

erikson

children

summer 2008

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Growing up old school

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To heal the soul wound

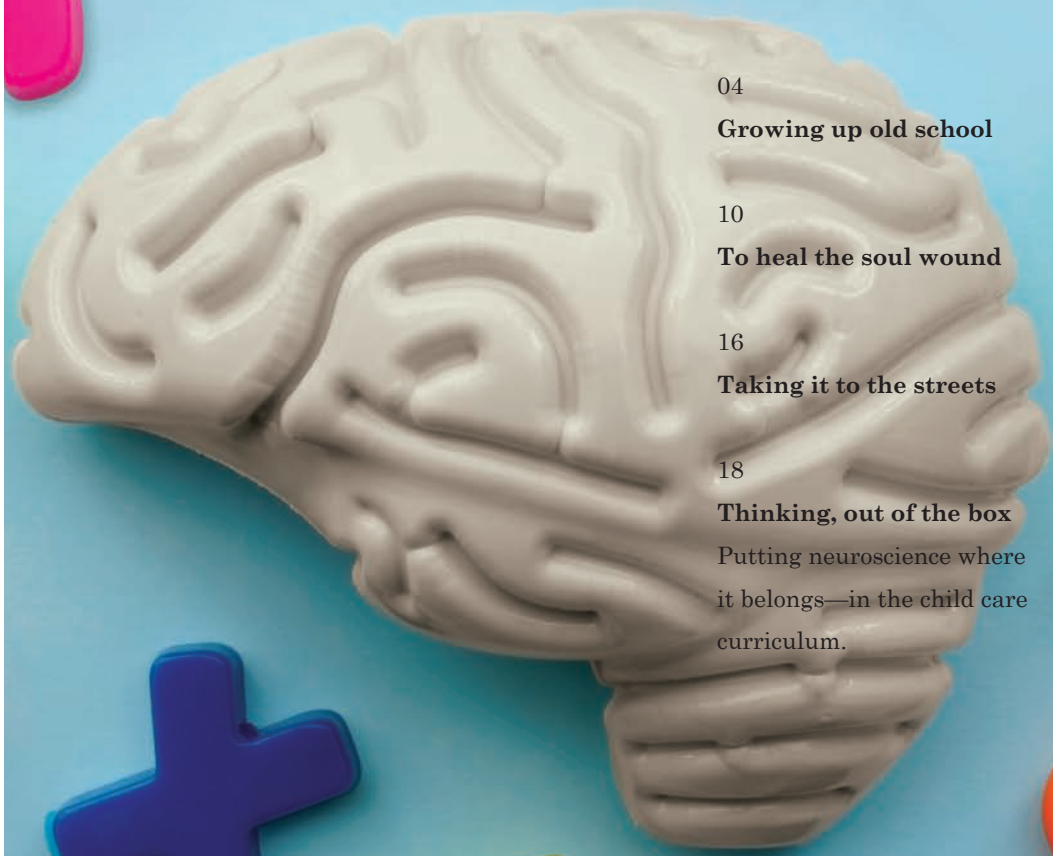
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Thinking, out of the box

Putting neuroscience where it belongs—in the child care curriculum.



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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Only one in five kids entering ninth grade will finish college. The other four need better educational options than what we're offering them.

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From the President

When people ask me what Erikson is, I always have an answer. But I feel that one answer rarely communicates all I want to say about this remarkable institution.

I think that's because we are so many things. We're a graduate school in child development, and a fine one—quite possibly the best in the country. All kinds of people come here to discover how children learn and grow, and they go on to do all kinds of important things.

We're a research center, committed to finding answers to questions that matter to children and families—research that matters.

We're people—faculty, students, and alumni—in pursuit of a single goal, a goal that will improve our world.

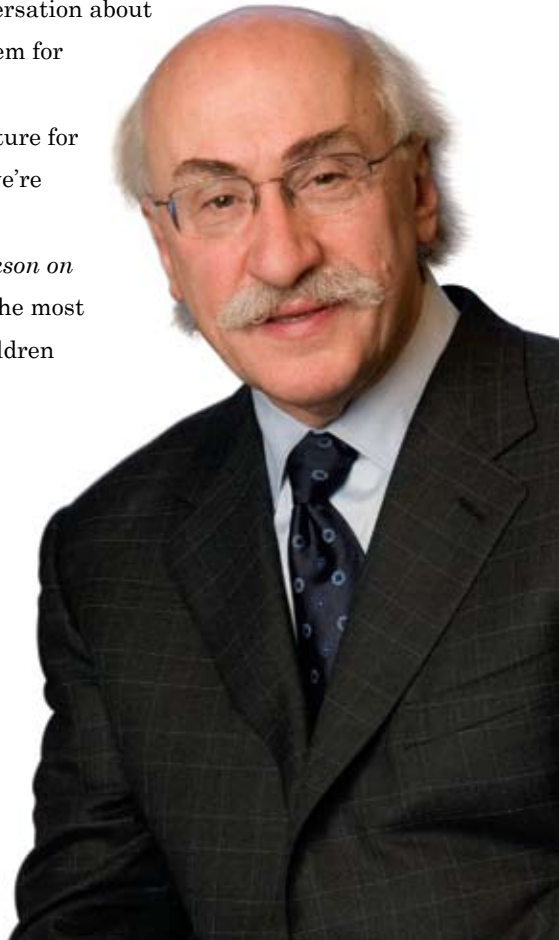
What we are is complex, but what we do is simple: We do everything we can to improve children's lives, both the lives they lead right now and the ones they will lead in the future. Whether it's because we focus on just that one thing, or because we bring together the best resources we can find and devote ourselves to this goal entirely, we succeed.

In these pages, you'll see the evidence. We set out to increase teachers' and caregivers' knowledge of brain development, and we did. We believed it was imperative to begin a national conversation about the best way to engage teens and equip them for adulthood, and we did. We've been looking for ways to restore a fractured social structure for children and families, and little by little, we're accomplishing that.

I think you'll find that this issue of *Erikson on Children* will tell you about what may be the most important thing Erikson is: success for children and families.



Samuel J. Meisels
President





Robert Halpern



Growing up old school

Of every five kids that enter 9th grade in the United States, only one will graduate from a four-year college. Teen dropout rates are high, but even kids who make it through high school are arriving at adulthood unprepared for meaningful work. For the last three years, Erikson professor Robert Halpern has been examining one way to change that: apprenticeships.

Halpern identified and studied nearly 20 programs throughout the U.S., looking at both how they worked and how well they worked. What he learned was that apprenticeships appear to give young people exactly what they need, and precisely what their high school education lacks: meaning and purpose. By admitting adolescents into the adult world of work, apprenticeships encourage kids to apply knowledge to experience, and vice versa. They allow kids to investigate possible careers, to “pretend” while being productive. For the kids Halpern studied, the experience left a lasting impression. He finished a book on the subject—*The Means to Grow Up*—this summer.

