


erikson

children

fall 2010



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About Erikson

Erikson Institute, a graduate school in child development, is a hub of complex, creative thinking that brings the newest scientific knowledge and theories of children's development and learning into graduate education, professional training, community programs, and policy making. Our goal: to improve the lives of children and families.

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From the President

The big news at Erikson, these days, is the i3 award, a \$5-million vote of confidence in Erikson's Early Mathematics Education Project. That and the Institute's new strategic plan, which reconnects us to our founding purpose and sets some fairly audacious goals for the future.

These two items aren't as different as you might think.

To compete successfully for funding with the likes of Harvard and Johns Hopkins (two other i3 awardees this year), you need more than a great idea. You need even more than intelligent execution and demonstrable success. You need a set of long-range goals and a clear vision of how to achieve them.

Strategic planning is the process of determining those goals and articulating that vision. It's a huge investment of time and energy—Erikson trustees, faculty, and staff committed a good part of last year to producing the latest plan. But the result is a detailed map that describes not just the route but the final destination and the stops along the way.

You can read about the plan in this issue of *Erikson on Children*. I invite you to learn more about it and join the conversation at strategicplan.erikson.edu.

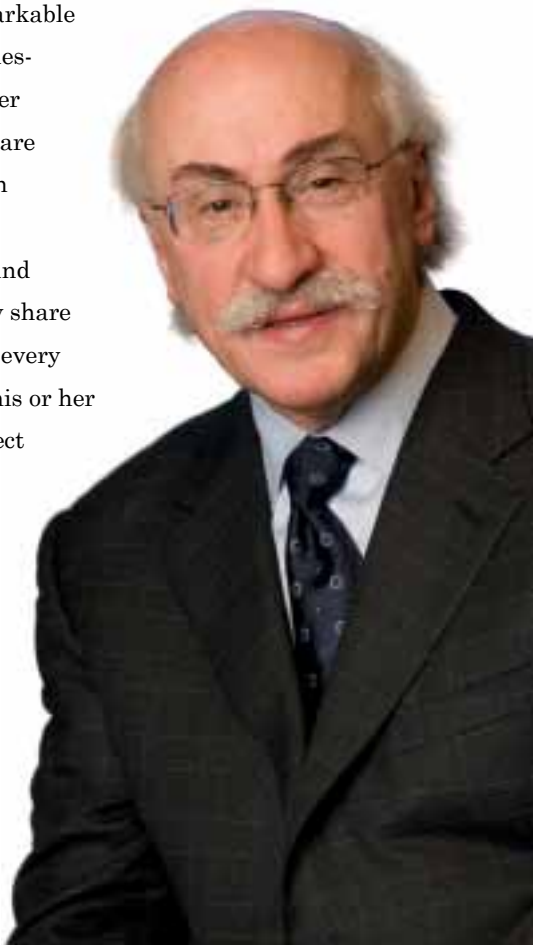
As you do so, I hope you will join me in taking a moment to thank all of our trustees, a remarkable group of individuals who have nurtured, questioned, guided, and goaded us to think bigger and do better. The pages of this newsletter are testament to the value of their participation and the motivation they provide for us.

At the back of this newsletter, you will find another thank you, this to our donors. They share our goals and our vision—a world in which every young child has the opportunity to realize his or her potential—and their gifts enable us to perfect the means of achieving them.

With sincere gratitude,



Samuel J. Meisels
President





Christopher House Logan Square preschool classrooms are among the 35 participating in the Early Mathematics Education Project in 2010.

Progress you can count on

The mathematics achievement gap in this country has been the subject of hand wringing, dire predictions, and plenty of blame. Now, thanks to the Early Mathematics Education Project, it's the subject of progress.

As a scholar, Jennifer McCray, Ph.D., is cautious. So when evaluation data on the Early Mathematics Education Project (EMEP) came back showing positive effects, not just on teacher perceptions but on student progress, she took a deep breath, then ran the numbers again.

The results were the same. “Children who were behind in the fall and whose teachers were in our program began to ‘catch up.’ They learned the equivalent of 3 months more math than other children,” she says.

That progress is no anomaly. It's the result of a meticulously crafted, expertly delivered professional development program, a partnership between Erikson and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), that focuses on what McCray and the project's principal investigator, Professor Jie-Qi Chen, call a “whole teacher” approach.

“It's not enough to increase a teacher's content knowledge or teaching skill,” Chen explains. “You have to work with the teacher's attitudes and beliefs, too, and you have to help them change their classroom practice. You need to help them become more intentional in their work.

“Too often, early childhood teachers don't have a clear goal in their mind when working with a group of young children,” she adds. “Exploration is important, but it isn't sufficient.”

The weakest link

For teachers, the trouble often begins in their teacher education program. Prospective teachers who don't want to do a lot of math are frequently advised to pursue a career in early childhood. And methods courses tend to ignore the development of math skills that occurs before the use of written symbols. McCray, who directs the EMEP, calls this a “missed opportunity.”

In 2009, the National Research Council published a report urging an increase in the amount of mathematics instruction at the preprimary and primary levels, especially for children from low-income homes. The report noted that young children have a natural interest in math. It also attributed the

scarcity of mathematics instruction in early childhood classrooms to educators' fears that the subject area is too difficult for preschoolers or is in conflict with developmentally appropriate practice.



EMEP team members left to right: Rebeca Itzkowich, M.A.; Mary Hynes-Berry, Ph.D.; Jennifer McCray, Ph.D.; Donna Johnson, M.S.; Cody Meirick, M.A.; Jie-Qi Chen, Ph.D.; Jeanine O'Nan Brownell, M.S.; Lisa Ginet, Ph.D.

A study done at the behest of CPS attests to the lack of mathematics instruction in preschool. Erikson researchers found that more than 90 percent of the system's early childhood classrooms teach literacy on any given day, but only 21 percent teach mathematics.

McCray suggests a reason for the imbalance that goes beyond fears about the suitability of math for young children. "Early childhood teachers are under-confident in mathematics," she says. "They don't think they can do it."

Building knowledge and confidence

"I used to think that 'math' was a series of computational skills that had no relation to anything in the real world—except for recipes or figuring out the area for carpeting. Wrong!" laughs Kathleen Katsoudas, a preschool teacher at the Cesar E. Chavez Multicultural Academic Center.

Math Project classes invite teachers to discover for themselves the fundamental principles of algebra, number and operations, measurement, geometry and spatial relations, and data analysis and probability—content strands identified by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Classes are structured as working sessions, more laboratory than lecture, and teachers have the opportunity to "play" with a wealth of math materials.

The springboard for their explorations—and their students'—is children's literature. Colorful storybooks are more than a gateway to new words and characters. They are also rich in things to count, to add or subtract, or to categorize.

"Children's literature is great because it gives everyone a common reference," says Mary Hynes-Berry, Ph.D., a project instructor and early literacy expert. "And kids love it."

A lesson developed by Marisol Sierra, a pre-K teacher at McKinley Park Elementary School, is a case in point. It was inspired by *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister, a classic tale of a beautiful yet boastful fish unwilling to share his sparkling scales with the more ordinary fish in the ocean.



