A LOOK BACK WHILE MOVING FORWARD

2009-2010 Annual Report

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Michael M Behrman

Message from the **Director**

As I move into my second decade as the director of the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disabilities – boy does time fly- I am humbled at the impact the faculty and staff associated with the KIHd have had on our community and on the fields of special education and human disabilities.   As a tribute to the generosity of Arthur and Elizabeth Kellar, and their daughters, Mary and Judy, and grandchildren, Nathan, Casey and Amy we continue to use their donations to help us develop and conduct comprehensive research, implement innovative teacher training programs, and develop state of the art technologies that improve the lives and productivity of individuals with disabilities.

KIHd continues to build and support numerous educational research projects that vary across disciplines spearheaded by the Mason faculty members. Last year's

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highlights included professor Mastropieri's Outstanding Faculty Award from SCHEV and professor Scruggs CEHD Research Award. Projects included commercially licensing a handheld data collection and analysis system for instantaneous display of ABA observable data to A Deeper View, development of a video captioning computer tool to assist individuals with physical, cognitive and intellectual disabilities access to content in the general curriculum using highlighted text and picture symbols. Other research examines student learning across the content areas and include projects such as, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to teach math, promoting student learning of science through hands-on methods of instruction, and enhancing the writing ability of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. One of our current projects is designed to build a Universal Design and Assistive Technology Center which will model accessible housing, serve as an accessible meeting place for the disability community, offer traditional and high tech conferencing facilities, and provide additional training opportunities for students in our postsecondary program for young adults with intellectual disabilities (LIFE) program. Finally we have been working extensively with consortia of other universities across the state to offer technologically sophisticated distance education in low incidence areas (Severe Disabilities, Vision Impairment) and in mild and moderate disabilities.

The KIHd and CEHD have continued to explore ways to further expand the use of distance education to provide

teacher training and professional development across the state. This had led to the development of programs that use distance education delivery modes which maximize the number of individuals who can participate in the programs. Over the last ten years, the KIHd has developed a technology enhanced distance education and communication infrastructure that has spawned increasing collaboration and training and technical assistance capacity. Located within a mile of the GMU main campus, the Kellar Annex I and II include three eLearning classrooms and two eLearning conference rooms which have state of the art technology, such as, videoconferencing which is an interactive connection between two or more sites that transmit video, audio and graphics. Unlike streaming or broadcast television, both sides of conference can see and hear each other in real-time. In addition, these rooms are equipped with Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro, which is a web-conferencing tool that allows attendees to share documents, computer desktops, and virtual whiteboards for the purpose of synchronous collaboration and training at a distance. Courses are also distributed via video streaming and audio conferencing capabilities which enable remote students to participate in a synchronous manner by phone but not video. These video streams are recorded for archival access.

The KIHd has also developed a unique virtual collaboration center to facilitate meetings and collaboration across the state. Meetings are scheduled in an online database against conference resources that includes web conferencing, video conferencing, video streaming, audio conferencing, document sharing and a virtual PC lab. Meetings for 2-500 participants can be scheduled depending on available resources and one way or two-way communication. Participants can also have instant meetings at the coffee shop.

With the continued growth of the faculty and staff at KIHd, we will soon be moving from our current location into another on-campus facility in Finley Hall that will provide us with much-needed space. This will enhance collaboration among our own faculty as they seek out new opportunities for research and development. We will continue to be fully committed to improving the lives and productivity of persons with disabilities.

EXECUTIVE
summary

IN REMEMBRANCE

This annual report fondly remembers Arthur and Elizabeth Kellar whose generous support has made the work of the institute possible.

HISTORY

In 1998 Mr. Kellar and his wife provided $3.2 million dollars to George Mason University, one of the largest donations in George Mason's history. Arthur Kellar was a trustee of the George Mason University Foundation from 1990-1995 and the former chairman of E-Z Communications. The Kellars had previously endowed a "Kellar Center" in Fairfax City as part of the INOVA Hospital of Fairfax.

The donation to George Mason University from the Kellars was in honor of their daughter Helen and was specifically designated for the Center for Human disAbilities (CHd) within the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD). The intention of the gift was to meet the needs of the disability community in Virginia and the nation; support the promotion of scholarship, graduate students, and leadership through an endowed chair; and provide an opportunity to enhance outreach to the community.

CENTER FOR HUMAN DISABILITIES (CHD)

Prior to the Kellar's gift, the Center for Human disAbilities (CHd) functioned as a viable entity within the George Mason University and Northern Virginia communities. The Center was chartered in 1988 in order to provide an infrastructure for externally funded projects related to disabilities and to enhance the ability of George Mason faculty to obtain and manage such projects. In 1999, Michael M. Behrmann, who was the director of the 10-year-old Center, commented for the Mason Gazette that, "Great acts of kindness cast wide shadows. It is our intent to ensure that what the Kellars have done for us will have a most positive impact upon many of the people in Northern Virginia

and Washington, D.C. that we currently serve. We hope to build on the Kellar gift and eventually turn our center into a focal point where professionals who work with the disabled can come together to brainstorm and collaborate."

HELEN A. KELLAR INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN DISABILITIES

The Kellar Family Foundation has generously provided to varied healthcare, education, and human services organizations. Their philanthropy, in memory of their daughter, Helen, who died in 1998, advanced the activities of the Kellar Institute. In 1999, the Center was renamed the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities (KIHd) and the leadership of the KIHd was reorganized with the creation of an endowed chair. Dr. Michael M. Behrmann was named the first Helen A. Kellar Professor of Special Education in 1999-2000 and has since served as the Director of the KIHd.

MAJOR PURPOSES

Since its inception, KIHd has grown not only in size, but also in its development of innovative programs for improving the lives and productivity of children and adults with disabilities. The interdisciplinary campus-based Institute combines the resources of George Mason University with local, state, regional, national, public, and private sector agencies and organizations. Dr. Behrmann has facilitated the expansion and influenced the development of the institute to increase its interdisciplinary support for students and faculty throughout the university. In addition, he recognized the need to acquire sufficient technological equipment to be utilized for teaching and learning by the campus community and the Northern Virginia area. The Helen A. Kellar Institute supports educational research projects and provides instructional workshops, assistive technology, consultation, model training programs, numerous professional development opportunities, and an inclusive postsecondary program for young adults with intellectual disabilities.

The KIHd provides services for: persons with disabilities and their families, service providers, service organizations, employers of persons with disabilities, public access organizations, and Mason faculty, staff, and students. The Kellar Institute within CEHD currently has over 85 special education collaborations and/or partnerships which serve PreK-12 school needs across the region. The KIHd employs a multi-disciplinary staff of over 67 individuals and 28 affiliate Special Education Instructional Faculty. These professionals specialize in the areas of elementary and secondary Special Education, Severe Disabilities, Vision Impairments, Deaf-Blindness, Speech & Language, Behavior, and Physical Therapy. These professionals have direct knowledge of the populations they serve as a result of their professional training, cultural background, and/or personal experiences with disabilities.

OPERATIONAL FUNDING

Most of the operating budget for any Center or Institute is generated through other sources beyond state appropriations. The George Mason University's Foundation and the initial $3.2 million endowment of the Kellar family have supported the operations within the KIHd. Since 1988, the KIHd has also secured substantial external funding from federal, state, and fee for services of slightly more than $50 million dollars from federal, state, local (Cohort Outreach programs), and private sponsors. External funding in 2009 was over $9 million dollars. In addition, the Institute was again honored in 2005 when the Kellar's donated an additional $1 million to Mason.

SPACE

The Kellar Institute was formally located off campus on Chain Bridge Road and then transitioned onto campus in 1996. The on campus location enabled the KIHd to work more effectively with faculty and programs within the Mason community. In the past few years, nearly 6,800 square feet of KIHd has been dispersed among four on-campus locations: Krug Hall, with offices and facilities in Thompson Hall, Robinson Hall, the West Building, and in Commerce I on University Drive. Although the first floor

of Krug Hall has been the central location for the KIHd, additional space includes the second level of Krug Hall (T/TAC offices), the Aquia Building (a temporary location), and classrooms, offices, and an assistive technology lab in the off campus Kellar Annex on University Drive and on Democracy Boulevard where there are 5 technology based classrooms/conference rooms and 10 offices.

In the spring of 2011 the Special Education Program and Kellar Institute will expand into Finley Hall which is being refurbished. This space will enhance our collaborive efforts and offer many opportunites for future growth.

2009-2010 ANNUAL REPORT

The following KIHd annual report features those individuals involved with the Kellar Institute as well as the numerous projects and initiatives currently active within the College of Education and Human Development. This publication will also detail the active training programs available, products and services offered to the community, research projects in progress, and the renowned faculty who have been recognized for their contributions over the past year.

Highlights of the Year

photo by Evan Cantwell

and timely topical issues, and broad perspectives by leaders in the field. *Exceptional Children* has the highest overall visibility (with over 40,000 subscriptions), the most rigorous publication standards (with an acceptance rate of approximately 20% of all manuscripts submitted), and the highest overall impact of any journal in special education.

photo by Evan Cantwell

EDITORS TOM SCRUGGS AND MARGO MASTROPIERI: EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Tom Scruggs and Margo Mastropieri were appointed Editors of *Exceptional Children*, the flagship journal of the Council for Exceptional Children and the most highly respected scholarly journal in the field of special education. Since its origins in 1934, *Exceptional Children* has presented insightful, pioneering research, important

2010 STATE OF THE ART CONFERENCE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

The 2010 State of the Art Conference on Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities was held on October 28 and 29, 2010 at Mason's new hotel and conference center in Fairfax, VA. The conference provided an opportunity for colleges and universities, researchers, program staff, parents and self-advocates to discuss the current state of policies, research, and practice in the field. This year's sponsors were: George Mason University's Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities and the National Down Syndrome Society and co-sponsored by the Riggio family, the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), U.S. Department of Education, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration, ThinkCollege, Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), the Lawrence B. Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education at Syracuse University, the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and PACER Center.

2009 AND 2010 STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA (SCHEV) OUTSTANDING FACULTY AWARDS

The General Assembly and Governor created the OFA program in 1986. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Outstanding Faculty Award recognizes the finest among Virginia's college faculty for their excellence in teaching, research and public service. The Outstanding Faculty Awards are the Commonwealth's highest honor for faculty at Virginia's public and private colleges and universities. These awards recognize superior accomplishments in teaching, research, and public service. Since the first awards in 1987, a total of 290 Virginia faculty members - including the 2010 recipients - have received this high honor. The Kellar Institute of Human disAbilities was privileged, for two consecutive years, to have two of its faculty honored for their distinguished achievements with this award for the years 2009 and 2010.

Dr. Margo Mastropieri was awarded a 2010 State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Outstanding Faculty Award on February 8, 2010 in Richmond, Va. Professor Mastropieri was recognized for her excellence in teaching, research, knowledge integration and public service. She is interested in how students with disabilities learn in school, and much of her research has focused on cognitive strategies designed to promote learning and retaining school-related information. She has also studied what happens during inclusive instruction involving students with disabilities and suggested instructional strategies to facilitate inclusive efforts.

Dr. Michael Behrmann was awarded a 2009 State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Teaching with Technology Award on February 19, 2009 in Richmond, Va. Professor Behrmann is a leader and innovator in special education and technology. He believes in collaborative research/training enhanced by technology. An early adopter of microcomputer technology, his pioneering pursuits are known worldwide. He wrote two of the first books on assistive and instructional technology.

2009 GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Dr. Pamela Hudson Baker, assistant professor of special education, College of Education and Human Development received a 2009 George Mason University Teaching Excellence Award. Provost Peter Stearns presented the awards at a celebration on Monday, April 13, in the George Mason University Center for the Arts. Dr. Baker has dedicated her teaching to promoting positive special education methodologies that make an impact. Seeking to create an impactful learning community for her students, Baker builds dynamic learning environments in which students can gain knowledge, skills and new perspectives, challenging them in ways that meet their individual needs.