[If I can start with the basics, what is apprenticeship, and what is your study of it doing at Erikson?](#)

Apprenticeship is a balanced working and learning experience. Young people learn and practice the skills of a specific discipline through increasingly responsible participation in the tasks of that discipline, under the guidance of a skilled professional. They're often paid, and they feel like they're making a real contribution. It's not make work, you don't put in hours because it's a requirement. Kids are literally exploring fields that they think they might be interested in and finding out whether in fact they are interested in them or not.

As far as what makes this study a fit at Erikson, I suppose it's because I take a developmental lens and apply it to a set of issues. My take on this whole issue is very different than a labor economist's or a political scientist's.

Do you honestly think that having an apprenticeship model of education could solve the problems we have with high school education—the high drop out rates, the dead-end high school diploma?

Apprenticeship isn't exactly a model of high school education but a model of learning and socialization that has the potential to reinvigorate high school education. The experiences I'm writing about are not formal, "registered" apprenticeships, either. That said, I think vocational and technical apprenticeships address the problem of loss of engagement directly in the sense that they give kids and their parents realistic options. When they are tied to more interesting classroom experiences, apprenticeships provide a more appropriate high school experience for kids who really aren't aiming for college. And there are a lot of kids who aren't. No one wants to say it, but the majority of kids these days are on the nothing track, the in-between track. It's not an academic track, even though it's occasionally called that, and it's not a technical or vocational track.

Parents and high school counselors resist moving kids off of this so-called four-year college track. Parents, in particular, hold on to that dream as long as they can, in part because they're influenced by a culture that says, "It's either a four-year college degree or nothing." They don't know a lot about technical or community colleges or careers that their kids might be well suited for in health care, biotechnology, biosciences, information technology, graphics. Apprenticeships introduce kids and their families to another set of pathways to consider.

In addition, you've got a lot of kids who are just sort of wandering through high school, not particularly interested, not particularly engaged. Having apprenticeship experiences seems to wake kids up and re-engage them to some extent. It may only be because they need math skills in their apprenticeship, and they realize they don't have them.

Third, in some settings apprenticeship has really begun to affect the high school curriculum, the teachers, and the environment—the sense of what learning is about and where and how it occurs.

What would you say to people who say, "You're selling our kids short, the thing that you need to do is fix the schools so that our kids aren't on the path to nowhere."

We've been trying to strengthen high schools forever. Let's say we can finally and magically get it to work. Even if you increase the percentage of kids who graduate from four-year colleges from 20 percent to 30 percent—which would be a great accomplishment—you'd still have 70 percent of kids who didn't make it, even having had the advantage of these better high schools.

I think we need to create different pathways for kids, and not just create them but value them and make them less stigmatized. Many of the jobs kids might be interested in and suited for don't require four years of college. Kids don't know about these jobs, or they become aware of them later, after they have come out of some four-year college with gigantic loans, money that they owe and can't pay back.

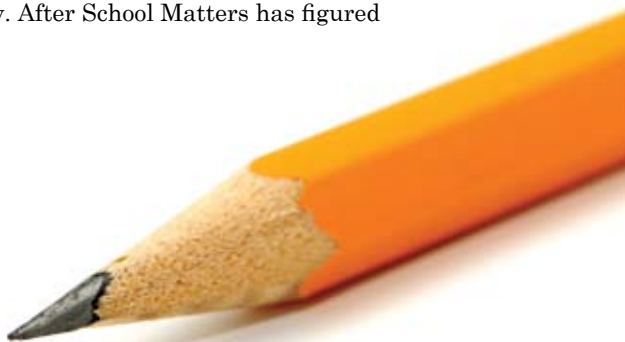
We have to give up the idea that all kids should be attending four-year colleges. Guidance counselors won't tell parents. We have this giant, private four-year college system of mediocre colleges that need to fill their classes, so *they're* not going to tell parents.

In one sense, I don't think there's any solution to the problem because our culture demands everybody have the same nominal education, even if in reality the same nominal education includes different content for different groups of kids. It could be the biggest obstacle to actually improving education that we face in the United States. People are good at different things, they should be allowed to take different pathways, and those pathways need cultural sanction.

What would it take to get a system started?

If apprenticeship programs are going to exist on a large scale, they'll have to be the result of formal policy and funding. There is a statewide initiative in Wisconsin called the Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program, one of the more vocationally oriented apprenticeship systems in the U.S. It involves state government, local school systems, employers, and the technical and community college system. Industry leaders even got together and developed sets of skill standards in their different fields, standards that would then guide the apprenticeship experience in hundreds of local businesses around the state.

You obviously can't do that with creative and cultural kinds of apprenticeships. But what is interesting is that the majority of creative individuals, artists and such, don't just do their own work. They also have jobs in industry or in the nonprofit or civic sector. Not all of them would be great teachers and mentors, of course, but it's an obvious role for a lot of professionals in the creative and cultural sectors, if you do it in an organized, systematic way. After School Matters has figured out how to do it in Chicago.



You point out in your book that many kids today have very unrealistic expectations: they're going to be famous. Can an apprenticeship program reconnect kids to reality?

The anecdotal evidence, the experience of kids who participate in apprenticeships, says to me that it does make a difference. Kids learn so many lessons about what it means to try to get good at something, about how much work it takes and what the timeframe is. They have no concept of how fields are structured, or what the processes are that professionals in the field have been through. Apprenticeships teach them about that.

How does it affect the kid who's sitting around hoping that she or he's going to be discovered? I don't know, but I think that kids have that fantasy in part because it's a substitute for having a more grounded sense of "first you gotta go here, and then you gotta go there, and you gotta do this and you gotta do that."

How long would an apprenticeship have to be to give someone the chance to learn all that?

It's a good question. Many aren't really long enough to get kids beyond what you'd call the novice phase. A lot of mentors that I've spoken with have said that they need to work with kids over a longer period of time. It's also a problem that the early phase in any field is the least satisfying, so you also are struggling the most. In the Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program, which has the most hours of any program I've seen in this country, they're doing 900 hours. That's enough to begin to get good in some fields, but it isn't enough in others.

Are we creating two separate worlds? Middle class kids on the academic track can remain children until they're out of grad school, but kids in lower socio-economic groups have to become adults right away?

I don't think that it's just working class kids who need to be engaged in the adult world.

You know, we protect kids in the wrong way, and we expose kids in the wrong way. We protect them saying, "Oh, my child has plenty of time to become an adult," and yet we expose them, in the area of morals and responsibility in relationships and that kind of thing, when they're very young.

Another big problem is that we tend to separate the world of work—the economy and productivity—from our educational institutions, both college and high school. That separation is so much greater in the United States than it is in any other country. That's part of what makes this discussion so



While not an apprenticeship program, Chicago's After School Matters offers teens after school work opportunities in diverse fields.

difficult: we don't think about what it would mean to have a closer connection between education and the economy, or about what should be rooted in or driven by the economy.

What would you like to come from this work?