Mathematical ideas such as cardinal numbers, repeating and growing patterns, ordinality, classification, size and shape, and location and direction have a critical place in the early childhood classroom.

To help her students in this low-income school explore the big idea of measurement, Sierra created the fish estimation game, in which children try to guess how many Goldfish crackers are in a jar. The estimates are written on a chart, and when everyone has made their guess, the crackers are counted. Eating the Goldfish follows the activity.

Math with shoes

Storybooks are only the beginning. Once teachers begin to understand the “big ideas” in math, they become adept at seeing the ways in which children can experience those ideas in their daily lives.

Take shoes, for instance. One teacher invited children in her class to classify the shoes they were wearing, grouping them by color, by how they were fastened, by material. Students graphed the results and saw how some



Abstractions such as the basic idea of naming quantity, without respect to thing, undergird children’s later use of symbols and algorithms in elementary math.

classifications yielded more dramatic differences than others. Such concrete experience enables children to grasp sophisticated concepts.

Megan Lynd-Meier, a kindergarten teacher at Murphy School, recently led her 20 5-year-olds on a “number walk,” quietly searching the hallways looking for the number 2. “We found out that it meant the second floor, part of the name of a room, and even time on a clock,” she says. “Learning about the number suddenly had a purpose.

“After completing the Erikson Math Project, I think I approach my lessons with a renewed sense of wonder and awe,” she says.

[Adding to success](#)

Real success for any professional preparation program involves extending the learning experience beyond the program itself. To ensure that the program benefits are lasting, the Math Project is developing teams of coaches—veteran teachers—who receive the early math education training and then work with their colleagues in the schools throughout the academic year. A set of materials to strengthen teachers’ understanding of the “big ideas” is also being developed. These will be used to train trainers and can eventually be available to other school districts that want to implement the model.

And while the project began with school-based pre-K teachers, the i3 grant (see accompanying story) will enable the team to extend the in-service training up to third grade.

Chen and McCray’s long-term goals, however, reach far beyond that. “This could be the first branch of what becomes a whole STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] program,” says Chen. “That would be the *big goal.*” **ii**

Math Project wins big— with a little help from its friends

On Thursday, September 16, a three-line email from the Department of Education made it official: Erikson’s Early Mathematics Education Project had been declared a winner in the 2010 “Investing in Innovation Fund” (or i3) competition.

The project, which is already narrowing the achievement gap in 300 Chicago Public Schools, would receive \$5 million over the next five years to expand its efforts from preschool all the way to 3rd grade. Of nearly 1,700 applicants nationwide, only 49 had been chosen to receive awards, and Erikson had been the *only* institution of higher education in Illinois to make the cut.

Even as the congratulations of colleagues began pouring in, however, the project’s principal investigator, Professor Jie-Qi Chen, and its executive director,

Jennifer McCray, were giving credit for their success where credit was due.

“If not for the \$1 million match grant of the CME Group Foundation, we wouldn’t have gotten the i3 award,” says Chen.

She is referring to an important condition of the i3 process: To qualify for an i3 award, it wasn’t enough to have an innovative project backed by solid theory and performance. Applicants *also* had to have a match grant from the private sector of 20 percent of their proposal’s request. In the case of the Math Project, that 20 percent was \$1 million.



**Jack Sandner, Chairman
CME Group Foundation**

Foundation chairman Jack Sandner describes the decision to make the grant that fulfilled the challenge. “We wanted to support an institution that can provide progress in early childhood math education, and we found through our analysis that Erikson stood very tall in the field.

“Math is inextricably connected to advancements in science and technology and is a tremendous learning exercise, even if you aren’t going to be a mathematician or a scientist,” he says. “And yet, we in the United States are not dedicating enough resources to math education and are not helping kids be comfortable with math.”

The i3 award and matching grant will expand the reach of the project even beyond Chicago. A portion of the funds will be used to create a print and multimedia manual for education trainers who work with teachers in Chicago and around the country to provide quality early math education.

Supporters of Erikson’s
Early Mathematics
Education Project

CME Group Foundation

McCormick Foundation

Motorola Foundation

Exelon

**Robert and Isabelle Bass
Family Foundation**

“Friends and family” funding lays the
groundwork

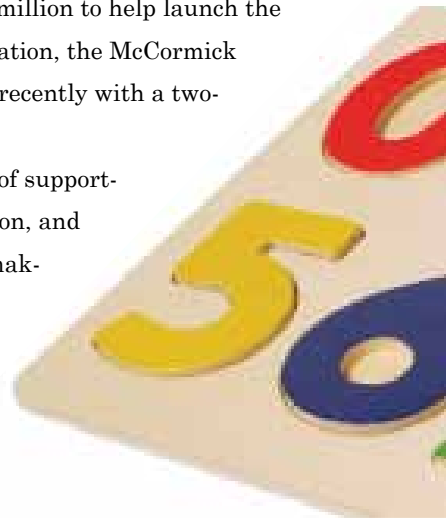
“The CME Group Foundation has been an incredible champion of our work,” says McCray. “They’ve been there for us from the beginning—I think Kassie Davis [CME Group Foundation’s executive director] knows as much about our project as *I* do. And we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the McCormick

Foundation for their vision and advocacy. They not only made a critical early investment in the project, they introduced us to other potential funders, including the people at CME Group Foundation.”

Sara Slaughter, director of the McCormick Foundation’s Education Program, says making the introduction was gratifying. “Erikson comprises an important part of McCormick’s grant making portfolio and our mission to build a system of quality early care and education in Illinois. This project is grounded in a sound understanding of education and child development, and the project’s roots can be traced back to quality research, including a survey of CPS pre-K and kindergarten teachers. It has really just been a wonderful collaboration and partnership with CME Group Foundation.”

That collaboration includes a total of nearly \$1 million to help launch the Math Project in 2007. And like CME Group Foundation, the McCormick Foundation continues to support the project, most recently with a two-year grant it awarded in 2009.

That same year, the Math Project’s community of supporters grew by three, with Motorola Foundation, Exelon, and the Robert and Isabelle Bass Family Foundation making significant gifts. According to Chen, the early gifts “allowed us to develop, test, and improve



The calculus of support

Erikson's expertise and reputation for linking theory to practice

- + **Innovative idea for training teachers and coaches in math instruction**
 - + **Positive results to date and high expectations for the future**
 - + **Ascalable program that will touch increasing numbers of teachers and students**
 - + **The foundation's mission to support the education of young children through adults**
-
- **Support for the Early Mathematics Education Project**

our process and our results. They got us through a critical early stage and let us continue our development to the next stage.”

