As I begin my tenure as Associate Dean and Chair for the Department of Allied Health Sciences (DAHS), I am truly excited about the future. My arrival could not have gone better, thanks in part to an extremely thoughtful welcoming event on January 7 (Thanks to all involved!).

I am gratified to be learning more and more about our outstanding faculty and staff, and energized by the superb student body that comes through our doors. We truly recruit the best students and provide not just excellent educational opportunities, but also leadership and career opportunities. As I have learned, the employment rates of our graduates are nearly 100%, with many of them moving into leadership roles—including research roles.

Our research enterprise is growing, with a number of innovative projects that are ongoing and in the pipeline. Although extramural funding has become more challenging over the past several

New Interdisciplinary Autism Training Grant will Help Produce Leaders in Research and Outreach

A new interdisciplinary training grant to help doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows at UNC develop leadership competencies related to Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) has received $1,246,834 in funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

The project, titled “Interdisciplinary Leadership in Autism Spectrum Disorders: Optimizing Research-Practice Partnerships for Evidence-Based Outcomes,” will draw on the resources and expertise from the Divisions of Speech and Hearing Sciences and Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy within the School of Medicine, Department of Allied Health Sciences (DAHS), and the Applied Developmental Sciences and Special Education (ADSSE) program in the School of Education. The focus of the program is to prepare students to assume leadership positions in institutions of higher education and to guide research, practice, and policy regarding evidence-based outcomes for children and youth with ASD.

Continued on page 6
We’re only half way through academic year 2013-2014 and already there are several noteworthy accomplishments! We welcomed Dr. Stephen Hooper as our new Associate Dean and Chair of the Department of Allied Health Sciences (DAHS). We look forward to working with him as we begin to implement our strategic plan – a retreat to launch this process is planned for June and will include all faculty and staff.

Our Office of Research (DAHS-OOR) team launched the online Grant Pre-Submission Notification System (www.med.unc.edu/ahs/research/gps), which has streamlined the process of routing approvals for multiple investigators/units simultaneously, and facilitated access to grant support resources such as budget development, analysis plans, and grant editing. Our two new methodologists, Drs. Wanqing Zhang and Richard Faldowski, have plunged into their new roles, taking on various research projects, serving on committees, and offering lectures. They are feeling quite needed these days, as requests for methodology consultations soar. This year the monthly Research Forum spotlights research of new faculty and interdisciplinary panels to identify cross-cutting themes, methods, and opportunities for collaboration. The newly formed “Methodology Happy Hour” creates a social space for PhD students and faculty to dialogue informally about cutting-edge methods and brainstorm solutions to methodological challenges – it’s a great opportunity to have your specific questions answered by our resident experts!

Last, but not least, the DAHS-OOR team in concert with the PhD program directors and research methods course instructors, are beginning the process of analyzing syllabi and teaching needs with the goal of creating research course offerings that better meet our students’ needs, capitalize on our collective faculty expertise, and utilize resources more efficiently across the three PhD programs: Occupational Science, Speech and Hearing Sciences, and Human Movement Science. Stay tuned!

**PROPOSALS SUBMITTED (July 1-December 31, 2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE : PI ; TEAM</th>
<th>SPONSOR</th>
<th>PROPOSED FUNDS</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Validity and Reliability of a Knee Angle In-field Measurement Device: Yu, Bing; Zhou, Haibo; Blackburn, Troy</td>
<td>National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMSD)</td>
<td>$401,704.00</td>
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<td>Maximizing Spinal Circuits: ‘Forced’ Arm/Leg Pedaling as a Gait Training Adjunct Post-Stroke: Lewek, Michael; Lipscomb-Hudson, Angela; Blackburn, Troy</td>
<td>American Heart Association (AHA)</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
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<td>Targeted Transcranial Electrotherapy to Accelerate Stroke Rehabilitation – Phase II Trial: Jacks, Adam; Roth, Heidi</td>
<td>Soterix Medical Inc</td>
<td>$449,998.08</td>
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<td>Rehabilitation for Youth with Cerebral Palsy: Effectiveness of Technology Enhanced Interventions: Thorpe, Deborah</td>
<td>PCORI</td>
<td>$308,252.00</td>
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<td>Non-Heart-Beating Donors in Lung Transplant: Communicating with Key Stakeholders: Burker, Eileen; McLaughlin, Jacqui; Roth McClurg, Mary; Edwards, Teresa</td>
<td>Lung Banks of America</td>
<td>$392,130.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory Over-Responsivity and Anxiety Disorders in Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Baranek, Grace; Bulluck, John</td>
<td>Department of Defense (DOD)</td>
<td>$78,208.56</td>
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<td>Efficacy of a Parent-Mediated Intervention for One-Year-Olds at-Risk for Autism: Watson, Linda; Tashjian, Christene; Stefani, Lucy; Beck, Melissa</td>
<td>Autism Science Foundation</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
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<td>Barriers and Motivators to Clinical Trial Participation: Menezes, Prem</td>
<td>Janssen Global Services, LLC</td>
<td>$101,438.32</td>
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<td>Pilot Treatment Study Addressing Sensory Hyperresponsiveness During Home Activities: Baranek, Grace; Boyd, Brian; Bulluck, John; Watson, Linda; Schipul, Sarah</td>
<td>American Occupational Therapy Foundation</td>
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<td>Project SEARCH Augmented for Youth with ASD: Klinger, Mark; Osborne, Glenna</td>
<td>Cincinnati Childrens Hospital Medical Center</td>
<td>$414,335.28</td>
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<td>A Mindfulness Intervention for Anxiety In Chromosome 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome: Hooper, Stephen; Faldowski, Richard</td>
<td>Duke University</td>
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### New Grants Awarded (July 1-December 31, 2013)