I'd like it to be part of the high school reform debate. Right now, every mayor in the country and many state and school and foundation leaders are tackling this issue of "High school isn't working," and yet we've not really defined yet very clearly how and why it's not working. And nobody's even thinking about apprenticeships. You've got the Gates Foundation funding high school reform to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, and yet never has the word apprenticeship passed their lips.

I don't think work's the solution to everything, by the way, but I do think that what I've discovered through working on this book is that work-like settings and experiences seem to meet a lot of needs that are not being met now. The purpose of this book, in part, is to reintroduce what people see as an outmoded, not-so-useful concept and to argue that, You know what? It's a concept that actually addresses a lot of the things that we're concerned about, as well as some of the things that we're not thinking about but that we should be. [ii](#)



Lucille A. Echohawk

To heal the soul wound

When Texas officials, suspecting child abuse, took 468 Mormon children from their homes and parents this year, it took just 54 days for the courts to reverse the action. Yet American Indian/Alaska Native children across the U.S.—68 percent of them in the years between 1941 and 1978 alone—have been forcibly and permanently removed from families who are suspected of nothing whatsoever. Tribal scholars call this cultural destruction the “soul wound.” One Erikson alumna has spent the last 30 years trying to heal it.

“The big picture is to cut the Native foster care population in half by the year 2020. I think it could happen. I’m optimistic. I always am.”

Lucille A. Echohawk, ’78, optimist and winner of the 2007 Erikson Institute Founders Award, is also a realist. Currently strategic adviser of Indian child welfare programs at Casey Family Programs in Denver, she has looked at, and sometimes lived, the issues from any number of perspectives: first-grade and Head Start teacher, policy wonk, fundraiser, administrator, researcher, agency founder, adoptive mother, and yes, American Indian.

A member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Echohawk was raised in Farmington, New Mexico. She is the second of six children in a close-knit family that she describes as a “tremendous asset.”

“It was never easy, it was never perfect, but it was constant,” she says. “And you always knew that you had that to rely on. That, and one another,” she adds.

Reestablishing roots

At Casey, Echohawk works to give Native children that same advantage. She helps nations strengthen their families and communities, develop foster care systems that respect tribal and clan kinships, and provide direct services to children who must be placed in foster care due to abuse or neglect. Her child development degree—the result of a chance encounter with five Erikson faculty members advising Head Start programs on nine reservations—has helped her

understand and frame the issues and sort through the devastation left behind by more than a century of government-sponsored assimilation.

As a policy, assimilation was meant to “kill the Indian, and save the man,” in the words of Capt. Richard H. Pratt, who founded one of the first Indian boarding schools in the nation (having first tested his ideas in a Florida jail). Transported to white-run boarding schools, Native children were given new names, forbidden to speak their language, and separated from every cultural referent they had ever known. From the 1880s to the 1930s, more than 100,000 children were transported. Parents caught trying to hide their young ones and keep them home lost their food rations.

The residential schools eventually fell out of favor, but government-mandated, wholesale removal of children continued. Between 1941 and 1978 alone, 68 percent of all Indian children were removed from their families to be placed in white orphanages or foster homes or adopted by white families. Even today, 30 years after the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), social workers, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals continue to persuade Indian parents to consent to adoptions, promising them that their children will be better off in a white, middle-class family.

Professor Barbara Bowman, one of the five who first met Echohawk in Albuquerque, recalls, “They’d send out trucks that would stop at every hogan and pick up every child over the age of five. The kids would be sent off to boarding schools and they’d stay there until they graduated from high school or ran away, whichever came first. I saw five-year-olds who hadn’t been home in six months.”

To Echohawk, what *didn’t* happen to her community during that terrible time is at least as important as what did. “We did not disappear as Native Nations,” she says simply. “Even after trucking a whole bunch of us to urban areas, by and large, we did not assimilate.”

[A war on all fronts](#)

The work of strengthening families has multiple components: research, service, education, philanthropy, building collaboration. At Casey and in any one of a dozen independent initiatives, Echohawk has done them all.

Louis Delgado, director of Loyola University Chicago’s Philanthropy & Nonprofit Sector Program, has known Echohawk since he was her internship supervisor when she was at Erikson. “Lucille’s work has catapulted her to national leadership, but she has maintained her commitment to local Indian initiatives,” Delgado says. “Most people do one or the other; to lead at the national and local level is extraordinary.”



Students at Carlisle Indian School, circa 1880. The school, founded by Capt. Richard Pratt, was in Pennsylvania. These students were from Omaha.

Delgado himself launched one of the national initiatives in which Echohawk has played a significant role. The private nonprofit Native Americans in Philanthropy, founded in 1990, seeks to get Native people involved in mainstream philanthropy, not just as donors or fundraisers but as program officers and trustees. Something under one-tenth of 1 percent of the philanthropic resources of mainstream private foundations reach the American Indian/Alaska Native community, and those have traditionally gone to colleges, universities, and libraries. While the rise of gaming in the '90s has enriched a handful of tribes, the vast majority have few resources and tremendous needs. “Her work has increased not just funding,” says Delgado, “but awareness of the issues at stake.”

Echohawk’s connections and energy seem limitless. Eleven years ago, while working at the American Indian College Fund, she volunteered to help Casey put together recommendations for “Goal 14,” the foundation’s Indian child welfare initiative. In 2000, she cofounded the Denver Indian Family Resource Center, which is now providing advice and technical assistance to a similar urban effort in the Bay Area of California, one that may branch out to L.A., as well. She has worked with the Oglala Sioux, or Lakota, of the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations, the MHA Nation (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara), the Nez Perce in Idaho, the Northern Arapaho and the Shoshone of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, and the Yakama Nation in Washington state.

[Putting the law into practice](#)

Thirty years after its passage, compliance with ICWA is still an issue.

“There aren’t enough native foster homes,” explains Echohawk. “There isn’t enough adherence to the requirements of the act, so in many cases Indian kids don’t even get identified. People have stereotypes about what Native people look like, and if you don’t have ‘the look,’ they don’t always ask the question. Some-



*Left: Echohawk and Erikson cofounder Lorraine Wallach.
Right: Echohawk catches up with old friends at the annual Alumni
of Erikson Institute dinner and awards ceremony.*

times even if you do have the look they won't ask the question because they think you're Hispanic or something else. I used to get asked if I was Hawaiian.

"Many kids don't get proper or appropriate services because the social workers don't know that we have an entity here that can provide those culturally appropriate services. It's a challenge. But we can improve the system, and we can catch kids and get their families to focus on strengthening themselves before their kids ever get in the system.

