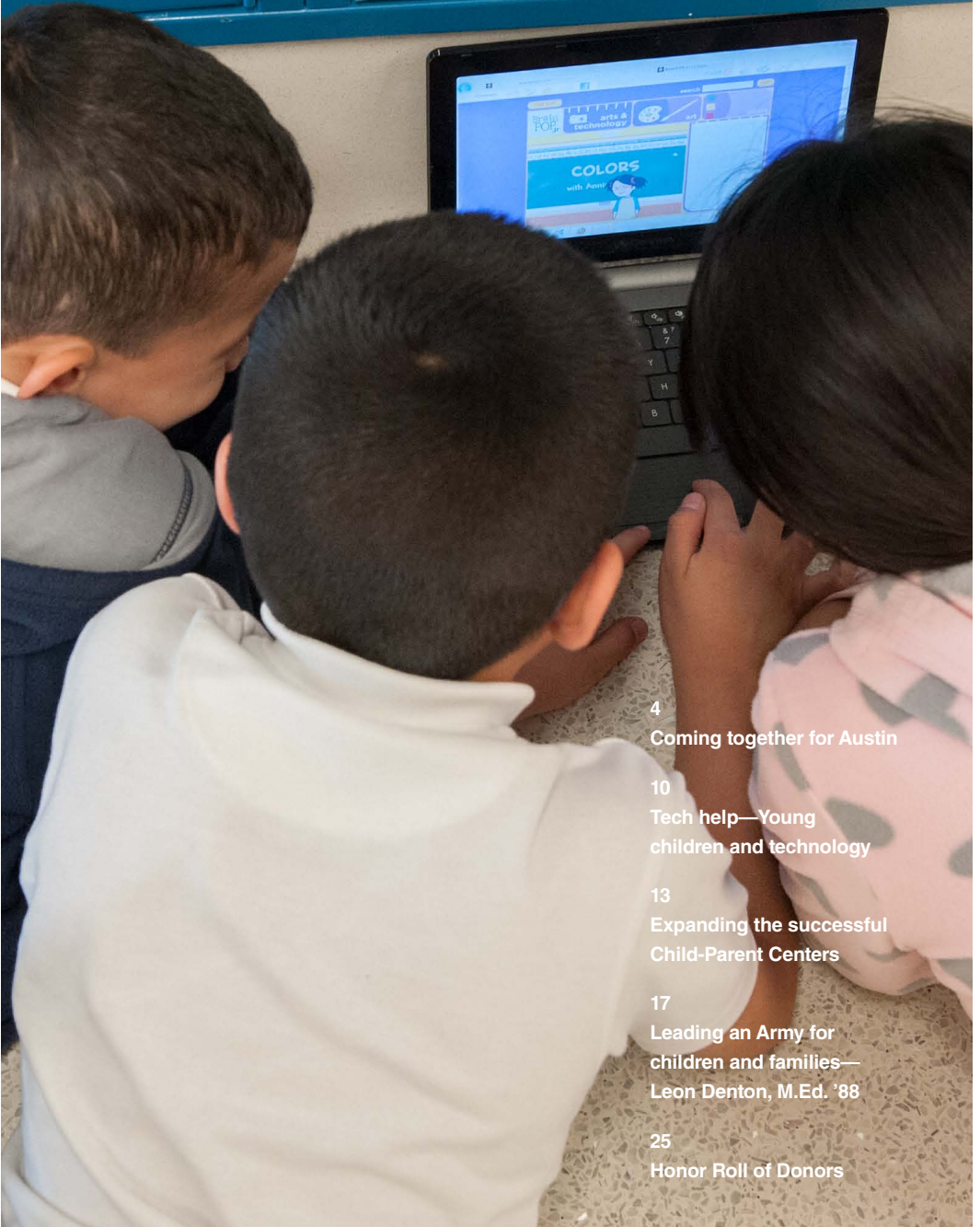


erikson

children

winter 2012–13



4
Coming together for Austin

10
Tech help—Young
children and technology

13
Expanding the successful
Child-Parent Centers

17
Leading an Army for
children and families—
Leon Denton, M.Ed. '88

25
Honor Roll of Donors

About Erikson

Erikson is the premier graduate school in child development in the United States and a hub of complex, creative thinking about how young children learn and grow and how adults can help them do so. We bring the newest scientific knowledge and theories of children's development and learning into graduate education, professional training, community programs, and policymaking. Our goal: to improve the lives of children and families.

In this issue

Coming together for Austin

There's a groundswell of positive change in Chicago's Austin community—and Erikson has a vital role.

4

Tech help

What do practitioners—and parents, too—need to think about before handing children iPads and other gadgets?

10

Expanding success

Child-Parent Centers, one of the nation's most effective early education reform strategies, are expanding with Erikson's help.

13

Leading an Army for children and families

Through his innovative leadership, Leon Denton, M.Ed. '88, has created a "one-stop" shop of family support.

17

Erikson ongoing

Read how Erikson faculty, staff, and alumni are making life significantly better for children and their families.

20

Honor Roll of Donors, 2011-12

Thank you to our donors and volunteers!

25

Cover: Children learning together with technology at Federico Garcia Lorca Elementary School, a partner of Erikson's Early Mathematics Education Project.

Photo by Steven Gross

From the President

In January 2002, I arrived on Erikson's old Wabash Avenue campus, chilled by the Chicago winter, but excited about the opportunities awaiting me as president. Eleven years later, I can honestly say that my time here has been among the most exciting and fulfilling of my career. These have been very busy years, but it's been deeply inspiring and gratifying to have been part of Erikson's growth as we reached out to children, families, and early childhood professionals.