2009, ELECTED FELLOW, INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY FOR RESEARCH IN LEARNING DISABILITIES

Dr. Thomas Scruggs was Elected Fellow to IARLD (International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities). IARLD is an international professional organization dedicated to conducting and sharing research about individuals who have learning disabilities and is comprised of the premiere scientists, educators, and clinicians in the field of learning disabilities throughout the world. An elected fellow is an invited member from the world's leadership in the area of scientific study of human problems related to learning disabilities.

2009 STATE OF THE SCIENCE CONFERENCE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

The 2009 State of the Science Conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities was a one day conference that focused on postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. The conference was sponsored by The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) in coordination with the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), both in the U.S. Department of Education, and Helen A. Kellar Institute, GMU. It was held on November 6, 2009 and took place in the Johnson Center on the George Mason University Fairfax Campus, VA.

FACULTY

—— *and* ——

STAFF

AFFILIATE SPED INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY

Michael M. Behrmann
Director of KIHd, Kellar Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Patricia Addison
Associate Professor of Education, CEHD

Sheryl Asen
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Pamela Baker
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Brenda Bannan-Ritland
Associate Professor of Instructional Technology, CEHD

Sheri Berkeley
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Frederick Brigham
Associate Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Susan Bon
Associate Professor of Education Leadership, CEHD

Susan Burns
Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, CEHD

Jodi Duke
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Anna Evmenova
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Amie Fulcher
Director of Academic Operations, Office of Academic and Student Affairs

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Assistant Professor of Education, CEHD

Ted Hoch
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Holly Lawson
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Marci Kinas Jerome
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Peggy King-Sears
Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Margo Mastropieri
Professor of Special Education, CEHD, University Professor, GMU

Kristy Park
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Sharon Ray
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

Kelley Regan
Assistant Professor of Special Education, CEHD

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Carmen Rioux-Bailey
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Vicky Spencer
Associate Professor of Special Education, CEHD and Assistant Director for Operations, KIHd

Eva Thorp
Associate Professor of Special and Early Childhood Education, CEHD

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Associate Professor of Special Education and Special Education Outreach Coordinator, CEHD

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T/TAC Special Education Policy and
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Bonnie Bell
T/TAC Secondary Education & Mild/
Moderate Disabilities Coordinator

Karen Berlin
T/TAC Autism & Severe Disabilities
Coordinator

Sheryl Fahey
T/TAC Early Childhood Coordinator

Judith Fontana
T/TAC Curriculum and Instruction
Projects Coordinator

Kris Ganley
T/TAC Early Childhood Coordinator

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Kay Klein
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T/TAC Assistive Technology
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Emily McKeough Fallings
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Technology Coordinator, T/TAC

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Lynn Wiley
T/TAC Director

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Outreach Program Support

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Accounts Receivable

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KIHd Librarian

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Graphic/Web Designer

Ala Showers
Executive Assistant

Jancy Templeton
Special Education Program Advisor

Samit Vartak
Programmer

Pamela Vogel
Special Education and KIHd Fiscal
Support Specialist

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Kelly K Brady

Dannette Bronaugh

Nancy Cerar (Irby)

Sarah Conklin

Mary Guckert

Laura Harris

Clara Hauth

Brittany Hott

Patricia Leins

Kim Michaud

Sara Mills

Ying Wu

Cherie Takemoto

Catherine Creighton Thompson

BROADSIDE

GMU
ESCORT SERVI E
993-HELP

Broadside

George Mason University's Student Newspaper

Volume 85, Issue 11
broadsideonline.com
Monday, 11.16.09

Construction Sites Near Completion

Students Show Concern for On-Going Campus Building Projects

BRENDA SHEPARD

GOP Wannabes Jockeying Early

Palin, Pawlenty and

Teacher Education and Training

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS CERTIFICATE

The Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities offers three avenues for preparing participants to become competent practitioners of applied behavior analysis and contributors to the discipline. These include academic and internship training programs at both the Undergraduate and Graduate levels, and a Professional Development Series to help certified practitioners remain abreast of current practice and to inform others who are interested. Content of the two academic programs and of the professional development series is derived entirely from the Task List, Guidelines for Responsible Conduct, and Disciplinary Standards of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (www.bacb.com).

The Undergraduate Minor in Applied Behavior Analysis is available to Mason undergraduate students majoring in any field. The minor is an 18 credit hour sequence consisting of a three course sequence and a required 9 credit hour internship. Successful completion of this program, in addition to completion of an undergraduate degree, satisfies the BACB's coursework and experiential requirements to sit for the BCABA examination. This track is also appropriate for those who already hold bachelor's degrees and wish to become certified at the BCABA level but do not wish to pursue graduate coursework. Paid and unpaid internship placements are available for students in this program at numerous agencies and schools in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area.

The Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis is a five course sequence that can be completed in three, four, or five semesters. Completing this coursework, in addition to holding a graduate degree, satisfies the BACB's educational requirement to sit for the BCBA examination. Completing the optional Graduate Internship in Applied Behavior Analysis enables students to satisfy the BACB's

Ted Hoch

■ Dr. Hoch is an Assistant Professor of Special Education, Graduate School of Education, at George Mason University. He teaches the Applied Behavior Analysis track in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University. His clinical and research interests include integrating solution focused therapy and family systems therapy with applied behavior analysis in treating difficulties encountered by individuals, families, or organizations.

supervised experience requirement. The Certificate Program has partnered with agencies and schools in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area to provide paid and unpaid internship opportunities.

For those who are already certified and in need of additional professional development, and for others who are interested, the Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities is approved by the BACB as a Type II ACE Professional Development provider. The intent of this program to help certificants stay abreast of recent developments in applied behavior analysis and expand their knowledge base and scope of educational and clinical capability. This program considers the entire range of applied behavior analysis within educational and practice domains, across the lifespan, and across populations. Currently scheduled seminars and workshops are on a variety of topics to include: Verbal Behavior, Eating and Feeding Problems, Children and Students with Autism, Precision Teaching, and Ethics in Applied Behavior Analysis. All seminars and workshops in this series are open to the general public.

"There is growing recognition that applied behavior analysis is a leading methodology for educating people with autism and other disabilities. GMU's Applied Behavior Analysis programs have produced Board Certified Behavior Analysts working in public and private schools; clinical psychology; group homes, and other residential settings; therapeutic recreation; speech and language pathology; and other areas, nationally and internationally."

AUTISM CERTIFICATE

In response to the recognized need by the Virginia Department of Education to train teachers in the area of Autism, George Mason University, has developed a certificate in Autism in addition to the existing Applied Behavior Analysis Certificate. Collaborative dialogue with Outreach and the surrounding school divisions in VA superintendent's Region 4 revealed that teachers require specialized information and techniques to instruct students with Autism which are otherwise not included in current licensure programs. The certificate for Autism (with no teacher licensure) was approved to begin its first cohort in the spring of 2008. This 15 credit program is designed to provide teacher training in topic areas required to implement instructional programs for students with Autism. The curricula for the certificate for the Teaching Students with Autism Graduate Certificate (ETSA) are based upon the standards of the Council for Exceptional Children and research based best practices for the instruction of students with Autism.

"A critical need exists for special education leaders who are prepared to meet the unique requirements of high-needs children with disabilities, especially those with ASD, and those who support them."

The certificate is suitable for those special education teachers who provide instruction to students with Autism across a variety of settings. At the completion of the certificate courses, teachers will gain a unique set of skills to serve all students across the Autism spectrum.

Vicky Spencer & Terry Werner coordinate the Autism Certificate Program.

Vicky Spencer

■ Dr. Vicky G. Spencer is currently the Assistant Director of the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities at George Mason University which engages in research, technical assistance, model program development, teaching, and technology development to improve the lives and productivity of individuals with disabilities. She is also an Associate Professor in the College of Education and Human Development in the Program of Special Education.

Autism Facts

■ According to the CDC autism now affects **1 in 110** children and **1 in 70** boys

■ Between 1992 and 2006 the rate of autism in Virginia increased by **918%** (www.ideadata.org and www.cdc.gov/nchs/)

■ Children who receive Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI) will cost the state of Virginia **$137,400 less** in special education costs per child than children who do not receive these services *(Assessment of Services For Virginians With AutismSpectrum Disorders, 6/8/09)*

PREPARATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP DOCTORAL PERSONNEL

The U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs awarded Dr. Peggy King-Sears, Dr. Rick Brigham, and Dr. Pam Baker with Special Education Leadership Doctoral Personnel Program Grant. Eleven doctoral students were selected, and they began their PhD program in the Spring or Fall of 2009. These students complete the doctoral core curriculum (21 credits), a professional specialization in special education (12 credits), and a 12 credit minimum in the Special Education Leadership concentration developed by Dr. Baker. A significant amount of the grant funding is used to provide full tuition coverage for doctoral candidates in the program. Training includes a focus on special education legislation, regulations, and policy issues.

PI(s): Peggy King-Sears, Rick Brigham, Pam Baker
Amount: $200,000 per year
Source: US Department of Education
Dates: 4 years funding

PREPARATION OF LEADERSHIP PERSONNEL: DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs awarded Dr. Margo Mastropieri and Dr. Tom Scruggs with a funded Doctoral Leadership Program in Special Education Personnel Grant. The program began in the fall semester of 2002 and completed June 30, 2010. The present project was intended to address need areas by providing a high quality, comprehensive doctoral program in special education. This special education doctoral program developed and implemented coursework and teaching, research, and service experiences designed to promote mastery in teacher education, research, and leadership. Thirteen doctoral students received funding throughout the project, all of whom graduated with PhDs from George Mason University.

Seven of those 13 graduates are employed at universities and hold faculty positions that include teaching, research, and service activities. Five of the 13 graduates hold leadership positions in Fairfax County Public Schools ranging from district-wide special education support services to assistant principals to department heads. All graduates demonstrated competencies in research, teaching, and service activities as measured by outstanding performance in courses, collaborating on research activities with project faculty, and co-presenting with project faculty at local, state, and national professional meetings. Many of the research activities in which the students were involved included products that have been, or will be, presented at conferences and published in professional journals. Students funded on this project, along with project faculty, made 78 presentations, published 32 journal articles, 22 chapters and 3 sets of instructional materials.

PI(s): Margo Mastropieri, Tom Scruggs
Amount: $200,000 per year
Source: US Department of Education
Dates: July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2010

PREPARATION OF LEADERSHIP PERSONNEL: A COHORT DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs awarded Dr. Margo Mastropieri and Dr. Tom Scruggs with a funded Cohort Doctoral Leadership Program in Special Education Personnel Grant. The program began in the fall semester of 2007. The funding significantly supports student tuition, fellowships, travel, and research supplies. This new cohort program is designed to prepare students for leadership positions as faculty in special education, higher education and other leadership positions. Training includes research, teaching, and service for individuals with mild disabilities including learning disabilities and emotional disturbance.

The high-quality, comprehensive doctoral-level training in special education emphasizes the balance among teaching, research, and leadership objectives. A unique feature of this program, helped in part by George Mason's location in the Washington, DC area, is the opportunity for internships in teacher education, research, and leadership in national educational, governmental and service organizations. Each project year, four full-time students have been fully funded with tuition, fellowship, travel and research funding and two part-time students have been funded with tuition support. To date students have collaborated with faculty and project staff on 14 paper presentations at the annual meetings of the Council for Exceptional Children and the American Education Research Association and published 4 papers.