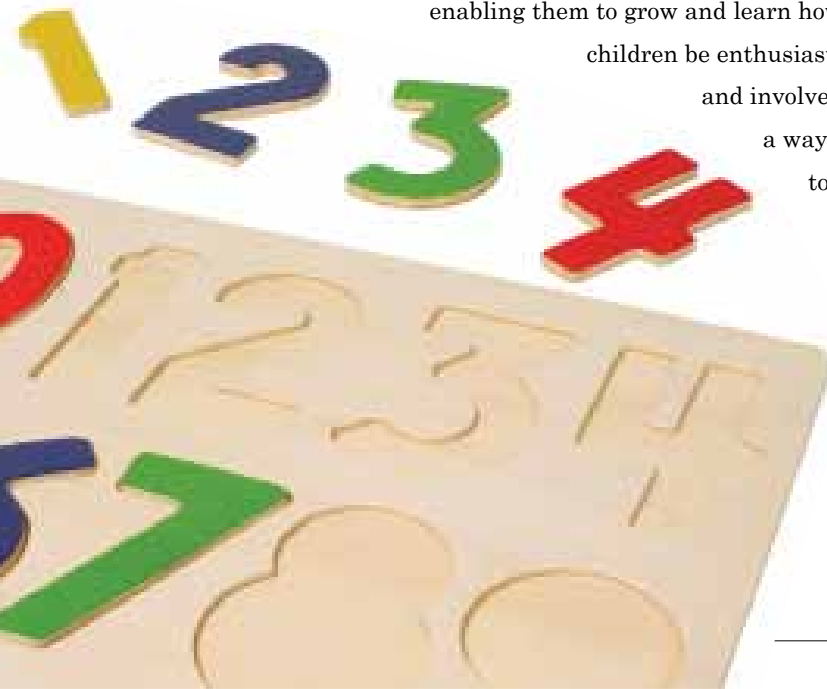
“We made a commitment to make grants to innovative programs that are less than two years old,” says Eileen Sweeney, director of the Motorola Foundation, whose gift came from its Innovation Generation grants program.

“Promising ideas sometimes struggle for funding, and it’s in our blood as engineers and innovators to take calculated risks on promising ideas. We found that Erikson’s math project really fit with our four priorities: supporting STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] education, working with underrepresented groups, creating networks among the unconnected, and doing innovative work.”

Likewise, the Robert and Isabelle Bass Family Foundation appreciated the value of supporting new ideas.

“It’s wonderful to be able to support an innovative idea and program that needs that support to develop and have a greater impact in the community,” says the foundation’s Susan Noel. “I am very impressed with the work the

Early Mathematics Education Project has done to support teachers, enabling them to grow and learn how to help young children be enthusiastic about math and involved in learning in a way that is exciting to them.” [ii](#)



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Erikson makes a plan

On June 10, 2010, the Board of Trustees adopted a five-year plan that sets Erikson's sights on addressing seven critical issues in early childhood. Whether longstanding—the consequences of poverty, the achievement gap—or emerging—the role of technology in the early childhood classroom, childhood obesity—all demand our best efforts in the years ahead.

The complete plan is available online at strategicplan.erikson.edu. The heart of the plan is below.

1. The impact of poverty

According to the Census Bureau, a staggering 1 in 5 children were living in households with annual incomes of less than \$10,830 in 2009—or less than \$22,050 for a family of four—and experts say that figure appears to be continuing to rise. Black and Hispanic children are disproportionately poor, as are children under six years of age. Among all groups, median family incomes in 2009 were 5 percent lower than they were 10 years before.

Poverty dramatically influences aspects of children's lives long recognized as essential to normal development. It affects children's health, cognitive development, behavior, emotional well-being, and school achievement. To cite just two statistics:

children from poor families are 1.7 times more likely to be born with low birth weight—itsself predictive of potential behavioral problems and poor school achievement—and 2 times more likely to repeat a grade in school.

Seven critical issues

1. **The impact of poverty**
2. **The achievement gap**
3. **Changing demographics**
4. **Quality of infant and toddler child care**
5. **Child health and wellness**
6. **Growing reach of technology and media**
7. **Disconnect between early childhood policy and programs**

Erikson will seek to decrease the developmental effects of poverty on young children and provide support for families living in poverty. We will

- Improve the quality and accessibility of early intervention and infant mental health services.
- Enhance family support and education to underserved families.
- Develop early education that is responsive, well planned, and well delivered.
- Provide current and pertinent information to guide the decision making of policymakers, families, and the public to address the effects of poverty.

2. The achievement gap

In the U.S., children who start behind are likely to stay behind. Worse, the cumulative nature of early learning ensures the gap will grow, and grow quickly. Even when children work hard and make progress, the disparity between them and their more advantaged peers widens from fall to spring of a single school year.

Compared internationally, the effects of educational and social disadvantage from an early age are even more pronounced. While children who have access to superb educational resources compete favorably with the children of other developed countries, the majority of our nation's children show consistently and significantly poorer performance across the board, raising serious concerns about the nation's future ability to compete in the global economy.

We will seek to ensure that all children have access to high-quality early childhood educational opportunities and raise the quality of early math and science education.

We will

- Expand the New Schools Project, which provides expertise and continuing professional education to preK–3 programs in Chicago.
- Expand the scope and activities of the Early Mathematics Education Project, which improves math teaching and academic performance in the preprimary and primary grades.
- Explore creating a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) center dedicated to improving the quality of early science and math education.
- Establish an integrated administrative and resource infrastructure to expand the scope and impact of all our community initiatives.

3. Changing demographics

In 2008, 48 percent of the children born in the U.S. were members of minority groups, compared to 37 percent in 1990. Children of immigrant families

whose first language is not English are the fastest growing group of children in the nation: as of 2005, nearly one-quarter of children in the U.S. lived in such families.

Illinois has the fifth largest population of immigrant children of any state: it is estimated that 1 in 7 families in Illinois and 1 in 3 in Chicago speak Spanish at home. Across the U.S., dual language learners are more likely than children in the general population to come from poor communities and to experience many of the disadvantages typically associated

with poverty. Moreover, the move toward inclusion of children with special needs, from physical disabilities to autism spectrum disorders to learning disabilities, is adding to the diversity of children in early childhood settings.

In Illinois, the greatest teacher shortage areas are in special education and bilingual/ESL.

Erikson will further develop and expand an inclusive educational model, meeting the emerging needs of a diverse and changing society. We will

- Increase the number of special education teachers by developing and launching an early childhood special education letter of approval as a specialization in the master of science in early childhood education, the first step in developing a master of science in early childhood special education.
- Increase the number of bilingual and ESL teachers by offering an online version of our Early Childhood Bilingual/ESL Certificate Program for certified teachers.
- Continue to graduate highly qualified professionals who understand the role of race, class, and culture in children's development, the challenges of inclusion, and the needs of immigrant children and who possess the ability to build bridges to families and communities.



Photo by Loren Santow

4. Quality of infant and toddler child care

Today, nearly 73 percent of the nation’s infants and toddlers spend some or all of their day in child care, ranging from centers and relative or nonrelative care outside the home to home care by nannies. Nearly 40 percent of these children are in care full time—a figure that jumps to 58 percent for African American children—and 34 percent are in multiple care arrangements.

We know relatively little about the quality of care these young children receive, and what we do know is not encouraging. More than 40 percent of infants and toddlers in center-based care, for example, are in poor-quality classrooms. Home-based care, which is generally inferior to center-based care, is more widely used by low-income families.

Erikson will continue to address the knowledge gap in this area and enable professionals and the public to improve outcomes for the youngest children. We will

- Increase the number of high-quality infant specialists nationwide by launching a new online master’s degree with a specialization in infancy.
- Increase the capacity of existing early childhood professionals to work with infants and toddlers through online professional development modules.