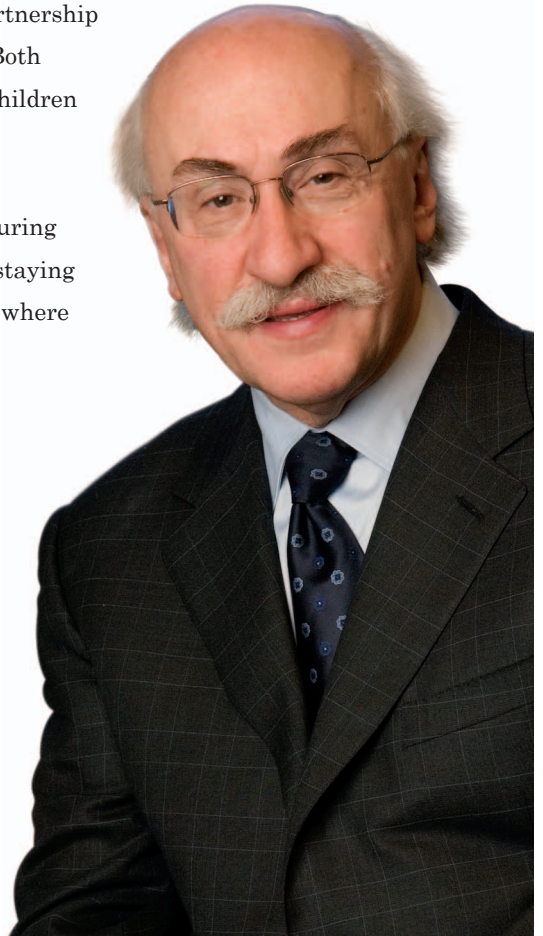
With mixed feelings, I announced in October that this would be my last year at Erikson. Next June, I will become the founding executive director of the University of Nebraska's new Buffett Early Childhood Institute. The institute was established with an endowment of more than \$100 million thanks to a generous gift from philanthropist Susie Buffett and support from university, private, and federal sources. It is committed to helping transform early childhood development and education in Nebraska and across the nation.

My years at Erikson have been devoted to working with schools, conducting research, helping children and families, and exercising a leadership role in the nation's preeminent early childhood graduate school. This *Erikson on Children* describes two of our new projects, the Austin Community Early Learning Partnership and the Child-Parent Centers expansion. Both of these will significantly improve life for children and families in Chicago and throughout the Midwest.

I am deeply grateful for your support during my time at Erikson, and I look forward to staying in touch with you in the future. No matter where I go, Erikson will always be in my heart.



Samuel J. Meisels
President



Erikson in Chicago's Austin Community

● New Schools Project partner schools in Austin



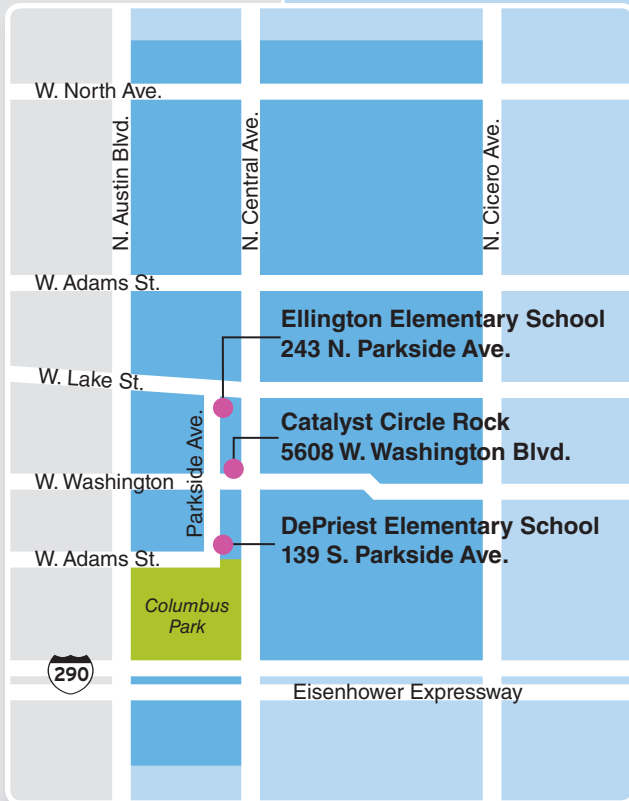
Lake Michigan

Austin

Erikson ●

Chicago

Ellington ●
DePriest ●
Catalyst ●
Circle Rock ●



Coming together for Austin

Austin is considered one of Chicago's toughest neighborhoods. But what no one is talking about is the groundswell of positive change happening right now—amazing work being done by people who live in the community, along with partners like Erikson.

“The biggest issue for Austin is not that there aren't enough nonprofits working in the community,” says **Amara Enyia**, executive director of Austin Coming Together (ACT). “The issue is that there's no system to coordinate all the different activities of these nonprofits.”

ACT, a community-based organization founded in 2010 with the support of JP Morgan Chase, seeks to build the needed coordination and collaboration among Austin's nonprofits, community leaders, schools, and social service agencies. They turned to Erikson for help with a vital component: creating a community-wide system of support for young children and their families.

A team of Erikson's early childhood experts, including faculty, researchers, coaches, and facilitators,

have begun working on several coordinated projects to help the Austin community achieve its goals of giving children the opportunity to succeed in school and beyond.

Identifying the need

Last summer, **Tonya Bibbs**, research associate for the Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy, **Jana Fleming**, director of the Herr Research Center, and **Aisha Ray**, senior vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty, conducted a community needs assessment. After interviewing a wide range of community members—including parents, teachers, principals, child care providers, clergy, social workers, juvenile justice specialists,

All children deserve the best start in life. A community coming together with experts in early childhood development and practice can provide children with the opportunity to succeed in school and beyond.