PI(s): Margo Mastropieri, Tom Scruggs
Amount: $200,000 per year
Source: US Department of Education
Dates: 4 years funding

SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE

The Special Education program works collaboratively with a number of Northern Virginia school divisions to offer special education certificates and degree programs to school employees using a cohort model. This model provides convenience to the students and forms a better link between academia and school realities. In response to the critical need for program administrators to address the requirements of exceptional learners and those who teach them, the Special Education Leadership Certificate was designed in the spring of 2007. This certificate provides training for those who administer or lead program implementation efforts for learners with exceptional needs. The training is intended to prepare administrators to

"A critical need exists for program administrators who are prepared to meet the unique requirements of individuals with exceptionalities and those who teach them. Without such leaders, teachers will continue to struggle to support high-needs learners and the students themselves will continue to be underserved."

Pam Baker

■ Dr. Pamela Baker is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education and Human Development. Her research interests include the responsible inclusion of learners with emotional behavioral disorders in both academic and extracurricular environments including teacher efficacy and effective interventions, and Special Education Leadership.

address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners and to lead school reform.

This 15 credit certificate in Special Education Leadership includes 2 required courses and a selection of three out of four possible courses. Each course has been planned in accordance with professional standards and current research to maximize the effectiveness of the program. This certificate is appropriate for central office personnel in special education, building level supervisors of special education, lead teachers/department chairs, and general education administrators who have a desire to expand their knowledge and skills regarding special education administration. Additional future initiatives for special education leadership training offered through CEHD include a SPED leadership licensure and a Master's program in Special Education Leadership.

PI(s): Pam Baker, Terry Werner
Amount: TBD
Source: Revenue
Dates: Annual

REGION IV ENDORSEMENT PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ACCESS THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM, K-12

This Program provides school employees interested in pursuing licensure in mild disabilities (earning disabilities (LD), emotional disabilities (ED), and mental retardation (MR)) with a supportive contribution to tuition costs. The purpose of this endorsement program is to increase the number of qualified teachers in the local school systems. Participating students have the opportunity to earn licensure and/or a master's degree in special education. George Mason offers its state approved licensure program to teachers throughout Region 4 of the Commonwealth of Virginia in both cohort and non-cohort models. Instruction is delivered both face-to-face and via distance education.

PI(s): Kelley Regan, Terry Werner
Amount: $75,000
Source: Virginia Department of Education
Dates: Annual

SPECIAL EDUCATION OUTREACH FOR REGION IV

Special Education Outreach is a cohort program that offers licensure fulfillment and/or a master's degree to employees across 19 Virginia School Districts in Region 4. These include Prince William, Fairfax, Loudoun, Frederick, Orange, Culpepper and Madison Counties as well as Alexandria City. Classes are provided on site at a designated school in the district and Mason faculty/adjuncts travel to these schools. Cohorts typically consist of 20-25 employees from a single school district or regional collaboration. Courses are offered according to the school division schedule rather than the Mason academic calendar. For the 2010-2011 school year, there are approximately 32 active cohorts across Region 4's public school system and private sector (VAISEF, Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities) as well as in Maryland and the Teach for America Program.

The Master's cohort program is designed to be completed in two years, taking 4 courses over a calendar year. Atypical of university semester courses, these courses run on an 8-10 week cycle. The students within the cohort complete the licensure courses first including the 2 required internships; the internship qualifications may vary for each individual. The final two classes in the sequence complete the M.Ed. Program. The Special Education Outreach Coordinator is Terry Werner.

PI(s): Terry Werner
Amount: $1,885,932
Source: Revenue
Dates: Annual

Cohort Outreach Programs

■ In the mid 1990s, the special education program at George Mason University initiated an outreach program called Special Education Licensure Fulfillment (SELF) to respond to school division requests to assist in the preparation of qualified personnel. The model was based on the concept that GMU should provide complete licensure and master's degree programs to teachers where they work, rather than requiring them to come to campus. This model was predicated on provision of all of the benefits of the on-campus program, including individual advising, face to face instruction from full time GMU faculty interspersed with collaboration and instruction from highly qualified adjunct faculty working in the same schools. It was felt that this model could provide convenience to the students as well as form a better link between academia and school realities.

Cohort students are receiving identical instruction to students taking on campus courses. Students in cohort programs meet the same admission and graduation standards as on-campus students.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER LICENSURE - TEACH FOR AMERICA

The special education program at George Mason University has been well recognized for its strength and coherence in preparing exceptional quality educators. Based upon this reputation, Teach for America (TFA) approached George Mason University and requested that the College of Education and Human Development provide the graduate teacher training program necessary for their Corp members. The TFA Special Education program is taught at the Mason Arlington campus, employs the latest technology for timely and frequent electronic communication, and includes faculty visits to each student placed school site. Participants in this concentration consist of TFA special education teachers in Washington DC. The Teach for America program consists of a 31 credit hour course sequence leading to a Graduate Certificate in Special Education Teacher Licensure-Teach for America. This certificate is designed to prepare Teach for America Corp Members to teach culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse special education students in an urban setting. The Special Education coursework addresses Council for Exceptional Children's professional competency standards and is designed to provide Teach for America Corp Members with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to make informed decisions and implement effective instruction for all children. An additional goal is to prepare professionals to assume leadership and advocacy roles that address issues of disability, culture, poverty, and inequity in their teaching. The integrated, cohort-based program offers unique courses and practitioner-based learning experiences that develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be effective teachers and promote the exploration of educational knowledge and practices through social and cultural lenses, especially within urban settings.

"Funding for the Distance Cohort Outreach Program (DCOP) has enabled GMU to fund student tuition for 863 individual course enrollments. The impact upon the most challenged students within the Commonwealth has been enormous. Additionally, special education teacher retention rates have increased in each division served. This program has opened the doors to licensure programs teachers would otherwise be unable to access."

PI(s): **Terry Werner**
Amount: **TBD**
Source: **Revenue**
Dates: **Annual**

Terry Werner

■ Terry Werner is an Associate Professor and the Special Education Outreach Coordinator for the College of Education and Human Development. Terri coordinates the many outreach programs run through the Kellar Institute of Human disAbilities which support the education, training and licensure of new special education teachers.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LICENSURE FULFILLMENT (SELF)

This special education licensure fulfillment program is a series of graduate courses offered by George Mason University's special education program to fulfill minimum requirements for Virginia licensure in Teaching Students with Disabilities who Access the General Education Curriculum. These special education courses are offered in various off campus locations convenient to employed teachers. This program is located within The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at George Mason. The funding for this project is as follows:

Special Education Coordinator: Michael Behrmann
Amount: $864,257
Source: Revenue
Dates: Annual

Impact:

■ George Mason University's Outreach and Distance Education…

■ Serves 19 school districts in Virginia

■ Serves 32 cohorts in the public and private sectors

■ Delivers instruction on-site and through distance education delivery modes

■ Serves over 500 students

STATEWIDE DISTANCE MODEL FOR TRAINING SPECIAL EDUCATION PERSONNEL

In response to the geographic and economic challenges faced by provisionally licensed Special Education personnel, George Mason University, in collaboration with Old Dominion University, was awarded funding to provide state approved teacher preparation special education licensure programs via distance education models. This innovative delivery design provides state-wide outreach teacher training and tuition support for those special educators who hold a valid provisional or conditional license with an endorsement in Special Education: General Curriculum. The course delivery will include on-line, asynchronous and synchronous technologies so that students may fully engage in 'real time' when completing the coursework and field experiences. Two cohorts, 20 students per cohort completing 14 credits per year, and 60 students per each 3-credit ON-DEMAND class will be supported.

PI's: Kelley Regan, Terry Warner
Amount: $293,052
Source: Virginia Department of Education
Dates: annual

THE VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR VISION IMPAIRMENT LICENSURE PROGRAMS

(Initial endorsement, Recertification, Masters)

After recognizing a need for teacher preparation in the area of vision impairments (VI), Mason began offering a variety of training/licensure options for teachers of students with visual impairments in the fall of 2007. The Virginia Consortium for Vision Impairment (VI) Licensure Programs is comprised of five Virginia Universities: George Mason, Radford, James Madison, Norfolk State U, and Old Dominion. The Consortium's primary goal is to meet the initial and continuing education needs for teachers of students with visual impairments in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The program is designed to utilize distance education in order to provide a shared program of study and coursework which enables teachers to meet the state required competencies for highly qualified teachers of students with vision impairments.

The Virginia Consortium for Vision Impairment has several options for both undergraduate students and graduate students. There is an initial licensure certificate in VI (32 credits). Courses in the program can be applied to the Masters in Education (MEd) program and can be used for recertification points for practicing teachers. The field experience(s) required in the program of study is individualized.

With students across five universities participating, the delivery of instruction for the courses in the Virginia Consortium is primarily delivered on-line. The goal of this program is to create an on-line learning community where students can access important course information at anytime. A video or web conference call to the participating sites is initiated from George

"The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Vision Impairment is an innovative program designed to meet the critical shortage of teachers of the blind and visually impaired (TVI) in Virginia. Students in this program can enroll in any of the five participating universities to gain skills and expertise to become highly qualified TVIs."

Holly Lawson

■ Holly Lawson is an Assistant Professor of Special Education and the coordinator of the Virginia Consortium for the Vision Impairment Licensure Program. A state supported grant helps to fund the coordination and implementation of the Vision Impairment program, as well as, student tuition.

Mason using IP (internet) or telephone lines. With this technology, it is possible for all students to see, hear, and interact with one another and also with the course instructor. Classes use video conferencing equipment to establish real-time, interactive, multipoint conference instruction among the five universities. As a backup, during instruction, students are able to use the telephone to call into the instructor to ask questions or participate in discussions or to use the live chat feature to type questions for a moderator to pass on to the instructor.

Furthermore, students are able to view current and archived multimedia presentations, including video and PowerPoint slides. In addition, the Consortium provides interactive and authentic learning opportunities through both class activities and practicum experience.

PI (s): Michael Behrmann, Holly Lawson
Amount: $190,848
Source: Virginia Department of Education
Dates: Annual

THE VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN SEVERE DISABILITIES

The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Severe Disabilities is comprised of five state approved teacher preparation programs for Teachers of Students in the Adapted Curriculum, including George Mason University, Norfolk State University, Radford University, University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University. The consortium's primary goal is to prepare teachers across the state to be highly skilled at working with learners with SD. The program is designed to increase the number of fully endorsed teachers by providing training to new full-time pre-service personnel and to accelerate the training for those already teaching on conditional licenses.

The SD Consortium has developed a state approved, 36 credit hour program that leads to state endorsement in SD.

"The SD program is designed to increase the number of fully endorsed teachers by providing training to new, full-time, preservice personnel and to accelerate the training for those already teaching on conditional licenses. By the end of the federal grant (March 2011) we will have met our target of 60 new fully trained and qualified preservice teachers in Special Education: Adapted Curriculum."

The program consists of nine 3-credit classes offered annually. Four additional credit hours of hands-on practicum are taken concurrent with specific classes, allowing trainees to apply the concepts learned in class to actual school settings. Students enrolled full-time are able to complete the entire program in one calendar year while part-time students complete the program over a longer period.

Each class uses video conferencing equipment to establish real-time, interactive, multipoint conference instruction among the five universities. Through video conferencing, students across the state are able to see and communicate with the professor and the other university students in real time. Furthermore, students are able to view multimedia presentations, including video and PowerPoint slides. In addition, the Consortium provides interactive and authentic learning opportunities through both class activities and practicum experience.

