



Stories from the
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
The 2015–2016 Fiscal Year in Review



UNC
FRANK PORTER GRAHAM
CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

From the Director



FPG’s 50TH year was a period of celebration, reflection, reaffirmation, and productivity, and it was also tinged with some sadness.

Celebration. As an organization, the highlight of this year was the celebration of our 50TH anniversary. Our internal celebration with staff and investigators happened in the fall, with a centerpiece presentation of our history prepared by longtime FPG researchers Barbara Wasik and Donna Bryant. The spring brought a larger celebration that extended to the local, state, and national community. At our award dinner, co-founder Nancy Robinson’s memories of our origins, the Provost’s welcome, and rousing speeches from Howard Lee and Governor Hunt created a celebratory spirit for the evening. The conference on the subsequent two days directed our attention to the field’s research and professional development, as seen through the eyes of national leaders. Thanks to assistant director Stephanie Ridley for being the “glue” that allowed the 50TH celebration to be successful and executive leadership board member Don Stedman for being a primary moving spirit behind these events.

Reflections. Our 50TH anniversary created the occasion to reflect on our performance as an organization as well as possible initiatives for the future. We are in the midst of crafting a strategic vision for research and professional development, technical assistance, and implementation science. We also established a mentoring program in which nine young professionals participated last year, and we are examining FPG infrastructural support for proposal development. Desiree Murray, as- sociate director for research, has provided extraordinary leadership for these efforts.

Reaffirmations. In this tumultuous year of questioning the values of acceptance, I was proud that FPG was one of the first UNC institutes to publicly reaffirm our commitment to the value of inclusion of all individuals: *At FPG, we are committed to the policy of inclusion. By that we mean welcoming membership and supporting participation of people with differing abilities; people from different racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds; and people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. At this time, we reaffirm our commitment to this policy and these values.*

Productivity. FPG investigators continue to be productive in receiving funding for our important work. Among many other projects, three new research awards from the Institute of Education Sciences are focusing on issues related to social-emotional development (under Desiree Murray’s lead), early childhood quality (under Diane Early’s lead), and autism (under my lead). Another IES award to Peg Burchinal will examine effectiveness of rural pre-kindergarten programs among a constellation of variables, and North Carolina and Georgia continue to fund Ellen Peisner-Feinberg’s evaluations of their Pre-K programs. Our technical assistance work, led by Christina Kasprzak, continues to support the development of recommended practices for the field of early childhood special education. Allison Metz’s National Implementation Research Network continues to lead the way in the application of implementation science to a myriad of issues related to children, youth, and families. Also, always a highlight of the year, the National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, led by Tracey West, had another successful conference.

Sadness. In the midst of this productive year, we took time to grieve the loss of two colleagues. Pan Yi was a statistician with FPG’s Data Management and Analysis Center and an FPG investigator. Many of us benefited from his great work as a methodologist and his always positive spirit. Steve Reznick was professor of psychology and an FPG faculty fellow. He was a former co-director of our Behavioral Measurement and Analysis Core and had many other associations with FPG over the years. We miss them and recognize their great contributions to our personal work, to FPG, and to the field.

Changing of the Guard. In this 11TH year as director, I have decided to step down and turn my full attention to research. I have asked our Vice Chancellor for Research to begin a search for a new director, who we hope will be in place this time next year. My years as FPG director have been the high point of my career. FPG is an extraordinary place, and it has been my honor to lead it over the last decade.

—Samuel L. Odom, Director

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FPG at a Glance

Advancing knowledge. Enhancing lives.

The mission of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute is to enhance the lives of children and families through interdisciplinary research, technical assistance, professional development, and implementation science. FPG generates knowledge, informs policies, and supports practices to promote positive developmental and educational outcomes for children of all backgrounds and abilities from the earliest years.

People

- 222 Staff
- 54 Investigators
- 24 Fellows
- 19 Executive Leadership Board Members
- 8 Postdoctoral Research Associates and Graduate Assistants

Affiliated Disciplines

Anthropology, Audiology, Biostatistics, Education, Epidemiology, Linguistics, Maternal and Child Health, Neuroscience, Nursing, Occupational Science, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Psychology, Public Health, Public Policy, Social Work, and Speech and Hearing Sciences

Major Areas of Emphasis

Developmental Disabilities; Early Care and Education; Physical and Social Health; Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Implementation Science; Public Policy and Evaluation; Racial, Ethnic, Linguistic, Cultural, and Socioeconomic Diversity; the International Initiative

Funding Sources

Federal grants, nonprofit organizations, foundations, education and research institutions, business and industry, state grants and appropriations, and other sources

Sources of Federal Funding

U.S. Department of Education, National Institutes of Health, Administration for Children & Families, and other sources

Spotlight

JFK, LBJ, and FPG

Soil and Seeds for a New Center for Children

As part of our continuing celebration of FPG’s 50TH anniversary, this story chronicles FPG’s early growth from the seeds John F. Kennedy planted the month before he was assassinated.



John F. Kennedy

The idea for the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute grew out of the turbulent soil of the 1960s—out of iconic frame-by-frame images of a president’s killing in slow-motion, yet also images of his brother on Justice Department steps with a bull-horn in hand, calling for racial justice.

Robert Kennedy



The decade demanded social progress. African Americans marched on Washington after integrated groups of demonstrators participated in Freedom Rides across the South. Congress legitimized the ideal of equality with the Equal Pay Act, the Civil Rights Act, voting rights legislation, and immigration reforms. President Lyndon B. Johnson declared war on poverty, and, on behalf of children in poverty, Head Start was born. Illinois set a progressive precedent for homosexual rights at the state level by abolishing laws proscribing gay sex. Betty Friedan and colleagues founded The National Organization for Women to work for the end of gender discrimination. Disability rights advocates began challenging the status quo of care in institutions and asylums, including Burton Blatt and Fred Kaplan’s release of *Christmas in Purgatory, A Photographic Essay on Mental Retardation*, which exposed the horrific treatment of people with mental illness and intellectual disabilities.

Awareness and change, however, often were coupled with violence in the 1960s. By the time of FPG’s found-

ing in 1966, President John F. Kennedy and Malcolm X already had been assassinated, the U.S. had committed 200,000 troops to Viet Nam, and much of the decade's most chilling violence had yet to come. Assassins also would gun down Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. The New York City Police Department would set off an infamous four-day riot by raiding a gay bar called the Stonewall Inn. U.S. officials would tout victories in Viet Nam by comparing body counts, sending escalating numbers of troop overseas, and instituting the draft—and draft cards would burn. The 1960s was a decade of great tragedy that nonetheless provided a context that nourished lasting, organized commitments on behalf of peace, the poor, women, gays and lesbians, people of color, people with disabilities, and children.

John F. Kennedy planted the seeds for FPG in key federal legislation he had signed into law the month before he was assassinated. Kennedy's sister Rosemary had intellectual disabilities, which in large part—along with his sister Eunice's encouragement—compelled him early in 1963 to challenge Congress to significantly address mental illness and mental health by establishing interdisciplinary research centers that could profit from “the talents of our best minds.” Not only did the subsequent *Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act* authorize funding for developmental research centers in university-affiliated facilities, the law also specifically included provisions that supported universities in the construction of research centers. With Kennedy's assassination the following month, the Act marked the end of his planning for America's “New Frontier”—but the legislation's crucial, germinating effects would long outlive its biggest advocate.

After Lyndon Johnson succeeded Kennedy, new programs and policies originating from the White House fueled Johnson's move to a “Great Society,” through which he fostered efforts to reduce inequalities in wealth, health, and education. Johnson signed Medicare and Medicaid into law, and when his “War on Poverty” zeroed in on the plight of children, the 1965 launch of Head Start began more than 50 years of federal funding for early education for children from low income families.



FPG co-founders Hal and Nancy Robinson

In this climate, researchers also had begun to consider how early education could affect the trajectories of young children in poverty. In fact, it was the seminal question for husband and wife Hal and Nancy Robinson, psychologists at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“It was wonderful to be living in a liberal community in the middle of the South, because it was a time of the civil rights movement,” Nancy Robinson remarked years later.

“There was a hopefulness about what could happen economically to our society and with inclusion of everybody, and that was very exciting and made a big difference in what we did there. The other movement at the same time was, of course, in ‘mental retardation.’” And, thanks to Kennedy's pivotal legislation and the federal political context, “There was money.”

Nancy and Hal Robinson and close colleagues at UNC proposed building a center on “retardation” that would include both behavioral and biological components. Early planners included members of the Chapel Hill School Board, School Superintendent Howard Thompson, and UNC's Thelma Thurstone, Harriet Rheingold, and Ann Peters. The Robinsons would become FPG's co-founders—and Hal its first director—when the National Institutes of Health awarded 12 grants to establish research centers across the nation to study and treat “mental retardation.”

FPG (“Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center” in its early years) was the sole center focusing on prevention—especially the prevention of problems resulting from childhood poverty. Nancy Robinson explained the connection between inadequate environmental conditions and intellectual deficits in children, a link few people were making. “The war on poverty and the war on ‘mental retardation’ were going on side by side,” she said, “but nobody was saying they were the same one.”

The husband-and-wife team had planned to establish a model child care center that offered comprehensive services to a small number of infants and toddlers, a place where scientists also could study their learning and development. The Robinsons and their small group of scientists wanted to determine to what extent high-quality child care could impact intellectual deficits in young children from at-risk families. They also wanted to explore the effects of group care for infants, as well as how children from different backgrounds could share the same settings.

“In the 1960s, there was talk about the ‘cycle of poverty’ and how generation after generation had problems in school and life,” said Joseph Sparling, who came to FPG in 1967. He subsequently co-created the curriculum for the most famous study in early childhood care and education, FPG's Abecedarian Project. “There was a sense of concern, because of the Civil Rights Movement, that there needed to be more equity in society and that universities needed to respond,” Sparling said. “Educators and psychologists saw a social role for themselves. Until then, they primarily viewed their role as creating knowledge. There was a sweeping vision that we were not only going to do research in the field of ‘mental retardation’ but also to produce a program that had practical value to society.”

And why had the Robinsons chosen Frank Porter Graham as the namesake that would embody such extraordinary goals?



Frank Porter Graham

Some consider Graham to be the most renowned southern progressive of his time for promoting public education and for advocating on behalf of the less fortunate. From 1930 to 1949, he served as president of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At Franklin Delano Roosevelt's request, he chaired the president's National Advisory Council on Social Security. Later in his career at UNC, Harry S. Truman named him to the President's Committee on Civil Rights, and North Carolina's governor appointed Graham to replace a U.S. senator from the state who had died

after taking office. Afterward, Graham flourished throughout a tenure spanning two decades as a diplomatic mediator and representative for the United Nations. More than 20 colleges and universities recognized him with honorary degrees, which comprise only a portion of his awards. In Chapel Hill, his portrait adorns the Morehead Planetarium, the UNC General Administration Building, and the university's Frank Porter Graham Student Union.

Stories about his character and belief in equity pervade campus lore, such as when Graham had grappled with the dean of UNC's Medical School over admission of a Jewish student in 1933. During the dean's tenure, he had instituted a cap for Jewish students, allowing in only four out of the incoming class's 40 students. Despite the dean's alarmist arguments about the imminent collapse of the medical school if the cap did not remain in place, Graham ordered him to admit a qualified student who would make the fifth Jewish student in the incoming class. The dean resigned, but of course the Medical School flourished.

Hal Robinson met Graham years later—and never forgot him.

"Hal was on a plane ride from somewhere when his seatmate was Frank Porter Graham, who at that time was a U.N. mediator," Nancy Robinson explained. "Hal came home and said, 'I have met the most wonderful man, the most wonderful humanitarian I ever hope to meet.' And so... it became the Frank Porter Graham Center."

Newspaper reports said early plans for FPG included making temporary use of a local Presbyterian church's facilities for the first group of children. Shortly afterward, three trailers on Cameron Avenue in Chapel Hill provided classroom space for 11 children and five staff, with the Robinsons' own daughter, Beth, becoming the first enrollee at FPG. According to Nancy Robinson, the center typically brought in children at a very early age, from the time their mothers had returned to work after giving birth.

FPG also offered nothing short of a radical child care setting for the South of the 1960s. "It involved black and white children together," she said. "This was revolutionary in those days and times."