"In Indian country," she observes, "nothing is easy." Nonetheless, Echohawk is particularly encouraged by the work that Casey Family Programs has been doing on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations since 1983. "I said to one of our trustees once, 'I don't know how you-all chose those two areas, but you took on two of the toughest tribal communities in this nation. If you wanted need, you got it, exponentially,'" she remembers. The project has involved facilitating the creation of tribally-controlled child welfare agencies; previously, cases were handled by the state of South Dakota or the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

"It took time and a lot of money. But now, it's mostly the Native people themselves that are doing the work, and that's the beauty of it," she says. "They know the needs and they can best figure out the solutions. They get a lot of help from the outside, but they're leading the effort, not us. In Pine Ridge, we facilitated the development of their own practice model, a Lakota practice model, incorporating their spiritual beliefs, their code of ethics, as they call it. They're trying to apply cultural practices to good child welfare practice as they define it, not as we do. Recently they wrote a proposal where they will partner with their tribal college, the Oglala Lakota College, and put together a training support system for their child welfare workers that, again, will be culturally specific. It is absolutely unique."

Research and policy

From her office in Denver, Echohawk works to get Native people a place at the table. She is careful to have the facts and dogged at putting them to use. It's a skill she learned when she "cut her policy teeth" in Washington as special assistant to Graciela Olivares in the Carter administration's antipoverty agency.

"I recently had to write some comments that we were presenting to the Department of Health and Human Services on a regulation on the AFCARS [Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System] data, and again, they forgot to talk about Native people," she says. "Well, we're only about 1.5 percent of the total population, but in the child welfare system we are disproportionately represented, more so than even African American children.

"They called it a disparity ratio, and it is probably even higher because a lot of Native data isn't even in AFCARS.... If tribes are contracting BIA child welfare dollars and they've got kids in care, those kids aren't counted anywhere."

In the policy arena, what doesn't get counted doesn't exist. So Echohawk has used her position at Casey to encourage Native-specific research, of which there is still very little. A research collaboration she put together with NICWA, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, resulted in a series of research reports that provide insight into the Native community both in the aggregate and tribally. Among them is *Native American Kids 2000: Indian Child Well-Being Indicators*, which in itself could be course reading for a class on multicultural child development.

Going the distance

Dealing with the culture of poverty, trying to build on the strengths of the tribal culture, restoring faith, bringing people together around new ideas—after so many years of chipping away at the issues, Echohawk's philosophy is fairly straightforward: "Just continue to give whatever it takes in different ways.

"It's a long-term process. It isn't going to happen probably in my generation, but you've got to set the tone and get started down the road, and that's happening." Sometimes, she says, it's as simple as giving people encouragement and support, gifts she got first from her parents and found again, not surprisingly, at Erikson.

At the award ceremony at Erikson in November, Echohawk reflected on her time here—a time during which, she noted, she saw her first public housing project and got accustomed to locks on doors. "It was tough, but Erikson was like a family, and with that family here behind me, I made it through. The spirit and the passion for children and the sensitivity to where I and others were coming from was just amazing. It really did send me well on the way I found for myself." **ii**

Taking it to the streets

Award-winning teacher Mildred Ebietomiye, '06, gets behind the wheel of the StoryBus

Like so many other Erikson alumni, Mildred Ebietomiye [eh-be-i-toe-me-yay] could describe her career goals in one word: “more”—more children, of more ages, in more places.

She began working with just a few children in her own home, running a home-based child care service. After earning a certificate in infant studies at Erikson and then returning for a master’s in child development, she branched out into the classroom, first as a teacher and then as a master teacher, supervising the work of other teachers at Educare, the child care program managed by the Ounce of Prevention Fund.

Now, Ebietomiye has widened her scope again. In January, this former Kohl McCormick Early Childhood Teaching Award winner became director of education at the Dolores Kohl Education Foundation, a private, not-for-profit organization that offers professional development for teachers and develops educational programs for children. The most prominent of those programs, and certainly the most visible, is the StoryBus.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for me,” says Ebietomiye. “I’ve worked with professionals at the foundation before, and they are all so talented.” The position also gives Ebietomiye a chance to unleash her creativity. In May, a family literacy event at the Kohl Children’s Museum reunited children who’ve participated in StoryBus, their families, and their teachers in storytelling and book-making activities.

The StoryBus is both an actual 37-foot Winnebago bus and a literacy-based curriculum for early childhood teachers. It’s a traveling storybook, appealing to children’s imagination by recreating the setting of four classic children’s tales: *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Little Red Hen*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, and *The Gingerbread Man*. Teachers implement the curriculum activities using the StoryBus stories as a context for learning math, science, and language arts—in fact, all the areas that the Illinois State Board of Education considers critical. In the 2007–08 school year, 4,500 children participated in StoryBus.



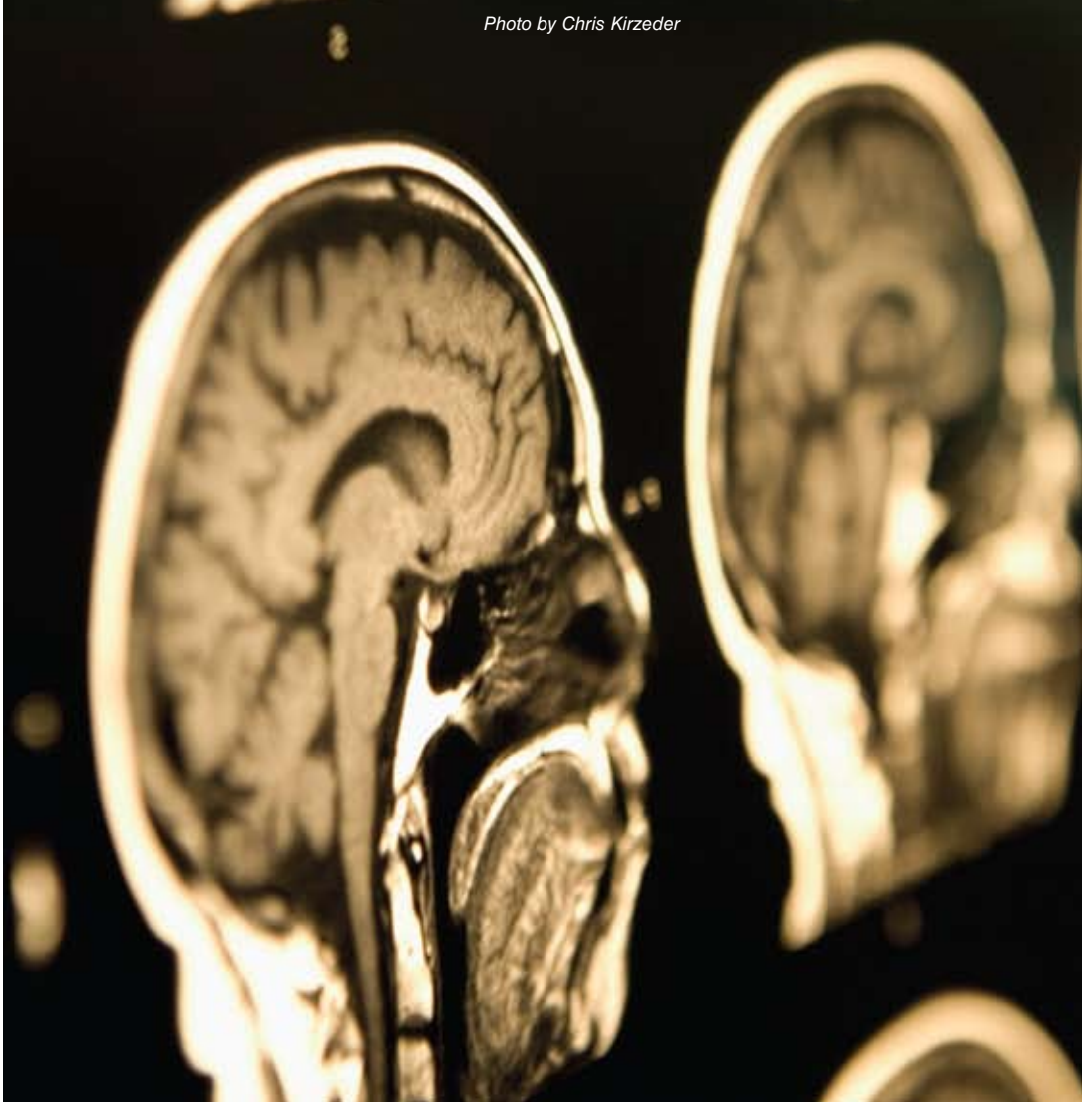
Beginning this fall, the StoryBus's path will cross Erikson's, when the institute will begin providing training and support for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers who participate in the StoryBus program. Deborah Mantia, director of professional development at Erikson, anticipates working with about 300 teachers, a number that translates to about 6,000 children in Chicago area schools.

