

ERIKSON
INSTITUTE

A Graduate
School in Child
Development

Summer 2004

Erikson Today

Grand Victoria
supports Bridging

Erikson public forums invite
community learning

Fussy Baby Network
expands

Prism Ball 2004
raises the bar—again



Bridging to the suburbs

A two-year, \$100,000 grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation is bringing new skills and professional development to 50 pre-K and first-grade teachers in southern Will County's Special Education Cooperative and the deLacey Education Center in Kane County. The grant has enabled the teachers to take part in a two-year, Erikson-led practicum focused on improving the education of young children with learning and behavioral disabilities and other special needs. The practicum is Erikson's first to be based in the far south and northwest suburbs.

"I spend a lot of time talking to teachers, and I hear the same thing over and over," says Deborah Mantia, director of professional development at Erikson. "They're eager to take advantage of Erikson's course offerings. They want to bring their best to the classroom, and that means staying connected to learning themselves. They need to develop themselves as professionals and develop real professional relationships with their peers. You just can't do that in the odd half-day inservice. But a two-hour commute to Erikson at the end of your teaching day isn't always feasible."

Photo by David Schwartz



That's where Grand Victoria stepped in, enabling Mantia to offer one of Erikson's most sought-after professional course offerings, Bridging, off site. The course, and its namesake assessment tool, helps teachers gather information about a child's cognitive development that might otherwise go unobserved, and use that information in their teaching. Slots in two cohorts were quickly filled, with Erikson tapping one of its own, Peg Callaghan, M.S. '73, former director of special education at Oakton Community College, to take on the role of lead teacher.

By all accounts, the experience thus far has been well worth the effort. "Enriching," "helpful," "surprising," "essential," and "creative" are just a few of the one-word summaries the teachers themselves use to describe their experience as participants.

"The teachers are really coming to value Bridging," says Callaghan, who keeps in regular contact with Professor Gillian McNamee, who codeveloped the assessment with Professor Jie-Qi Chen. "It

encourages them to become better observers, to slow down, to realize what they can do for their students and how they can do it. This isn't a kit. It's a tool that has meaning

because it helps lead to individual answers about individual students."

"It's reflective practice at its best," says Mantia. "Bridging, this professional development course, the grant—it's all about giving students and teachers every opportunity to achieve."

For an in-depth look at Bridging, see Erikson Today, Fall 2003, available online at www.erikson.edu.

Words to live by

Erikson welcomed its 37th graduating class with a guest speaker rich with knowledge and experience in early childhood education.

Lella Gandini, whose work in Reggio Emilia, Italy, has inspired early childhood teachers worldwide, reminded students that by "looking, observing, and listening to children" they would "see richness and potential

that sometimes are not immediately apparent."

Grammy Award winner Ella Jenkins, who along with Gandini was awarded an honorary doctorate at the ceremony, led the class of 2004, including 44 masters and 2 newly minted Ph.D.s, in a rousing rendition of

"Did You Feed My Cow?" before family and friends at Chicago's Harold Washington Library Center.

If you build it...

Thanks to a \$250,000 grant from the State of Illinois Capital Development Board, Erikson is turning dreams into reality. In September, we added our third cohort of master's students and a schedule of morning courses, not to mention nearly 40 percent more space to accommodate the increase—a big first for the institute that started with a single classroom. The expansion and renovation funded by the grant included new classrooms, seminar rooms, and faculty offices as well as facilities for Erikson's first foray into direct service with children and families. The Edward Neisser Library and Learning Center, one of the institute's fastest-growing and best-used resources, also got some much-needed additional space.

So, now that we've built it, have they come? In droves. Two new faculty have been hired to handle the jump in enrollments. Library use has doubled. And dozens of parents and their hard-to-comfort newborns are dropping in for support and information from the Fussy Baby Network.



Professor Barbara Bowman, Ella Jenkins, D.H.L., and board chair Susan Wislow celebrate in the winter garden.

Photo by Oscar Moresi

Network adds new members

Erikson Institute's Fussy Baby Network continues to grow, expanding its presence through a new partnership with Prentice Women's Hospital, part of Northwestern Memorial Hospital in downtown Chicago. Prentice joined



the network in 2003. The network, which provides resources to parents whose infant experiences sleeping, feeding, and temperament issues during the first year of life, already includes LaRabida, University of Chicago, and Michael Reese Hospitals.

"Prentice wanted to be able to do more for families, for teen parents, and for other challenging cases not eligible for [state-supported] early intervention services," Erikson professor Linda Gilkerson says.