Photo by Michael Fehrenbach/Catalyst Circle Rock Charter School

Students at Catalyst Circle Rock Charter School. This year, the New Schools Project is focusing on literacy with its partner schools in the Austin community.

police officers, and community leaders—they identified what the community perceived as its greatest strengths and needs.

Included in their key findings was recognition that the entire community—not just parents—had great faith in their children. There was a universal acknowledgement of children’s potential, enthusiasm, and excitement about learning.

However, Bibbs, Fleming, and Ray also found that community stakeholders recognized that young children did not always come to school with the foundational skills and experiences they need for learning. They needed support to effectively cope with social and emotional challenges they encountered in their young lives.

Another key finding was that many community members, especially parents and teachers, felt overwhelmed by the stress caused by the economic challenges, crime, and joblessness faced by the community. “Both parents and teachers are invested in the children and their success,” says Bibbs. “But in many cases, they’re working in very stressful conditions.”

In the needs assessment, Bibbs, Fleming, and Ray provided recommendations for developing a comprehensive approach to early childhood development

from birth to age eight in Austin, a plan that included strategic community partnerships and special services.

Connecting school and community

In tandem with the needs assessment, Erikson’s New Schools Project is partnering with three Chicago Public Schools: Oscar DePriest Elementary, Edward Kennedy Ellington Elementary, and Catalyst Circle Rock Charter School. Over three years, Erikson coaches and facilitators will work with the schools to establish effective learning environments for children in prekindergarten through third grade.

Teachers at these schools know all too well the challenges their students face.

“I don’t leave this job at the end of the day. It’s with me all the time. I’m thinking about these kids—worrying about them—all day,” says **Pam**



Marella Croom, second-grade teacher at Catalyst Circle Rock Elementary

Patterson, a third-grade teacher at DePriest Elementary. “I have kids whose only meals are at school.”

Even with the challenges, there are bright spots. **Marella Croom**, a second-grade teacher at Catalyst Circle Rock Charter School, says most of her students’ parents are involved and supportive, and she values her relationship with them.

“You can get a lot more accomplished when you’ve got a good relationship with the parent,” she says. “When the parent is on your side, the child sees that and will be a better student.”

With the guidance of the New Schools Project, Croom and her colleagues at Circle Rock have strengthened the school’s “community of learners,” a culture that values and shares everyone’s knowledge and experience. Teachers and administrators learn from one another and their skills and techniques are shared with other partner schools.

Parents and children are part of this community as well. As Croom picks up new teaching techniques, she shares them with parents when she needs their help to support a child struggling in a certain subject.

“The parent might want to help their child improve in reading or math, but they’ve forgotten how they learned it themselves. At this point they just know it, so it’s great to pass on some techniques they can use to help their child understand.”

Croom says her teaching has improved as well, bringing her not only increased knowledge but also an awareness of intentionality in all of her activities, like pulling out teachable moments while reading to her class.

“Working with the New Schools Project has definitely been a positive experience,” she says. “They’re an invaluable resource.”

Gathering momentum—and data

The Austin community is working effectively together to achieve their shared goals for their children. More than 40 of ACT’s partners gather each month to share updates on ongoing projects and announce new services. At one of

Building a community-wide system of educational and community supports for Austin’s children will lay the groundwork for their future achievement and the health of the community. It may even become a model for other urban communities.

the summer meetings, a minister invited other organizations to tell senior citizens about the free retirement planning classes at his church. Another organization announced a job-training program for employed and unemployed people who need to update their technological skills. An assistant U.S. surgeon general encouraged organizations to promote public health and wellness by providing information on nutrition, prenatal

care, and substance abuse to their clients. Erikson faculty and staff are active participants in many of these meetings and serve as contributing members of the Austin Early Childhood Collaborative, a subcommittee of ACT focused on children from birth to age eight.

In addition to facilitating face-to-face meetings, ACT is developing a comprehensive online database of available services and community organizations. In partnership with Google and Social Solutions, ACT also has created web-based tools to help its partners collaborate on projects, collect, and analyze data, and measure outcomes.

Gaps in services identified by Erikson’s needs assessment are beginning to close as the word gets out about the supports and opportunities already available in the Austin community. An increasingly coordinated effort is helping community members access the variety of supports that can benefit their often complex educational, health, and career challenges.

“Anyone doing this type of community work is motivated by a desire to help that community,” says Enyia, the head of ACT. “You have to see yourself as part of something bigger and work toward the interests of the broader community.”

Investing in each other

In the past several years, many Chicago philanthropists have come together in support of Austin. Recently, Erikson received a \$200,000 challenge

Make a gift to the
New Schools Project
and its work in the
Austin community at
www.erikson.edu/support.

grant supporting its work in Austin, which will double new and increased gifts made before April 5, 2014.

Bibbs, a member of Erikson’s needs assessment project team, sees this support as encouraging not just for nonprofits and schools serving Austin, but also for the families who live there. “This community is made of good people who are worth investing in.” 

Tech help

Young children love playing with technology, from iPads to digital cameras. What do early childhood practitioners—and parents, too—need to think about before handing children these gadgets?

We asked **Chip Donohue**, dean of distance learning and continuing education, for his insights. In March, Donohue launched Erikson’s TEC Center, which stands for Technology in Early Childhood, with the support of **The Boeing Company**. Donohue also co-chaired the writing team and working group that developed the guidelines for media and technology in early childhood programs released in March by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children’s Media.

[Let’s start at the beginning: what is technology in early childhood?](#)

Chip Donohue: It could be a camera, audio recorder, music player, TV, DVD player, or more recent technology like tablet computers and smartphones used in child care centers, classrooms, or at home. More than once, a teacher has told me, “I don’t do technology.” I ask them if they’ve ever taken a digital photo of their students, played a record, tape, or DVD, or given kids headphones to listen to a story. Teachers have always used technology. The difference is that now teachers are using really powerful tools like iPads and iPhones in their personal and professional lives.