5. Child health and wellness

Good health and nutrition are fundamental for optimal child development, mental health, and learning. Many young children, however, lack basic access to adequate health care and nutrition; many also live in housing and in neighborhoods that pose significant health risks from environmental factors. Asthma, hearing and vision problems, diabetes, behavior problems, high blood



pressure and high cholesterol, allergies, poor dental health, heart problems, and obesity are just some of the threats to these children’s development.

Obesity alone has become a critical issue in childhood, particularly among children whose recreational opportunities are curtailed by unsafe or under-resourced neighborhoods. By age six approximately one in five children is overweight or obese, and more than one-half of obese children become overweight at or before age two. In the last two decades the prevalence of overweight infants under six months almost doubled, from 3.4 percent to 5.9 percent, and research shows that both low-birth weight and high-birth weight babies are at risk for obesity.

In the realm of mental health, while “school readiness” is a national goal, 10 to 14 percent of all children between birth and age five have socio-emotional problems that impair their ability to benefit from early educational experiences. They have not learned to regulate their emotions; have not developed a consistent, trusting, positive relationship with adults; cannot adjust to the emotions of their peers; are not motivated to learn; or cannot remain calm and attentive. Such social and emotional skills are the necessary foundation of a child’s ability to learn.

Erikson will address early health habits and health issues that have lifelong consequences. We will

- Develop a collaborative research agenda, led by faculty and the Herr Center, that will address prevention of obesity in early childhood.
- Build faculty expertise in this area as part of a faculty development plan.
- Develop a specialization in child health and wellness as an option in the master’s degree.
- Create a series of professional development modules for early childhood practitioners to support child health and wellness.
- Increase the number of qualified practitioners by launching an online infant mental health certificate program.
- Expand existing initiatives in infant and early childhood mental health, including the Fussy Baby Network.[®]
- Expand access to assessment and early intervention services at the Center for Children and Families.

6. Growing reach of technology and media

A 2005 study found that 59 percent of children under the age of two watch television for an average of more than two hours a day. Television is found in the bedrooms of 30 percent of children birth to three years old and 43 percent

of children four to six years old. Computers and smart phones have become ubiquitous; in addition to ebooks, electronic games, and “learning toys,” young children are exposed at ever-younger ages to technologies that were once the domain of adults.

Little is known about long- or short-term effects of technology and media on young children. Few early childhood educators are conversant or comfortable with technology in the classroom; among professionals and parents alike, uninformed rejection of technology is as commonplace as uncritical acceptance of it.

Erikson will facilitate research and dialog in this area to ensure that parents and professionals alike can make thoughtful and informed decisions on these issues.

We will

- Advance understanding of the impact of new technologies on young children and their families.
- Explore how technology can play a positive role in the preparation of early childhood professionals and in the development of young children.
- Provide families, early childhood professionals, and other caregivers with the information they need to make wise choices about children’s use of the technologies that are now so widely accessible.

7. Disconnect between early childhood policy and programs

Despite growing public funding, there is no “system” of early care and education in the U.S. Public programs serving identical children may have different

enrollment criteria, staff requirements, funding streams, and eligibility rules for family participation. Some private programs are regulated by state governments; some are not. The dearth of communication between and among programs and agencies and lack of cooperation result in gaps in service and redundancy. Under such circumstances, even committed policymakers are ill-equipped to encourage reform and development.

The field requires a new kind of leadership: professionals who understand early

childhood systems, how those systems impact individual programs, and how to develop appropriate policy responses to improve early care and education. It also requires an informed and empowered public.



Across a range of initiatives, Erikson will help create the conditions for coherent and effective policy. We will


- Create this new class of leaders by establishing an online master of science in early childhood leadership and policy.
- Increase the amount of information available to policymakers by expanding the core capacity of the Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy.

An invitation to get informed and get involved

Erikson was founded in the belief that family and society play a critical role in the development of children. Although we have educated the public and supported families from the beginning, those activities have been secondary to our stated mission: educating the professionals who *serve* children and families.

Central to our 2010–15 strategic plan is the insight that success in our primary mission is inseparable from those “secondary” activities. To that end, the plan embraces educating and supporting families in their quest for quality early care and education and encouraging public involvement in what we believe is the most important of all social issues: the care and nurture of our young.

Among the many ideas presented in the full strategic plan are an annual Futures of Children conference and public education initiatives such as adult education courses, readings, videos, public lectures, and Web-based information on issues relevant to parenting and grandparenting.

Our first step, however, is to invite you to comment and contribute your ideas about the problems we face and the solutions we propose. You can tell us what you think at strategicplan.erikson.edu. 



Jim Gill (right) with longtime musical collaborator and bassist Jim Cox

A serious man

Alumnus Jim Gill, '93, writes award-winning music and books, performs all over the country, and has an army of devoted fans of all ages. But let's be clear about this, he's not just an entertainer.

In a studio at the Academy of Movement and Music in Oak Park, Illinois, Jim Gill is producing his first-ever music video for his song "Foot Notes." Standing on a vast green screen that hangs from the ceiling and sprawls over the floor, he coaches Erika and Layla, a mother and daughter, on their parts.

"This one's called 'hot foot,' so I need you to hop from one foot to the other, like you're on burning hot coals."

Layla smiles widely to let him know she gets it.

Jim nods to his director, Mike Dutka, and steps off set to watch the monitor beside his wife, Sue.

Mike quiets the set and calls out, "Hot foot, take one. Music, go."

In the back of the studio, a young audio technician cues up the song. Erika and Layla hop across the set, mock-wincing all the way, their toes barely making contact with the floor. At the other side they stop and high-five.

When the music cuts, Jim looks at Sue and takes a deep breath. "Rock. On!"

The other parents and children waiting for their scenes break off playing and applaud. The day is off to a good start. In short order the camera is rolling again as Erika and Layla make their way back across the set, this time trudging through imaginary snow.

And so they go, from "hot foot" to "cold feet" to "snow shoes" to "hoof beat." With each pass they interpret the rhyming, stream-of-conscious lyrics into movements. For "sleepwalk" they shuffle, arms outstretched and eyes closed. For other words, like "gum shoe," there are multiple possibilities. Erika and Layla strain to lift their feet off a sticky floor. Later, another mother and daughter will turn that phrase into a hot-on-the-trail search for clues.



Gill warms up the crowd with a game of Follow the Leader before filming begins.

This word play and, more importantly, parent/child interaction, are the heart of Jim Gill's popular music—music that emerged from more than 20 years experience in running playgroups for special needs children.

Gill's first songs were written for those groups, to engage parents and children in play together. What he discovered was, at the time, something of



Sue Gill, director Mike Dutka, and Jim Gill discuss their next scene

a revelation. The children were willing and able to learn and do far more complex activities when they played with their parents than when they were in standard therapy sessions.

The key, Gill says, was creating an opportunity for the parent and child to do something that was a little more difficult than what the child could have done alone. An obvious benefit was that the child learned to do something new. But Gill realized that something far more important had happened.

“For children, the interactions created a special attachment to learning because they had someone they love experience it with them,” he says.

It was around that time that Gill became a student at Erikson, and his studies gave a name to and reinforced the value of the “relationship-based” approach to learning he had discovered.