PI(s): Michael Behrmann, Marci Kinas Jerome
Amount: $200,000
Source: Department of Education
Dates: 5th year, (4-year funding)

PI: Michael Behrmann
Program Coordinator: Marci Kinas Jerome
Amount: $300,000
Source: Virginia Department of Education
Dates: Annual

Marci Kinas-Jerome

■ Dr. Marci Kinas-Jerome is the program coordinator for the Severe Disabilities Consortium and an Assistant Professor in the College of Education and Human Development. Her current research interests include the effectiveness of assistive technology for students with severe disabilities and access to the general curriculum for students with severe disabilities.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT) TRAINING/DEGREE PROGRAM(S)

(Major, Minor, and Certificate Options)

George Mason University's Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities offers one of the oldest and most diverse programs in Assistive Technology (AT) in the country. Started in the mid 1980's, the program now provides training through a graduate Assistive Technology (AT) Certificate, a Masters and Doctoral degree in Assistive Technology, and a recently established undergraduate Minor specializing in Assistive Technology. The AT Minor (15 credits) contributes to enriching existing degrees such as education, speech pathology, nursing, and information technology. The graduate Certificate Program (15 credits) is designed to provide supplemental training to practitioners needing to use assistive technology with the individuals with disabilities with whom they work. Both of these options segue into the Masters (17 credits of required courses and 13 credits of elective courses) and/or Doctoral AT program which provide more intense, theoretical backgrounds in instructional technology, instructional design, special education, and/or policy and leadership. Coursework is delivered in person, via distance education, and/or combined formats. The AT training is appropriate for a variety of disciplines including rehabilitation counselors, various service personnel, instructional and web designers, as well as general and special educators. A Minor in Assistive Technology extends training of AT solutions to undergraduate students at George Mason University.

> "By linking theory and practice with design, our goal is to ensure that our graduates are able to connect rigorous design processes and principles with carefully and wisely chosen technologies. M. Kinas"

Kristine Neuber, Anna Evmenova, Marci Kinas-Jerome and Cindy George *(not pictured)* contribute to the success of the Assistive Technology Training Programs.

PROGRAMS

—— *and* ——

PROJECTS

AIM-VA PROJECT: ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

The Virginia Accessible Instructional Materials Library (AIM-VA) produces and delivers accessible instructional materials, in numerous formats, for public schools in Virginia who have students with print disabilities (K-12). As an authorized user and provider, using funds from the Department of Education, AIM-VA also converts NIMAS files into the requested formats and collaborates with the Department of the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI), Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) and Bookshare to provide accessible instructional materials through a one-stop shop and in a timely fashion. AIM-VA also provides training and technical assistance to LEAs that order and use these materials in order to implement the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) regulations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

"Providing accessible texts throughout Virginia allows kids not only to work independently but places them in a more self-directed, self-controlled environment where they can feel empowered and personally proud of what they are learning"

The need for accessible instructional materials continues to increase. Recognizing that traditional print-based curriculum materials can be one of the barriers to progress and access to the curriculum for students with print disabilities, the services that AIM-VA provides enable differentiated instruction that can be tailored to individual student needs thus improving student outcomes. AIM-VA strives to prepare students to be digital natives for the 21st century through timely delivery and access to specialized formats.

IMPACT:

The Library System has provided:

■ 3,000 Large Print and PDF accessible Books

■ Merged RFBD library of 58,299 titles

■ A search by multiple features
  ISBN
  Format
  Grade Level
  Content Category
  Title

■ Upcoming:
  Merge DBVI's Braille records
  Merge Bookshare.com records

Cindy George

■ Cindy George is an instructor in the assistive technology instructional program and production coordinator for AIM Va. She has been with George Mason University since 1995. As an adjunct instructor and past coordinator in the instructional technology program Cindy provides access to the field of assistive technology to numerous students.

AIM collaborates with the following agencies in providing accessible instructional materials:
- Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)
- Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic Regional Unit of the Virginias and Carolinas (RFB&D)
- Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI)
- Virginia Correctional Enterprises (VCE)
- AIM-VA, GMU (KIHd) Conversion Specialists
- Bookshare.org
- Don Johnston Incorporated

During the first two and a half years AIM-VA has scanned and converted over 3000 texts into large print and PDF:Accessible files used in K-12 school settings. These texts have been catalogued in the AIM-VA library database. Each school district has Digital Rights Managers (DRMs) who request accessible instructional materials ranging from the entire textbooks to components of the text converted into formats such as pdf, audio, Daisy, Braille, and/or Large Print.

AIM-VA is also now providing online training and support webinars for educators through TTACOnline.org. Our new exclusive webpage and weekly metrics indicate increased traffic, excellent open and click-through rates, page views and downloading of information. We also provide monthly informational E-blasts to DRMs with timely, relevant content updates and information.

Impact:

Read:OutLoud 6 provides reading accommodations to an estimated **170,000** students in **1,900** VA public schools.

AIM-VA has made sustained and significant progress from the prior years of operation:

- There has been **a 235% increase in the number of digital rights managers** who are participating in the program, from 200 last year to 670 this year.

- There has been a **152% increase in book orders** this year.

- A new library data base lets DRMs browse the library(s), order and retain materials, track their orders and provide feedback on the quality of materials and services.

Through AIM-VA print materials are accessible in the following formats:

- PDF: Accessible - A PDF that provides the electronic translation of images of printed text into editable/readable text is considered an Accessible PDF. Stationary or portable computer assistive technology interprets the text and can be read using screen readers and text-to-speech technologies.

- Braille - Braille is a hard copy system of touch reading for persons who are blind that employs embossed dots evenly arranged in quadrangular letter spaces or cells.

- Braille Ready File (.brf) - Braille Ready File (.brf) is a specialized digital text format used to create Braille.

- Large Print - Large print is defined as print for text passages that is larger than the commonly used print and font sizes. Large print books are printed in black-and-white and may be divided into smaller volumes to offer a more convenient carrying size.

- Audio Recording (RFB&D) - Recorded Audio Books are audio-only human voice recordings that require specialized hardware—desktop or portable "players"—or Audio Plus-compatible computer software for playback.

- Microsoft Word Document - A Microsoft Word Document is a structured format optimized by using standard sans serif, 12-point font to enhance legibility, including content-based graphics and pictures for comprehension and presenting all content as left justified for readability.

- Digital Talking Book (DTB) - Daisy 3

- A Daisy 3 file is an audio and text file that has navigational features embedded into the file. Daisy 3 books can be read using computer-based or dedicated DAISY readers.

- NIMAS – NIMAS is a technical standard used by publishers to produce source files (in XML) that may be used to develop multiple specialized formats (such as Braille or audio books) for students with print disabilities who have an IEP.

- HTML - HTML format is a NIMAS file that is converted to HTML, providing the structure and layout for a Web document. There are web attributes and tags used to format and layout the book information such as graphic/picture tags (alternate text) and hypertext links that allow students to link to another page within the web document by a click of the mouse on either an image or word(s).

- DAISY-NIMAS - The DAISY-NIMAS format is a converted NIMAS file into a DAISY 3 file. Like the AIM-VA Daisy formats, the DAISY-NIMAS format is an audio and text file that has navigational and alternate text embedded into the file.

KELLAR LIBRARY

The Kellar Library, named in honor of Arthur and Elizabeth Kellar, is located in the Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities, (KIHd), in Krug Hall, Room 109. The library is a merger of the Kellar Special Education Collection, the T/TAC Lending Resources, and the Virginia Assistive Technology System resources (VATS). The library supports the mission of T/TAC by providing teachers and schools within VDOE Region 4 with materials to support the improvement of educational opportunities and success of children and youth with disabilities from birth to age 22. Checkout of VATS equipment is also coordinated via the library's online catalog. VATS equipment includes devices to aid daily living, low vision, communication, hearing, mobility, adaptive toys, and computer access. VATS equipment is available for loan to Virginians of all ages who live in the VATS North region. A collection of books is also available to students in the Mason LIFE program.

Requests for materials in the Kellar Library may be made through the catalog, via email, or on a walk-in basis. Materials may be checked out for three weeks with one renewal and may be picked up at the library or sent via USPS Priority Mail to home or school addresses. Some check-out restrictions may apply. For example, assessments are available for checkout only to George Mason graduate students in Special Education and to professionals who have been trained to use the assessments.

"The Kellar Library is an important resource for teachers, school administrators, George Mason faculty and graduate students who need access to disabilities-related books, videos, assessment materials, AT devices and software. The Kellar Library can also provide guidance on how to find information."

The library is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. To request library materials, check the library's online catalog at http://129.174.35.36/InmagicGenie/opac.aspx.

Updates regarding the library and new materials added to the collection can also be found on the library's website at www.kihd.gmu.edu/library.

Anyone living and/or working in the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Region 4 is welcome to use the Kellar Library's resources

Our patrons include:

Families and Parents

Counselors

General Education Teachers

Special Education Teachers

School administrators

George Mason faculty, staff and students

Occupational Therapists

Speech Therapists and Pathologists

Impact:

Almost 4,000 items including curriculum materials, books, journals, software, instructional and assistive technology devices, videos, kits, textbooks, and assessments are available for checkout.

Jackie Petersen

■ Jackie Petersen is the librarian at the Kellar Institute Library and the AIM-VA Project. She has been with Kellar since 2006. Jackie has a master's degree in library and information science from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana and a bachelor's degree in History and French from Morehead State University, Morehead KY. She has worked in various library positions throughout the Southeast, including the University of South Carolina-Columbia, University of the South, Sewanee, TN, Kentucky Virtual Library, Frankfort KY and Marymount University in Arlington, VA.

THE MASON LEARNING INTO FUTURE ENVIRONMENTS (LIFE) PROGRAM

The Mason Learning into Future Environments (LIFE) Program (http://masonlife.gmu.edu/) is a supportive academic university experience for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Program offers a four year postsecondary curriculum of study to students who begin the program between 18-23 years of age.

Currently, there are 38 Mason LIFE students enrolled for the 2010-2011 academic year.

ACADEMICS FOR MASON LIFE STUDENTS

The Mason LIFE academic program is designed for full time students attending classes 20 hours per week in traditional academic domains (literature, math, and writing), employment, independent living, and social/recreational development.

All students attend fall and spring semester courses from 9:00 – 3:00 daily. The Mason LIFE Program follows GMU's academic calendar. The program provides a 5:1 student/teacher ratio. Courses within the curriculum are modified and differentiated to meet the needs of all students with an emphasis placed on advancing their academic progress.

All classes have a syllabi and end of the semester grades are determined by a course rubric. Additionally, Literature and Math have probe curriculum based assessments each week and portfolio samples are collected in Writing classes. This work is distributed and shared with families during Person Centered Planning Meetings, at the end of each semester, and placed in each student's Mason LIFE file.

The everyday functions of the Mason LIFE Program are supported by instructors, internship students, practicum students, students completing field work placements, research students (Master and Doctorate levels), student mentors, volunteers, and best buddies.

In 2009-2010, 77 George Mason students were involved in the program in addition to our 11 instructors supporting the academic program and 6 residential assistants. The Mason LIFE Program draws students from the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), the Graduate School of Education and the School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism with majors in special education, recreation, and assistive technology.
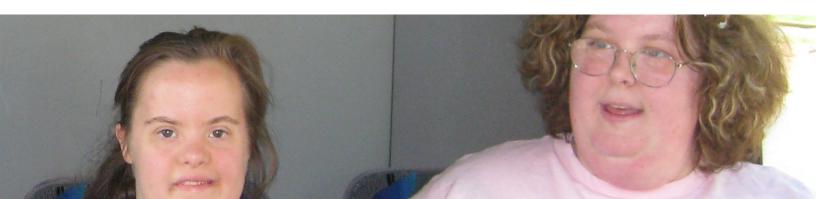
Through these reciprocal efforts, the Mason LIFE Program supports the university by providing tuition support, stipends, internships, practicums, fieldwork placements, and licensure studies that enrich undergraduate and graduate programs.

"As the Academic Coordinator, I am responsible for the educational development of students with Intellectual and Developmental disabilities. I supervise University students who serve as Instructors and Mentors in an apprenticeship learning environment. All students benefit from an enriched learning experience –one that affects change and strengthens their contributions to the greater community. In Mason LIFE, innovation means advancing ideas with tangible outcomes which last a lifetime."

Karen Ingram

■ Karen Ingram is the Academic Coordinator for the Mason LIFE Program. Karen ensures that the curriculum is continually evaluated and modified. Additionally, she oversees and supervises the implementation of all lessons as well as provides classroom management training.