Named, funded, and with key political support from UNC System president William Friday and other university heavyweights, the fledgling center began what would become a half-century of research, technical assistance, professional development, and other forms of public service. FPG's influence would spread across many professional and disciplinary spheres, and by the time the original little center would celebrate its golden anniversary as a booming institute, people in 180 countries would use its resources—and children from its very first major project, the Abece-darian Project, would still be making news.

As difficult, exciting, and complicated as it would prove to be, FPG had embarked on its mission to fulfill the promise of the premise that it was possible to affect the trajectories of lives by steering them onto better courses early—and that doing so, in turn, could begin to alleviate broader social and economic challenges.

The Latest Science

*New findings and newly launched studies
benefit children of all ages,
as well as their teachers and families.*



This past year brought groundbreaking research from FPG with implications for children and families in North Carolina, across the United States, and around the globe. For 50 years, our studies have capitalized on FPG's wide and varied expertise to generate knowledge about how best to educate and care for children and their families. This science has addressed numerous urgencies, and what follows are snapshots of some of our recent accomplishments.



Preschool Academic Skills Improve Only When Instruction Is Good to Excellent

New research combining eight large child care studies reveals that preschools prepare children to succeed academically when teachers provide higher quality instruction.

Margaret Burchinal, senior research scientist at FPG, led a research team whose findings have groundbreaking implications for publicly-funded early care and education. They found as the overall quality of instruction in preschool classrooms increases, children experience better outcomes across a range of skills, but the needle only moves on language and reading skills when instructional quality is at or above a threshold.

“Preschoolers in center-based care showed larger gains in reading and language when their teachers spent more time supporting their learning—but only if the quality of instruction was in the moderate to high range,” Burchinal said.

Burchinal’s co-authors included Martha Zaslow of Child Trends and Louisa Tarullo of Mathematica Policy Research. Their team also found that children appeared to benefit from a larger “dose” of center-based child care.

“Children showed larger gains in academic skills when they attended more than one year of Head Start, had fewer absences, and spent more time in reading and math instruction,” Burchinal said. “Early childhood education is widely accepted as an effective way to improve opportunities for all children, and this finding about Head Start supports the growing trend of two years of publicly funded preschool for children from low-income homes.”

Burchinal explained that unlike most of the Head Start classrooms in her study, some programs do not meet a threshold of quality, offer a second year, or provide sufficient time in math and reading instruction to enable children to make academic gains.

“The lowest quality programs are going to have to change a lot in order for us to likely see the kind of improvement in language and academic skills that provide the foundation for succeeding in school,” Burchinal said. “Children in our study showed the largest gains when teachers interacted with children frequently in engaging activities that were designed to teach those language and academic skills deliberately.”

Burchinal explained that if lower-quality preschool classrooms do not improve children’s reading and language skills, this could inform the conceptualization and design of publicly funded programs—as well as efforts to improve existing learning opportunities for children. Shifting the field’s current focus from overall quality and instead zeroing in on content may be more effective in promoting children’s academic learning.

“At present, our field focuses on broader classroom quality and teacher-child interactions,” she said. “Our study found that only small gains in language and literacy outcomes were associated with higher quality interactions between teachers and children, but large gains were associated with high quality instruction in those areas. Having a sensitive caregiver is really important for young children—but it probably isn’t sufficient alone for promoting academic skills. There has to be content and an intentional approach to instruction.”

Burchinal, Zaslow, and Tarullo published their study, “Quality Thresholds, Features, and Dosage in Early Care and Education: Secondary Data Analyses of Child Outcomes,” in a special monograph for the Society for Research in Child Development.

abstract and full article
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8390>

Georgia Governor on FPG Study: Georgia Pre-K “Significantly Improves” Student Readiness

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal announced in October that students in Georgia’s Pre-K Program show educational improvement in key areas and progress at a greater rate while participating in the program, according to FPG’s multi-year evaluation.

“Ensuring Georgia’s youngest scholars continue to benefit from Georgia’s highly ranked Pre-K Program is one of my top priorities,” said Deal. “This study confirms that Georgia is on the right track. Our Pre-K Program helps students acquire the foundation necessary for a solid education, puts them on track to read at grade level by the third grade and assists in developing essential skills which will lead to academic excellence and future success.”

The comprehensive evaluation was commissioned in 2011–2012 by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and tracked the progress of 1,169 children who participated in Georgia Pre-K during the 2013–2014 school year. Results showed that program participation significantly improved children’s school readiness skills across a wide range of literacy, math, and general knowledge measures. Based on standardized test scores, the study indicates that students progressed at a greater rate while participating in the program compared to normal development in the same timeframe. The report also revealed that Spanish-speaking dual language learners

grew skills in both English and Spanish, usually showing greater growth in English.

“These findings are strong and attest to the impact of Georgia’s signature early education program and the important work accomplished by our teachers and assistant teachers every day,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “The findings concerning language and literacy are especially important, as they suggest that foundational reading skills are taught in Pre-K classrooms.”

Researchers will continue to monitor student progress through the end of the third grade.

“Georgia’s Pre-K Program has had positive outcomes for children, and the level of quality has remained fairly constant over time,” said principal investigator Ellen Peisner-Feinberg. “The results from the studies conducted so far indicate that the program clearly has several areas of strength; as a long-standing, statewide, universal Pre-K program, the outcomes for children and the quality of classroom practices have been maintained.”

executive summary of FPG’s report
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8021>



Self-Regulation Reports Provide Comprehensive Review of Research and Evidence-Based Practices

FPG associate director Desiree W. Murray has spearheaded a series of reports for the U.S. Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation on the latest science on self-regulation.

Most recently, *A Comprehensive Review of Self-Regulation Interventions from Birth through Young Adulthood* is the third in a series of four inter-related reports from the *Self-Regulation and Toxic Stress* series. The first report, *Foundations for Understanding Self-Regulation from an Applied Developmental Perspective*, provided a comprehensive framework for understanding self-regulation in context, using a theoretical model that reflects the influence of biology, caregiving, and the environment on the development of self-regulation. The second report, *A Review of Ecological, Biological, and Developmental Studies of Self-Regulation and Stress*, provides a cross-disciplinary review of research on the relationship between stress and self-regulation. The fourth report, *Implications for Programs and Practice*, was pending at the time this publication went to press.

A Comprehensive Review of Self-Regulation Interventions from Birth through Young Adulthood describes results of a comprehensive review of self-regulation interven-

tions and summarizes the level of evidence for different interventions across age groups and outcome domains. In this report, Murray and her team provide details on the methodological approach and data findings, including figures with detailed descriptions regarding the evidence base that supports the report's conclusions. These conclusions will be repeated in *Implications for Programs and Practice*, with a more applied summary of the results organized by their implications for different types of programs.

The overarching aim of *A Comprehensive Review of Self-Regulation Interventions from Birth through Young Adulthood* was to inform the selection and use of self-regulation interventions within human services programs supported by the Administration for Children & Families in the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Thus, the report's focus is on universal and targeted interventions that can be used within the infrastructure of those programs, with particular attention to vulnerable populations living in adversity or with specific risk characteristics.

full report

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8278>

The Family Life Project Investigates the Role of Household Chaos, Early Poverty, and Academic Achievement

Patricia T. Garrett-Peters, advanced research scientist and project director of the Family Life Project at FPG, has published findings from a new study that relies on the long-running project's data from over 1200 children in rural North Carolina and Pennsylvania communities.

According to the study, "although the links between family income poverty and poor school achievement are well documented, the processes that account for these associations have not been thoroughly explored." Garrett-Peters—with FPG's Irina Mokrova, princi-



pal investigator Lynne Vernon-Feagans, and Michael Willoughby—determined one of the key links between income and kindergartners' achievement. They found that income poverty was related to household disorganization, one of two dimensions of household chaos, and that, in turn, household disorganization is related to lower academic achievement.

The researchers concluded that their approach, which divided household chaos into two dimensions, reveals the utility of household disorganization as a discrete variable in and of itself, which can explain some of the effects of poverty on children's achievement.

"Given the current larger sociocultural context, the field is now ripe for researchers who strive to understand the links between poverty, household chaos, and child development," the researchers wrote, cataloging a long list of adverse trends, stresses and causes of instability in low-income homes. "As these movements continue to unfold, researchers have an opportunity to advance the field by remaining cognizant of the ways in which these sociocultural trends might contribute to increased chaos in households across the SES spectrum and the potential implications of these increasing chaotic conditions for both family and child functioning."

abstract and full article

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8289>

Child Care Subsidies Help Families Receive Better Child Care

FPG advanced research scientist Allison C. De Marco and Family Life Project principal investigator Lynne Vernon-Feagans have completed new research that investigated the relationship between child care subsidy use and child care quality in low-wealth rural communities.

According to De Marco and Vernon-Feagans, child care subsidy programs are designed to lessen the number of families for whom child care limits or excludes opportunities to work, and, therefore, such subsidies are crucial for economic self-sufficiency. Additionally, quality child care can enhance child development, especially for children from low-income households.



However, the researchers explained, most studies have had "an urban focus, so little is known about rural settings where formal programs are limited and of lower quality." Thus, De Marco and Vernon-Feagans examined "the subsidy use of rural families, the care arrangements they make, and the quality of care received."

They used data from the Family Life Project, whose families reside in low-wealth counties and include an oversampling of low-income and African American families. Findings revealed that families who used subsidies were more likely to receive better quality care, regardless of the type of care they chose for their children.

"These findings point to the need to maintain subsidy programs and encourage eligible families to take advantage of such resources," wrote De Marco and Vernon-Feagans. "With a more thorough appreciation of these relationships we will be better equipped to craft outreach, quality improvement efforts, and policies responsive to the realities of rural life."

abstract and full article

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/6954>



FPG Launches Comprehensive Study of Early Learning in Rural NC

FPG has launched a new study of the early learning experiences of children in rural North Carolina from Pre-Kindergarten through third grade to identify policies and practices that promote school success. The new study, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, builds on FPG's work in rural North Carolina.



The FPG study will be a key component of the new Early Learning Network developed by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The network will look at systems-level policies and practices, teacher-child interactions and classroom practices, and child and family characteristics to identify effective policies and practices for early education.

“This is an exciting opportunity to look at the quality of early learning from new perspectives,” said FPG senior research scientist Margaret Burchinal, principal investigator of the study. “It’s one of few studies, if not the first, that will follow children from Pre-K into elementary school and gather enough data, from enough different sources, to tell us what we can do to promote academic success for vulnerable children.”

“As we increase access to early education, we need high-quality research to show us the most effective ways to prepare children for success in elementary school and beyond,” said Acting Secretary of Education John King in the announcement from IES. “The Early Learning Network will develop important information and tools that will help policymakers and practitioners improve preschool and elementary school teaching and learning across the country.”

Burchinal, a veteran of FPG's Abecedarian Project and many other seminal studies of early education, will rely

on an experienced team with established ties in North Carolina. Joining her is co-principal investigator Ellen Peisner-Feinberg, who for several years has headed FPG's annual evaluations of the state's Pre-Kindergarten program.

“We know from our previous research that NC Pre-K benefits children academically,” said Peisner-Feinberg, who also directs FPG's National Pre-K and Early Learning Evaluation Center. “This study will help us understand how to extend those positive outcomes through the early elementary grades.”

Lynne Vernon-Feagans, principal investigator of the Family Life Project, will oversee the study's exploration of teacher-child interactions.

“Very few studies have focused on rural America, where geographic isolation, poverty, and fewer federal dollars to fund education have been barriers to many children's success in school,” said Vernon-Feagans. “This study will be critical in better understanding how Pre-K environments, especially those for children living in poverty, may create the context for success for many rural children. Competent and caring teachers who foster high-quality positive interactions with children are critical to the success of young children living in poverty.”

Lora Cohen-Vogel, the Robena and Walter E. Hussman, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Policy and Education Reform at the UNC School of Education, will lead the study's integral look at policy, an often understudied area in early childhood education.

“We need to understand state and local policies as they relate to the early educational experiences of rural children in North Carolina,” said Cohen-Vogel. “Policymakers are concerned about program effectiveness and how their early childhood investments can lead to positive, long-term effects for kids. We will help them get answers.”

Rounding out Burchinal's team is a formidable collection of FPG experts, including research scientist Ximena Franco, who will study English-Spanish dual-language learners; FPG fellow Claire Baker, who will look at

parental involvement and the role of African American fathers in promoting academic success; research scientist Mary Bratsch-Hines, who will serve as project director; and research scientist Irina Mokrova, who will contribute statistical analyses.