Technology is just a tool. It shouldn’t be used in classrooms or child care centers because it’s cool, but because teachers can do activities that support the healthy development of children. Teachers are using digital cameras—a less flashy technology than iPads—in really creative ways to engage children in learning. That may be all they need.

At the same time, teachers need to be able to integrate technology into the classroom or child care center as a social justice matter. We can’t assume that all children have technology at home. A lack of exposure could widen the digital divide—that is, the divide between those with and without access to digital technology—and limit some children’s school readiness and early success. Just as all children need to learn how to handle a book in early literacy, they need to be taught how to use technology, including how to open it, how it works, and how to take care of it.



Some experts worry that technology is bad for children. Where do you come down?

Donohue: There are real concerns about children spending too much time in front of screens, especially given the many screens in children's lives. Today, very young children are sitting in front of TVs, playing on iPads and iPhones, and watching their parents take photos on a digital camera, which has its own screen. There used to be only the TV screen. That was *the* screen we worried about and researched for 30 years. We as a field know a whole lot about the impact of TV on children's behavior and learning, but we know very little about all the new digital devices.

The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages screen time for children under two years old, but the NAEYC/Fred Rogers position statement takes a slightly different stance. It says that technology and media should be limited, but what matters most is how it is used. What is the content? Is it being used in an intentional manner? Is it developmentally appropriate? The NAEYC/Fred Rogers position statement doesn't set specific limits on technology, just as the field doesn't set limits on block time or the book corner or dramatic play or manipulatives. We wouldn't tell a child that his 10 minutes of puzzle making or reading for the week is up.

My advice to teachers and parents is to trust your instincts. You know your child and if you think they have been watching the screen too long, turn it off. It's up to the adult to notice that a child's computer time is limiting interactions with other kids and nudge her in new directions. It's also up to the adult

to understand the child's personality and disposition and to understand if technology is one of the ways the child chooses to interact with the world.

At the same time, cut yourself some slack. We all know that there are better things to do with children's time than to plop them in front of a TV, but we also know that child care providers have to make lunch, and parents need time to take a shower. In situations like that, it is the adult's job to make the technology time more valuable and interactive by asking questions and connecting a child's virtual experience on the screen with real-life experiences in her world.



How do early childhood professionals learn how to use technology appropriately?

Donohue: No one is really teaching early childhood professionals about using technology and that's a big problem. Teacher education programs have to help future teachers be digitally

literate and comfortable enough with the intersection of technology and child development to know how to be appropriate, what's effective, how much is too much, and what to avoid.

The other part of the conversation is program directors and administrators. They are going to be expected to train their teachers on how to use technology in the classroom and need to know how to do it well. If not, teachers will continue to set new technology aside or use it inappropriately because they haven't had a chance to play with the technology and learn about what it can do. That's a big missed opportunity for children.

The TEC Center was created to help provide a professional resource that is sorely lacking. On our website, the Center aggregates and curates examples of best practice. People are already doing great things with technology and children. We need to learn from them. Soon, the TEC Center will also begin offering professional development courses. Likewise, Erikson's teacher preparation program is helping teachers become more comfortable with these tools. **ii**

Learn more at teccenter.erikson.edu.

Expanding success

Bright and early each school day, some 90 preschoolers and their parents arrive at the Child-Parent Center at Dewey Elementary Academy of Fine Arts on Chicago's South Side.

The children scamper to their classrooms after all-school opening exercises. Parents gather in the parent resource room for workshops and resources. The workshop topics range widely: nutrition, parenting skills, how to earn a GED, résumé writing and job searching, and even knitting, a skill the parents were interested in learning together.

“Child-Parent Centers forge a strong connection between home and school,” says **Jessica Smith, M.Ed. '88**, the head teacher at Dewey, a Chicago Public School housing one of the original Child-Parent Centers in the nation. “We welcome parents into the classroom as active participants in their children's education. It's an opportunity for parents to grow right here in school and support their children.”

Over the last 30 years, the centers have proven to be one of the nation's most effective prekindergarten to third grade educational reform strategies. Research shows that children who attend Child-Parent Center programs have greater success in school and beyond, including significantly lower high school dropout rates, fewer arrests and convictions, and higher income following high school. Comparing the costs of the program to its impacts, the centers show an impressive long-term return on investment: \$8 to \$11 per dollar invested.

Recently, the Child-Parent Centers received a big vote of confidence: a five-year \$15 million Investing in Education (i3) grant from the U.S. Department of Education to expand and evaluate the program beyond the Chicago Public Schools. The project, directed by **Arthur Reynolds** of the Human Capital Research Collaborative at the University of Minnesota, added six centers in

Photos by Loren Santow



Head Teacher **Jessica Smith, M.Ed. '88**, (right) works with Frankie Corgwell and her son, preschooler Jylan Jones.

the Chicago Public Schools for a total of 16, and established programs in two Illinois districts—Evanston/Skokie District 65 and Normal School District 5—and two Minnesota districts—St. Paul Public Schools and Virginia Public Schools with Arrowhead Head Start.

Erikson, in partnership with the University of Minnesota, began creating and delivering innovative online and in-person professional development to 33 preschool sites and elementary schools in summer 2012. In addition, **Professor Barbara Bowman** serves as curriculum coordinator on the expansion project. **President Samuel J. Meisels** sits on the advisory committee.

“This project scales up and expands what we know works in education,” says Reynolds. “It is a seismic opportunity to increase access to and improve the quality of preschool through third grade education, while at the same time gathering the data we need to replicate the model around the country.”