Gill realized that his model would benefit all children and families, and he started performing concerts and writing music and books that would bring the experience to wider audiences. His reputation has grown steadily since, and between his family concerts and appearances at early childhood education conferences, Gill has now brought his style of music and play to 42 states plus the U.S. Virgin Islands. His CDs are fixtures in the collections of more than 1,500 libraries throughout the country.

On occasion he gets a request to perform at a mall or Christmas party, the type of gig where he is expected to keep a group of children entertained while their parents are somewhere else. He declines.

“Long ago I decided I'm only going to do this in places that have something to do with child development,” he says.

Seeing parents and children playing together while listening to his music is rewarding, and while staying true to his purpose has cost him a little notoriety, he does have the satisfaction of knowing he makes a big impact wherever



(Clockwise from top left) Gina and Talia Sigismond study “toe-fu”; Jason Warzecha clowns for his daughter, Zoe; Gill directs Erika and Layla through “leisurely stroll.”

he goes. His wall on Facebook is a running list of two types of messages: “Thank you for the awesome show!” and “When are you coming to our town?”

Gill’s books and music also have received high praise. His first album, *Jim Gill Sings the Sneezing Song and Other Contagious Tunes*, received the Parent’s Choice Award from the American Library Association (ALA) and recognition as one of their “notable children’s recordings.” His latest book/CD, *A Soup Opera*, was his fourth work to receive an ALA award (see sidebar, following page).

Gill’s current project has proven to be his most complex series of compositions yet, venturing into free-association lyrics and freestyle musical accompaniment.

“This isn’t a traditional music video. It’s not meant to be another way to just entertain your kids,” he says. “This is more of an instructional video to teach parents and children how to play this game. Hopefully, they’ll watch it once and say, ‘Let’s go play it ourselves.’”

Layla is now between scenes, lying on the ground, apparently making dust angels. Her mother, Erika, enjoys a muffin and some coffee with her friend Gina. Before this shoot Erika had never heard of Gill’s music or books, but as a preschool teacher, she quickly sees their value.

“The kids are having so much fun they don’t even realize they’re learning—but they are!” she says. “They’re learning to think creatively, to move and react spontaneously to sounds. It’s all pretty high-level abstract thinking.”

Gina, an instructor at the dance academy and a close friend of Jim and Sue, regularly uses Gill’s music in her beginner classes. “I’m a big believer



Soup's on

A Soup Opera, written by Gill and illustrated by David Moose, is a musical comedy about a man's struggle to eat a bowl of soup. Children and parents can reenact the drama or sing along with their favorite characters.





that kids learn by following adults' examples. So, when they can't figure out a move by themselves, they can still learn to do it by following my lead."

A moment later director Mike Dutka calls everyone back to set. Gina takes her daughter's hand. "Talia, we're gonna tiptoe!"

"Oooohhh!" Talia squeals, and together they join the pack running to the green screen. The group's socked feet are a blur of colors: red and white zig-zags, pink and purple and rainbow stripes, multi-colored hearts, and one pair that looks like pig faces, complete with protruding snouts.

The one person conspicuously absent is Jim Gill himself, who remains behind the camera. On another day, he'll shoot some brief scenes with his band, but he insists that the video focus on the parents and children.

"If I were a children's performer, I would have to be on camera the whole time because the video would be about selling me and the music," he says. "But I'm not a children's performer. I'm not even really a musician. I'm a child development specialist. I use music to work with children and families because it's a great way to get them playing together."

Gill thinks back to when he recorded his first song, "The Sneezing Song." His producer wanted to create a melody for the "a- a- achoo," to make it more musical. Jim argued against it, knowing that shouting "achoo!" was the payoff kids would look forward to. To sing it would mean losing the fun of making that noise.

Finally, his producer blurted, "This isn't a song!"

Gill thought for a moment and said, "It's not a song, I guess. It's music play.

"I've liked that description ever since: music play. I've never tried to trademark it or anything, because that's not my style. Frankly, no one owns play. It's free." ii

Dot tot

Toddlers don't have cell phones—yet—but there's no getting around the fact that information technology is reaching younger and younger audiences. Whether that reach holds promise or threat for young children isn't clear. Recently, we sat down to talk about it with Erikson's director of distance learning, Chip Donohue, Ph.D., early childhood educator, father of two, and one of the world's foremost experts in the innovative use of technology for early childhood teacher education and professional development.

Let's go right to what, for many people, is the central issue: Should technology even be used with young children? A number of organizations and individuals say no, among them the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. You disagree?

It's a complex issue. I have enormous respect for the work that Susan Linn [founder of Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood] and others are doing, and I completely agree that we need to protect our children from all kinds of commercial influences. But I *do* worry that taking a “no technology” stance prevents young children from having important experiences in an increasingly technological world and educational system.

We all take absolute positions when we're trying to make a point. But absolute positions aren't always realistic. The AAP says, “no screen time for children under 2,” but how many screens are we talking about now compared to when that statement was written, when we were thinking only about television? At this point, we're including showing a toddler a digital image of him or herself on the camera, or viewing photos on the computer screen. Do we really want to prohibit that?

If you want to say to me, “Really be careful about technology for kids under 2, and here's why,” I am listening. But I worry that recommending that children in child care, preschool, and kindergarten settings have “little or no exposure to screen technology” guarantees that some children who do not have access to these

technologies in the home will enter school without the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to succeed in a technological world.

And what happens to the achievement gap, which we're already worried about, when a child grows up in a technology-rich home and in a technology-rich preschool environment and goes to school tech ready for first grade and the child who's had none of this shows up? Today the divide is being marked not just by what children know but by what they are able to do. We should rather be promoting media literacy for young children and modeling safe, appropriate, and commercially neutral uses of existing and emerging technologies.

You're a senior fellow at the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media. What kind of work are you engaged in with the center?

I've been involved in a number of webinars and in the Fred Forward Conference, "Creative Curiosity, New Media, and Learning." We're working on the design, development, and deployment of the Fred Rogers Center Early Learning Network, a web-based environment whose initial focus is on the importance of conversation in the development of early literacy skills. The site is intended to support parents and teachers/caregivers in finding and sharing resources and effective practices, with an emphasis on how technology and media can support adult learning about child development. Right now, we're working on building an editorial/advisory board, identifying and courting content partners, and working with a design firm to create the environment. We're also bringing together an evaluation team.

Cochairing the working group that is revising the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) position statement on technology and young children is also part of my role as a Rogers fellow.



What is NAEYC's position on the subject?

NAEYC believes that early childhood educators have a responsibility to critically examine the role and impact of technology on children and to be prepared to provide guidance on the appropriate use of technology.

We need to rewrite the statement because it was last written in 1996. In '96, the total focus was on computers and classrooms. The landscape has changed considerably since, not just with respect to the kinds of technology but with respect to the reach of technology beyond the classroom and *before* the classroom—the whole debate about infants birth to age 2 versus young children 3 to 5.

What should Erikson's role in all this be?

We lead the field in early childhood not because we create a great course for students who come to our campus but because we create conversations in the wider community.