In addition to Burchinal's team, the new IES Early Learning Network comprises researchers from a social policy nonprofit and four universities, which she called “a first-rate group.”

Thomas W. Brock, Commissioner of the National Center for Education Research at IES, said the Early Learning Network would lead to crucial advances.

“The idea is for the network teams to develop a deeper understanding of problems and solutions surrounding the issue,” Brock said, “and then share what they have learned with policymakers and practitioners to improve teaching and learning for all students.”

IES announcement

http://ies.ed.gov/whatsnew/pressreleases/01_19_2016.asp

Researchers Partner with Spanish-Immersion Elementary School to Solve Class Participation Mystery

When the principal of a Spanish-immersion elementary school approached FPG with a mystery, a groundbreaking new project was born. FPG researchers Doré R. LaForett and Ximena Franco have been examining how the school's language immersion program affects different students' academic engagement and social networks.

“The principal had noticed something that immediately got our attention,” LaForett explained. “She said it seemed to her that students whose home language was Spanish weren't participating in classes—even when teachers primarily taught in Spanish.”

According to LaForett, if in fact this were the case, it could contradict theory and expectations about

Spanish-speaking learners in immersion classrooms. As a result, LaForett and Franco launched a partnership with the elementary school on the “Social Networks and Academic Engagement in a Bilingual Education” project.

“We followed 340 Pre-K to 5TH-grade students,” explained Franco, who also partnered this past year on a project with FPG's Nicole Gardner-Neblett to develop a free instructional overview of the development of dual language learners in early childhood. “The school employs a variety of models across classrooms, from a 50-50 English-Spanish mix to 90-10 mostly Spanish instruction, depending on the grade level, track, and subject.”

In addition to conducting their own classroom observations, LaForett and Franco gathered data from teachers and children. “We're looking at which students hang out with whom and which students actually are participating in class,” said LaForett, who has been involved in several research projects and initiatives focused on young dual-language learners and their families. “We're even asking the students to tell us who they consider to be good students.”

In the end, the researchers hope to answer questions about home language, the language of instruction, peer networks, and classroom participation—and how these pieces of the puzzle fit together.

“No one else is doing this,” LaForett said.

Gardner-Neblett and Franco's instructional overview of dual-language learners

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8383>

dual-language learners in public Pre-K

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7301>



Preschoolers' Classroom Engagement Improves When Adults Participate with Children with Severe Autism

New research from FPG's autism experts reveals that for children with severe autism, the participation of adults is especially important for increasing classroom engagement. FPG research scientist Ann Sam was lead author for the study, which the team published in *Autism Research and Treatment*.

According to another study the FPG team cites in its publication, previous research has established that academic outcomes are linked to the ability of a child to engage in the classroom—that is, “the amount of time children spend interacting with the environment (with adults, children, or other materials) in a manner that is developmentally appropriate.” Yet, Sam wrote, little information exists regarding how “child characteristics of autism and adult behavior impact engagement.”

Sam and her colleagues—including FPG's Pan Yi, Brian Boyd, Kara Hume, and Sam Odom, as well as UNC's Stephanie S. Reszka—explored how autism severity, language ability, and challenging behaviors affect associations between adult participation and child engagement. They determined that preschoolers with more severe autism were more likely to be engaged when adults participated with them actively or passively. In addition, preschoolers in the study who possessed lower levels of ability with language also were more likely to be engaged when adults participated with them.

The findings allowed Sam's team to conclude “these children might need more support from adults to engage with materials or the environment” and to call for future research to explore “the causal relationship between adult behavior and child engagement.”

abstract and full article
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8235>



Jessica Dykstra Steinbrenner

Intervention Shows Value for Elementary School Use with Children with Severe Autism

The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) funded a single-year FPG study of the “Advancing Social-Communication and Play” (ASAP) intervention, a program designed to improve the social-communication and engagement skills of children who have been “severely affected” by autism spectrum disorder, and earlier this month the OAR announced the findings.

FPG research scientist Jessica Dykstra Steinbrenner headed the study, testing the program in North Carolina elementary school classrooms on four kindergartners and first graders. Her team sought answers about ASAP's effectiveness with regard to improving social-communication skills and engagement, as well as whether ASAP was a feasible intervention for elementary school classroom settings. Each student in the study received 10 weeks of ASAP treatment for at least 40 minutes per day.

Her team found that the intervention improved aspects of social-communication for three of the four students, while improving engagement for two of the four. An announcement from the OAR noted that “school personnel who implemented the intervention completed surveys and semi-structured interventions, and rated and spoke highly of the value and feasibility of the ASAP intervention for elementary school students with autism with significant communication needs. However, school personnel also noted in interviews that they felt they would need ongoing coaching to implement the intervention.”

The OAR concluded the intervention was feasible for elementary school classrooms “but would require some modifications to promote ease of use.”

The OAR additionally noted the value of the study for establishing the foundation for “new adaptations to existing interventions to target this population of students.”

background and findings (conference poster)
<http://tinyurl.com/FPGAutismPoster>

New Research Reveals Factors Affecting Engagement of Elementary and Middle School Children with Autism

FPG research scientist Jessica Dykstra Steinbrenner and fellow Linda R. Watson published new findings from research exploring factors that affect engagement of elementary and middle school children.

“Researchers have highlighted engagement as a critical component of effective interventions for students with autism spectrum disorder,” wrote Steinbrenner and Watson, “yet there is limited research related to engagement in school-age children with ASD.”

They designed their study to look at engagement and its relationship to a number of classroom factors and student characteristics, gathering data on 25 students.



They found that joint engagement was related to “group size, use of student-directed practices, autism severity, and expressive communication skills.”

“The results provide an informed starting point for future research in intervention and educational environments,” wrote the researchers. “Additionally, the results of this study and future related studies have implications for educational policies and practices, as well as professional development for special educators.”

abstract and full article
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7806>

Two-Year Trial Shows Benefits of “Every Classroom, Every Day” Intervention for High Schoolers

FPG senior research scientist Diane M. Early and colleagues recently published results of their two-year randomized trial in 20 high schools, demonstrating the positive effects from the “Every Classroom, Every Day” intervention on high school students' math achievement scores.

According to their study, which appeared in the *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, “Every Class-



Diane M. Early

room, Every Day” is “a set of instructional improvement interventions designed to increase student achievement in math and English/Language Arts.” It has three main components, including “systematic classroom observations by school leaders” and “intensive professional development and support for math teachers and instructional leaders to reorganize math instruction, assessment, and grading around mastery of benchmarks,” as well as “a structured literacy curriculum that supplements traditional English courses,” which also includes support for teachers using it.

Early and her team conducted the two-year trial in five school districts in four states. “The students were ethnically diverse,” wrote the researchers, “and most were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.”

Results offered a mixed perspective on the effectiveness of “Every Classroom, Every Day.” While the findings offered evidence that it improved high school students’ scores on standardized math achievement tests, Early and her team did not find evidence that the instructional improvement interventions raised scores on standardized tests of English/Language Arts achievement.

abstract and full article

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7974>

Spotlight

James B. Hunt, Jr.

FPG Recognizes the Former Governor with a Lifetime Achievement Award



Former NC Governor Jim Hunt delivers his acceptance speech for FPG’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

As part of FPG’s continuing celebration of its 50th anniversary, the institute honored former North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. with its *Lifetime Achievement Award* for Hunt’s public service on behalf of children and families in North Carolina. The ceremony kicked off a two-day conference designed to provide a new vision for the fields of child development and early education.

“Governor Hunt’s vision for our state’s Smart Start initiative has helped improve the quality of early learning in all 100 counties in North Carolina,” said FPG Director Sam Odom. “His service has benefited children of all ages and all abilities.”

During his acceptance speech, the former governor discussed the importance of high-quality care for the state's youngest children and the key roles FPG has played over the years on their behalf.

"I believe the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute does the best work on child development in America," said Hunt. "The institute was invaluable in the establishment of the North Carolina Smart Start program."

Established under Hunt in 1993, the Smart Start initiative supports local nonprofit organizations across the state to help young children enter school healthy and prepared to succeed. Ron Haskins, senior fellow at The Brookings Institution and former senior policy advisor to President George W. Bush, said Hunt relied on the field's expertise to guide Smart Start.

"Research informed his decisions," said Haskins, who serves on FPG's executive leadership board. "Smart Start succeeded in part because of the FPG scientists who helped plan and lead it, and who evaluated it for a decade."

During Hunt's 16 years as the state's chief executive, he created the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, chaired the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, and worked with former FPG director Jim Gallagher and others to establish the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. He also established a reading program in primary schools and put a full-time teaching assistant in every public classroom in grades 1–3.

"It's an important and exciting time to work in early education and child development, especially in North Carolina," said Odom. "With Smart Start and North Carolina's Pre-Kindergarten program producing beneficial and persistent outcomes for young children, our state has the opportunity to remain a leader in early care and education."

Hunt said North Carolina faced big challenges to make education the best it could be for all children in the state: "FPG's work on early child care and education is crucial to our success."

full text and video of Governor Hunt's acceptance speech and keynote address
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8329>

Shaping Dialogue and Guiding Practice

Bringing research to real-world solutions



FPG actively contributes knowledge and expertise to enhance the lives of children and their families at home and abroad. Scientific study drives positive outcomes for children and families only when evidence-based practices find successful implementation, support, and maintenance. Therefore, many experts at FPG have dedicated much of their service to traversing that well-known valley between research and practical application. The following stories sample some of the many initiatives from FPG designed to heighten awareness and marry evidence-based practices with real-world solutions for children and families.



Major Foundations Join Forces for FPG's New Planning Conference on Young Children

FPG celebrated its 50TH anniversary by spearheading a two-day conference to envision and enable better outcomes for young children and their families. Major foundations across North Carolina backed the event.

“This symposium will take a thoughtful look at education and child development,” said FPG director Sam Odom in advance of the conference. “A formidable gathering of experts will reflect on our current knowledge and project a vision for the next steps in advancing knowledge and enhancing young lives.”

Ron Haskins, senior fellow at The Brookings Institution, noted the range and strength of the support for the conference. Sponsors included Annie E. Casey Foundation, Goodnight Educational Foundation, Skeebo Foundation, PNC Financial Services Group, RTI International, Cansler Collaborative Resources, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, and many others.

“All are major forces in support of work on behalf of children in our state and nation,” said Haskins, a long-time member of FPG’s executive leadership board. “In addition, more than 30 significant individual and family contributions have been received.”

Tom Lambeth, senior fellow at Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, served as one of three co-chairs of FPG’s golden anniversary planning committee. “The steady production of first rate research that has come and continues to flow from FPG is stunning,” said Lambeth. “The university and the state should be proud of its work and depend on more in the years ahead.”

Co-chair Howard Lee praised FPG’s history of connecting its research to what happens on the ground. “FPG has been and continues to be the primary source of policy and practice for preschool education and child care in North Carolina,” said the former North Carolina state senator.

“Over the past many years, FPG has been a major force in helping state and local programs set policies, guidelines, and quality markers for best practice for our education and child care programs,” added NC state representative Verla Insko. “Access and quality assurance are based on sound data from FPG research.”

With Lambeth and Lee, Sandra Wilcox Conway, an independent consultant in Charlotte, served as co-chair for the planning committee, which coalesced widespread support for the conference. Backers included the Brady Education Foundation, the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation, and the North Carolina Pediatric Society, as well as many private donors.

William C. Harrison, superintendent of the Alamance-Burlington School System, said that for decades FPG has been supporting best practices. “I hope, for the sake of all teachers, they keep ‘keeping on,’” said Harrison, who also served on the anniversary planning committee.

FPG has generated knowledge, informed policies, and supported practices to promote positive outcomes for

young children of all backgrounds and abilities. Among other groundbreaking work, FPG’s Abecedarian Project found that the positive effects of high-quality early education persist for decades.

Elizabeth Pungello Bruno, president of the Brady Education Foundation, worked on the Abecedarian Project’s follow-up studies. “The impact that FPG has had on the field of early development and education is beyond measure,” said Bruno.

The Friday Center in Chapel Hill housed the *Advancing Knowledge, Enhancing Lives* conference, which brought together respected researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. FPG had been planning for the May event ever since receiving a gift in 2014 from Don Stedman, former dean of UNC’s School of Education, on behalf of his New Voices Foundation.