At the hospital's invitation, specialists from the network are leading two parent groups at Prentice, one for those whose infants are in the neonatal intensive care unit. All families at Prentice learn about the regular services the network offers; the hospital has already referred three families for the

services. "The partnership with Prentice is a great way to reach more families," Gilkerson says. "We want to be there for whoever needs us."

The network also received a one-year, \$45,500 grant from the Michael Reese Health Trust to work with Healthy Families Illinois, a program within the Illinois Department of Human Services that works to prevent child abuse. Fussy Baby Network will help Healthy Families apply the resources and expertise of the network to children and families in need.

Chen awarded second Fulbright grant

In April 2002, associate professor Jie-Qi Chen was awarded a Fulbright Senior Specialists



Grant. The senior specialists program was created to complement the traditional Fulbright Scholar program by giving leading U.S. academics the opportunity to support culture exchanges and faculty development abroad.

Chen's first grant took her to Taiwan in 2002. She will use the second to travel, teach, and

lecture for a month in Hong Kong and mainland China this summer.

While abroad, Chen will be based at the Hong Kong Baptist University Center for Child Development. "Educators in China are very hungry for new ideas," Chen says, "but it is not always clear to them what is appropriate or applicable on Chinese soil. I will try to engage in a dialogue with Chinese educators and bring them an insider's point of view on Western early childhood education."

Halpern in print

Professor Robert Halpern's paper, *Supporting the Literacy Development of Low-Income Children in Afterschool Programs*, has been published by the Robert



Bowne Foundation. Halpern, one of the best known scholars in the field, draws on research he conducted during a national study of literacy practices in programs for school-aged children. Such research is increasingly important.

"I argue that afterschool programs' philosophy, purpose, and

approach to nurturing literacy has to be different—in some ways fundamentally different—from that found in most urban schools," Halpern writes.

The paper is available online at www.robertbownefoundation.org.

Hail and farewell

Samuel J. Meisels's three-year tenure as president of Zero to Three's Board of Trustees ended in December. At a Washington ceremony in his honor, Erikson's president stepped down from the top spot. He remains an active member of the board. "Other than my work at Erikson, there's nothing I spend more time on professionally or gain more professional gratification from than Zero to Three," he said.

Winning ways

Erikson master's student Mildred Ebietomiye was one of five winners of this year's Kohl McCormick Early Childhood Teaching Awards. She works at the Ounce of Prevention's Educare Center, where she has implemented a care model that allows infants to remain with the same caregivers until the age of three. This allows the children time to develop secure attachments, essential for emotional and cognitive development.

Not far from the tree

One of this year's Golden Apple awards went to Oak Park River Forest High School physics teacher Aaron Podolner. He's the son of Erikson alumni Mark Podolner, M.S. '76, and Marion Sirefman, M.S. '76.

Parents welcomes Stott

The masthead of the June edition of *Parents* magazine features a familiar name. Dean and clinical psychologist



Fran Stott has been appointed to *Parents*'s board of advisers. In that capacity, she'll consult with editors

and writers as they develop articles, a task Stott, now in her 25th year of teaching, has had some preparation for. And our sympathies to that first writer, pressing for a definitive answer where there is none, who hears, "It depends."

Expert advice

Wonder why toddlers are shy with the babysitter one day and ready to wander off with a stranger the next? Having trouble connecting to a grandchild? Have a little one who just doesn't fit in?

Three Erikson events—two in June and one in October—are providing Chicago-area parents and grandparents with the answers.

On June 16, Erikson founder and professor Barbara T. Bowman presented *LUVU: Connecting with Grandchildren*, a discussion on the role a grandparent plays in children's lives. On June 29, Erikson professor and infant/toddler expert Linda Gilkerson, along with Karen Benson, M.S. '74, Fussy Baby Network

child development specialist, presented *Life with Your Toddler: Development, Growth, and Challenge*. Both discussions were part of Erikson's "at home" series of presentations hosted by community members in their homes.

Erikson's public lecture series continues on October 4 with Drs. Perri Klass and Eileen Costello, whose latest book, *Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping Your Child Who Doesn't Fit In—When to Worry and When Not to Worry*, has been featured in the *New York*



Times and *Parents* magazine and praised by the likes of T. Berry Brazelton and Harvard Medical School's Margaret L. Bauman. If you miss the opportunity to hear Klass, a practicing pediatrician and assistant professor of pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine, and Costello, a primary care pediatrician at Boston University, at the State Street studios of ABC-7 in the morning, plan on joining us at North Central College in Naperville that evening. For more information on all events, contact Jenifer Vargo, director of development, at 312.893.7114.