The huge need, the national need, is in professional development. We need to do a better job preparing teachers and those who work with young children to use technology effectively. Generally speaking, if a teacher's good at technology, it's not because she or he was prepared in her program. It's because that teacher likes technology and some parent bought a computer for the class. And we should *use* technology to *teach* about technology, we should model technology.

How would do we do that? How would you do it at Erikson, for example?

I would create a space in this building, an environment for new media and technology, an adult play room where people who work with kids can come and engage with new technologies, try them out and evaluate their potential. The iPads came out? Okay, you have this new interface, what might the impact of it be on children?

Whether that space is a center for the effective use of technology, I don't know. The important thing is creating a place that leads to articles, leads to research, leads to



teachers teaching. It's having a place to come and play, come and try, come and talk to other people who are trying to figure these things out.

If we empower teachers and other practitioners to make better decisions about technology, then they also become advocates with parents who come to them and say, "What should I do?"

We use technology so widely in our daily lives. Why aren't we incorporating it into the curriculum for teachers?

Because we don't want to take on the debate. We don't want to raise the question of should we even *use* technology, so instead we just kind of quietly don't. I've always called us a low-tech, high-touch field.

There's an interesting dynamic, a dichotomy between, "These kids are born digital, we better help them," and, "We better play and paint and hug and hold and get in the sandbox with them."

Well, those aren't mutually exclusive to me. We *are* all using technology. We're walking around with smart phones, the most sophisticated little package of technology that has ever been designed, and we know how to use them. We're getting our email, we're online, we're checking the bus schedule, we're on Facebook, whatever. The disconnect is, we've never thought about how that same technology could be used in our work with children, because we fundamentally aren't so sure it should be.

That's the other challenge, incidentally. At home, or in our pockets or our purses, we have something that came out weeks ago. Schools are looking at computers and software that are 15 years old and don't work. Part of the problem of technology is the cost of staying current. It's extraordinary.

How many schools or preschools even *have* technology?

We're going to have some data soon on that from a survey of the NAEYC membership around how teachers are using technology. Anecdotally, we would

say there's lots of technology in schools, but it's out of date and not being used, or it's in a lab and you get your 10 minutes a week, which was our notion in 1985 of how computers fit in to the classroom. We're still acting on that notion.



The Pew Internet and American Life study is providing us with interesting data about access to technology in this country. One set of data that jumped out at me—and this is particularly as it relates to my work at the Rogers Center—is that people are skipping home computers and going straight to a mobile device. They want access, but they don't want to pay for two services and two plans. So, how do you deliver content on that 3-inch screen instead of that TV-sized screen?

Are teachers and other early childhood professionals aware of that disconnect between their daily lives and their work with children?

When I talk about that, I get, “Huh, I hadn't actually thought about that, but you're right.” A study was done in 2007 on license-exempt child care providers in Illinois, and it turns out there were tons of computers in their homes

and they were very good at using them: buying books, buying movie tickets, printing maps, what have you. But they never once thought about using that technology to connect to professional development or to each other, and they complained of feeling “isolated” and all that.

We can either say, “That's their problem,” or we can say, “We need to fill that gap.” That's another role for Erikson, in my opinion.

You're obviously a fan of technology. But what about people who just aren't comfortable with it?

You say “technology,” but for me it's tools. And when it comes working professionals in the field, I'm sorry, it's 2010, you've got to learn how to use these tools. I think we have a professional obligation to challenge ourselves, to think hard about why and how and what.

Being a “fan,” incidentally, doesn't mean I don't see the pitfalls. Walking home one day, I saw a mother and child at a restaurant, having a little lunch. The “story” I wrote about it in my mind was “mom and child having a special lunch together.” But the reality was mom glued to her phone and daughter absolutely not a part of anything.

The question is, Can we use technology as a tool to reconnect children and adults? I don't know the answer, but it's an intriguing idea. **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.

Tummy time in Guayas

Occupational therapist Marsha Baker, '96, part of Erikson's Fussy Baby Network team, headed some 3,000 miles south this summer to spend a week in the coastal province of Guayas, Ecuador, with Zully JF Alvarado, '84.

The pair wasn't there to work on their tans. Alvarado, who was born in Ecuador, is founder and director of Causes for Change International. Baker had agreed to join one of the organization's regular volunteer missions of medical assistance and training in health, education, and economic issues served children, women, and persons with disabilities.

"The purpose of the trip, for me, was really to talk with parents and staff at the schools for children with disabilities. Both groups had a lot of questions

about how to work with their children, many of whom had significant developmental disabilities and had not received early services." Few early intervention programs are available in Ecuador, and there is little training for early childhood educators. Together, Baker and Alvarado conducted training sessions at AVINNFA (Volunteer Association of the National Institute for Children and Families), a school and rehabilitation facility in the town of Milagro, and the National Council of Disabilities Rehabilitation Center in Naranjal. They also traveled to locations in the countryside to meet with infants and mothers.

"In one village, we put down palm leaves on the ground, and that's where parents brought their children as they were waiting to see the dentists. It was

fun for me, but a cultural disconnect: Most parents felt that their children were doing fine."

All in all, Baker spoke with more than 250 parents and professionals during the week. One outcome of these conversations was to give her a better idea about what kind of information and trainings might be helpful. She and Alvarado are recurrently discussing delivering trainings via Skype on visual systems that center staff can create for their classrooms and parents can use at home.



Marsha Baker, '96, above and right. With Zully JF Alvarado, '84, (in red) top right.



Photos courtesy Zully JF Alvarado

Present at the creation

Speaking at the commencement ceremony, honoree Bernice Weissbourd made the following remarks.



Erikson life trustee Bernice Weissbourd, founder of Family Focus, one of two recipients of an honorary doctorate at Erikson's 43rd commencement in May.

"I remember, many years ago, when Maria Piers came to my house in Hyde Park to talk about an idea she had. She was concerned that Head Start was growing rapidly all over the country, and there just weren't enough trained teachers to serve young children well.

"Planning with Barbara Bowman and Lorraine Wallach, this idea geminated into what Erikson Institute is today—a nationally and internationally known school for the very best education in a comprehensive understanding of early childhood.

"Harboring such memories, I'm a bit overwhelmed to be receiving this honorary degree.

"And along with those personal feelings are my thoughts as a professional in the field. In these years, the society has moved from a concern about kids starting at first grade to a focus on children's development from birth. Erikson has been, and under the direction of Sam Meisels will continue to be,

a leader in this cultural revolution—a change towards children which affects our political, economic, and social landscape.

"So I accept this honor with heartfelt personal thanks, and with deep appreciation of the eminence of Erikson Institute."

Photo by Kathy Richland

Speech, speech

Erikson president Samuel J. Meisels, Ed.D., will be delivering a second commencement address this year, this one at Roosevelt University in December, where he will also accept the doctorate of humane letters, honoris causa. The honorary degree, the highest awarded by the university, is being given in recognition of Meisels' long and distinguished career as an educator in the field of early childhood development and for his many public service accomplishments.

Project Match founder honored

In 1985, Toby Herr, '82, had an insight into the lives of the chronically unemployed: the problem wasn't the lack of a job.

Just as giving a toddler a pen didn't magically confer an ability to write, giving a person a job didn't give that person the whole constellation of competencies that make a person employable.