MASON LIFE INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the Mason LIFE students are integrated into special topics classes or catalog classes offered by George Mason University. The coordination of the special topics classes through the Mason LIFE program enables the course instructors an avenue to ensure modification of the class assignments and tests as needed. The Mason LIFE students attending the special topics classes are required to take a special topics support class to ensure continued student assistance. The diversity of course offerings is one of Mason LIFE's core strengths.

All Mason LIFE students are registered in the GMU's Administrative Information System as non-credit students and receive student identification numbers along with their student Identification cards. Since all classes are listed in the University System, students have the ability to request from the GMU Registrars' Office an Academic Record which lists all coursework as well as end of course grades.

"Mason LIFE students are changing the meaning of academic achievements. They have become well integrated in undergraduate classrooms and are models for exemplary work habits. Integrating Mason LIFE students into the Mason classrooms enhances learning and allows students to demonstrate their potential for academic success"

Presently, students conclude the program with a Certificate of Completion. All students who complete the four year program participate in the College of Education and Human Development Convocation held in May.

Inclusive Special Topics classes such as:

- Public speaking
- Debate
- Visual arts
- Japanese
- Judo
- Karate
- Dance
- Golf
- Astronomy
- Social work
- Newspaper Workshop
- Technical Theatre
- Acting
- Classical Music
- Drawing
- Piano
- World Religion

Kudy Giwa

■ Kudy Giwa Lawal is the Program Coordinator of the LIFE Program. She plans the program of special topics classes and provides support to students attending these classes. Kudy has worked with diverse learners of various ages, cultures, and languages from preschool age to college level. She conducts research, designs curriculum, and teaches classes for college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Jennifer Labbe

■ The Mason LIFE employment coordinator, Jennifer Labbe, works with Mason LIFE students to build job endurance and on the job training. The program employs fading support techniques to build independence that will ultimately lead to full-time employment. Mason LIFE first year students stay in the classroom and learn the basics of employment.

EMPLOYMENT

In addition to academic studies, second through fourth year students also have job experiences in locations on campus such as the two campus libraries (e.g., Johnson Center and KIHd), the Mail Services, the Child Development Center, and the Aquatic and Fitness Center. These on-campus placements are led by the Mason LIFE Employment Coordinator who provides initial orientation, training, and support.

Mason LIFE has an internship program aimed at creating a transition to full-time employment for Mason LIFE graduates. The interns are supported through skill building job practicum outside the university with such placements as TJ Maxx, the World Bank, Our Daily Bread, and Food Services. The Employment Coordinator works with them to build job endurance and on the job training, fading support and ultimately leading to independent employment. The interns also take part in certain Mason LIFE classes such as Independent Living, reading, writing, and math classes specifically designed to strengthen areas needed for employment.

"It takes but one open door to discover a world of possibility and opportunity for our students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. One person's willingness to provide an occupational experience can change the life of a person with a disability. Mason LIFE is knocking on your door. Will Opportunity open it?"

IMPACT:

Of the 19 LIFE Program Graduates **70%** are employed and **5** students are in the Internship Program

Employers Include:

- Inova Fair Oaks Hospital
- Loudoun County Public Schools
- Our Daily Bread
- Deloitte
- T.J.Maxx
- EPAImageX
- Audi of America
- ARC
- The World Bank
- Hallmark
- Kellar Annex
- Peace Corp
- Best Buy

Mason LIFE has work experience sites on-campus to include:

- Kellar Library
- AIM Virginia
- JC Library
- Aquatic & Fitness Center
- RAC
- Sodexo
- Child Development Center
- Broadside
- Recycling
- Postal Services
- Visual and Performing Art Center
- Mason Inn
- WGMU Radio Station
- Office of the President

INDEPENDENT LIVING

The residential component continues to build upon the foundation fostered in the independent living and community access classes taught in the academic program. While two thirds of the Mason LIFE students commute to the university, at least one third are residential students who live on the campus supported by three Quiet Hour Resident Advisors (QHRAs) who live in each of the apartments with the LIFE students and three Floating Resident Assistants (FRAs) who are on-call at all times.

The RAs' chief role is as a facilitator. They provide oversight and assistance with activities in the Residential Hall (i.e., laundry, cleaning, and cooking) and in the greater George Mason University community. All residential students take a required residential class that covers topics from hygiene, safety, roommate conflicts, and personal boundaries. Additionally, all students have a Residential Handbook and sign a contract agreeing to follow the University's Guide to Pride and nine housing principles.

SOCIAL LIFE

George Mason University is one of the most diverse universities in the U.S. and provides a great learning environment for students with disabilities. Mason LIFE students take special topic classes, work in job placements, join clubs and groups, and manage teams all with other GMU students. Mason LIFE students also participate in these activities and groups (in addition to having students living in the Residential Hall): Student Government, Sorority, Choir, Running Team, Pep Band, Theatre crew, Orchestra, Men's Soccer, Football, Men's Basketball, Women's Rugby, Women's Tennis, Best Buddies, and Special Olympics. Council on Exceptional Children (CEC), the professional organization which sets the standard in special education and advocates for those unique individuals, recognized a Mason LIFE student at the annual conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

IMPACT:

Mason LIFE has implemented a Capitol Hill Internship Program with Mason LIFE students gaining employment experiences in the offices of the United States Congress.

Salley Woods, Communications Director, and Congressman Gregg Harper have been pleased with the progress of the Mason LIFE students and their supportive job assistants (other GMU students). With 8 Mason LIFE interns serving 16 representative's offices this fall, we are creating an official bi-partisan Internship Program for students with intellectual disabilities, the first in the nation.

As a result of this innovative effort, Politico published an article by Erika Lovely (see link http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0410/36448.html).

PARTNERSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY

In addition to our collaboration with the LEA, Mason LIFE also partners with other community members. For example, in honor of Direct Support Professionals Day, a day to appreciate professionals who provide direct support to people with disabilities, Sharon Bulova in 2009 and John Cook in 2010, Chairpersons of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, recognized the Mason LIFE Program's administrative staff, instructors and RAs for their excellent work with students with disabilities.

Brian van de Graaff and the Storm Chaser ABC 7/ WJLA-TV & News Channel 8 broadcast the Mason LIFE Program during his visit and live weather report in the fall. In conjunction with a Meteorology elective, the Mason LIFE Program was invited to visit the studio in the spring. Moreover, Congressman Gerry Connolly visited the Mason LIFE program (April 2010) and was presented with the AbilityOne Congressional Champion award for his strong support for employment for people with disabilities. Bob Chamberlin, President and CEO of NISH (one of the nonprofit agencies that administers AbilityOne) and Rex Parr, President and CEO of Didlake, presented the award.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND AGENCIES

Now in our ninth year, the Mason LIFE Program continues to partner with other agencies in the field of postsecondary education for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The program succeeds by highlighting students' abilities, encouraging interaction with peers, and instilling self-confidence and self-esteem through diverse, yet individually tailored, programming. Researchers and educators from other institutions have visited George Mason University to learn more about this novel program and its impact on students. Additionally, agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, Department of Finance, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, NISH, Didlake, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, HSC Foundation, Long Term Care Coordinating Council (LTCCC), Leadership Fairfax, Fairfax Falls Church Community Services Board, and Arlington County Community Services Board have expressed interest in the program's model of inclusive practices.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES (LEA)

Along with collaboration within CEHD and departments outside of the college, the Mason LIFE program partners with our Local Education Agencies. In the 2009-10 academic years, program representatives participated in the following Transition Fairs: Annapolis Schools, Fairfax County Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools as well as Future Quest. Additionally, Mason LIFE students have presented at several GMU doctoral Early Childhood classes and graduate Transition classes to further their public speaking and to provide firsthand accounts of their educational experiences. As part of the interactive partnerships with the LEA, Mason LIFE students will also

RESEARCH

Research and dissemination of information has always been a priority for the Mason LIFE program. Furthermore, Mason LIFE supports the coursework assignments and action research projects within the program of studies for special education. A classroom in the Mason LIFE Program may have numerous observers and interventions occurring within the course of a semester. For example, The Mason LIFE Program implemented an intervention regarding helpful eating habits, a writing intervention using self-regulated strategy development, and an organizational strategy supporting student ability to complete homework. Along with research from the GMU masters students, several doctoral dissertations have been completed using the Mason LIFE program as either the setting or student sample. A recent investigation involved enhancing comprehension skills of current events through picture symbols, text enhancement, and video footage. Furthermore, a ground-breaking dissertation was conducted on eye-tracking patterns for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as using an iPhone to assist with travel training.

Hedi Graff

■ As the director of the Mason LIFE Program, Dr. Graff is expanding the research line in the area of secondary and postsecondary education for student with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as setting outcome measures for transition programs.

"This experience of learning, working, and living together mutually benefits all individuals and is the basis for the Mason LIFE Program. Whether the program is the research site for Masters students conducting their Qualitative Reading Inventory to information sessions for out-of-state potential applicants to being a presence on Capitol Hill, the Mason LIFE program strives to promote an agenda of continuous education and learning."

Director: Heidi Graff
Amount: $742,300
Source: Revenue
Date: Annual

Region IV T-TAC

THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (VDOE) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (T/TAC), REGION IV

The Training and Technical Assistance Center (T-TAC) for Region IV is one of eight centers in the coordinated state-wide system grant-funded by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to improve educational opportunities and contribute to the success of students with disabilities, birth through age 22 years. They accomplish this through services delivered in the form of technical assistance and professional development. The intent of these services is to have a positive and lasting impact on instructional delivery and to build the capacity of educational professionals to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The T-TAC at GMU is available to school personnel and related service providers in the counties of Arlington, Culpeper, Clarke, Fairfax, Fauquier, Frederick, Loudoun, Madison, Orange, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Warren, and Shenandoah, and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Winchester. The T-TAC receives direct guidance from the VDOE personnel in the Office of Special Education, with support from the Offices of Instructional Support and Related Services, School Improvement, Student Services, and Financial and Data Services. To access the VDOE T-TAC at GMU website visit **http://ttac.gmu.edu**.

It is the overall mission of the T-TAC to provide school and related services personnel with high-quality professional development to increase their expertise and knowledge in research-based instructional and behavioral practices. When these practices are used, students have greater opportunities to access the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment and to develop grade-appropriate knowledge and skills. They are better prepared to meet the academic requirements for high school graduation and, ultimately, achieve success as adults in the work force.

In addition to professional development, other T-TAC services are:

- Consultation and collaboration with school-based teams

- Information services, such as The T-TAC Telegram, a newsletter written and published by the T-TAC four times throughout the school year

- Linking and networking professionals with resources

- Managing a lending library of multimedia resources and technology

- Training on the use of assistive technology for instruction and communication

- Developing and managing web sites, such as T-TAC Online, a site of web shops and resources to support face-to-face learning opportunities

- Providing long-term technical assistance

During the fiscal year 1 July 2009 through 30 June 2010, the VDOE T-TAC at GMU collected data on their Region 4 activities. Almost 5,000 Region 4 educators and related providers used T/TAC services during this reporting period. Services were delivered through a total of 492 events. There were 79 workshops with a total of 3,026 attendees. Content, including that for workshops and other types of training and technical assistance, typically focused on curriculum and instruction (19.80%), collaboration and team building (16.99%), integration and least restrictive environment (13.33%), assessment (11.37%), Child Find (7.58%), technology (4.89%), and behavior (3.55%). Based on program affiliation, some of the largest groups served were: 1,778 special educators, 1,400 general educators, and 1,095 early childhood special educators. In terms of the type of educator or provider, some of the largest groups served were special education teachers (1,323), general education teachers (1,023), special education administrators (608), general education administrators (523), and paraprofessionals (248).