Scaling up from a handful of children to thousands doesn't faze Ebiotomiye in the least. "When you're supporting others you have to have a willingness and openness to see things from their perspective," she says. "I know Erikson gave me those skills." ii





Photo by Chris Kirzeder



Thinking, out of the box

What researchers have learned in the last 15 years about how the human brain develops has profound implications for everything from early childhood program design to curriculum and teaching. Yet few, if any, of these findings are covered in courses for child care workers and preschool teachers—the very people who could put that knowledge to good use.

All that's about to change, thanks to a multiyear Erikson initiative that created a kit of neuroscience curriculum modules, each incorporating the best thinking on the subject, that college child development teachers can use right out of the box in their classrooms. In February 2008, after intensive field testing by 55 instructors at 22 colleges in the Chicago area, those modules were published by Zero to Three Press as *Early Development and the Brain: Teaching Resources for Educators*. Erikson professor Linda Gilkerson, who launched the project, and Rebecca Klein, '01, a key contributor, edited the volume.

“This curriculum has enormous implications for educators,” says Gilkerson. “They can now make the link between how an early childhood professional engages with a young child and how this learning affects his brain.”

Early Development and the Brain distills complex topics—such as stress, coping, and caregiving; sensory processing; and language and the brain—and offers a road map for teaching them. Each of the nine units in the curriculum includes everything the instructor needs, including student handouts, PowerPoint™ slide presentations, and detailed lecture notes. The materials were created with a cadre of nationally recognized developmental and neuroscience professionals from institutions such as Erikson, Yale Child Study Center, and Harvard Medical School. The experts not only wrote the curriculum and acted as consultants; some even mentored the faculty who tested the units.

Building a better curriculum

“We started with a needs assessment. What we learned was that child development faculty at the colleges we surveyed really were interested in bringing this material into their classrooms,” says Gilkerson. “What they didn't necessarily feel up to was the task of sifting through hundreds of



journal articles to find the latest research, evaluate its validity, and then review the literature to understand its significance to early childhood teachers and caregivers.”

Examples of such research abound. Take the lag that neuroscience researchers found between the development of Wernicke’s and Broca’s areas in the maturing brain. Does it have any significance to the child development classroom? As it happens, the answer is yes. Wernicke’s is responsible for receptive language, Broca’s for expressive, and the lag between their development explains why your baby can understand the word “book” before she can say it.

Even when you know something, it can be hard to overcome the fear of teaching it. “It’s worrying about how well you yourself have grasped the subject, and how competent you are to teach it,” explains Sharon Syc, a clinical professor at Erikson and one of the project leads, “that keeps many good teachers from updating their courses.”

For the project team working on the curriculum, identifying and gathering the research was only the first hurdle. Finding a way to teach it—to break down complex science and work it into an existing curriculum—was another. For that, they relied on a group of early childhood faculty that came to be known as the faculty study group. Study group members helped ensure that the curriculum was accessible, easy to use, and could be applied to most college early childhood programs.

Sureshrani Paintal, professor of early childhood education at Chicago State University, summed up her study group work this way: “There is so much information about the brain in the media. How do my students decipher that and apply it to their work? That was my starting point.” As Paintal tested the modules, she let the project leaders know what worked for her students, where more explanation or illustrations were needed, or when her students were confused by technical terms. “Now I am more confident, and they are better prepared,” she says.

Enthusiastic reviews

Teachers can use the modules as the basis of an entire course or weave them into a variety of courses in child development. Nancy Segall, formerly a faculty member at both Truman and Daley Colleges and now adjunct faculty at Erikson, says that she’s used the modules in almost every course. “For instance, the module on language and the brain added depth to a course on the development of language. It gave me everything I needed to teach about the brain and language acquisition.”

Measurable results

A survey of faculty and students illustrate the modules' effectiveness.

Faculty	Students	Increased teaching time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changed the course content• Developed new courses• Increased teaching time about the brain• Added or enhanced course topics• Added course readings• Used additional videos• Added or modified their course assignments	<p>72% increase in learning</p> <p>Percentage of students showing change</p> <p>62% of community college students</p> <p>80% of undergraduate and graduate students</p>	<p><i>Average</i> 40 min to 3 hr 8 min</p> <p><i>Community college</i> 34 min to 2 hr 43 min</p> <p><i>Undergrad/Grad</i> 38 min to 3 hr 34 min</p> <p><i>Mini-grant</i> 48 min to 3 hr 50 min</p> <p><i>Non mini-grant</i> 29 min to 2 hr 6 min</p>

Both Segall and Paintal gave especially high marks to the module on stress by Megan Gunner, a professor of child development at the University of Minnesota, and Elysia Davis. “We all experience stress—babies, children, and adults,” says Paintal, “Taking it from theory to real science and seeing the hard evidence about the effects of stress on learning were very exciting for the students. I’ve used Stress, Coping, and Caregiving with undergraduate and graduate students and have integrated it into almost every course I’ve taught over several years.”

She is equally enthusiastic about the module called Neurobehavioral Observation. “It was invaluable. I have found that my students could become excellent observers of how babies respond to their environment just from this one lesson.”

Jorge Argueta, acting chair of the humanities department at St. Augustine College in Chicago, notes that his students “have a deeper understanding of development and are more objective and less judgmental in their observations.” And not just students benefit. “I got so interested in the topics that it spurred me to read more. I felt increasingly confident in understanding and interpreting what I read,” he says.