On Friday, October 29, the Alumni of Erikson Institute will recognize the power of Herr's insight—and of the organization she created to act on it—with the Founders Award, given during the association's annual meeting at Erikson.

The organization Herr founded is Project Match, designed to give the unemployed the developmental supports they needed to join the world of work. Long admired by policymakers and program administrators dealing with workforce attachment, the

project's employment model for community-based organizations and case management system for welfare agencies have both been replicated at sites around the country. In 2008, the organization accepted the ultimate accolade. It was only one of eight nonprofits internationally to receive the MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.

Project Match recently expanded its direct service activities and is now focused on Chicago's West Haven neighborhood.

Career moves

Stephanie Bynum, '02, who launched Erikson's Office of Career Services six years ago, has been promoted to assistant dean for academic affairs. In her new position she will oversee and coordinate critical components of academic programs, including adjunct faculty, certificate programs, student academic support, and internships. Bynum brings extraordinary experience to the job: in addition to getting her degree here, she has taught in the master's program, directed the administration specialization, and served on the alumni board.

Partners in Care receives grant

Prince Charitable Trusts awarded a \$25,000 grant to adapt the Fussy Baby Partners in Care training, consultation, and resources to meet the needs of Early Head Start (EHS) programs. Partners in Care materials, which are reproduced in Spanish and English, help infant and child care center personnel recognize and address the challenges of caring for the very young outside the home.

Center for Children gets a little hug

This spring, Erikson received a \$1,000 grant from the Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation to support the Center for Children and Families. The grant underwrites the purchase of toys needed for play-based assessments of children with social-emotional, behavioral, and developmental concerns. "Toys not only make for a welcoming space at the Center," says Center executive director Margret Nickels, "They are key to our assessment of the child since so much is evident in how a toy is used. We are grateful to Build-A-Bear Workshop." The foundation, which supports children's health and wellness causes, is committed to making life more "bearable" for children and families in need. Proceeds from the sale of each "Champ-A Champion Fur Kids" at Build-A-Bear Workshop support these efforts.

Small world

Two Erikson faculty members represented Erikson at the World Association for Infant Mental Health's 12th World Congress in Leipzig, Germany, this summer. Associate professor Jon Korfmacher participated in symposiums on the role of helping relationships in early interventions and the challenges of assessing early prevention programs around the world. Together with research associate Aimee Hilado, '06, he also presented a study that compared how five states define the competencies—our specialized knowledge and skills—needed by early childhood mental health specialists. The study will help develop training standards for the fledgling field.

Assistant professor Tracy Moran presented two studies, one examining the role of maternal depression on infant emotion and the second on the Assessment of Parenting Tool, a developmentally sensitive measure of how efficacious parents

of children birth to 24 months feel. Parents of children under 2 years of age are invited to participate in the ongoing study by taking an online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/aptsurvey.

Consultation project ends

The start of the new fiscal year brought to a close a state-funded program that provided ongoing mental health consultation to practitioners working in Birth to Three Prevention Initiative and Pre-K program throughout Illinois.

The Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program, an initiative of the Illinois State Board of Education launched at Erikson by Sam Wulfsohn, Ph.D., in summer of 2007 fielded consultants to more than 100 programs and 450 home visitors, pre-K teachers, program directors, and other staff, helping them to understand children's social-emotional development and its effect on children's interactions with parents, caregivers, and peers. The goal was to better prepare practitioners to teach the children at greatest risk.

In an email to the Erikson community announcing the closure, Irving Harris Professor of Infant Studies Linda Gilkerson expressed her "heartfelt appreciation" to the entire team for their role in "advancing Erikson's mission to improve the lives of children and families." The project included Laurie Kabb, executive director; Lauren Wiley, director; project manager Gregory Tate and past-director Tonya Bibbs, a doctoral student; Chicago-area consultants Maggie Brett, Teresa Collado, '10, Tina Dorow, M.S. '10, Vicki Pendelton, Darcie Price-Wallace and Olga Silva-Zletz, M.Ed. '96; and state-wide consultants Colleen Berman, Jill Corder, Elizabeth Frisbie, Lynn Liston, and Angela Marvel.



Champ-A Champion Fur Kids



Better than chance: Increasing the odds of funding good work

How do you know which programs are doing a good job working with children and families? Programs often try to document their results. The problem comes when programs that address the same problem use different tools to measure their progress.

That was the situation facing Children's Hospital and Health System's Child Abuse Prevention Fund in Milwaukee. Of eight home visitation agencies providing parent education and support to at-risk families who are expecting babies or have preschoolers at home, all were using different tools to measure the results of their work. And none could accurately compare their results to any common benchmarks.

To solve the problem, the fund has launched a research

project in collaboration with Erikson associate professor Jon Korfmacher, who will lead a team that will develop a practical and reliable tool for measuring program quality across different models of home visiting.

The goal is to make a tool that is user-friendly, grounded in research, and relevant to all the different groups who are interested in ensuring good programs. Such a tool can not only help home visiting providers improve the effectiveness of their programming but help policy makers and early childhood funders determine if they are making investments in quality programs.

The research is made possible by a two-year commitment of financial support from the Pew Home Visiting Campaign, a project of the Pew Center on the States. Performance Works of Wisconsin is providing project management support.

Warren reports

James Warren, columnist for the Chicago News Cooperative and former managing editor and Washington bureau chief of the Chicago Tribune, has high praise for two Erikson alumnae. In a piece that ran in the New York Times, Warren wrote:

"On Wednesday, my wife and I attended the kindergarten graduation at Ravenswood Elementary, a North Side school with a high poverty rate. As we watched our son and his proud classmate sing John Lennon's 'Imagine,' we were grateful that he had experienced a young and stellar teacher after two years with another young star, his pre-K teacher.

"The kindergarten teacher, Meghan Residori [current student], showed parts of a nifty film about the past year and gave us all a copy of it, as well as a laminated folder that contained our child's kindergarten memories in the form of his thoughts on various photos taken during the year, and a month-by-month compendium of his writing, evidence of heartening progress.

"She and the pre-K teacher, Kira Hamann [M.S. '09], are probably as good as you'll find in any public or private school. Each has a commitment to the students and an ability to build a cohesive community. But, in seniority-driven layoffs, they might be goners.

"It's absurd. A sane system would include real standards. It would give flexibility to and demand accountability of principals. It would replace clearly mediocre teachers with clones of these two women.

"Imagine."
Indeed.

Chautauqua beckons Bowman

"How we treat children between birth and age 7 or 8... makes an enormous difference in how they lead their lives."

The message was one Barbara Bowman has delivered hundreds of times over the course of her 50-odd-year career as an early childhood educator and advocate. The venue, however, was unique.

It was the amphitheatre at Chautauqua, one of the most venerable of American institutions. Bowman had been invited to deliver the lecture (available from the Chautauqua bookstore at <http://chautauquabookstore.ciweb.org>) as part of the 136-year-old learning community's summer 2010 offerings.



Photo by Emily Fox/The Chautauquan Daily

The experience puts her in some fairly distinguished company. Thomas Edison, Thurgood Marshall, Franklin Roosevelt, Susan B. Anthony, Helen Keller, Margaret Mead, Al Gore, Ken Burns, Bill Cosby, Calvin O. Butts, Bill and Hillary Clinton, and Elie Wiesel, to name just a few, have all lectured at Chautauqua.