Impact:

■ From 1 July 2009 through 30 June 2010 -

Almost **5,000** Region 4 educators and related providers used T-TAC services

There were a total of **492** events, with a total of **3,026** attendees

T-TAC Online www.ttaconline.org is a web-based community linking people and resources to help children and youth with disabilities. T-TAC Online includes:

- VA Assessments: Provides information and resources for the various alternative and alternate assessment options in Virginia.
- SOL Enhanced: Presents SOL Enhanced Scope and Sequence Plus (ESS+) Lessons which include options for differentiation.
- Resources: Supplies an annotated listing of websites, materials, articles and books that can be searched by category, disability or keyword.
- Events: Contributes an annotated listing of state and national conferences, workshops and trainings that can be searched by category, disability, month or keyword.
- Online Training: Offers self-paced online webshops that address a variety of topics.

ASPIRING SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERS ACADEMY

The Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy was established in 2008 to assist school divisions and state-operated programs with succession planning and to help prepare potential leaders for future administrative positions in special education. Through a year-long program, cohort members, made up of teachers, direct service providers, school psychologists/social workers, special education coordinators, and assistant principals, have the opportunity to participate in

monthly seminars, observations, assignments, and field experiences. Each cohort consists of 30 participants, selected on a competitive basis, and a new cohort begins each August. The program is designed to create and maintain a pool of individuals who have knowledge and skills to assume special education leadership roles in local education agencies, state education agencies, and state operated programs.

PI: Patricia Addision, Ed.D.
Amount: $274,041
Annual

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STATE-DIRECTED PROJECTS

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has formed state-directed projects to support goals within the Virginia Special Education Improvement Plan (VSEIP). Staff members from the Training and Technical Assistance Centers (T-TACs) from the eight Superintendent's regions participate in each project. These projects provide professional staff development that increases the capacity of school personnel to help students with disabilities gain access to the general curriculum, to assist schools in meeting Virginia's accreditation standards, and to assist local education agencies in meeting the qualified personnel requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Acts (IDEA). For more detailed information on the state-directed projects, please visit: **http://ttac.gmu.edu**.

ACADEMIC REVIEW FOLLOW-UP: SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOLS IN IMPROVEMENT

This project coordinates participation and follow-up technical assistance for specific schools that have a critical need to address the academic outcomes of students with disabilities.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The Assistive Technology Project goal is to increase access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities through the use of assistive technology (AT). This project supports the accommodations and modifications that are necessary for students with disabilities to master curricular objectives and to participate in statewide assessments. The project website **http://www.ttaconline.org/atsdp** provides more information on issues related to technology, UDL, AT consideration and assessments.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

This project coordinates information and training for personnel in schools serving children with autism spectrum disorders. Project members provide support for, and participate on Virginia's interagency autism council to improve services for individuals with autism, birth through adulthood. Autism state-directed project resources and training events can be accessed on **T-TAC Online**: (http://www.ttaconline.org). These resources include the Autism E-News, Autism Online Resources, and Autism Resources for Educators in Virginia. Autism resources are also available from the Kellar-TTAC Library online at: **http://kihd.gmu.edu/library**

State-Directed Projects include:

- Academic Review Follow-Up: Special Assistance for Schools in Improvement

- Assistive Technology

- Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Behavior Assessment and Intervention & Effective School-Wide Discipline (ESD)

- Early Childhood Transition and Preschool

- Family Involvement Network

- Instructional Consultation Teams (ICT)

- Intellectual Disabilities

- Literacy Academic Instruction for Special Educators

- Literacy for Middle & High Schools: Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) & Content Literacy Continuum (CLC)

- Secondary Transition

- Standards of Learning (SOL) Enhanced Scope and Sequence PLUS (ESS+)

BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION & EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE (ESD)

This project provides training and information on conducting functional behavior assessment and developing behavior intervention plans. The project staff also work with schools on the positive behavior model, Effective School-Wide Discipline (ESD), an initiative that uses a team-based process designed to address the unique needs of individual schools with regards to discipline. ESD is a systematic approach to practices that decrease inappropriate student behavior. The Effective School-Wide Discipline in Virginia website is:

http://www.ttac.odu.edu/esd/

EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION AND PRESCHOOL

This project supports professionals providing special education and general education services to young children, birth through kindergarten age, in a variety of settings. A specific goal of this project is to increase inclusive opportunities for children with developmental disabilities by promoting evidence-based educational strategies and building collaborative partnerships with community preschools and agencies. The project staff also provides training and technical assistance for personnel working with toddlers who transition from early intervention services to special education programs.

"T-TAC is the link between research and practice. Our goal is to increase evidence based instructional and behavioral strategies to improve academic outcomes for all students with disabilities."

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (FIN)

In recognizing that families are vital members of the educational team serving students with disabilities, the staff involved with the FIN supports families by collaborating with Region 4 Parent Resource Centers. They meet the needs of families by providing activities that help increase their knowledge and skills in the area of disabilities and academic strategies. One focus for family training is on understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Kay Klein

■ Kay Klein is the Assistant Director for the VDOE Training and Technical Assistance Center (T-TAC) Region 4 at GMU. She believes that teachers, administrators and parents share a common goal to help students increase their academic outcomes, improve positive relationships, and develop qualities and skills that lead to a successful and satisfying life.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSULTATION TEAMS (ICT)

The ICT project staff train and provide technical assistance to the instructional consultation and support teams in elementary and middle schools. Over the years, they have established and maintained teams in schools that now serve as model sites for other schools. The process embellishes pre-referral activities and facilitates professional development to increase the instructional skills of school personnel to improve student performance.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

The Intellectual Disabilities Project provides instructional resources, training, and technical assistance for teachers of students with cognitive disabilities who take the state's alternate assessment which is based on the Virginia Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOLs). The ASOLs are the academic curriculum assessed through the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) covering four core content areas: English-Reading, Math, Science, and History-Social Science. The project develops materials, resources, and holds trainings to assist teachers in the instructional process that addresses the ASOLs.

LITERACY ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATORS

This informal network of T/TAC staff from across Virginia collaborate with VDOE general instruction office staff to disseminate information and assist school personnel in accessing professional development in reading, math, and other academic content areas for students with disabilities.

"T/TAC is the link between research and practice. Our goal is to increase evidence based instructional and behavioral strategies to improve academic outcomes for all students with disabilities."

LITERACY FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS: STRATEGIC INSTRUCTION MODEL (SIM) & CONTENT LITERACY CONTINUUM (CLC)

The T/TAC staff is part of a coordinated, state-wide professional development project to improve literacy for students with disabilities that will enable them to be successful in learning the Standards of Learning (SOL) content. The two different processes used in this effort are the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) and Content Literacy Continuum (CLC) from the University of Kansas Center on Research and Learning.

SECONDARY TRANSITION

This project has a number of functions that provide leadership, support, resources, training, and technical assistance that address transition and postsecondary

outcomes. Members of the project assist local school personnel in assessing their IEP process to meet federal and state requirements. They assist divisions in identifying programs and activities that help students reach their post-school goals. They provide training and resources to help educators facilitate self determination skills in students from elementary through high school. T/TAC staff also participate in local and state transition councils, college orientation events, workforce partnerships, and employment and postsecondary opportunities for students with low-incidence disabilities. Towards this end, they sponsor events that increase awareness and knowledge about secondary transition, such as the Virginia Transition Forum. Every other year, the T/TAC at GMU sponsors a college event, Future Quest, an event for students, their families, and educators who are interested in post-secondary options, particularly as they relate to higher education, but also including work-related training opportunities.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING (SOL) ENHANCED SCOPE AND SEQUENCE PLUS (ESS+)

The *SOL Enhanced Scope and Sequence PLUS (ESS+)* provides resources to elementary, middle, and high school teachers in the delivery of SOL content for English, math, science, and history/social studies to students using differentiated instructional techniques and technology.

ESS+ features are:

- Units organized by topics from the original Scope and Sequence
- Essential knowledge and skills from the Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework
- Related Standards of Learning
- Research-based information and links

PI: Michael Behrmann
Director: Lynn Wiley
Amount: $2,720,672
Source: Virginia Dept. of Education
Year: Current

Lynn Wiley

■ Lynn Wiley is the Director of the VDOE Training and Technical Assistance Center (T/TAC) Region 4 at GMU. Lynn currently supervises fourteen educational specialists and three administrative staff who work to build critical relationships with teachers, administrators, related service providers, and families to support their efforts to maximize academic outcomes for students with disabilities.

THE VIRGINIA ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM (VATS) NORTH

The mission of the Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) is to ensure that Virginians of all ages and abilities can acquire the appropriate, affordable assistive and information technologies and services they need to participate in society as active citizens. VATS North provides many assistive technology support services for individuals with varying abilities and challenges, and for their families and related professionals, that promote the independence, productivity, and quality of life.

The Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) complements the studies within the Assistive Technology (AT) program of George Mason University by providing services to the community. The universal design of accessible housing is a component of training available within the AT training program.

Requests for information or referral can be made by phone at (703) 993-3670 (local voice and text) or (800) 333-7958 (toll-free voice and text), by e-mail at emckeoug@gmu.edu, or online on the VATS North Request Form web page at http://kihd.gmu.edu/vatsnorth/request/

PI: Michael Behrmann
Coordinator: Emily McKeough Fallings
Amount: $85,749
Source: Virginia Dept. of Rehabilitative Services
Year: Current

Assessments are available in the areas of:

- Communication
- Computer access
- Telecommunications
- Positioning and mobility
- Educational activities
- Leisure activities
- Vocational activities
- Home environmental control
- Activities of daily living

Emily McKeough Fallings

■ Emily McKeough Fallings Is the coordinator for Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)-North. She is also the director for George Mason University's CompuWrite Summer Camp for children who need help with the writing process.

RESEARCH

—— *and* ——

DEVELOPMENT

SPECIAL EDUCATION PRE-SERVICE TRAINING IMPROVEMENT

This 84.325T project focuses on the education, training and efficacy needs of special education teachers. After completion of an undergraduate degree in a specific content area with a minor in special education, current undergraduates studying in the content areas of math, science, history, and English will, in a fifth year of study, complete the remaining special education courses which lead to licensure certification and a Master's Degree in Special Education. This program will increase the number of highly qualified special education personnel with a content area background. Program goals are to retain teachers in special education, and improve the design of an approved teacher preparation program, with the inclusion of mentorship for students and the teaching of evidence based strategies across core content classes.

Key collaborators for this project will include those members in the special education program(s) in the College of Education and Human Development as well as local school agencies and those faculty members in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the College of Science.

"When preparing prospective teachers to work with students with disabilities, we have to consider innovative ways to reach out to rural areas outside of the Washington metropolitan area. At the same time, we also need to maintain the quality of our programs and design better supports for our students, especially when we have over 700 special education graduates annually."

PI's: Kelly Regan
Amount: $499,995
Source: US Department of Education, OSEP
Dates: 10/1/08-9/30/13

Kelly Regan

■ Dr. Kelley S. Regan is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education and Human Development. Dr. Regan is interested in improving the lives of students with EBD by identifying effective school-based interventions (academic & behavioral) for this population. Her primary research interests focus on writing instruction, the teacher-student relationship, and teacher behavior.

Anna Evmenova

■ Dr. Anna Evmenova is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education and Human Development and is an instructor in the Instructional Technology Program. Her research interests include assistive and instructional technology tools for providing academic content-based instruction to students with various abilities and needs.