[Child-Parent Center program, preschool to third grade](#)

The first Child-Parent Centers opened their doors on Chicago’s West Side in 1967 to provide comprehensive educational and family support services to children in low-income neighborhoods from preschool through third grade. Unique features of Child-Parent Centers include:

- **Connection to an elementary school.** Each Child-Parent Center preschool is affiliated with an elementary school and housed within the school or in a neighboring building, which promotes continuity in children’s educational experiences.
- **Parent involvement and engagement.** Strong parent-school relationships help ensure that children thrive. Each Child-Parent Center has a parent resource teacher to run a parent resource room and workshops tailored to parents’ interests. It also has a school-community representative to connect families with needed services in the community, and teachers regularly involve parents in the classroom.
- **Aligned curriculum.** Under the collaborative leadership of the principal and a head teacher, classroom teachers work together to ensure that curricula and instructional practice are aligned from prekindergarten through third grade and focus on 21st-century skills like communication, problem solving, and critical thinking.
- **Effective learning experiences.** To promote children’s academic success, Child-Parent Centers require small classes and teacher aides for each class.

“In sum, Child-Parent Centers offer a comprehensive approach to combating the achievement gap by bringing families, teachers, and school



administrators together and offering the educational and other support services they need,” says **Chris Maxwell**, director of Erikson’s New Schools Project, which oversees Erikson’s work with the Child-Parent Centers.

[21st-century professional development](#)

To support the Child-Parent Center expansion, Erikson is creating a unique model for professional development that blends online and on-site support. Over the course of the project, Maxwell and her team will develop 20 online professional development modules focusing on high-impact teaching strategies for literacy, math, science, the arts, and other content areas.

At each school, the teachers and Child-Parent Center leadership team complete the online modules together, with built-in “pause points” when the group works together to determine how to implement the strategies into their

Child-Parent Center. The modules are flexible and responsive: Head teachers can dedicate 30 minutes at a time to the professional development or three hours to complete the entire module, and they can choose what concepts to emphasize



Photo by Mike Paulucci

Midwest Child-Parent Center Expansion Professional Development staff (left to right): Linda Hamburg, coordinator; Constance Reid Wilkerson, facilitator; Anna Jerabek, facilitator; and Ross Jensen, M.S. '11, M.S.W. (Loyola) '12, project coordinator.

with their staff. The modules also include a host of online supporting materials that teachers and staff can access at any time.

Each of the 33 sites is assigned an Erikson facilitator who helps the head teacher structure the professional development and coaches the head teacher and classroom teachers as the concepts are applied throughout the year.

“This is a totally new way of receiving professional develop-

ment, but we have high expectations given Erikson’s early childhood expertise,” says Smith, the Dewey head teacher. “Over the next several years, Erikson will be a driving force for our content- and curriculum-based training.”

As the Child-Parent Center expansion progresses, Erikson will continue to work with the sites to ensure that they are receiving the training they need.

Challenge of sustainability

An estimated 9,000 children ages 3 to 9 will be served through the Child-Parent Center expansion project. Funds from the i3 grant, private matching contributions, and related school supports will follow this year’s preschoolers as they progress to third grade.

“We’re working with the schools on sustainability plans to ensure that the centers become permanent and each succeeding class receives the same supports,” says Reynolds, the project director. “To make this happen, we need the long-term commitment of schools, districts, community partners, and others to an educational model that works.”

Smith has seen firsthand how effective Child-Parent Centers are during her 18 years at Dewey. “We hope that Child-Parent Centers won’t remain unique to us and to Chicago,” she says. “With the data that the expansion project collects, people will see that Child-Parent Centers need to be expanded to wherever children and families need support.” **ii**

Make a gift to the New Schools Project and its work on the Child-Parent Center expansion at www.erikson.edu/support.

Leading an Army for children and families

The numbers are stark: More than a third of Chicago children live in poverty, and many more families are struggling. An Erikson alumnus is helping these children and families receive the help they need.

“The issues parents face are greater than ever,” says **Leon Denton, M.Ed. '88**, the director of children and youth services at the Salvation Army Metropolitan Division. “They need quality child care and education but are struggling with the effects of a bad economy and social isolation, peer pressure, teen pregnancy, teen suicide, gangs, crime, and other issues.”

During his 25 years at the Salvation Army, Denton has helped create a “one-stop shop” of support for families in the Chicago area. Each year, some



Photos by Loren Santow

50 expectant mothers and 330 children beginning at six-weeks-old come to the Salvation Army for services ranging from parenting classes to afterschool care.