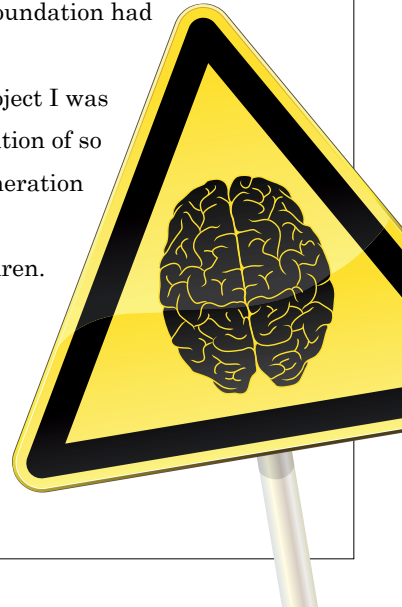
Linda Gilkerson

Gilkerson and her team encouraged members of the faculty study group to experiment with the modules as well. Mini-grants enabled faculty to purchase resources and to launch small interdisciplinary projects to spread the knowledge about neurodevelopment.

At Chicago State, Paintal used a mini-grant to bring together interested faculty from biology, reading, library science, and elementary education for several meetings. “This was a very exciting time. We all learned from one another and felt enriched by talking across disciplines.” Language and the Brain coauthor Lise Eliot, associate professor of neuroscience at the Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science and author of *What’s Going On in There? How the Brain and Mind Develop in the First Five Years of Life*, attended one such meeting to share her knowledge.

Erikson’s work has already influenced Chicago-area child development faculty and the hundreds of students they prepare for positions in child development centers and preschools each year. With the publication and distribution of *Early Development and the Brain*, the work will reach faculty and students throughout the country. Such far-reaching results were exactly what project funders the McCormick Foundation and Irving Harris Foundation had hoped to achieve with their investment.

“It’s been a long time coming—when I started this project I was a brunette,” jokes Gilkerson, “but thanks to the participation of so many experts and teachers across the country, a new generation of early childhood professionals will bring new skills and understanding to their work with babies and young children. And that benefits us all.” [ii](#)



Erikson ongoing

Whatever their job title, Erikson faculty, alumni, and students are united in a single, ongoing enterprise: to make life 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.



Left: Isabel Aguilar and Maria Martinez, both 2008 graduates, chat after *A Conversation on Social Justice*, which focused on the effects of immigration policies on children and featured Flavia Jiménez, right, of the National Council of La Raza.

Mission accomplished, and then some

The goal, an ambitious one under the circumstances, was to serve 200 families and 175 children. Those are the numbers that Erikson's Fussy Baby Latina project had vowed to reach with its two-person staff, augmented by an 8-hour-a-week part-timer.

Well, the final tally is in: 249 Spanish-speaking families have received counseling, and 187 babies have been held, soothed, given tummy time, and, in some cases, referred for early intervention or necessary health

services. As important, more than 35 percent of the families seen have become "regulars," participating in ongoing weekly parent groups in their community, like the one at St. Agnes of Bohemia, in Chicago's Little Village. Parent group discussions cover everything from temperament and crying to discipline, motor skills, speech and language development, sibling issues, and more.

"Finding the right approach with this community, learning about their needs and their greatest worries, took a bit of time," says project director Sinane

Goulet, "but at this point, we could be seeing three times the number of families if we only had the staff to do it."

Smart move

As you read this, Erikson is settling into its new campus. The Erikson lobby on the corner of LaSalle and Illinois provides access to the contemporary three-floor facility, providing up-to-date learning technology, more classroom space, and room to grow. Even more exciting (if that's possible): starting in

2009, Erikson's new Center for Children and Families will begin providing assessments, family based mental health services, and developmental services to children and families in Chicago. Moving day is scheduled for July 31; our new address is 451 North LaSalle, Chicago, 60654.



Alumna named one of "Chicago's finest"

Barbara Clear, '05, received a Kohl McCormick Early Childhood Teaching Award at a luncheon ceremony held on June 3 in downtown Chicago. Clear, who came to the early childhood classroom by way of the theater, works with 2- to 5-year-olds at Evanston Day Nursery. More than 200 teachers were nominated for the awards; 5 were chosen in a selection process that included site visits. Jim Price, a former Kohl McCormick winner, praised Clear's work. "She has a great ability to use naturally occurring conversations and events to 'teach' social skills, vocabulary, and other concepts. Barb is a Pied Piper," he said. "Children follow her lead wherever she goes."

A walk for the roses

A total of 84 master's and 3 doctoral students received their diplomas at Erikson's annual commencement, held May 10 at the South Shore Cultural Center. Receiving the doctorate honoris causa were early childhood educator and museum founder Dolores Kohl Kaplan and writer Alex Kotlowitz.

Worth 1,000 words

How do you capture or codify the richness of what you do when you teach? Teachers learn what they know about teaching through practice, and practice can't be broken down into a series of rules. How to make teachers' professional knowledge accessible to other teachers is the focus of *Teachers Learning in Communities: International Perspectives*, edited by Michal Zellermyer and Elaine Munthe, with Malka Gorodetsky, Erikson dean of faculty and senior vice president for academic affairs Frances O'Connell Rust, and Lily Orland-Barak.

Right:

Master's students Tate Steele Street and Reena Vohra at the first Alumni/Student Networking Night.

Good work

Rose Davies, '72,

received the Commander of Distinction Award from the government of Jamaica in 2007 for her “outstanding contribution to the development of early childhood education in Jamaica.” As commissioner for early childhood education in Jamaica since 2004, Davies oversees the development and monitoring of more than 2,000 early childhood programs and services for children birth to age eight—programs that serve more than 150,000 children. She is also senior lecturer of early childhood education at the University of the West Indies, where she oversees the early childhood teacher education programs in local teachers’ colleges. Davies, who holds a doctorate in teacher education, says she has fond memories of Erikson, “and how much I learned in [a] short space of time.”

Patricia M. Cooper, '80,

is assistant professor at New York University and works in early childhood and early literacy development.

Jean C. Murphy, '81,

has begun her tenth year at Chicago State University as a full professor. She also serves on a writing team responsible for creating curriculum materials for pre-K to kindergarten-age children in Ghana, West Africa. Murphy advises on the development of children’s workbooks and teachers’ guides in mathematics, literacy, and environmental studies; in February 2007, she traveled to Ghana for the launch of the first of these materials. The project produced more than 600,000 copies in 2007.

Ann Gadzikowski, '90,

has published *Story Dictation—A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals* (Redleaf Press, 2007) on the technique of writing down children’s stories. Gadzikowski dedicated her book to “my friends and mentors at Erikson Institute, past and present,” thanking the faculty and alumni who “provided valuable support and resources during the creation of the book.”