Alumni spotlight

Angela Searcy, M.S. '01

An adjunct professor of early childhood at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights, Angela Searcy knows how to keep busy. In addition to teaching, she is a therapist and education consultant with the Neuropsychology Diagnostic Center in Orland Park, where she serves children from birth through age 18. Neuropsychology testing is a means of evaluating the major functions of development: attention, perception, memory, speech and language, mood, and motor abilities. Searcy also was named by the Illinois State Board of Education as a master trainer in its

Access and Equity Project. She trains administrators and early childhood professionals on the importance of inclusion.

"In the last six months I have learned how to administer numerous neuropsychological, memory, and learning and achievement tests," Searcy says. "I have also learned how to relay this information to teachers and school administrators through educational reports and conferences, as well as provide treatment to all ages of children. It has been an amazing process, one I could not have accomplished without an Erikson point of view."

NAEYC salutes five

Erikson cofounder, professor, and trustee Barbara T. Bowman was one of only five people—all connected to Erikson—honored in November at the National Association for the Education of Young Children annual conference held in Chicago. "Honoring Chicago's Contributions to Early Childhood Education" paid tribute to Bowman, Erikson life trustee Bernice Weissbourd, Erikson alumni Judy Bertacchi, M.S. '71, and Carol Brunson Day, M.S. '69, and Judith Musick, an educator who over the years has delivered lectures to hundreds of Erikson students.

This year's annual conference showcased Erikson faculty as well. President Samuel J. Meisels and faculty members Bowman, Jie-Qi Chen, Linda Gilkerson, Jon Korfmacher, Gillian McNamee, and Aisha Ray led a total of 13 presentations. Former adjunct professor Marsha Hawley, M.S. '89, and assistant clinical professor Patty Horsch, M.S. '86, Ph.D. '99, also contributed.

Success and celebration

A breath of magic and good will filled the Museum of Science and Industry at Prism Ball 2004, as more than 600 guests turned out to dine, dance, and bid.

Dressed to the nines and surrounded by the museum's captivating exhibits, gala attendees celebrated their way through an evening that raised more than \$700,000 to support Erikson's academic and research programs, then danced the night away in the rotunda to the sounds of Gentlemen of Leisure. Supported by spirited fashion, elegant ice sculptures, and the chance to bid on a cutting-edge Lexus hybrid, the RX400h, Prism Ball showed why it remains a benchmark for Chicago's spring gala season.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Spirit of Erikson Institute award to Harrison Steans, whose sustained efforts and contributions are helping to revive Chicago's North Lawndale community. He was pre-

sented the award by the gala cochair—his daughter, Heather Steans, and Kate Neisser.

"Dad passionately believes that by demonstrating a long-term commitment, developing trusting relationships, and making connections," Heather Steans said, "we can help to empower the people and organizations in the neighborhood."



1. Board chair Susan Wislow with Michelle Obama, director of community affairs at the University of Chicago Hospitals, and president Samuel J. Meisels.

2. Trustee Virginia Bobins, center, who served on the gala's sponsorship and silent auction committees, with trustee Richard Kiphart and his wife, Susan, an Erikson alum.

3. 2004 Spirit of Erikson Institute award winner Harrison Steans chats with 2003 winner Michael Krasny.

4. President Samuel J. Meisels joins trustees and gala cochair Heather Steans and Kate Neisser, and Harrison Steans.

5. Trustee and gala master of ceremonies Kathy Brock with Harrison Steans.



Erikson

Erikson Institute
420 North Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611-5627
Tel: (312) 755-2250
Fax: (312) 755-0928
Email: info@erikson.edu
www.erikson.edu

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2963
Chicago, Illinois

On the cover Regan Kelly, '02, and Rebecca Paulson, '04, help children and families cope with illness and hospitalization at University of Chicago Children's Hospital.
Photo by Kathy Richland.

Erikson Today is published for the donors, alumni, and friends of Erikson Institute. Comments and suggestions, as well as changes of address, may be mailed to the Department of Institutional Advancement, Erikson Institute, 420 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Contributing writers: Emily Hilligoss, Pat Nedeau, David Schwartz; *Editors:* Pat Nedeau, David Schwartz; *Design:* Sorensen London Design; *Photography:* Oscar Moresi, Kathy Richland, Eileen Ryan, David Schwartz.

Produced by the Office of Communications. © 2004 Erikson Institute. All rights reserved. 6-04/6M/DS/04-195