“FPG is a world class child development organization,” said Stedman, an early pioneer at FPG. “A half century of work has helped transform both how and when children need educational support to make their lives better and richer.”

watch FPG’s “Advancing Knowledge, Enhancing Lives” Conference
fpg.unc.edu/node/8332

the anniversary celebration’s honorary planning committee
<http://50years.fpg.unc.edu/honorary-committee>

FPG Leads Three Additional Key Conferences in 2016

In addition to the seminal *Advancing Knowledge, Enhancing Lives* conference that marked FPG’s 50TH anniversary, this past year FPG also spearheaded three key conferences for practitioners, families, administrators and researchers.

In February, the *Conference on Research Innovations in Early Intervention* kicked off in San Diego, bringing over 200 participants together from across the country. This multidisciplinary conference was created by and for researchers in early intervention (birth–8).

The unique 2½-day meeting focuses on methodological advances, research in progress, innovative approaches to combining methodologies, issues in conducting research, and controversial topics related to interventions with young children with disabilities or with those at risk for developmental delays, as well as with their families. All attendees present their own research during the conference, which provides an especially valuable opportunity for graduate students to present work in progress and receive guidance and suggestions from experts who have firmly established themselves by their research.

Late spring and summer brought two more conferences invaluable to the field. In May, the annual *National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute* launched with a new



theme: “More than an Event.” Over 500 attendees heard world-class experts in dozens of groundbreaking sessions, including the return of a special federal plenary panel, as well as a dual keynote address from FPG fellow Ann Turnbull and Allison Metz, FPG’s principal investigator for the new National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning.

In addition, all registrants received free access to new CONNECT Courses for continuing education units (CEUs), based upon the globally popular CONNECT Modules. This year’s Institute also made available an online treasure trove of additional materials, designed to keep the thoughtful and effective practice of inclusion at the forefront well beyond the three-day conference.

Over the summer, FPG’s Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center collaborated with The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems, the IDEA Data Center, and the National Center for Systemic Improvement to present the three-day *Improving Data, Improving Outcomes* conference. The meeting combines issues related to the development or enhancement of Part C, Section 619, and/or coordinated early childhood data systems, the improvement of data quality, and the measurement and use of child and family outcomes data in order to make data informed decisions.

The conference highlights national frameworks and products, as well as states’ experiences and resources for improving data systems and services. Several hundred Part C and 619 coordinators, data managers, and many others working on data systems, outcomes, and improving service systems and practices at state and national levels participated.

Conference on Research Innovations in Early Intervention
<http://criei.fpg.unc.edu/>

National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute
<http://inclusioninstitute.fpg.unc.edu/>

Improving Data, Improving Outcomes
<http://ectacenter.org/~meetings/ecidea16/mtghomepage.asp>

FPG’s Cutting-Edge Resources Support New Federal Policy on Inclusion

In May 2015 at a special federal panel at the National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services debuted a draft policy statement for increasing the inclusion of young children with disabilities in high-quality early childhood programs. While the Institute was at the epicenter of the new policy—which federal officials would later finalize in September—innovative CEU-granting courses on inclusion also were in the last stages of development at FPG. Additionally, FPG’s Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center and FPG’s National Professional Development Center on Inclusion have developed important products to support inclusion across the country.

“Inclusion has stalled in terms of implementation,” said Pam Winton, FPG senior research scientist. “The new policy statement explicitly identifies a research-based roadmap for states and local communities to jumpstart progress toward making high-quality inclusive options a reality for all young children with disabilities—and it also aims to help their families.”

To lead practitioners through several crucial aspects of that research-based roadmap, Winton and FPG advanced technical assistance specialist Chih-Ing Lim developed low-cost online CONNECT Courses for professionals who work with or support young children and their families in inclusive settings. They launched the courses through FPG’s Professional Development Center (The PDC@FPG), and five states already have approved the courses for state training.

Winton and Lim adapted the content for the online courses from FPG’s free CONNECT Modules, which have generated over 3,000,000 page views from 430,000 people worldwide. According to Winton, the new courses have found a variety of applications, including use in a hybrid model of training that also incorporates the modules.

“Individual users are taking the courses,” Winton said. “And groups inside and outside North Carolina are using them, too, sometimes in tandem with the modules, which afford additional activities, resources, and opportunities for feedback.”

Winton explained that creators of instructional content must continue to innovate with regard to delivery, because not everyone can afford an in-person, full-fledged coaching model for intensive professional development.

“The CONNECT Courses are an effective \$30 alternative,” she said. “Especially since TA practitioners can reinforce the content by using the accompanying free modules with the teachers and providers who have taken the courses.”

The new joint federal policy statement specifically calls for improving infrastructure and offering professional development to strengthen and increase the number of inclusive high-quality early childhood programs nationwide. In addition to noting CONNECT’s online learning, the statement highlights crucial resources from FPG’s Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center and FPG’s National Professional Development Center on Inclusion.

FPG also provides training on the *Inclusive Classroom Profile*, a structured observation rating scale that assesses the quality of classroom practices that support young children with disabilities. “Other states are beginning to include quality indicators of inclusion as part of QRIS and are using the *Inclusive Classroom Profile*,” Winton said.

In addition, FPG’s Supporting Change and Reform in Preservice Teaching in North Carolina (SCRIPT-NC) targeted early childhood community college faculty with a series of five webinars, each of which focused on cross-course issues. For several years, SCRIPT-NC has been working with community college faculty to better prepare preservice early childhood educators to meet the diverse needs of children in their community.



Winton also said innovative professional development will be a cornerstone of efforts to move forward on inclusion in North Carolina and across the rest of the country. “Effective PD must be intensive, performance-based, sustained, and affordable,” she said. “It has to provide opportunities for feedback and be embedded within professionals’ jobs.”

more on CONNECT Courses on Inclusion
<http://connect.fpg.unc.edu/>

access the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center’s resources on inclusion
<http://tinyurl.com/ECTAinclusion>

more on FPG’s National Professional Development Center on Inclusion
<http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/>

FPG’s training on the *Inclusive Classroom Profile*
<http://tinyurl.com/ICPtraining>

watch SCRIPT-NC’s webinars
<http://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/>

more online instruction, workshops, and resources through The PDC@FPG
<http://pdc.fpg.unc.edu/>

FPG's Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center Develops New Materials to Support Widespread Use of DEC Recommended Practices

FPG's Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) has selected 16 experts to serve as "ambassadors" to spearhead the use of new recommended practices for the care and education of young children with disabilities.

"We hand-picked the ambassadors for their broad expertise and skills," said Joan Danaher, associate director of the ECTA Center. "They form a national cohort with knowledge of evidence-based practices, professional development and training, and their state's early childhood services and practitioner networks."

Danaher explained that ambassadors will serve as an extension of the ECTA Center, disseminating information and providing training within their states. Not only will ambassadors collaborate with one another to develop and share strategies and resources, but each will develop and implement goals aligned with a state improvement effort.

"As part of this inaugural group of ambassadors, these experts will also participate in designing, documenting, and making recommendations for subsequent groups as we continue to disseminate materials nationally," said Danaher.

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children developed the Recommended Practices to provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth to age 5, who have or are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities.

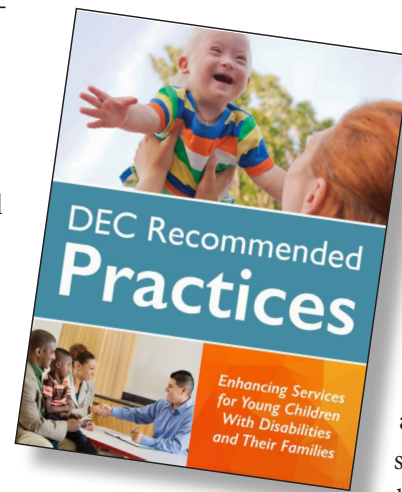
Danaher said that through a cooperative agreement with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the U.S. Department of Education, the ECTA Center has developed a suite of products for practitioners and families to learn how to apply the Recommended Practices to developmental interventions in everyday routines and settings involving children and families. All of the products and resources are free, including popular videos starring "aRPy," an animated spokesperson created by the ECTA Center.

The "aRPy Ambassadors" are based in state and local agencies and universities. They will receive support for their roles from state programs for children with disabilities birth through age 5 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

With OSEP funding, FPG also is developing online learning modules to support the use of the DEC Recommended Practices. The online learning modules and

accompanying online resources, including instructional supports and opportunities to actively engage, will support faculty at two-year and four-year colleges and universities, professional development providers, and technical assistance providers. A primary intention is to build the capacity of IDEA Part C lead agencies, early intervention service providers, and other early childhood programs serving children with disabilities and their families.

These modules will showcase the alignment between the Recommended Practices and NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation. Specifically, the new online learning modules will build on other resources developed to help early childhood practitioners learn about and apply evidence-based practices, such as CONNECT Modules, also funded by OSEP and developed at FPG.



The new modules are being developed in partnership with the DEC, the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute, the University of Connecticut, other OSEP-funded centers, and faculty and providers of professional development. These partnerships ensure that the modules and supporting materials are high quality and reflect the intent behind the *Recommended Practices*. ECTA Center director Christina Kasprzak serves as principal investigator for the project.

meet the aRPy Ambassadors

<http://tinyurl.com/aRPyAmbassadors>

more about the ECTA Center's products supporting DEC Recommended Practices

<http://ectacenter.org/DECrp/>

about the ECTA Center

<http://ectacenter.org/>

FPG and Partners Launch New Center on Early Childhood

FPG is a primary partner with the national nonprofit ZERO TO THREE on a new center to improve outcomes for children and to support professional development systems for childcare providers.

"The National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning will bring research-based solutions to real-world settings for children and the people who care for and educate them," said senior research scientist Allison Metz, FPG's principal investigator on the project. "The Center will create resources, provide training, and offer technical assistance to early childhood programs, specialists, and lead agencies."

Metz said FPG's groundbreaking work in implementation science—the science of effectively bringing research to actual services on the ground—will be a critical component of the new center's approach.

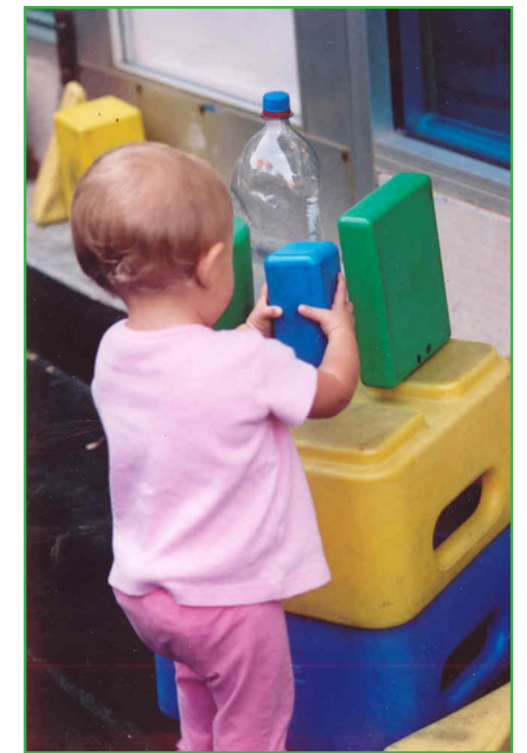
"By using proven mechanisms and structures, we can strategically move evidence-based practices more quickly, widely, and efficiently into the field at all levels," said Metz, who also directs FPG's National Implementation Research Network. "This benefits more children and teachers and does so more immediately."

Co-principal investigator Pamela J. Winton, former chair of FPG's National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, said FPG's longtime commitment to supporting the inclusion of young children with disabilities in early childhood settings will fuel a key part of the new center's mission.

"FPG has a lengthy, proven track record of training, technical assistance, and research that ignites and strengthens inclusive services for children who have a wide range of abilities," Winton said. "And this year's Inclusion Institute was the venue for rolling out a new federal interagency policy statement on inclusion."

Winton added that different early childhood programs and services often face similar challenges and could benefit from more opportunities to collaborate. "Another of the new center's key priorities will be to help strengthen coordination between Head Start, child care, and other early childhood services," she said.

FPG senior research scientist Noreen Yazejian, who also will serve as co-principal investigator, said FPG's experience adapting to the nation's changing demographics will inform and support the



new center, too. Yazejian’s research recently revealed that Educare Schools narrow the achievement gap for young children from low-income families—and that Educare’s effects on children whose first language isn’t English are especially powerful.