New faces



Randy L. Holgate, formerly senior vice president for university resources at the University of Chicago, is Erikson's newest vice president for institutional advancement. Holgate began her career in institutional advancement at Yale University and Hampshire College before serving in multiple roles during a 30-year career at the University of Chicago. She received the Benjamin Franklin Award from the Association of Fundraising

Professionals in 1995 for significant fundraising achievements and service as a role model to the profession. Holgate is on the boards of the Chicago Children's Choir and the Smart Museum of Art, as well as the University of Chicago Women's Board.



Susan H. Wallace joined Erikson this summer as vice president for finance and operations. Previously, Wallace was vice president and chief financial officer at the Illinois Institute of Technology, where she oversaw annual and long-term financial operations and planning,

managed investment portfolios, and supervised a team of 55 employees across multiple departments. During her 30-year career, Wallace held similar positions at DePaul University and the Poetry Foundation. She is currently a board member of Catalyst Charter Schools and a trustee of the Union League Club Boys and Girls Club. A certified public accountant, Wallace earned an M.B.A. from DePaul University.

Good work

Michael Olenick, M.Ed. '79, was elected to the board of directors of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. He also was re-elected as president of the board of the California Childcare Resource and Referral Network.

Associate professor Chip Dyanda, '97, was appointed to the post of deputy vice chancellor for the University of Zimbabwe.

Zully JF Alvarado, '84, served as a delegate to the invitation-only National Disability Policy Summit hosted by the National Council on Disability. Participants met in Washington, D.C., to discuss the future of disability policies and programs.

Jamilah R. Jor'dan, M.Ed. '94, joined the faculty at Chicago State University as an assistant professor in the Department of Early Childhood-Primary/Bilingual Education.

Sarah Sivright, M.Ed. '96, is a co-director and teacher at All Seasons Preschool in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota. The preschool, which shares space with Inver Glen Senior Living, encourages children to interact with residents of the senior housing community through structured activities and casual visits. Sivright writes, "The relationships between the children and the 'grandmas and grandpas' are nothing short of miracle to witness." The school features an art- and nature-focused curriculum.

Amy Morgan, M.S./M.S.W. '05, provides therapy for individuals, couples, and families through her private practice, Amy Morgan Counseling, and continues to be a writing tutor at Erikson. She has two boys, 3-year-old Dino and 1-year-old Jake.

Angela Searcy, M.S. '05, is the owner and founder of Simple Solutions Educational Services. In November 2009, her company provided consultation and training services for 17 Head Starts

and Early Head Starts in Cook County, Illinois. The work was funded through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant to the Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County. Searcy also serves as a consultant with The Multisensory Training Institute of the Stratford Foundation in Needham, Massachusetts, which seeks to prevent and address reading difficulties in students by increasing teachers' knowledge of evidence-based strategies.

Sara Sladoje, M.S. '05, and Alison Kramme, LCPC, are launching a new mother and infant support group, GRASP (Gathering, Reflecting, AS Parents) beginning in September. Each week, the group will focus on a specific topic ranging from couplehood after baby to infant/parent attachment.

Shira Miller, M.S. '06, recently received Rush Hospital's Employee of the Year Award. She is the first child life specialist at Rush to ever receive this hospitalwide award.

Claire Halloran, '07, is a speech-language pathologist who works primarily in early intervention. In September, she affiliated her practice with the Learning Through Play Center and will work with children up to age 6. Halloran sends a special thank you to a number of Erikson staff and faculty for their support, including Linda Gilkerson, Anne Powers, Marsha Baker, Robin Manus, Judy Bertacci, and Maeve O'Shiel.





Thank You!
Honor roll of donors
2009–10

From the Board Chair

Erikson could not have the impact it does on early childhood policy and practice without the support of the Institute's generous donors. During the 2010 fiscal year, the individuals, families, foundations, and corporations listed in the following honor roll gave \$8.7 million to the Institute. Your gifts enable Erikson to engage in the most important work—providing young children with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

You support Erikson students, faculty, and researchers as they generate knowledge and learn how to provide the best education and care for young children. Your gifts help sustain vital programs in underresourced and underserved communities. Erikson's outreach ranges from working with teachers and administrators to improve pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade instruction and curriculum to directly serving young children and families through assessment, diagnosis, and treatment programs. Your gifts also help Erikson develop close partnerships with schools and a wide variety of programs and agencies that serve children and families in Chicago, its suburbs, and beyond.

On behalf of the board of trustees and the many children and families served by Erikson, thank you for your support. I truly believe that there is no better investment you can make than in our children and in Erikson.



Richard P. Kiphart

Chair (2006–10), Erikson Institute Board of Trustees

Thank you!

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"Thank you a million times over for the gift you gave me and so many others. My education at Erikson Institute has been the greatest educational experience of my lifetime thus far. I cannot express enough how prepared I feel to be a child advocate, a child care provider, a friend, a mother, and a human out interacting in the world."

Laura Frank, M.S./M.S.W. '09, Harris Scholar and assistant director of child care and child development coordinator, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center

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“Thank you, Erikson, for equipping your students with the broader knowledge of ‘how to do’ when many others tell you only ‘what to do’ and for your unique focus on understanding the culture surrounding each individual child we work with. This helps set Erikson apart and gives alumni the credentials and the know-how to solve complicated issues concerning children and families.”

Frank London Gettridge, M.S. '05, principal, Clara Barton Elementary School

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“What Erikson has done for Erie Elementary Charter School is absolutely invaluable. The New Schools Project has helped us identify who we are and to create a warm, loving, intellectually engaging place for children and teachers alike. The support and guidance New Schools has provided will always be a part of Erie.”

Velia Soto, principal, Erie Elementary Charter School

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“I am a better teacher because of this professional development program. Thank you.”

Teacher who received coaching through Erikson’s Early Mathematics Education Project

“I cannot say enough about this program. It changed the way I think about and teach math. There is so much you can take away and use immediately in your classroom. It is also a great time to share with fellow teachers.”

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“Thanks for providing a very valuable professional development program. CEDA Head Start staff gained new knowledge about bilingual child development, have committed to implementing new strategies, and are ready to transfer this valuable training to practice. Together, Erikson Institute and CEDA are working to improve the school readiness and family engagement of the English Language Learning community.”

Linda Langosch, Early Childhood Development Manager, CEDA Early/Head Start

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“We are so grateful for our partnership with Erikson, as it has added to our internal expertise, as well as provided us with a larger pool of resources. Erikson professors’ level of expertise is peerless. They have the newest, as well as established, knowledge surrounding children and families. And we’ve found that Erikson interns are always smart and hardworking and fit well into our child-centered environment.”

Jennifer Farrington, president & CEO, Chicago Children’s Museum

“Thank God for you guys. It’s a really scary experience to know your child might have problems, so it’s comforting to know places like the Center for Children and Families exist.”

Marikay, client, Center for Children and Families

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“Thank you so much for the support from Erikson and the New Schools Project this year. You helped us have a better understanding of early childhood education. I know that I will always apply what you taught me both in my profession and even when I have a family of my own.”

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