACCH Autism Center that serves the county in which you live. Contact information for the regional TEACCH centers as well as the referral process can be found on the TEACCH website www.teacch.com



Staff Reflections: David Moser

A graduate student of Memorial University of Newfoundland recently interviewed David Moser, an Accounting Technician at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His answers were so thought provoking that he was asked if a few of his responses could be published. David has been working at the TEACCH Autism Program, Administration and Research for the past 20 years. In the interview, David was asked to answer a series of questions and share some of his experiences in the employment world, specifically as they impact a person with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

David was asked, "If a university asked for your advice on how to best support a faculty or staff member with ASD, what would you tell them?" Below are his top five suggestions.

1. Supervisors and colleagues should know about potential issues for an employee who has ASD. They need to learn about autism to understand the need for visual checklists and organization, and time to process any verbal instruction. I use color folders for my different tasks and I have a written schedule that I am supposed to follow each day. They need to understand how the job coach is a support and not a diversion.
2. Be willing to modify and adjust responsibilities to focus on the individual's strengths. My responsibilities were adjusted so that the tasks that I am assigned focus on my strengths of attention to detail. All of my tasks are routine tasks that need to be done on a daily basis with enough variance to keep me interested. Administration reassigned some of my tasks to other people, tasks that I had greater difficulty completing such as tasks that required more communication with staff at the TEACCH regional centers. It is hard for me to break away from conversations when I ramble on or get distracted.
3. The employer needs to give honest and direct feedback to the person with ASD with professionalism and not be adversarial. I meet with my supervisor once a week. I learn about areas/tasks that I need to improve and areas that I am doing well.
4. Flexible scheduling for breaks and lunch. I need more time to eat my lunch. I get a 45 minute lunch break and my co-workers get 30 minutes, because it takes me longer to organize myself.
5. Accept people on their own terms! Everyone has his or her own quirks and foibles, which makes life interesting. I might be different but that does not make me a lesser-valued or less competent member of the office.

Clinical Director Position

The TEACCH Autism Program at the University of North Carolina has an opening for the Clinical Director at the TEACCH Center in Greenville, North Carolina. The Clinical Director will hold a position as Clinical Assistant, Associate or Full Professor (fixed-term faculty), depending on experience, in the Department of Psychiatry, UNC School of Medicine. Responsibilities of the TEACCH Clinical Director involve clinical and administrative management duties including staff training and supervision. In addition to administrative duties, Clinical Directors maintain a diagnostic and treatment caseload, provide consultation and training programs, and participate in treatment-outcome research. Minimum requirements for this position include previous clinical training and experience in assessment and treatment of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, completion of an APA-accredited Ph.D./Psy.D. clinical, school or related doctoral program, and completion of an APA-accredited internship. Candidates must be licensed or license eligible as a psychologist in the state of North Carolina. Salary will be commensurate with rank and experience.

Interested candidates may [apply here](#) and attach an up to date curriculum vitae and a letter of application. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

New Staff & Farewells

NEW FACULTY AT TEACCH

- ★ Nicole Ginn (Psychologist/Fayetteville Center)
- ★ Rachel Aiello (Associate Director/Charlotte Center)

NEW TRAINEES IN CHAPEL HILL

- ★ Whitney Brooks (postdoctoral fellow)
- ★ Lauren Donnelly (psychology intern)

NEW RESEARCH PROGRAM COORDINATOR - Elena Lamarche

Farewell and Best Wishes to Longtime Staff at TEACCH

Mandy Benson, John Dates, Doug DeMeyer, John Dougherty, Marquita Fair, Ruth Fuller, Edie Hughes, Amber Mackey, Vivian McIntyre, and Nancy Reichle

In Memory



Roger Cox passed away in late August 2014. Roger was a bright, knowledgeable and articulate psychologist who served as a Clinical Director at two TEACCH Centers before assuming the role of Director of Training. He was known as a gifted speaker and trainer and introduced a number of innovations to the TEACCH training program including developing strong collaborations with international colleagues. His contributions were recognized by the Psychiatry Department with his promotion to Professor. He had a great sense of humor and engaging manner that came through in his presentations. He left his mark on our program and will be remembered with gratitude and respect.