“FPG is well-positioned to help ensure the Center fosters services and practices that are culturally and linguistically responsive,” Yazejian said.

According to Yazejian, the federally-funded Center also can capitalize on many other resources and assets that FPG and other partners on the project already have developed. Joining FPG and ZERO TO THREE are a formidable team of experts from the University of Denver Marsico Institute for Early Learning and Literacy, the Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences at the University of Washington, Child Care Aware of America, WestEd, and AEM Corporation.

“The Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care have developed a tremendous network of resources to support the health and development of children from birth to age 5,” said Matthew Melmed, executive director of ZERO TO THREE, the lead group on the project. “It is an honor for ZERO TO THREE and our partners to be part of this important work.”

A Research to Practice Consortium made up of 18 leading researchers in early childhood development, teaching, and learning will ensure the Center bases its work on the latest science.

groundbreaking work in implementation science
<http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/>

FPG’s National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute
<http://inclusioninstitute.fpg.unc.edu/>

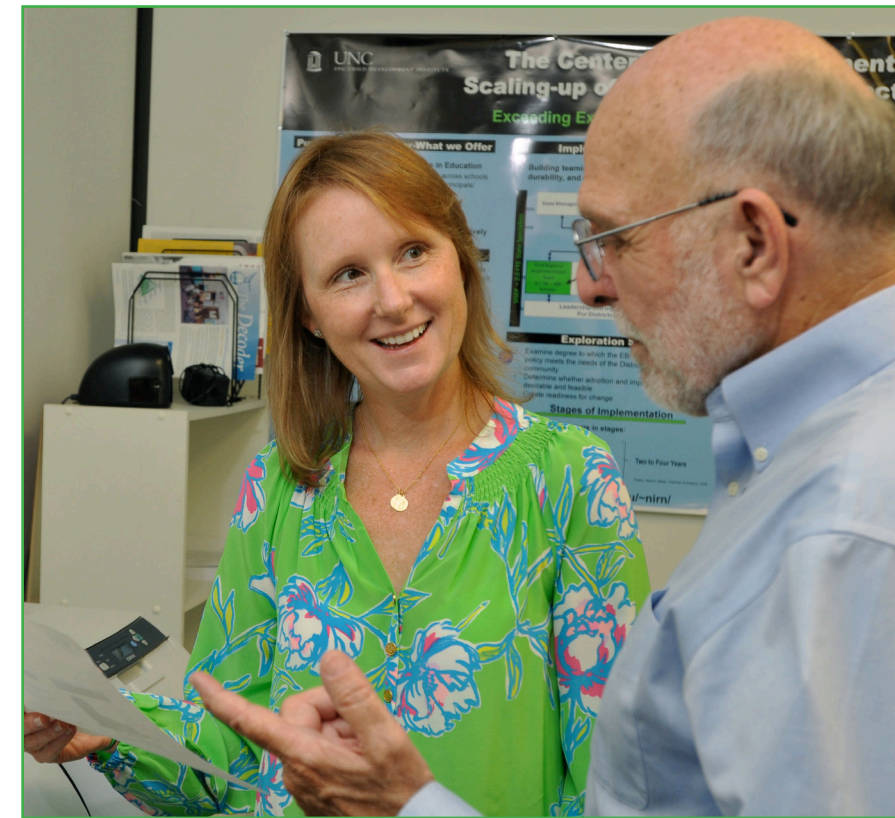
how Educare Schools narrow the achievement gap
fpg.unc.edu/node/7668

FPG’s National Implementation Research Network Expands in Scope and Size

Over the past year, FPG’s National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) has doubled in size, with a growing team working on new projects and utilizing new approaches. Highlights from the last 12 months include a seminal research brief, the launch of a new series of white papers, an insightful look behind the scenes of a major foundation in order to support its strategic vision, and much more.

NIRN director Allison Metz, associate director Sandra F. Naoom, implementation specialist Leah Bartley, and Child Trends’ Tamara Halle authored *An Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation of Early Childhood Programs and Systems* for the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. The research brief was the first in a series designed to provide early childhood researchers, program developers, and funders with an introduction to implementation frameworks and promising practices in implementation science with the aim of facilitating their use in early care and education. The popular brief introduces key elements of effective implementation, includes illustrative examples of the integrative stage-based framework, and provides a planning tool to guide people through the stages of implementation.

NIRN also has begun a series of white papers on active implementation concepts, tools, and practice. The series launched with “Practice Profiles: A Process for Capturing Evidence and Operationalizing Innovations.” To achieve desired outcomes and develop effective implementation supports, innovations need to be “teachable, learnable, doable, and assessable,” and the “Practice Profile” methodology facilitates both the development of innovations and their necessary infrastructure to buttress them.



NIRN director Allison Metz with co-founder Dean Fixsen

Gillings School’s Herbert Petersen co-taught the first graduate level course on “Implementation Science in Global Health” at the university. Also, this past summer NIRN’s “Active Implementation Hub” netted its 70,000th user, as the free online learning environment continued to attract practitioners, educators, coaches, trainers, and others involved in active implementation

and scaling up of programs and innovations.

“Implementation science and field knowledge are growing at a rapid pace,” Metz said last summer, when she announced an expanded research agenda for NIRN. “NIRN looks forward to continuing to learn together with our partners around the globe to improve outcomes across the spectrum of human services.”

An Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation of Early Childhood Programs and Systems
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7775>

***The Foundation Review* articles**
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8404>

more about NIRN
<http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/>

more about the Active Implementation Hub
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/>

With Douglas Easterling from the Wake Forest School of Medicine, Metz also co-authored two groundbreaking articles for *The Foundation Review*, the first of which delved in depth into Practice Profiles. The second also focused on the profiles, as well as on another instrument designed to foment effective implementation, the “Implementation Drivers Assessment.” For this article, Metz and Easterling explored the questions *What does the strategy require of particular foundation staff?* and *What does the strategy require in the way of organizational change within the foundation?* The researchers had an inside look as the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust used the instruments in implementing its Healthy Places NC initiative, and the process revealed discontinuities that otherwise might have resulted in a retreat from the foundation’s strategy.

In addition, Metz co-led The Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center team for co-creative capacity, which gathered for its inaugural meeting this past spring. Meanwhile, NIRN’s Sandra Naoom and the UNC

FPG Projects Receive Special Recognition for Innovation

When the Project Directors of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) met in Washington, DC, this past summer, two FPG projects received special recognition for their groundbreaking work. Larry Wexler, the Director of the Research to Practice Division of OSEP, singled out FPG's State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices Center (SISEP) and the Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM) project, calling the projects "significant innovative accomplishments" of OSEP.

The SISEP Center provides technical assistance to increase knowledge of evidence-based implementation supports for evidence-based practices in states, districts, and OSEP-funded technical assistance centers, as well as to establish implementation infrastructures in State Education Agencies and Local Education Agencies in support of full and effective use of evidence-based approaches to education. SISEP also helps establish implementation capacity, which research has identified as the missing component in efforts to move national and state policy into effective action in districts, schools, and classrooms. FPG's Dean Fixsen and Caryn Ward attended the meeting on behalf of the project.

AFIRM teaches the step-by-step process of planning for, using, and monitoring each of several evidence-based practices for learners with autism from birth to age 22. Each free learning module includes engaging case examples that demonstrate the behavior or practice in use, audio and video clips, and interactive assessments that provide feedback based on responses. In addition, supplemental materials and handouts are available to download. Users learn key components of each evidence-based practice, including the various approaches that can address specific behaviors and skills of learners with autism spectrum disorder.

In the past 15 months alone, the AFIRM modules have generated over 1,000,000 page views worldwide. Ann Sam, Ann Cox, and Sam Odom represented FPG on behalf of the project at the Project Directors' meeting.

FPG also was well represented at the meeting by multiple presenters and posters from the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), the Trohanis TA Projects, and FPG's Autism group.

more about the SISEP Center

<http://sisep.fpg.unc.edu>

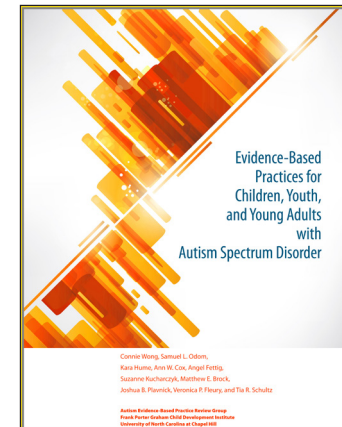
more about AFIRM

<http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules>

FPG Report Helps Guide Law to Expand Health Insurance for Children with Autism

When North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory signed last fall's *Autism Health Insurance Coverage Act*, it broadened coverage for birth to 18-year-olds with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). A seminal report that FPG scientists prepared the prior year for the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder (NPDC) helped shape the legislation.

"We are very pleased that the NPDC has been able to contribute to the important policy decisions about service that should be covered by insurance for children and youth with ASD," said FPG director Samuel L. Odom, who also served as principal investigator of the NPDC. "This could set a precedent in the nation for a more expanded view of evidence-based services that could be funded by insurance."



ASD incurs an additional average lifetime cost of \$1.4–\$2.4 million per diagnosis, depending on the level of severity. However, research suggests early diagnosis and effective interventions can reduce that cost by two-thirds.

Under the new law, qualifying health benefit plans must cover screening and treatment of ASD. This includes "Adaptive Behavioral Treatment" therapies, which the legislation defines as research-based "behavioral and developmental interventions that systematically manage instructional and environmental factors or the consequences of behavior."

"The families and caregivers of those with autism need every tool we can provide to get their loved ones treatment," said Governor McCrory in a press release. "This new law is not a silver bullet, but for many North Carolina families, it is a huge step in the right direction."

FPG scientists spearheaded the review of research that led to the NPDC's influential 2014 report by screening 29,000 articles about interventions for children and youth with ASD. The report dropped one practice from the 24 identified in its 2008 review of the research, renamed and broadened the "technology-aided instruction" practice, and added five more, including "exercise" and "structured play groups."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 1 in 68 children has ASD and that it is nearly five times more prevalent in boys than girls.

"More children than ever are being diagnosed with autism," said Odom, when the NPDC's report was released. "We're catching them earlier, with better tools, and these children need the right services."

The NPDC's report: *Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

<http://tinyurl.com/AutismEBPs>

FPG Provides Early Learning Activities and Visual Supports to Teach Toddlers with Autism

Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers (FITT) provides individualized support and training to families that focus on how core features of autism manifest in toddlers, as well as how to implement strategies in the home environment to support toddler engagement. FITT is designed to improve toddlers' developmental and adaptive skills, reduce parent stress, and increase parent well-being.

During FITT sessions, parents identify routines and skills they would like to target and then together with the FITT interventionist develop a visually structured activity or cue to help facilitate learning. Through FITT, parents and family members support the development of communication and social interaction skills, and FITT also supports the development of play skills, which creates opportunities for social interaction and in turn supports many types of learning.

Initial activities introduced during a table-based play routine typically have a very clear beginning and end,



Ann Cox



include a sensory component (preferred sounds or textures), are highly motivating, and build on the toddler's strengths. Interventionists and parents also informally assess the toddlers throughout FITT sessions to ensure activities target emerging skills and are individualized to meet the toddler's needs.

Activities may also include visual instructions, such as a series of photos or objects that teach a multi-step play activity. Single photos may be used to provide support for toddlers as they are learning functional and symbolic play routines (e.g., a farm animal completes an action, such as the pig jumps, the horse sleeps). Activities may be visually organized, which can include stabilizing them on a tray, providing containers for extra parts and pieces, and reducing the number of parts and pieces.

Additional visual cues or reminders of what the toddler should be doing before, during, or at the conclusion of an activity have proven effective with young children with autism; thus, they are also a key component of FITT, including visual countdowns of how much time remains in an activity, visuals for choice-making to see a field of choices during activities, and visuals for expectations to better understand rules and limits (e.g., a stop sign at a back door).

Research is currently underway to examine the impacts of FITT on toddler outcomes, including developmental and adaptive skills, as well as the impact on parent stress and well-being, and FPG's autism team is also collaborating with rural community-based early intervention providers in North Carolina to develop a training and coaching model to support the use of FITT.