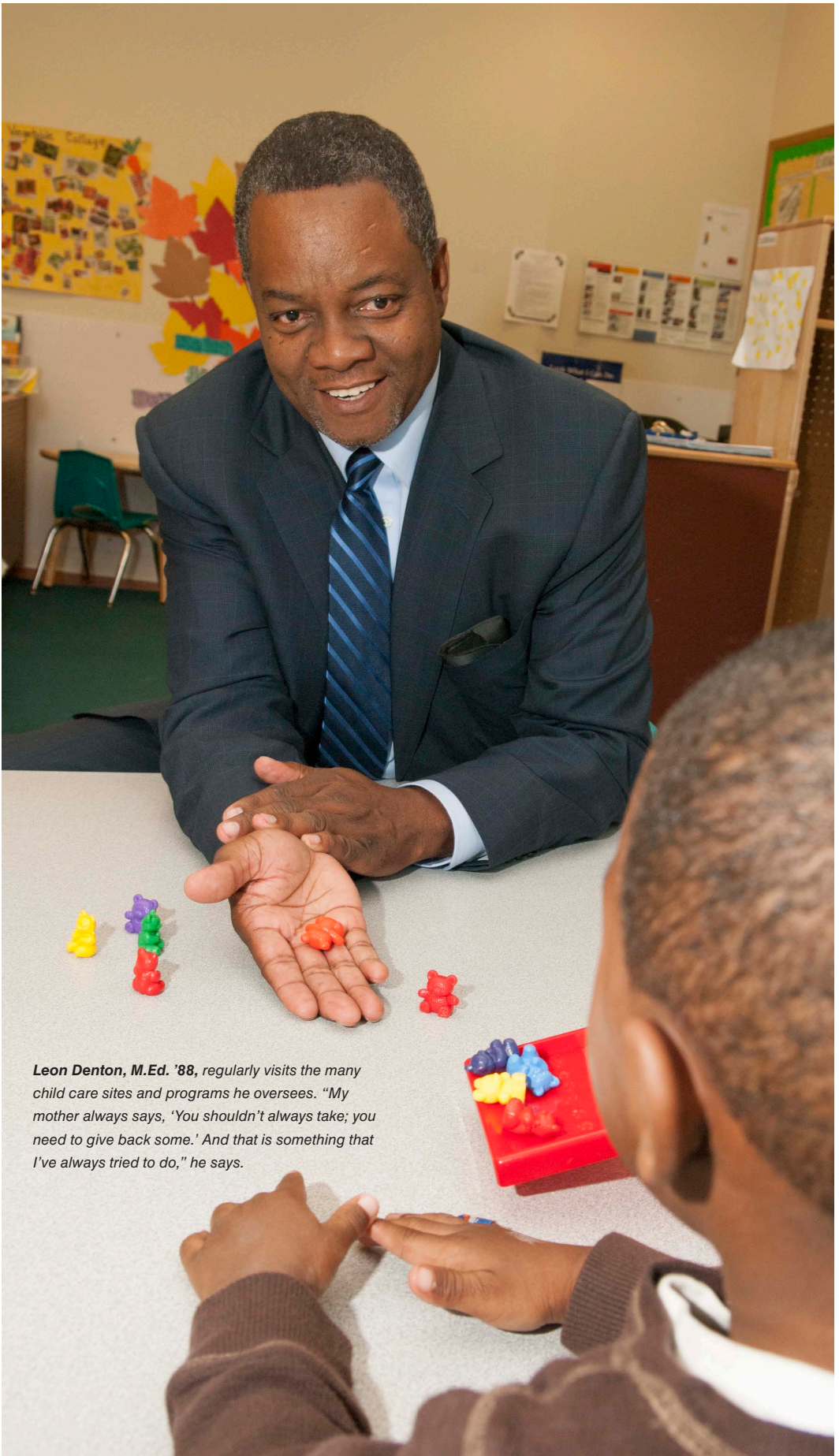
“There’s not one aspect of child care that we don’t touch on or work with,” he says. “If a family is hungry, needs shelter, or is looking for good child care, we can help.” Under Denton’s leadership, the Salvation Army launched innovative

programs including the first Head Start program in the Chicago Park District, a Head Start program for homeless families, and, beginning in 2013, the only Head Start program in Chicago serving pregnant high school students.

Denton also counts among his proudest accomplishments earning NAEYC accreditation for almost all of the Salvation Army’s child care sites, quadrupling the number of children served at the sites, and working with a variety of government programs and private funders to support the programs families need.

Denton can often be found at one of the many child care sites and programs he oversees, talking with parents, children, and members of his 80-person staff. The conversations help deepen his understanding of the struggles families face and remind him why he chose the early childhood field.

“Even after all these years, I still feel such a reward when I see children’s smiles and work with them and their families,” he says. “Even better is to



Leon Denton, M.Ed. '88, regularly visits the many child care sites and programs he oversees. “My mother always says, ‘You shouldn’t always take; you need to give back some.’ And that is something that I’ve always tried to do,” he says.

receive a call years later from a former client, inviting me to her college graduation or telling me about making the honor roll. I am blessed that so many families return to the Salvation Army to share these accomplishments with us.”

A leader in the field

In addition to his work at the Salvation Army, Denton is a volunteer leader on the local and national levels. He has served on the board of directors for The National Black Child Development Institute, The Partnership of Quality Child Care, Illinois Action for Children, Kennedy-King College, and Luster Learning Institute, which trains teachers to support their students’ social and emotional learning.

“Just mention children and I’ll help,” says Denton.

From father to Erikson graduate

Growing up, it never occurred to Denton that he would enjoy working with young children. He set out to be a medical doctor, earning an undergraduate degree in biology and minors in math and chemistry from Mississippi Valley State.

Back in Chicago and between jobs, Denton took his daughter to a Head Start program every morning and would often talk and play with the other children. Denton had such a rapport with the children, the director of the child care center soon offered Denton a part-time job.

From then on, he was hooked on early childhood. Denton took all the early childhood courses at Kennedy-King College before looking toward graduate school.

“I knew that I wanted to go to one of the best graduate schools for early childhood,” says Denton. “When I asked my Kennedy-King professors for their advice, everyone said Erikson. They spoke so highly of it.”

Denton admits that he was scared at first of Erikson’s reputation. “I didn’t think I could compete,” he says. A conversation with **Professor Barbara T. Bowman** soon calmed his nerves, and he began his master’s program and a new job as a teacher. But as he approached the end of his studies, Bowman had a new challenge for him: Change careers yet again.

“Barbara pushed me toward administration. She wanted me to be where I could affect greater numbers of children,” Denton says. Bowman and **Professor Joan McLane** recommended the Salvation Army for a practicum in administration. It led to a full-time job for Denton and a career in the Army.

“When Barbara and Joan talked to me about the Salvation Army, I didn’t even know that it had child care programs, but it ended up being the perfect fit for me—emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. I am doing what I truly enjoy, and I wouldn’t change it for anything in the world.” **ii**

Erikson ongoing

Whatever their job title, Erikson faculty, alumni, and students are united in a single, ongoing enterprise: to make life significantly better for children and their families. Their work takes them across the nation and throughout the world, but it is always rooted in the Erikson ethos: practical, thoughtful, inclusive, and effective.