Virginia A. York, '92,

is associate deputy director for licensing for the Illinois Department of Children Family Services, which licenses and provides consultation for more than 13,000 day care homes, day care centers, and child care institutions in Illinois.

Jennifer Ohman-Rodriguez, '93,

helped create, fund, and coordinate the Quad Cities Association for the Education of Young Children (Quad Cities AEYC), a project to raise the quality of early care and education centers. The Quad Cities AEYC provides environmental assessments, mentoring, and training for child care and education centers in the Quad City region, which covers parts of Western Illinois and Eastern Iowa. Fourteen centers, serving approximately 1,200 children, have completed the quality through accreditation project through the program. Ohman-Rodriguez currently serves as the program’s mentor, working with directors at child development centers to assess and implement improvement plans. In January, she was named to the advisory board of Free Spirit Publishing, a publisher of self-help books for kids and teenagers.

Katherine Murphy, '95,

is working at San Francisco State University with Gateway to Quality, a group that works to improve the quality of publicly and privately funded preschools in



and around San Francisco. Murphy does site support, working with teachers on environments, communication, and materials. She is married with two children, a 5-year-old girl and a 3-year-old boy.

Luisiana Meléndez, '97, received her doctorate at Erikson's commencement ceremony in May. She is director of Erikson's bilingual/ESL certificate program and a clinical assistant professor. Her dissertation was Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Early Childhood: A Study of Teachers' Knowledge.

Holly Bamford Hunt, '99, is working part-time as a parent/child educator at a community college in Tacoma, Washington. She conducts classes in which parents and their infants and toddlers learn through music and play. Hunt also provides support and classes to parents who are working to regain legal custody of their children. She is expecting her third child in May.

Jennifer McCray, '99, has earned her doctorate. In February she successfully defended her dissertation, Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Preschool Mathematics: Relationships to Teaching Practices and Child Outcomes, and in March, Professors Chen and Halpern signed

the approval form that made the achievement official. McCray has directed Erikson's Early Mathematics Education Project since last summer, and will continue providing leadership on the project through next year.

Lesley Phillips, '99, is working as a certified child life specialist at Kravis Children's Hospital at Mount Sinai in New York.

Geanine Pecora, '01, married Daniel Hunt on May 27, 2007. She works as a child life specialist in the pediatric intensive care unit at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago, which serves more than 113,000 children annually.

Angela Searcy, '01, is participating in a research study with the Center for Social and Emotional Early Foundations in Learning, a resource center that aims to strengthen child care and Head Start through research and training child care professionals in proven practices. Searcy, an associate at the Pediatric Neuropsychology Diagnostic and Treatment Center in Orlando Park, provides both training on social and emotional competence and technical assistance to early childhood programs in Maryland and Illinois. She is also a consultant on social and emotional competence to three child care programs in Chicago under grants from the Early Childhood Quality Improvement Program.

Carol Willison, '04, is teaching first grade students in Kampala, Uganda. She is also a literary coach for pre-K to second grade students. Her class has students from the Sudan, Belgium, Holland, Uganda, Tanzania, Pakistan, the U.S., Eritrea, and Israel.

Yocasta A. Alicea, who completed the bilingual/ESL certificate program in 2006, completed her masters in interdisciplinary studies of curriculum and instruction at National Louis University in March 2008.

Mandy Boyles Miller, '06, is a social service worker at Kaleidoscope, Inc., a Chicago agency providing therapeutic foster care for children with special needs, transitional living services for teens, and community services for foster families who face unique emotional special challenges. Miller assesses, develops, and executes strategies to stabilize the foster placements of children who've had to leave multiple foster homes.

Cynthia O'Neil Lashley received her doctorate in December 2007. Her dissertation was Transition to Motherhood: Low Income Adolescent Black Mothers' Perspectives.

In memoriam

Former faculty member and alumna Gertrude J. ("Jay") Freedman, '69, died May 5, 2008, in Skokie, Illinois, at the age of 84. Jay built Erikson's first Teacher Resource Room and was known for her work helping early childhood classroom teachers and caregivers to be effective practitioners. An excellent student adviser and a wonderful colleague, she was involved in a number of training projects, the largest of which was the development of teacher competencies in Native American early childhood programs. She will be remembered as an outstanding preschool teacher and educator, one who was, in the words of a colleague, Professor Aisha Ray, "very funny and very wise about what mattered for young kids, their families, and for the larger field."



Investing in our future

Every dollar invested in strengthening early childhood education saves from \$10 to \$17 in child welfare costs, remediation and special education costs, emergency room visits, public health costs, criminal justice costs, and decreased tax revenue. Market up or market down, investing in early childhood gives us all a guaranteed return.

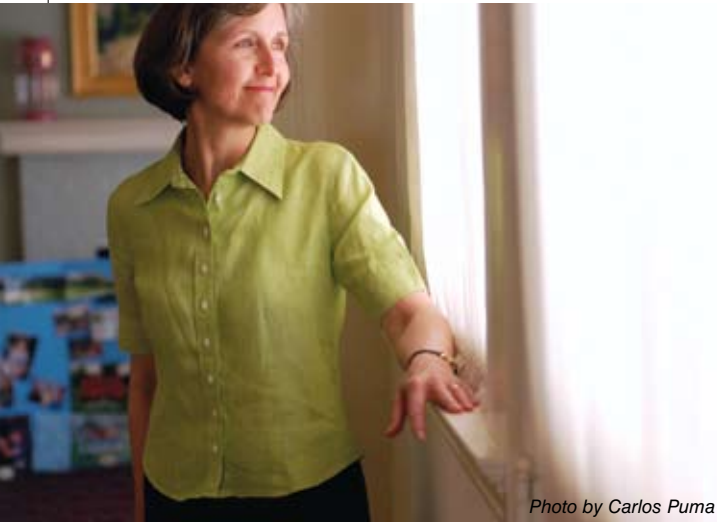


Photo by Carlos Puma

Passing it on

Clair Oxtoby, '93
Pomona, California

What brought you to Erikson?

A sense of wonder and curiosity about children. We had taken two sabbaticals, spending an academic year first in England and later six months in Australia. Our experiences in local schools motivated and deepened my desire to understand different types of educational experiences. I also wanted to sort out issues concerning physical growth and development, and the role of different cultural expectations. It was clear that many approaches

worked but I didn't know why.

During the application process in an interview with Barbara Bowman, she asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" It was a disarming question that has stayed with me because it sounded so direct and simple, and yet it was hard to answer. I must have said, "Teacher," although I already had a teaching credential and what I really wanted was to understand young kids better and learn about the field of early childhood development.

What do you remember about your student days here?

A very welcoming and supportive community: faculty and staff answered practical questions such as where to look for parking downtown and provided tools for chipping away at harder questions such as how can we foster resilience. There was almost always a snack in the kitchen and someone nearby with whom to share a conversation. During my first year classes were held in an office building on Chicago Avenue that by year's end had been condemned by the city. And for the very last class that was held there, we tiptoed around yellow police tape, cordoning off a sinking spot in the building. The following year we moved to Wabash Avenue to quite lavish quarters by comparison. I'm so glad Erikson will soon have its own building, gaining needed space and visibility.