ADAPTED CAPTIONING THROUGH INTERACTIVE VIDEO SOFTWARE PROGRAM (ACTIV)

ACTIV 1.0 is an Alpha prototype of the Adapted Captioning through Interactive Video software program developed at the H. Kellar Institute for Human DisAbilities. The program is designed to allow teachers to easily and efficiently enhance existing videos, including content-based videos in any subject area, with various adapted and interactive features. This innovative technology-based application aims to enable access and participation of students with various disabilities in appropriate and challenging academic curriculum through video medium. The project will ultimately result in the development of the technology-based instructional materials that will support improvements in academic outcomes of all students. The work on ACTIV 1.0 follows the iterative method of design, development, and usability testing. The project has already been initially planned and designed resulting in the Alpha prototype of ACTIV 1.0. Further development of the tool became possible with the funding through the Phase I Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students with Disabilities grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The lead programmer of the ACTIV 1.0 is Dr. Shuangbao Wang. The research team includes Dr. Anna Evmenova, Dr. Heidi Graff, and Dr. Michael Behrmann.

"ACTIV 1.0 is an innovative technology tool that utilizes the main principles of universal design to provide access to general education curriculum for students with various abilities and needs."

PI's: Dr. Anna Evmenova (Co-PI), Dr. Heidi Graff (Co-PI)
Amount: $400,000
Source: U.S. Department of Education
Dates: 2 years

INVESTIGATION OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

Dr. Margo Mastropieri is working on a multi-partner grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) investigating the impact of a writing intervention on the performance of middle school students. The project titled, Writing Instruction for Adolescents with Behavior Disorders: Scaffolding Procedural Learning to Extended Discourse is led by Linda Mason at the University of Pennylvania. The purpose of this development project is to conduct an initial evaluation of writing strategy and fluency instruction on the written expression and writing fluency performance of 7th and 8th grade students with behavior disorders who are struggling with writing. Margo and several research assistants have been collecting data and investigating the empirically validated instructional approach, Self-Regulated Strategy Development.

Investigator: Margo Mastropieri
Amount: $512,739
Source: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (NCSER)
Dates: 2007-2011

VISUAL ATTENTION IN COGNITIVE TASKS

This research involves the use of eye-tracking devices to measure visual attention in text and images displayed on the computer screen. Studies conducted to date have demonstrated reliable differences between individuals with and without Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in text reading, qualitative difference in performance of individuals from different majors in natural sciences in solving domain-specific problems and consistent differences in allocation of visual attention by individuals from Saudi Arabia and the United States. We are currently examining the extent to which individuals with and without disabilities exhibit similar or dissimilar patterns of visual attention in response to verbal prompts related to a given image. Funding for this project is provided by the Kellar Institute and the College of Education and Human Development.

PI (s): Rick Brigham
Source: KIHd

Fredrick Brigham

■ Dr. Frederick "Rick" Brigham is an Associate Professor in the School of Education and Human Development. His research interests include: Intervention research in special education, visual-spatial learning strategies, classroom assessment, single subject design, group design, and eye movement research.

PRODUCTS

—— *and* ——

SERVICES

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND EVENTS
COMPUWRITE

CompuWrite is a summer camp held at George Mason University for children with disabilities. CompuWrite and the CompuPlay lab are for students with learning disabilities in grades 3-6 who are experiencing difficulties with the writing process. The camp provides adaptations to support student learning such as technology and innovative computer software programs. The technological adaptations are incorporated in order to enhance the 5 stages of the writing process and make creative writing a fun and enjoyable learning experience. The camp is typically held in the summer and/or throughout the school year and is coordinated by an assigned Masters or doctoral student/candidate. The teacher/student ratio is typically 1:3. The CompuWrite staff take information from parents and schools prior to camp and make decisions with parents about particular individual focus areas, then apply the principles of writing using available technology to facilitate the writing process.

PI(s): Behrmann
Amount: $19,810
Source: Revenue
Year: Annual Funding

At CompuWrite our available resources include 100 Software Titles, such as:

- Co: Writer
- Write: Outloud
- Storybook Weaver
- Type to Learn
- Dragon Naturally Speaking Preferred
- OpenBook Unbound
- Intellikeys
- JAWS for Windows
- HeadMouse
- Touch Window iMac
- Ke:nx

At CompuWrite our available resources include over 40 Assistive Technology Devices, such as:

- Scanners
- Quick cams
- Digital cameras
- Video cameras
- Smart board
- LCD projectors
- Internet
- Macintosh platforms
- Windows platforms

CELEBRATE COMMUNICATION 2010

Celebrate Communication Day is a leading annual community event of the Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons in collaboration with KIHd. This event has been held at George Mason University since 2004 and the previous year we hosted 500-700 people from the Northern Virginia metro area. Over 60 exhibitors including audiologists, hearing aid providers, educators, agencies, nonprofit/support groups, and businesses gathered on campus to provide information and the latest technologies regarding communication. Celebrate Communication 2011 will be held on May14, 2011.

STATE OF THE SCIENCE CONFERENCE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES 2009 & 2010

On November 6, 2009, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) in coordination with the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), both in the U.S. Department of Education, and Helen A. Kellar Institute hosted a conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities.

The purpose of the conference was to discuss the current state of research and practice in the field. Outcomes of this conference were a better understanding of existing postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities and recommendations for future research.

The 2010 State of the Art Conference on Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities was held on October 28 and 29, 2010 at Mason's new hotel and conference center in Fairfax, VA. The conference provided an opportunity for colleges and universities, researchers, program staff, parents and self-advocates to discuss the current state of policies, research, and practice in the field. Panels included staff from PSE initiatives, parents, students, and other experts who shared effective practices during breakout sessions and who took advantage of opportunities for group discussion. Sessions centered around the themes of Policy and Advocacy on day 1 and Research and Practice on Day 2.

The third annual 2011 State of the Art Conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities that will be held on November 3 and 4 at Mason Inn, Fairfax, VA. Conference website: http://www.sscsid.org

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

The Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI) is a joint project of the Office of Equity and Diversity Services (OEDS), the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities (KIHd), and the Office of Disability Services (ODS). The mission of the ATI is to help provide individuals with disabilities an accessible university environment by supporting access to all technological, architectural, and educational resources available at George Mason University through the incorporation of assistive technologies, the provision of technical support, and the development of university-wide strategies for universal access.

The ATI works collaboratively with other units within the Mason community to develop and coordinate implementation of a university-wide plan to ensure access to information technology and communications through the use of adaptive equipment and the provision of technical assistance, training and support to Mason employees and students with disabilities. The ATI also provides training and technical support to the entire university community related to access to information technology and compliance with the Virginia Information Technology Accessibility (VITA) Standards. The VITA standards themselves are based on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Additionally, the ATI manages the production of accessible text for Mason students with disabilities who require equal access to the university curriculum and other resources.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY LAB

The assistive technology lab was designed to be an ideal instructional environment. It incorporates several design features and instructional technology tools to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning for both people with and without disabilities.

The lab is designed to support both students who are pursuing degrees in the area of assistive technology and students and employees with disabilities at George Mason University. The seven accessible desktop stations are located around the perimeter of the lab on adjustable height computer tables to accommodate for faculty, staff, and students in wheelchairs. Each station is designed to meet the needs of a particular functional disability area.

VIRTUAL COLLABORATION CENTER

Over the last ten years the KIHd has developed a technology enhanced distance education and communication infrastructure that has spawned increasing collaboration and training and technical assistance capacity. Currently, the

The Assistive Technology Initiative

Provides the following services:

- Informal Assistive Technology assessments for Mason employees and students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- Technical Support and training to the Mason community related to access to information technology and compliance with the Virginia Information Technology Accessibility (VITA) Standards. The VITA standards themselves are based on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

- Training for the Mason community on recommended adapted techniques, software, and/or devices.

- Training and technical resources for Mason employees who support computer technology at GMU.

- Provision of accessible text to students, faculty, and staff with print-related disabilities.

KIHd is developing a virtual collaboration center where small and large groups across the state can meet and work without traveling. Some of the available technologies used in the Virtual Collaboration Center are video, web and audio conferencing.

Videoconferencing is an interactive connection between two or more sites that transmit video, audio and graphics. Videoconferencing is used for distance education and for faculty/ staff meetings at George Mason University. Unlike streaming or broadcast television, all parties can see and hear each other in real-time.

Our web conferencing tools include Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro, which also allows attendees to share documents, computer desktops, and virtual whiteboards for the purpose of synchronous collaboration, including training presentations, at a distance.

LITERACY ACCESS ON-LINE (LAO)

http://www.literacyaccessonline.com

Literacy Access On-Line is a resource for readers and their helpers which offers a variety of on-line tools including Story Builder, reading from the web, and online reading assessments. Children can independently or with the help of a family member or additional facilitator walk through the three steps of pre-reading, reading, and post reading with the support of Literacy Explorer. Children also have the option with LAO to type in a story of their own and add graphics from their favorite Web sites. A ready to read menu of stories is also accessible from a provided story bank. LAO supports facilitators with on-line resources for preparation, reading strategies, and motivation strategies.

LiteracyAccess Online provides reading activities and resources for readers and their helpers including:

- StoryBuilder, where you can create stories, save your work in your own account, and publish your story on the LiteracyAccess Online site.

Assistive technology devices include, but are not limited to:

- Alternate input devices for computers: adapted keyboards, joysticks, trackballs, and infrared head pointers
- adaptive software: word prediction, graphic organizer, text to voice, and voice to text programs
- environmental controls
- augmentative communication devices
- adaptive switches
- adapted battery-operated toys
- voice amplifiers
- text magnifiers
- scanners with speech synthesizers
- Braille products

The benefits of LAO to young readers:

- Students will learn new ways to read and to enjoy the process of reading with the help of a facilitator.

- The student and facilitator will experience together the uses of technology while building reading and writing skills.

- Students will explore inter-active activities designed to help build the necessary skills needed to become successful in reading and writing.

- Students will have oppor-tunities to choose reading selections that match his or her interest and ability levels.

- Facilitators will find wonder-ful resources available for students in the areas of reading, writing, motivation and assistive technology.

- Read from the Web, where you can hear language read aloud, using a free download of BrowseAloud, and follow along, using our helpful tips, resources, and activities.

ZONING IN ON PHYSICS

http://ziop.gmu.edu

"Zoning in on Physics" is the culmination of four student design teams' efforts to implement a DOE, Office of Special Education Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities, Steppingstones-to-Technology Grant to GMU and its Helen A. Kellar Center for Human disAbilities. "Zoning in on Physics" is a multi-sensory virtual simulation of Newton's Laws of Physics. The on-line activities are based on a scenario in which students need to help an Alien from the Planet Zorg learn more about the Laws of Motion here on Earth. It is designed for high school students who may have learning disabilities and/or who benefit from a more hands-on approach to learning science. The on-line web site provides supplemental resources for teachers and students, as well. The "Zoning in on Physics" project has as its foundation, research on the impact of virtual reality learning environments in teaching science to learning disabled students. That research emanated from Project Science Space, a joint research project undertaken by George Mason University, the University of Houston and NASA's Johnson Space Center.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN CURRICULUM MODULES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL MATHEMATICS: A FOCUS ON EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION

http://www.middlegrademath.org

Within the Universal Design Curriculum Modules in Middle School Mathematics each module consists of a set of free, downloadable, printer-friendly publications, including a teacher's guide, teacher resources (such as transparencies, wall charts, and unit organizers), and student materials (student booklets containing reference materials for students as well as problem sets/activity sheets). The modules assist teachers in enhancing how new content is presented and represented, how students learn and practice the content, and how students express what they know and can do.

"When we analyzed the math texts and teacher's guide, there was minimal guidance for demonstrating math concepts in different ways. Teachers repeatedly noted how much they, and students, benefited from the varied demonstration lessons in these modules."

Each of these UDL modules is based on a specific three-stage explicit instruction sequence. The teacher begins by demonstration of new concepts. The teacher then

Accessible Computer Stations available for use:

Physical Disabilities

- Alternative Keyboard Access
- Alternative Mouse Access
- Switch Access
- Voice Recognition

Visual Impairment

- Screen Enlargement
- Document Scanning & Reading

Blind

- Screen Reading & Braille Production

Cognitive Impairment/ Learning Disabilities

- Talking Word Processors, Graphic Organizers

leads students through guided practice of new concepts. Finally, materials (at various levels of difficulty) are included for independent practice by students.