Transitions

After 11 years of service, **President Samuel J. Meisels** announced that he will step down at the end of this academic year.

He leaves to become the founding executive director of the University of Nebraska's new **Buffett Early Childhood Institute**. The institute, which seeks to help transform early childhood development and education in Nebraska and across the nation, was established in 2011 with an endowment of more than \$100 million from philanthropist Susie Buffett and university, private, and federal sources.

"Sam is an exceptional leader with a transformative vision for early childhood," says **Kate Neisser**, chair of Erikson's board of trustees. "During his tenure, he has built on Erikson's many strengths and sparked innovative programs and initiatives that are helping young children in Chicago and beyond reach their full potential."

Under Meisels's leadership, Erikson doubled its enrollment and endowment, significantly expanded its programs in policy, applied research, and



Photo by Kathy Richland

Meisels at the 2007 groundbreaking for Erikson's current campus.

community-based interventions, and moved to its state-of-the-art LaSalle Street campus. Learn more about Meisels's accomplishments at www.erikson.edu/meisels-transition.

The search for Erikson's next president is led by **Michelle L. Collins**, vice chair of the board of trustees. Recommendations or questions can be sent to presidentalsearch@erikson.edu.

Erikson Leadership

Maria Piers
1966–1977

Joan Costello
1977–1979

Bonnie Litowitz
1981–1984

James Garbarino
1985–1994

Barbara T. Bowman
1994–2001

Samuel J. Meisels
2002–2013

Welcome aboard

We welcome two new members to Erikson's board of trustees.



Sarah Mangelsdorf is the dean of the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and professor of psychology at Northwestern University. Before joining Northwestern in 2008, she was the first woman to serve as the dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Illinois. Mangelsdorf earned a bachelor's degree from Oberlin College and a doctorate in child psychology from the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on social and emotional development in infancy and early childhood.



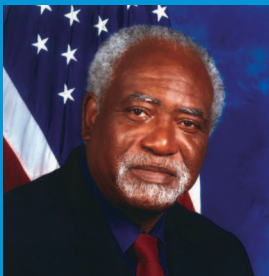
Lianne Stein is the vice president of Global Corporate Citizenship at The Boeing Company. Prior to this, she served for five years as vice president of Boeing International and president of Boeing Germany. She has also served in leadership positions at Connexion by Boeing, an in-flight Internet connectivity service, and International Lease Finance Corporation. Stein is a graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles and a licensed private pilot.

A deal of good

Groupons aren't just for manicures and meals anymore. In October, Erikson's **Fussy Baby Network** raised \$3,120, including a \$1,500 matching gift from Kolcraft, through a weeklong Groupon Grassroots campaign. Groupon Grassroots is the philanthropic arm of Groupon, the daily deal website.

One hundred percent of the gifts will be used to support home visits with parents in the Chicago area struggling to soothe or care for their baby.

If you missed the campaign, you can still make a gift to the Fussy Baby Network at www.erikson.edu/support.



*U.S. Congressman
Danny K. Davis*

Praise from the Hill

U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis had kind words for Erikson at A National Summit on Educational Excellence and Opportunity for African American Males:

"Erikson Institute is one of the hidden jewels of the 7th Congressional District. At Erikson, fostering the development of young African American males is a raison d'être of their mission. As I have observed and interacted with the dedicated people at Erikson over the years, my own appreciation and commitment to an emphasis on excellence in early childhood education, especially for African American males, has continued to grow. I commend Erikson for the outstanding work they have done and continue to do."

Aisha Ray, senior vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty, was a featured panelist at the summit, which was presented by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council of the Great City Schools on August 27.



What goes on in children's minds?

The Center for Children and Families shared insights on how young children develop at a sold-out **Chicago Ideas Week** event in October.

Margret Nickels, the Center's executive director, and **Jim Grabowski**, the Center's clinic director, led parents and professionals through a series of experiments exploring how children experience, make sense of, and navigate their environment.

Erikson was also a community partner of Chicago Ideas Week, an annual seven-day celebration of ideas, innovation, and community.

Learn more about the Center for Children and Families at ccf.erikson.edu.

Closing the gap

Erikson is helping close the achievement gap for African American students in Illinois beginning in the earliest grades.

Over the summer, Erikson launched **Envisioning Change**, a statewide effort to create a research-based plan for action. The effort is supported by a \$360,000 grant from the **Robert R. McCormick Foundation**.

"African American students face a constellation of challenges that children should not have to face," including economic poverty, trauma, and schools with poor instructional practices, says **Aisha Ray**, Erikson's senior vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty.

Envisioning Change will convene a task force of some 40 educators, advocates, and other stakeholders to develop a statewide plan outlining specific



Shannon Hart

strategies and a timeline. Over the next two years, the group will review the latest research on the achievement gap and promising programs, practices, and policies nationwide and in Illinois. Erikson will also collaborate with several Illinois school districts to understand their specific challenges.

Jana Fleming, director of the Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy, serves as the principal investigator, and **Shannon Hart** is the project director.



Host your event at Erikson

Whether you're planning a large conference, staff retreat, or reception, Erikson can accommodate your needs. Erikson's striking modern building is state-of-the-art, convenient, and affordable. To learn about options and availability, contact Matthew Zaradich at (312) 893-7171 or mzaradich@erikson.edu.

McCormick Math Minute

Discover foundational mathematics for young children—
in 60 seconds or less

Nixing “naked numbers”

When children are asked to rattle off the numbers from 1 to 10 without actually counting something, all kinds of confusion can result. These “naked numbers” don’t help children understand that “three” is an adjective that tells us “how many,” not a noun that stands by itself. No matter what is being counted or how the objects are arranged, “three” has the same meaning.