And the education itself?

Our entering class was a diverse group in terms of age, sex, ethnicity, and experience. We came mostly from different neighborhoods in Chicago, having worked in a variety of jobs relating to children: ophthalmologist, song writer and performer, day care provider, teachers from Head Start as well as from public and private



Mayor Richard M. Daley chats with J.B. and M.K. Pritzker at Erikson's Prism Ball.

schools, physical therapists, and social workers. We were eager to make sense of the materials for ourselves and to learn from the different perspectives of our classmates. At the same time I began working at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools as an assistant teacher in the Nursery School. Readings followed by discussion, teaching, and reflecting on the classroom experience made for a rich and well-integrated learning experience.

Why do you give to Erikson?

Erikson Institute is important because it champions children, teachers, and others who practice in a variety of child-related fields. I give to Erikson because it is such a forward-looking institution. The school is constantly expanding to bring new programs to more people, and I want to support this mission. I am also impressed that Erikson keeps in touch with its alumni so well and continues to support us as we try to support children in a variety of ways. In a sense, Erikson trains us to become advocates for children for life.

Happy holidays

Guests at the December 6 holiday reception hosted by Erikson trustee Judy McCaskey and her husband, Ray, were treated to more than an Erikson update. The McCaskey's impressive collection of antique holiday decorations and ornaments—a collection built over many years—perfectly captured the spirit of the season.

Thanks to our phonathon callers!

- Bilge Cerezci
- Christina Coghill
- Virginia George
- Jean Robbins
- Jessica Ruiz
- Chevon Townsend
- Professor Luisiana Meléndez
- Dean Frances O'Connell Rust
- Professor Linda Gilkerson



Maggie Daley

Prism Ball

Chicago First Lady Maggie Daley accepted the Spirit of Erikson Institute Award presented to After School Matters at Erikson's annual Prism Ball on Saturday, April 12. The black-tie event, held at the Field Museum, drew a crowd of nearly 400 Chicago notables in the fields of education, finance, philanthropy and real estate and raised more than \$1.1 million for education, research, and community outreach programs.



Long-time Erikson trustees, photographer Kathy Richland Pick and alumna Virginia Bobins, at the McCaskey's holiday party

Legacy Society

The Legacy Society honors and recognizes the generosity and vision of those who have chosen to leave a legacy to Erikson through their estate or deferred gifts. Legacy donors receive invitations to special activities and recognition in Erikson Institute publications. The Institute will also honor requests for donor anonymity. Members of the society may choose to make unrestricted gifts to Erikson or direct their gifts to ongoing programs. Staff can assist donors in providing options and making that decision. Membership in this honorary society is simply a matter of advising the vice president of Institutional Advancement of the intention of a legacy gift through providing documentation of a bequest in a will or living trust; a charitable remainder trust; or designation as beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy. Please contact Eileen Murphy at (312) 893-7110 or emurphy@erikson.edu for more information.

Fulfilling the Promise: The Campaign for Erikson Institute

Under the leadership of Virginia '90, and Norman Bobins, Erikson's \$30 million capital campaign is a growing success. As of June 5, 2008, the campaign total exceeds \$21,500,000. Included in that total are gifts and commitments from every member of the Erikson Board of Trustees, totaling more than \$12 million. Erikson alumni are participating in the campaign with their support of the Barbara T. Bowman Fellowship in Early Education and Social Justice.

We are most grateful to our donors of leadership gifts including The Irving Harris Foundation, Pritzker Foundation, Polk Bros. Foundation, the Searle

Funds at the Chicago Community Trust, the Harris Family Foundation, and Bank of America.

If you would like more information on Fulfilling the Promise: The Campaign for Erikson Institute, please e-mail Eileen Murphy, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, at emurphy@erikson.edu or phone direct to (312) 893-7110. Thank you.





This just in

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is revising its standards for teacher education to require an increased focus on child development. In collaboration with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, part of the National Institutes of Health, NCATE has convened an expert panel to make recommendations for how teacher colleges can revise their curricula.

Their thinking is that teachers who understand how children develop cognitively, psychologically, physically, and socially will be more effective teachers, better in the classroom and better at crafting appropriate lesson plans.

Erikson was founded some 40-odd-years ago with the same thought. So it was only to be expected that Erikson president Samuel J. Meisels would be tapped to participate in the panel. As part of their briefing for the job, each member received a packet of fundamental readings on the subject. Three of the packet's fifteen articles were authored by Erikson faculty.

To paraphrase the Oscar acceptance speech of 72-year-old actress Ruth Gordon after a lifetime of stage and film work, we can't tell you how encouraging a thing like this is.

Ongoing thanks

Erikson gratefully acknowledges the following donors for their generous contributions of \$25,000 or more. With this vital support, we are improving the lives of more children and families.

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- \$25,000 Unrestricted
- \$50,000 Unrestricted

Exelon Corporation

- \$25,000 Unrestricted

McCormick Foundation

- \$50,000 Early Development and the Brain
- \$50,000 Early Mathematics Education International Symposia Planning
- \$208,000 Early Mathematics Teacher Training Initiative
- \$255,000 Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy

Perkins Malo Hunter

Foundation

- \$30,000 New Schools Project

Pritzker Early Childhood

Foundation

- \$49,000 Fussy Baby Network

The Boeing Company

- \$150,000 Early Childhood Bilingual / ESL Graduate Certificate Program Scholarships

The Buffett Early

Childhood Fund

- \$167,949 Bounce Learning Network
- \$100,000 Unrestricted

The Educational Foundation

of America

- \$90,000 Writing Tutors

The Harris Family Foundation

- \$55,000 Unrestricted

The Irving Harris Foundation

- \$125,000 Infant Studies Program Expansion
- \$100,000 Prevention Initiative Mental Health Consultation and Training

The Joseph and Bessie

Feinberg Foundation

- \$25,000 Unrestricted

The Walden W. and Jean

Young Shaw Foundation

- \$100,000 Unrestricted

Gifts to the Prism Ball or the capital campaign will be recognized separately.

Gifts received October 1, 2007 through June 10, 2008.

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Erikson on Children
Summer 2008

Erikson on Children is published for the donors, alumni, and friends of Erikson Institute. Send comments, suggestions, or changes of address to pnedeau@erikson.edu or to Office of Communications, Erikson Institute, 451 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60654.

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Editor: Patricia Nedeau

Design: Melissa DePasquale, Kym Abrams Design

Photography: Steve Becker, Tom Cherrey, Chris Kirzeder, Tom Lane, Carlos Puma, Loren Santow

Illustration: Pablo Bernasconi

Our thanks to Valjean McLenighan, who set us on the path and whose spirit is, and will ever be, ongoing.

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07-08/14M/PN/07-437

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