This tool is for use by middle-grades mathematics teachers and their co-teachers, as well as special educators teaching in a resource room or self-contained setting. It is also useful to academic support teachers or tutors providing extra help to students in a Math Lab or Math Center. The modules are a useful supplement to any middle-grades curriculum during units on numeration, operations and computation, and patterns, functions and algebra. The modules can help support student success during these units.

NATIONAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (NATRI)

http://natri.uky.edu/index.html

The National Assistive Technology Research Institute (NATRI) conducts assistive technology (AT) research, translates theory and research into AT practice, and provides resources for improving the delivery of AT services. The research that is being conducted under the auspices of the Institute will produce data and products that will help improve the delivery of AT services to students who can benefit from the use of AT to enhance their abilities to function in schools and in society.

Although not currently funded, NATRI was supported by the University of Kentucky with additional funding from Cooperative Agreement #H327G000004 from the Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. Products available to the public on-line include AT information databases, online AT reports, AT device videos, and AT vendors. The resources provided for the partner projects under NATRI and the materials from NATRI presentations are accessible as well at their website.

ADAPTED CAPTIONING THROUGH INTERACTIVE VIDEO SOFTWARE PROGRAM

ACTIV 1.0 is an Alpha prototype of the Adapted Captioning through Interactive Video software program developed at the H. Kellar Institute for Human DisAbilities. The concept of ACTIV was initiated by the dissertation research study conducted by Anna Evmenova. That study showed that adapted and interactive videos can be beneficial for students with intellectual disabilities and increase their comprehension of academic content. The project has already been initially planned and designed resulting in the Alpha prototype of ACTIV 1.0. The extensive research and consideration of various video adaptations, available platforms, and technologies was followed by the initial programming of the tool. Currently, ACTIV 1.0 allows to:

- Upload any existing video (e.g., .wmv, .avi formats tested);
- Automatically create video transcript by converting speech to text with a reasonably accuracy and adding time stamps to each word in the video;

Margaret King-Sears

■ Margaret King-Sears at George Mason University, in collaboration with colleagues at the Talent Development Middle Grades Program at Johns Hopkins University (JHU), has designed the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) mathematics modules to assist teachers in reaching all mathematics learners.

- Edit text in the transcript while maintaining time stamps (to improve accuracy);

- Creating key word captions vs. verbatim captions;

- Enable regular text captions;

- Offer an option for each word in the text-based captions to be automatically highlighted as it is spoken out;

- Automatically support each word in the captions with picture symbols from Symbolstix;

- Add graphics to the video (as the overlay) to focus user's attention on important stimuli;

- Mute video and use text-to-speech feature;

- Create multiple choice quizzes on the video content;

- Tag each question from the quiz to the appropriate place in the video, so that the user can preview/ watch a segment containing the correct answer before or after answering each question.

Further development of the ACTIV 1.0 will be guided by the Expert Panel Reviews of the tool, which are planned for November 2010. Members of the expert panel will include nationally known experts on content-based instructions for students with disabilities, teachers of students with intellectual disabilities, as well as parents of students with disabilities. After the changes and revisions emerged from the Expert Panel Reviews are incorporated into the Beta Prototype of ACTIV 2.0, the tool will be tested with middle and high school students with intellectual disabilities (planned for spring 2011). As the development of ACTIV 1.0 continues, a patent will be pursued through the GMU Office of Technology Transfer as several software companies expressed interest in the licensing of this product.

KELLAR INSTRUCTIONAL HANDHELD DATA SYSTEM

The Kellar Handheld data (KIHd) System allows teachers and parents of children with disabilities to electronically collect data on observable behavior more accurately and conveniently. It has been licensed to A Deeper View - www.adeeperview.com. The system can be used to observe children with any disability and it is compatible with a personal digital assistant (PDA), computer, or cell phone. The Handheld data System allows the user to collect data based on frequency, duration, fluency, accuracy and additional anecdotal data on the handheld tool which then, in turn, displays a visual graph of the data. Observations may include a student's duration of time spent in his/her seat, the number of times a child calls out of turn, or a teacher's frequency of directions. The purpose of this tool is to maximize engaged learning time while still permitting teachers to collect effective data in classrooms with students with disabilities. Use of the tool encourages the flow of instruction and the reliability of effective decision making.

The Kellar Handheld data (KIHd) System has implications for Response to Intervention (RtI) initiatives occurring nationally. The impact of an intervention for a student can be monitored effectively by this measuring device which is both accessible and practitioner-friendly. Educators can monitor student progress in real-time and thus ensure that adequate instructional decisions are made for students with disabilities.

"Working with this tool gives us an unbiased window on attention in the tasks presented on the screen. The impacts of subtle differences in screen layout, text design or even learning outcomes that can be detected with this device are simply unavailable in other approaches to research."

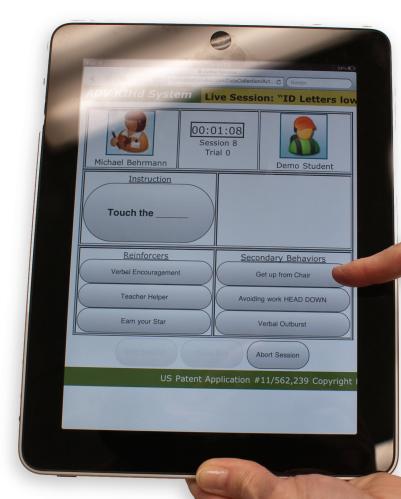Within the last five years, reliability has been established with the tools frequency data and four components of the handheld data recording device have been developed. These components include the Internet/Wireless Application, the stand-alone, the print-friendly graph, and the interactive graph. The usability of the tool has been developed and the application currently has two licensing agreements with companies involved with data collection and analysis of data in educational and private industry settings. Current development of application software for cell phones and other hand held devises is ongoing. See kihd.gmu.edu/research/kihd_system.

EYE-GAZE TRACKING DEVICE FOR VISUAL ATTENTION

This eye-tracking device measures visual attention in text and images displayed on the computer screen in order to discern the comprehension of the viewer. Studies conducted to date have demonstrated reliable differences between individuals with and without Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in text reading, qualitative difference in performance of individuals from different majors in natural sciences in solving domain-specific problems and consistent differences in allocation of visual attention by individuals from Saudi Arabia and the United States. We are currently examining the extent to which individuals with and without disabilities exhibit similar or dissimilar patterns of visual attention in response to verbal prompts related to a given image.

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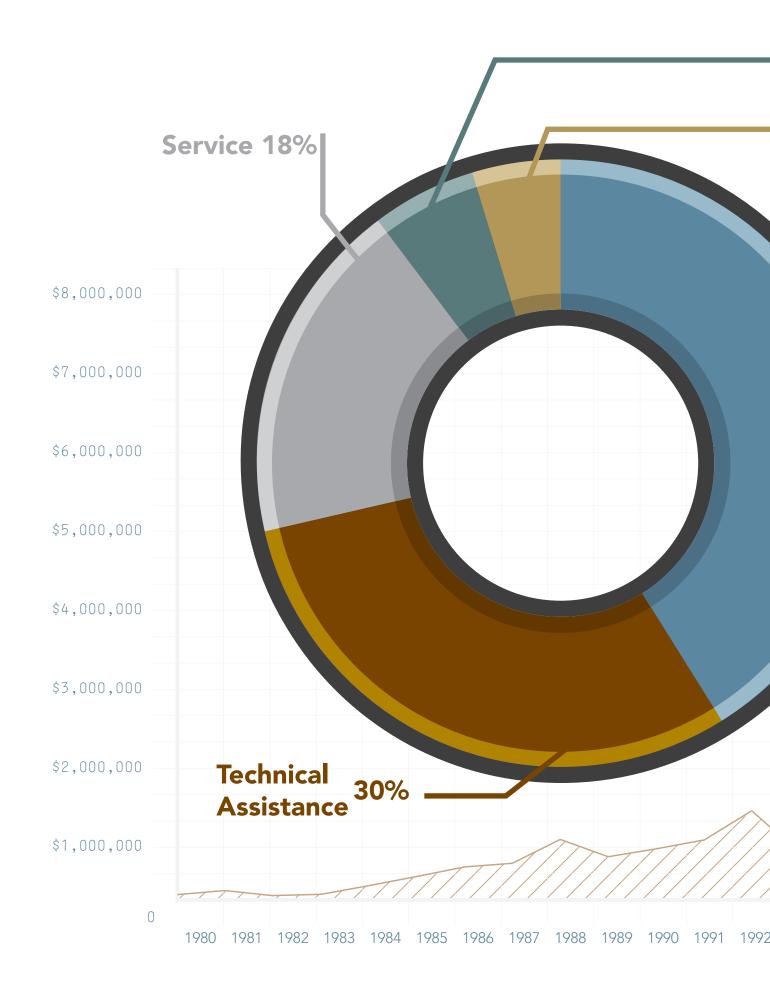
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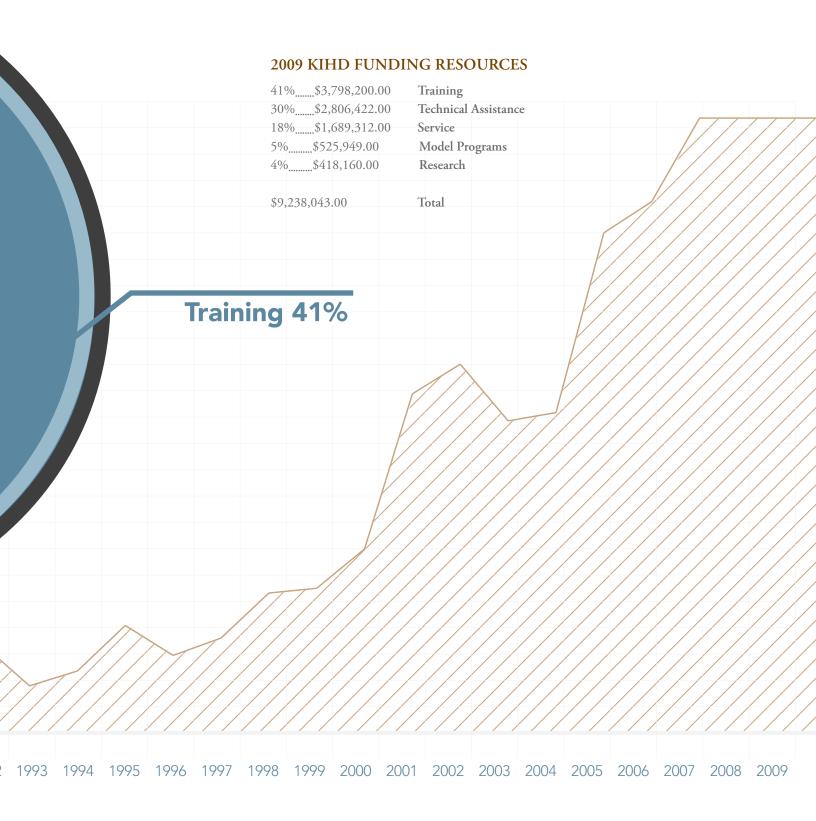
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FINANCIAL$

Service 18%

$8,000,000

$7,000,000

$6,000,000

$5,000,000

$4,000,000

$3,000,000

$2,000,000

Technical
Assistance **30%**

$1,000,000

0

1980   1981   1982   1983   1984   1985   1986   1987   1988   1989   1990   1991   1992

Model Programs 5%

Research 4%

2009 KIHD FUNDING RESOURCES

41%	$3,798,200.00	Training
30%	$2,806,422.00	Technical Assistance
18%	$1,689,312.00	Service
5%	$525,949.00	Model Programs
4%	$418,160.00	Research
	$9,238,043.00	Total

Training 41%

2 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

Credits

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