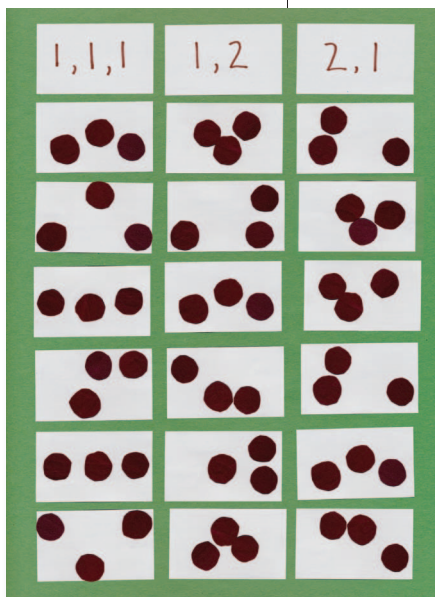
Melinda Chum helped her kindergarteners at Chicago’s Norman A. Bridge Elementary School develop a sense of what the number “three” means with black dots, 3” x 5” index cards, and inspiration from *Ten Black Dots* by Donald Crews.

With a small group of children surrounding her, Chum modeled how she could arrange three black dots on a card in different ways. She labeled one card as “1-1-1” and put down three equidistant dots, saying, “I put one here, one here, and one here.”



After showing that the dots add up to three, she created cards with 1-2 and 2-1 patterns: two dots closer together and one further away. Chum invited her

“What pattern can you make with your black dots?”



students to create their own patterns of three black dots, place their card together with others with the same pattern, and explain why their card fit the pattern they chose.

“It was wonderful to see how they think and decide that their card could belong just about anywhere on the number pattern graph depending on how you turn the card and how you are looking at it,” says Chum. “They continued to think and rearrange their cards, commenting on things like ‘My card looks like one, two and if I turn it this way it looks like two, one. So it could go here or there.’”

That rich conversation showed Chum that her students were developing a sense of “three-ness” and the different ways “three” can be constructed. No matter how the dots are arranged, there are still one, two, three!

The Erikson Early Mathematics Education Project, launched with the support of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, works with teachers to bring foundational mathematics to the early childhood classroom.

Happy trails

After 15 years of service to the Erikson community, **Marvel Pomeroy** is retiring. As associate director of registration and student records, Pomeroy



helped build Erikson's registration and student records office. Her many accomplishments include online registration for students, advising services for veterans and veterans' benefits, and advising support for faculty and students.

"Most importantly, Marvel leaves behind a legacy of outstanding service to the Erikson community," says **Michel Frendian**, dean of enrollment management. "Her impact on the experience of students, alumni, and faculty is unparalleled and evidenced by the countless words of praise that she has received each year in the annual student surveys."

Erikson is planning a retirement party for Pomeroy. You can also extend your best wishes to her by sending an email to admission@erikson.edu.

Karen Bryant, the assistant director, registration and student records, was promoted to fill Pomeroy's position. Bryant joined Erikson in December 2006.

Class notes

Judith Lavender, M.Ed. '87, was hired by the University of New Mexico to consult on New Mexico's prekindergarten program. She writes, "What fun I am having hanging out with four-year-old children again and their dedicated teachers!"

Angela Searcy, M.S. '02, hosts a new Internet radio show, "Angela Searcy's Simple Solutions" on www.globalnewsforum.com. Each Saturday, she offers simple solutions for difficult dilemmas that parents, educators, principals, and therapists face with children.

Katherine R. Cejda, M.S. '08, has served as a child life specialist at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis since graduation. She married Eric Bailey, a chef instructor at L'Ecole Culinaire, on September 2, 2012.

Jamie Rouse, M.S. '11, M.S.W. (Loyola) '11, and her husband, Kyle, welcomed their son, Miles Harvey Rouse, to their family on July 16. He weighed 8 lbs., 3 oz. at birth.

Bonnie Litowitz, who served as Erikson's chief executive from 1981 to 1984, was selected as the next editor-in-chief of the Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association (JAPA), one of the world's most respected publications in psychoanalysis. Her five-year term as editor-in-chief will officially begin on January 1, 2014. Litowitz is on the faculty of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis, an associate professor of psychiatry at Rush Medical School, and in private practice.

In memoriam

Erikson mourns the passing of **Gene R. Saffold**, an Erikson trustee from 2002 to his death in October, former chief financial officer for the City of Chicago, and long-time member of the Chicago Board of Education. In his memory, the board of trustees presented the Edward Neisser Library with an inscribed version of one of Saffold's favorite children's books, *Corduroy* by Don Freeman.

Submit a class note

To share your news—including a new job, marriage, or a new family member—email us at AlumniNews@erikson.edu. We would love to hear from you!



Honor Roll of Donors
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From the Board Chair



“Every child has to go through certain phases as he grows. It is our job, as guiding adults, to give children the opportunity to take new steps as they are ready,” wrote my grandmother, child psychologist Edith G. Neisser, in 1951.

Devoted to Erikson from its inception, she’d be thrilled by its hand in helping children, step after critical step, to actualize their potential.

As a graduate school in early childhood development, we train people to be leaders in the field and so much more. We partner with Chicago’s families, schools, and communities to educate those who so powerfully affect the steps children take. Among our continuing initiatives: The Center for Children and Families provides diagnostic and therapeutic services. Erikson assesses all children ages birth through three entering the foster care system in Cook County and coordinates assessments statewide for children ages birth to five. And in this computer age, we’re advising educators how to use technology with kids to the most appropriate and fullest effect.

We’ve taken many steps since my grandmother’s day, and it is you who have been our supportive force. In 2011–12, more than 530 individuals, families, foundations, and corporations gave \$6.9 million to Erikson. Through your gifts, you are providing the opportunity to a new generation of children and families here in Chicago and beyond.

On behalf of Erikson and kids, thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Neisser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kate Neisser

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