The autism team has also developed resources for families and professionals to support the use of FITT.

more about Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers
<http://fitt.fpg.unc.edu/>

FPG's Autism Experts Offer Key Resources on Complexities and Perils of Navigating High School

Kara Hume, co-principal investigator of the Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (CSESA), has authored a new research snapshot that provides guidance on "Considerations and Complexities for High School Interventions." Hume's brief is based upon feedback CSESA obtained from 28 focus groups in four states and the perspectives of 152 practitioners, parents, and other key stakeholders.

In her brief, Hume offers five essential recommendations, including: concerted and coordinated intervention efforts within secondary schools; finding time for professionals, families, and students to collaborate around programming; tailored interventions that address the diverse and individualized needs of students across the entire spectrum; strong professional development, training, and resources that are delivered in creative and compelling ways to ensure practitioners are well prepared to meet the educational and transition needs of high school students with ASD; and broader efforts to ensure that a basic awareness and understanding of ASD permeates secondary schools.

Kara Hume



The CSESA has developed numerous additional resources over the past year as well, including new editions of the popular *Autism at-a-Glance* publication. This series of practitioner and family-friendly documents is designed for high school staff members supporting students on the autism spectrum, as well as family members of adolescents with ASD. *Autism at-a-Glance* provides a current summary of topics relevant to high school students with ASD, including this past year's editions on hygiene, Internet safety, puberty, and building healthy habits.

research snapshot: "Considerations and Complexities for High School Interventions"
<http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/snapshot-78>

abstract and full article: "Considerations and Complexities for High School Interventions"
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7547>

Autism at-a-Glance
<http://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/resources/autism-at-a-glance>

more resources from CSESA
<http://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/resources>

FPG and Partners Hold Public Forum about Employing People with Autism

April was Autism Awareness Month, and FPG continued to draw attention to issues surrounding autism spectrum disorder by jointly hosting "Exploring Successful Opportunities and Strategies for Employing Individuals with Autism." With UNC's TEACCH Autism Program, the Department of Allied Health Sciences, the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities, and UNC's School of Education, FPG welcomed a packed house of community employers, families, and others interested in enhancing employment opportunities for people on the spectrum.

FPG's Kara Hume said the event helped provide awareness of the advantages of hiring people with autism. "It also offered opportunities to partner with successful



A panelist from "Exploring Successful Opportunities and Strategies for Employing Individuals with Autism"

employers of people with autism and to begin to create a network," Hume said.

Mike Chapman, director of the Supported Employment Program at TEACCH, moderated a panel from the local business community, which included Extraordinary Ventures, Persever8, Alpha Graphics, and others who shared stories about bringing people with autism into their workplaces. An employee with autism also joined the panel for a standing-room-only crowd at the Carolina Center for Educational Excellence.

Like many of the panelists, Michael Betts, human resources director for Extraordinary Ventures (EV), stressed key assets that people with autism have to offer.

"EV seeks to employ the range of the spectrum," said Betts. Extraordinary Ventures operates several businesses that benefit from the skills of people with autism, and Betts related a story about the repetitive nature of an initial conversation he once had with an employee on the spectrum about washing a window—which then resulted in a world-class window washing.

"You ask somebody with autism to wash a window," said Betts, "and you won't even know there's glass in it afterward."

Linda Varblow, an autism specialist at TEACCH, co-founded the non-profit Persever8 to train and place people with autism in the information-technology sector. Varblow explained that part of Persever8’s program included explaining the diagnosis of autism to her trainees, as well as how people with autism offer unique attributes that can help them do well in the IT field.

“That’s a message they’ve been very interested in hearing,” Varblow said.

Other panelists also noted the diligence, punctuality, and reliability of employees on the spectrum. One employer highlighted the supervisory responsibilities she handed over to an employee with autism. John, an employee with autism who works at a local bike shop, explained that his organizational skills were as good as or better than some of his peers without autism.

Betts added that employing people with autism involves challenges but that these come with the package of distinctive and often beneficial traits that defines ASD and that makes employing people on the spectrum so rewarding. “Our challenges are what make us awesome,” Betts said.

Hume said the success of the forum was indicative of the cross-departmental collaboration possible at UNC on behalf of people with autism. Among public universities, UNC is ranked first in the world on autism research.

more on FPG’s autism projects
<http://fpg.unc.edu/learn-more-about-autism-fpg>

FPG Director Odom and Duke’s Ken Dodge Co-Author Op-Ed on Pre-K’s Benefits

In a joint op-ed for the *Raleigh News & Observer*, FPG director Sam Odom and the director of Duke University’s Center for Child and Family Policy, Ken Dodge, explained how research has demonstrated that NC Pre-K is associated with much better child outcomes than Tennessee’s



Pre-Kindergarten program. They were writing in response to findings last year from a study conducted on Tennessee’s Pre-Kindergarten program that some people have cited to call into question the beneficial effects of Pre-K.

Odom and Dodge argued that research has demonstrated that the story outside of Tennessee often has been much different. At FPG, they said, senior research scientist “Ellen Peisner-Feinberg and colleagues have conducted evaluations of NC Pre-K for 13 years. In one recent study, they found that at the end of preschool and into kindergarten, children in NC Pre-K make significant progress in vocabulary and math, as compared with a norm group. Also, children who had the lowest English proficiency at the beginning of the NC Pre-K year benefited the most.”

Odom and Dodge later noted some of the Peisner-Feinberg team’s most important findings about NC Pre-K: “In another study, they found that the reading and math scores at the end of third grade for children were modestly higher for the NC Pre-K group as compared to a group who had not attended the program. That is, the effects for NC Pre-K do not ‘fade out’ as they had for children in the Tennessee study. Also, for the poorest children, fewer children were identified as having a disability at third grade, as compared to children not attending NC Pre-K.”

Odom and Dodge cited additional research and concluded that the “positive findings from North Carolina are consistent with findings from Pre-K programs in other cities and states,” such as in Boston, Tulsa, Georgia, and New Jersey.

“In evaluation research, a single study that has starkly different results from the convergence of findings of other studies is called an ‘outlier,’” said Odom and Dodge. “When establishing social policy about services and funding, the soundest course is to base decisions on the convergence of findings rather than listening to the outlier.”

more on NC Pre-K
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7633>

the full op-ed
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8246>

From Terrorism to Budget Implications: *Social Policy Report* Publishes Four Visionary Issues on Children

FPG director Sam Odom and assistant director Stephanie Ridley spearheaded an editorial cadre of current and former FPG experts for the seminal *Social Policy Report*, which in the past year produced a volume of four new

editions for the Society for Research in Child Development. *Social Policy Report* is renowned for providing objective reviews of crucial research findings on topics of national interest.

In an issue covering “Children and Terrorism,” one of the past year’s most popular, James Garbarino and his colleagues explained the ominous context facing children today: “Hardly a week goes by in the United States (and to varying degrees, in the rest of the world) that the word terrorism does not appear in the collective consciousness, as represented, channeled, and shaped by the mass media in its many print, broadcast, and Internet manifestations. While relatively few children worldwide (and even fewer children domestically in the United States) have been the specific targets for acts of terrorism, some have, and most are growing up in a world in which terrorism in its many aspects is a salient cultural phenomenon.”

The subsequent issue looked at “Implications of Developmental Science for My Brother’s Keeper Initiative.” Oscar Barbarin and his colleagues opened their



exploration of the White House initiative by outlining the reasons for its necessity: “On almost every indicator of wellbeing, the vulnerability of boys and young men of color (BMOC) is unmistakable. On negative indicators such as poor health, academic deficits, unemployment, and incarceration, they are over-represented. Conversely, on positive indicators, their presence is barely registered... In a bold move to draw attention to and to address this problem, President Barack Obama issued a Presidential Memo on February 27, 2014 entitled ‘Creating and Expanding Ladders of Opportunity for Boys and Young Men of Color.’ This memo established a high level presidential commission to gather information, propose policies, and implement programs to place more BMOC on a positive developmental trajectory.”

Editions on “The Influence of Health Care Policies on Children’s Health and Development” and “Federal Expenditures on Children: What Budget Policy Means for Children’s Policy” bracketed this past volume year. The latter edition included Heather Hahn’s seminal review of the current federal budgetary landscape, as well as her reminder that society-at-large must allocate spending on children because “investments in children’s health, education, and overall well-being pay high dividends for taxpayers and the economy as a whole. High-quality early childhood programs and K–12 education, stable housing, and adequate nutrition help children grow into healthy adults who are able to support themselves and contribute to economic growth.”

In a follow-up commentary, Ron Haskins added that Hahn’s analysis was “a terrific overview of changes in federal policy toward children as well as a warning to readers that federal policy increasingly sacrifices children’s needs to provide money and health services to the elderly.”

These four issues comprised volume 29 of *Social Policy Report* and marked the end of the current editorial team’s tenure, as a new team rotates onto the masthead.

Children and Terrorism
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8111>

Development of Boys and Young Men of Color: Implications of Developmental Science for My Brother’s Keeper Initiative
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8209>

The Influence of Health Care Policies on Children’s Health and Development
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8377>

Federal Expenditures on Children: What Budget Policy Means for Children’s Policy
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8123>

FPG and HBCUs Collaborate to Establish the NC Consortium on Black Children and Families

Since its inception as a groundbreaking, integrated child care center, FPG has conducted research and offered professional development to advance knowledge and enhance the lives of children of many backgrounds, as well as their families. FPG continues engaging in this work on several fronts, including a new collaboration with scholars at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) through the creation of the North Carolina Consortium on Black Children and Families.

The North Carolina Consortium on Black Children and Families establishes mutually beneficial collaborations between FPG and HBCUs. In addition to sharing resources with participating HBCUs, FPG scientists anticipate benefiting from the perspectives, knowledge, and skills that faculty from HBCUs will bring to joint research and to professional development projects that prepare or train early childhood educators and others who work with young African American children and their families.

To begin building this consortium, FPG met HBCU scholars with interests in early care and development of African American children and families during the



Nicole Gardner-Neblett

2015–2016 academic year. Initial discussions included a brief introduction to FPG, discussions about what FPG could bring to collaborations, and preliminary discussions about potential joint projects.

The consortium’s steering committee includes FPG director Sam Odom, FPG advanced research scientist Nicole Gardner-Neblett, and North Carolina Central University assistant professor Nigel Pierce.

more about Nicole Gardner-Neblett
<http://fpg.unc.edu/profiles/nicole-gardner-neblett>

FPG Fellow Rud Turnbull Helps the White House Celebrate the 40TH Anniversary of IDEA

Late last year, FPG fellow Rud Turnbull, adjunct professor in UNC’s School of Education, helped commemorate the 40TH anniversary of the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The White House celebration included a host of officials from government, the education community, advocates, and others to celebrate and reaffirm support for IDEA and to honor the many significant contributions that parents, teachers, service providers, administrators and

many others have made.

“Our memories capture IDEA’s fundamental message,” said Turnbull at the event. “First, disability is a natural consequence of the human condition and is no reason for discrimination, and second, discrimination in our schools will fade as appropriate education and inclusive schools occur.”

IDEA guarantees students with a disability will receive Free Appropriate Public Education tailored to individual needs. From 1975 to 1990, IDEA was known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. IDEA’s essential goal has been to provide children with and without disabilities the same opportunities for education.

Turnbull was co-founder of the Beach Center on Disability and the Ross and Marianna Beach Emeritus Distinguished Professor at the University of Kansas. He has authored or co-authored over 300 publications on numerous issues of disability law and policy. He also has been the recipient of national leadership awards from disability-advocacy organizations and other associations.

watch Rud Turnbull’s celebration of IDEA
<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/8159>

Rud Turnbull (left) with the FPG executive leadership board’s Don Stedman



Spotlight

Ann Turnbull

An FPG Fellow Receives a Special Education Lifetime Achievement Award



At its annual convention in April in St. Louis, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) bestowed FPG fellow Ann P. Turnbull with a national 2016 *J. E. Wallace Wallin Special Education Lifetime Achievement Award*, calling Turnbull “a premier scholar of family systems theory in special education.”

According to the CEC, the *J. E. Wallace Wallin Special Education Lifetime Achievement Award* “recognizes an individual who has made continued and sustained contributions to the education of children and youth with exceptionalities.”

The special education field has long hailed Ann Turnbull as a leading researcher on family support, family quality of life, family-professional partnerships, and other subjects—but national and international family networks also know her as a visionary and relentless advocate and leader. She co-founded the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas and co-directed it for 26 years. She also served as president of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Over her 40-year career, she has delivered over 600 presentations, authored over 250 articles and chapters, and published 32 books, including nine textbooks. More than 500 colleges and universities have adopted her book *Exceptional Lives: Special Education in Today's Schools*.

In 2015, FPG's National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute featured a formidable and multi-talented mother-daughter team when Ann and daughter Kate, a mindfulness coach who works with children with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, delivered the keynote address at the popular three-day conference and played key roles in several other Institute offerings.

At the time, Ann explained she was excited to co-present with Kate because of Kate's insights about having grown up with brother Jay (1967–2009), who had multiple disabilities. At earlier Inclusion Institutes, Ann had talked about her family's quest to support Jay in having an “enviable life,” but this was the first time that Kate would share her own journey with Jay.

This year, Ann Turnbull returned to the Inclusion Institute to deliver a keynote with FPG senior research scientist Allison Metz, “Implementation Science and Family Experiences: Where the Rubber Meets the Road.”

Such esteemed awards as the *J. E. Wallace Wallin Special Education Lifetime Achievement Award* are nothing new to Ann Turnbull. In 1999, she was named one of 36 people who “changed the course of history for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the 20TH century,” and nine years earlier she received the International Leadership Award from the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation.

more about Ann Turnbull

<http://fpg.unc.edu/node/7510>

Projects

FPG is one of the nation's oldest and largest multidisciplinary centers devoted to the study of young children and their families. Over 300 researchers, implementation and technical assistance specialists, staff, and students worked on dozens of projects during the past fiscal year across seven major areas of emphasis: developmental disabilities; early care and education; physical and social health; professional development, technical assistance, and implementation science; public policy and evaluation; racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity; and the international initiative.

What follows is a compendium of the past year's active projects, through which FPG continues to enhance the lives of children and families.

- A Family-Genetic Study of Autism and Fragile X Syndrome
- A Gathering of Leaders (AgoL)
- A Study of Child Care Settings in Multiple Communities
- Active and Ongoing Implementation Support for State and County Child Welfare Systems in California
- Active Implementation Frameworks to Support Effective Implementation of Family Success Centers
- Advanced Online Course in Foundations
- An Efficacy Study of the School-Based National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders Model
- An Epidemiological and Longitudinal Study of Rural Child Literacy Trajectories
- Capacity Building and Evaluation to Support the Implementation of Healthy Places North Carolina
- Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems
- Center on Secondary Education for Students With Autism Spectrum Disorder (CSESA)
- Children Living in Rural Poverty: Phase 3 of the Family Life Project
- Co-Creating the Conditions to Sustain the Use of Research Evidence in Public Child Welfare
- Creating Professional Development Resources for Child Care Providers Working With Dual Language Learners
- Development of a Computerized Assessment of Executive Function for Preschool-Aged Children
- Early Childhood Development Secondary Data Analysis Project
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
- Early Education in Rural North Carolina
- Early Literacy Module Project in Singapore
- Educare Follow-up Studies
- Educational Outcomes of the Incredible Years Small Group Program for Early Elementary Students With Self-Regulation Difficulties
- Effects of the Incredible Years Classroom and Teacher Combined Intervention on Preschool Children's Self-Regulation and Academic Achievement
- Ethnography, Neurodevelopment and Self-Regulation Project
- Evaluation of Shape NC Phase II
- Evaluation of Smart Start's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Child Care Health Consultant Project
- Evaluation of Supporting Change and Reform in Inclusive Personnel Preparation (SCRIPP)
- Evaluation of the 2015 Rising Pre-Kindergarten Summer Transition Program
- Evaluation of the Head Start Designation Renewal System
- Evaluation of the Mississippi Child Care Quality Stars Program
- Evaluation of the NC Pre-Kindergarten Program
- Evaluation of Wake County Public School System's "Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL) Coaching: Building Capacity and Ensuring Fidelity"
- Family Life Project Obesity Grant
- FirstSchool Online Education and Support: Inquiry and Equity in PreK Through Third Grade
- FirstSchool Online Education and Support: Minnesota Partnership
- FirstSchool Support for Demonstration Classrooms
- From Evaluation to Inquiry
- Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Evaluation
- Human Capital Interventions Across Childhood and Adolescence
- IDEA Data Center
- Illinois QRIS Validation and Child Outcomes Study
- Implementation Evaluation of the Triple P System in Two North Carolina Counties
- Illinois QRIS Validation and Child Outcomes Study
- Implementation Evaluation of the Triple P System in Two North Carolina Counties
- Joint Attention Mediated Learning Intervention for Toddlers With Autism Spectrum Disorders and Their Families

- Large Scale Psychometric Assessment of the ECERS-3
- Montana Maternal and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MECHV) Evaluation
- More Than Baby Talk: Improving Child Care Providers' Capacity to Promote Infant/Toddler Language and Communications
- National Center for Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning
- National Evaluation Partner for the Educare Learning Network Implementation Study
- New Jersey Department of Children and Families Evidence Based Practices
- NIRN Implementation Research: Wake County Public Schools
- North Carolina Early Learning Network
- North Carolina Family Survey Project
- North Carolina Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant Transformation Zone Evaluation
- North Carolina Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Support
- Online Module Development of Evidence-Based Practices for Learners With Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Partnership in Using Implementation Science to Improve Implementation of Evidence-Based Home Visiting in Montana
- Postdoctoral Research Training Fellowship in Early Childhood Education Sciences
- Prekindergarten Education Monitoring System Design Consultation and Coordination
- Preschool Special Education Evaluation Project
- Project to Provide Implementation Support for Permanency Innovations Initiative Grantees
- Promoting the Use of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Youth With Autism Spectrum Disorders and Their Families in Saudi Arabia
- Reliability Training for Three Participants: Orange County
- Reliability Training for Three Participants: Santa Clara County
- SCRIPP
- SISEP-NC DPI-OEL
- State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices (SISEP) Center
- Stress Exposure and Immune Outcomes in Children
- Stress, Self-Regulation, and Psychopathology in Middle Childhood
- Student Engagement: The Roles of Chaos, Self-Regulation, and Classroom Quality
- Study of EHS-CC Partnerships-Services Component 1: Knowledge Base and TOC Model
- Summarizing Abecedarian Over Time
- Supporting Change and Reform in Preservice Teaching in North Carolina (SCRIPT-NC)
- Tacoma Community College Paraeducator Project
- Targeted Reading Intervention NC Quest
- Teacher Leaders in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education



- Technical Support to CDC EHDl Team on Part C Programs
- Testing the Effectiveness of Interactive Writing in the Targeted Reading Intervention in an Urban School
- The Partners Project: Working Together to Enhance Inclusive Early Childhood Environments
- Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS)
- Toddlers and Families Together: Addressing Early Core Features of Autism
- Utilizing County Evaluation Findings to Build Implementation Capacity and Infrastructure to Support the Triple P System of Interventions in North Carolina
- Vermont Early Childhood Consultant
- Vermont FirstSchool Partnership

more about FPG's projects
<http://fpg.unc.edu/projects>

Spotlight

Howard Lee

*An FPG Executive Leadership Board Member
Receives the NC Award for Public Service*



On November 12, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory presented Howard N. Lee, longtime member of FPG’s executive leadership board, with the *North Carolina Award for Public Service*. In 1961, the N.C. General Assembly established the prize, the highest civilian award from the state of North Carolina.

The North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) administers the honor and in describing Lee’s lifetime of achievements said that Lee might still be best known “as the first African American to be elected mayor of a predominantly white southern town since Reconstruction.”

However, according to the NCDNCR, this was only one such important first for Lee. When he became secretary of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, he was the first African American to hold the position of cabinet secretary. He also was the first African American to chair North Carolina’s State Board of Education.

The NCDNCR said Lee’s biography reveals “a life-long commitment to education,” noting, for instance, that “while in the state Senate [he] was co-chair of the Senate subcommittee on education policy and also of appropriations.” In numerous capacities, Lee has “served the public, including creating a transit system and public housing in Chapel Hill, mentoring disadvantaged youth while employed at Duke University, managing all education reform enacted by the legislature from 1997–2000, and overseeing creation of the state’s mountains-to-sea trail.”

In 2011, Lee also established the Howard N. Lee Institute for Equity and Opportunity in Education. The mission statement for the Institute characterizes its primary purpose as partnering “with parents, schools, and communities to ensure at-risk middle and high school students have equitable access to high quality educational experiences and graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college, career, and life.”

Since 1964, the North Carolina award has recognized significant contributions to the state and the country in fine art, literature, public service, and science. Past recipients total over 250 luminaries and include John Hope Franklin, David Brinkley, Maya Angelou, Billy Graham, Branford Marsalis, William Friday, and James Taylor.

In addition to Lee, the 2015 award winners are Anthony S. Abbott, Dr. Anthony Atala, Senator James T. Broyhill, Dr. A. Everette James, Jr, and Patricia McBride.

Partnerships

Leadership, collaboration, and donor support

FPG's partners continue to make more work possible and to extend its impact. Through this network of collaborators, FPG grows and evolves, bringing better outcomes for children, families, and communities around the globe.

FPG's Executive Leadership Board offers experience and expertise, helping to define FPG's mission and focus. These board members infuse FPG with a wealth of knowledge, and we are grateful for their service.

- **W. Steven Barnett**
Director, National Institute for Early Education Research
Rutgers University
- **Senator Tamara Barringer**
North Carolina General Assembly
- **Barbara T. Bowman**
Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development
Erikson Institute
- **Elizabeth Pungello Bruno**
President
Brady Education Foundation
- **Peggy Carter**
Chair, Board of Directors
Winston-Salem State University Foundation
- **Ken Dodge**
Director, Center for Child and Family Policy
Duke University
- **Eugene Garcia**
Professor Emeritus
Arizona State University
- **Ron Haskins**
Senior Fellow, Economic Studies
Co-Director, Center on Children and Families
The Brookings Institution
- **Olson Huff**
Medical Director Emeritus
Mission Children's Hospital
- **Hal Kaplan**
President and CEO
Kaplan Early Learning Company
- **David Lawrence, Jr.**
President
Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
- **Howard Lee**
President
Howard N. Lee Institute
Formerly, North Carolina State Board of Education
- **Michael L. Lopez**
Principal Associate
Abt Associates
- **Marvin McKinney**
Academic Specialist
Michigan State University
Formerly, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- **Evelyn K. Moore**
President Emeritus
National Black Child Development Institute
- **Duncan Munn**
Munn & Munn, LLC
Formerly, Division of Early Intervention and Education,
NC Department of Health and Human Services
- **James M. Perrin**
Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School
Director, Center for Child and Adolescent Health Policy
Massachusetts General Hospital
- **Karen Ponder**
Owner, Ponder Early Childhood, Inc.
Formerly, North Carolina Partnership for Children
- **Donald J. Stedman**
President and CEO
New Voices Foundation
Formerly, Dean of the UNC-CH School of Education

In addition, FPG collaborates with several **centers, institutes, schools, and departments at UNC**, including:

- Carolina Center for Genome Sciences
- Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities
- Center for Developmental Science

- College of Arts & Sciences
- Department of Linguistics
- Department of Psychology and Neuroscience
- Department of Public Policy
- Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
- Gillings School of Global Public Health
- Department of Epidemiology
- Department of Maternal and Child Health
- Kenan-Flagler Business School
- Office of Research Communication
- School of Dentistry
- School of Education
- School of Medicine
- Department of Allied Health Sciences
- Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
- Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences
- Department of Pediatrics
- Department of Psychiatry
- TEACCH Autism Program
- School of Nursing
- School of Social Work

FPG's work transcends the university's boundaries, too, through collaborations with many **external groups and organizations**:

- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Belk Foundation
- Berks County Intermediate Unit
- Bertie County Schools
- Brady Education Foundation
- Branagh Information Group
- Buffett Early Childhood Fund
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Child and Family Policy Institute of California
- Child Trends
- Duke Endowment
- Duke University
- Evergreen Evaluation and Consulting, Inc.
- George Kaiser Family Foundation
- Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
- Georgia State University Research Foundation
- Illinois State Board of Education
- Indiana University
- JBS International, Inc.
- Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
- King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre Riyadh
- KK Women's and Children's Hospital
- Learning Connections
- Marquette-Alger Regional Education Service Agency
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau
- Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
- Michigan State Board of Education
- Minnesota Department of Education
- Mississippi Department of Human Services
- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- New York University
- North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- North Carolina Division of Child Development
- North Carolina Division of Public Health
- North Carolina Partnership for Children
- Northampton Community College
- Northwestern University
- Office of the North Carolina Governor
- Open Society Institute



Thelma O. Harms, longtime FPG donor, as well as a key figure at FPG and in the field since the 1970s

- Orange County CA Superintendent of Schools
- Oregon Department of Education
- Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute
- Ounce of Prevention Fund
- PACER Center
- Pennsylvania State University
- Peoria County Regional Office of Education
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- RTI International
- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- San Diego State University
- Santa Clara County Office of Education
- SRI International
- State of Montana
- State of Washington, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Tacoma Community College
- The Lewin Group
- U.S. Department of Education
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Irvine
- University of Chicago
- University of Colorado
- University of Connecticut
- University of Connecticut Health Center
- University of Nebraska
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- University of North Carolina General Administration
- University of Oklahoma
- University of Oklahoma - Tulsa
- University of Oregon
- University of Rochester
- University of South Florida
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Toledo
- University of Washington
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Urban Institute
- Vanderbilt University
- Vermont Agency of Education
- Wake County Public School System
- Walsh Taylor, Inc.
- Westat, Inc.
- William T. Grant Foundation
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- ZERO TO THREE

The success of FPG’s groundbreaking 50TH anniversary conference relied on the vision of an esteemed

Honorary Planning Committee:

- **Sandra Wilcox Conway**
Independent Consultant
- **Thomas W. Lambeth**
Senior Fellow, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
- **Howard N. Lee**
President, Howard N. Lee Institute
- **Robert Ashley**
Editor, *The Herald-Sun*
- **Elizabeth Benefield**
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North Carolina State University
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In addition, FPG’s **2015–2016 Honor Roll of Donors** provided crucial financial support for our 50TH anniversary conference as well as our ongoing efforts to advance knowledge and enhance lives. The investment of these individuals, corporations, and foundations in FPG is a testament to their commitment to helping children and families thrive:

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Spotlight

J. Steven Reznick

Remembering an FPG Fellow and Innovator

FPG fellow and UNC professor J. Steven Reznick passed away on July 5, 2016 after a three-year battle with ALS. The friendships he accumulated, the respect for his research and service, and his own sense of humor often were evident, but perhaps no more so than when he had accepted the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine* award seven months earlier. Since its inception a half-century ago, the award has become one of North Carolina's highest honors for civilian service.

“When I first came to Carolina, people started telling stories about Steve, and they were all good,” said Chancellor Carol Folt, who conferred the award at a ceremony at UNC. Folt called the stories “quite remarkable in their variety.”

Addressing Reznick, she said, “Your mentorship was something I heard about from so many people. Others, of course, talked about your research.” She added that testimonies often noted Reznick’s “incredible generosity and good cheer.”

“Every single one of these amazing stories also had a deep, constant theme—and that was about the respect and admiration, and indeed the love, that so many people have felt for you,” said Folt. She characterized Reznick’s service as not only exemplary on behalf of the university and the state but “indeed the nation and the world.”

Throughout Reznick’s career, he played a variety of key roles as innovator, launching new initiatives inside and outside North Carolina. He established or helped establish the Cognitive Development Society, the Society for Research in Child Development’s journal *Child Development Perspectives*, Carolina’s First Year Fellows program, the UNC-Duke Collaborative Program in Developmental Psychology, the Carolina Seminar on Behavioral Research on Minority Populations, and the Center for Developmental Science’s Durham Child Health & Development study.



Steve Reznick and Chancellor Carol Folt

“Dr. Reznick has been the consummate professor and professional since arriving at UNC,” said FPG director Sam Odom, at the time of the award. “His work has contributed to our scientific knowledge of child development, incorporated the collaboration of colleagues, furthered the research enterprise at FPG and the university, and supported his doctoral students.”

Reznick’s research primarily centered on early cognitive development, especially on working memory and attention, language, and aspects of perception.

With FPG senior research scientist Barbara Davis Goldman and others, he published a new study in *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, which, according to the authors, includes findings that “shed light into early functional brain development and provide a new perspective for future searches for functional developmental abnormalities.”

Reznick also contributed to research projects on autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and during a process lasting several years he co-developed an instrument that identifies infants who later are likely to be diagnosed with ASD. He additionally created or co-created several other widely-used measurement and assessment tools.

Goldman said FPG had benefited from Reznick’s wisdom and support over the years, and at the time noted the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine* ceremony in some ways typified his contributions. The announcement from UNC Psychology and Neuroscience about Reznick’s passing also concluded, “He will be sorely missed by the many faculty, students, and staff who knew him—and he leaves behind a legacy of courage and inspiration.”

J. Steven Reznick’s acceptance speech, including his revision of the hallowed toast associated with the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine*

<http://tinyurl.com/RememberingSteveReznick>

Resources

Books, Articles, Briefs, Multimedia, and More

FPG experts have served as leaders in professional associations, government task forces, and community organizations, as well as on advisory, editorial, and foundation boards. They have testified before Congressional committees and briefed their staffs, and our projects have drawn national and international coverage from hundreds of media outlets. Equally important, FPG's local, state, national, and international reach includes a vast array of highly anticipated and widely respected scholarly publications and other valuable resources, which take numerous forms for multiple audiences at home and abroad. What follows is a compilation of these resources from the past fiscal year.

Books and Book Chapters

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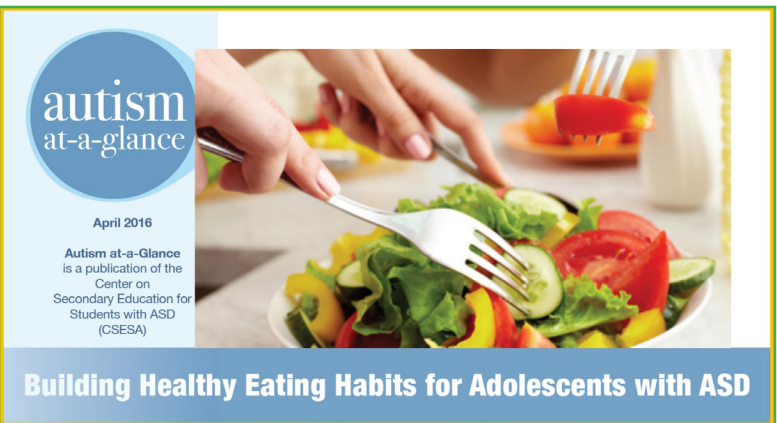
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Spotlight

Award Winners

FPG Recognizes Don Stedman, Emerging Scholars, and Other Key Contributors

Career Service Award winner Don Stedman with FPG assistant director Stephanie Ridley



In addition to recognizing former Governor Jim Hunt with the *Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute Lifetime Achievement Award* for his public service on behalf of children and families in North Carolina (see page 15 for the *Spotlight* feature on Jim Hunt), FPG also recognized six other key contributors and emerging scholars.

In May, FPG presented Don Stedman with a *Career Service Award* for his dedication to the field. Stedman, former Dean of UNC’s School of Education was a seminal mover-and-shaker during FPG’s early years as associate director and is a longtime member of FPG’s executive leadership board.

Most recently, he was instrumental on several fronts in helping to spearhead FPG’s 50th anniversary conference, including making the first donation designated to celebrate the anniversary, a gift from New Voices Foundation, which he co-founded.

“FPG is a world class child development organization,” said Stedman at the time. “A half century of work has helped transform both how and when children need educational support to make their lives better and richer.”

In addition to his integral roles with FPG, New Voices, and UNC’s School of Education, Stedman has served on many boards and advisory groups for organizations that address children’s issues. During his career he also has held faculty posts at Duke University and at Vanderbilt University, where he directed the JFK Center at Vanderbilt-Peabody, and he also served the UNC System for nearly 15 years as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Interim Vice President for Research and Public Service Programs.



Abecedarian Award winner Mary Bratsch-Hines with director Sam Odom

At the same ceremony Hunt and Stedman received their awards, FPG also presented the *Abecedarian Award* to Mary Bratsch-Hines. Established by FPG senior scientist emeritus Joseph Sparling, along with former FPG colleagues Craig and Sharon Ramey, this award provides support for research and development activities of faculty and staff at FPG.

Bratsch-Hines has worked on the Family Life Project and used data from the project to investigate child care instability for low-income families. Her research interests include professional development in literacy for pre-kindergarten and elementary teachers, program evaluation and assessment, access to child care, child care quality, rural families and schools, and more.

In addition, Stephanie Maher Ridley, FPG’s assistant director of policy and development, presented five awards at a luncheon last fall for FPG employees.

Chih-Ing Lim, co-principal investigator of FPG’s Supporting Change and Reform in Preservice Teaching in North Carolina, received the *Thelma Harms Early Childhood Education Award*. Named to honor FPG scientist emerita Thelma Harms, this \$5000 award provides financial support for the study of early childhood programs internationally.

Lim has served as coordinator for FPG’s Project CONNECT, which developed online evidence-based professional development modules and self-paced online courses. Prior to joining FPG, Lim worked in Singapore as a preschool officer with the Ministry of Education, where she collaborated closely with early childhood teachers and faculty to develop and pilot test the national curriculum for early childhood education. She remains active internationally on FPG’s behalf and recently coordinated the visit of a delegation from Singapore, who came to FPG to learn how to establish a research institute.

UNC graduate student Susan Hedges, whose work at FPG has focused on how to address challenges and needs of adolescents with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), was the recipient of the *James J. Gallagher Dissertation Award*.

Since 2002, in honor of beloved former FPG director and senior scientist Jim Gallagher, this \$3000 annual award has supported dissertation research on child development, education, or family support. Gallagher’s work focused on children at both ends of the developmental spectrum—those with disabilities and those who are gifted—and students working in these areas receive greatest consideration for the award.

Hedges is lead author of “‘Falling Through the Cracks’: Challenges for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder” in *High School Journal*, as well as “Depression in Adolescents with ASD,” an issue of FPG’s *Autism-at-a-Glance*. She also has co-authored several other publications on autism and adolescence.

Sandra Soliday Hong, co-principal investigator on FPG’s Illinois QRIS Validation and Child Outcomes Study, won the *Joanne Erwich Roberts Early Career Award*.

Roberts had a distinguished career as a researcher at UNC from 1981 until her death in 2008. The award in her name funds a wide range of professional development activities for the winner.

Hong was lead author on “Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: Validation of a Local Implementation in LA County and Children’s School-Readiness” in *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. Her earlier scholarship includes “Professional Development Systems for Early Childhood Educators Within a State and Federal Policy Context,” a book chapter in *Foundations for Teaching Excellence: Connecting Early Childhood Quality Rating, Professional Development, and Competency Systems in States*.

Each year, FPG also presents another award that carries the name of FPG’s esteemed former director. Two employees receive the *James J. Gallagher Award* in recognition of their exemplary attitude and commitment to the FPG community. These honorees demonstrate a willingness to perform above and beyond the call of duty and enhance the overall climate of FPG. Jessica Dykstra Steinbrenner and Karen B. Taylor are this year’s winners.

Steinbrenner is the principal investigator of FPG’s “Improving Social-Communication and Engagement of Elementary Students With Autism Spectrum Disorder: Adapting a Preschool Intervention for Elementary School

Classrooms” project, and she serves as an integral member of FPG’s Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. She has authored and co-authored numerous publications on interventions and practices for students with ASD.

Taylor is the project coordinator for FPG’s National Evaluation Partner for the Educare Learning Network Implementation Study and a veteran both of FPG’s Evaluation of North Carolina’s Smart Start Initiative and FPG’s North Carolina Needs and Resources Assessment. She has presented at conferences including FPG’s National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, Head Start’s National Research Conference, and the Conference on Research Innovations in Early Intervention.

In summarizing this year’s awards, assistant director Ridley thanked FPG’s private supporters and alluded to FPG’s global reach, which only begins in its Chapel Hill offices.

“Our institute is fortunate that generous donors have established several endowed funds to recognize and support the important work done by our talented investigators, students, and staff,” said Ridley. “It is a thrill to enable these scholars to continue their pursuit of such innovative and meaningful work, from South Greensboro Street to Singapore.”

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The mission of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute is to enhance the lives of children and families through interdisciplinary research, technical assistance, professional development, and implementation science. FPG generates knowledge, informs policies, and supports practices to promote positive developmental and educational outcomes for children of all backgrounds and abilities from the earliest years.

Stories from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute: The 2015–2016 Fiscal Year in Review
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