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<td>Exceptional Children Occupational Therapist:</td>
<td>Humphry, Ruth; Holahan, Lauren</td>
<td>$144,827.67</td>
<td>North Carolina Dept of Public Instruction</td>
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<td>Exceptional Children Physical Therapist:</td>
<td>Johnston, Lisa; Ray, Laurie</td>
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<td>North Carolina Dept of Public Instruction</td>
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<td>Interdisciplinary Leadership in Autism Spectrum Disorders: Optimizing Research-Practice Partnerships for Evidence-Based Outcomes:</td>
<td>Crais, Elizabeth; Baranek, Grace; Able, Harriet; Watson, Linda</td>
<td>$1,246,834.00</td>
<td>US Department of Education (DOED)</td>
<td>8/1/2013</td>
<td>7/31/2018</td>
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<td>Moderators of Functional Outcomes in Children with Mild to Severe Hearing Loss:</td>
<td>Harrison, Melody; Page, Thomas</td>
<td>$1,062,491.00</td>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
<td>8/1/2013</td>
<td>7/31/2018</td>
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<td>Development of a Hamstrings Muscle Stretching Device for Older Adults and Individuals with Neurological Disorders:</td>
<td>Mercer, Vicki; Faldowski, Richard; King, Russell; Heatwole Shank, Kendra; Issacs, Austin; Scronce, Gabrielle</td>
<td>$25,000.00</td>
<td>Rehabilitation Engineering Center</td>
<td>1/1/2014</td>
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### Proposals Submitted (July 1-December 31, 2013)

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<td>Assistive Technology Design for Occupational Disease Prevention and Non-occupational Disabilities:</td>
<td>Gross, Michael</td>
<td>North Carolina State University (NCSU)</td>
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<td>Susceptibility to and Release from Masking in Infancy and Childhood:</td>
<td>Leibold, Lori; Renner, Barbara; Hayes, Barrie; McGraw, Kathleen</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</td>
<td>$75,808.00</td>
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<td>Sensory Experiences in Children with Autism:</td>
<td>Baranek, Grace; Campbell, Alana; Evans, Anna; Beiger, Aysegul; Boyd, Brian; Best, David; Bulluck, John; Sideris, John; Watson, Linda; Jungers, Robert; Schipul, Sarah</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</td>
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<td>Real World Assessment of Dual-Task Performance After Stroke:</td>
<td>Plummer, Prue; Lipscomb-Hudson, Angela; Giuliani, Carol; Faldowski, Richard</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</td>
<td>$434,752.00</td>
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<td>Quantitative Assessment and Diagnosis of Apraxia of Speech:</td>
<td>Haley, Katarina; Jacks, Adam; Zajac, David; Roth, Heidi; Truong, Kinh; Styner, Martin</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</td>
<td>$2,715,604.00</td>
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<td>Supporting Family Occupations, Routines and Health: A Family-Centered and Occupation-Based Intervention for Families with Adolescents with Autism:</td>
<td>Bagatell, Nancy; Able, Harriet; Smith, Leann; Klinger, Mark; Rodger, Sylvia</td>
<td>American Occupational Therapy Foundation</td>
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<td>Electrophysiological and Psychophysical Measures of Auditory Temporal Processing:</td>
<td>Grose, John; Mamo, Sara</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</td>
<td>$62,919.00</td>
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<td>Effects of Rocker-Bottom Shoe Design on Static and Dynamic Measures of Balance:</td>
<td>Gross, Michael</td>
<td>Estey &amp; Bomberger, LLP</td>
<td>$9,987.92</td>
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<td>Using Structured Teaching to Promote Employment Skills in Adolescents with ASD:</td>
<td>Klinger, Mark; Osborne, Glenna; Klinger, Laura</td>
<td>Autism Speaks</td>
<td>$120,000.00</td>
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<td>Effects of Custom Foot Orthoses on Balance and Falls in Older Adults:</td>
<td>Gross, Michael; Carlson, John; Mercer, Vicki</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</td>
<td>$481,408.00</td>
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<td>Evaluating Informational Masking for Speech-On-Speech Recognition:</td>
<td>Calandruccio, Lauren; Buss, Emily; Leibold, Lori; Lockhart, Steve</td>
<td>National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders</td>
<td>$456,000.00</td>
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Bagatell Receives Junior Faculty Award to Study Occupations and Routines in Families with Adolescents

By Meredith S. Bennett

Dr. Nancy Bagatell, Associate Professor, has received a Junior Faculty Development Award worth $7,500 to help fund her research. The pilot project, “Families with Adolescent-Aged Children and the Co-construction and Re-negotiation of Occupations and Routines: Investigating Methods to Capture Transactions of Families,” seeks to study the routines and occupations of families with adolescents to discover how and why these routines change over time.

“My long-term goal is to develop a family-focused and occupation-based intervention for families with adolescents with disabilities, specifically Autism Spectrum Disorders,” Dr. Bagatell said. “Having an understanding of the daily lives of families with typically developing adolescent-aged children will inform the development of the intervention and strengthen the field’s understanding of the phenomenon of family occupations and routines.”

Family routines may include bedtime and morning routines in addition to activities that revolve around mealtimes. Research has shown that these routines are important contributors to the health and well-being of individual family members, supporting academic success, social competence, and mental health. As children grow, family routines change and evolve, especially during adolescence because this developmental period is marked by a search for independence and autonomy on the part of adolescents.

Dr. Bagatell seeks to further the understanding of family occupations by specifically observing their transactional nature; that is, how factors both inside and outside of the family affect routines and how these routines affect family members. Her aim is to further previous research by gaining a deeper understanding of how, and especially why, changes in routines occur.

The project will include four families from diverse backgrounds, each with at least one adolescent child, over a six-month period. While most other research has relied on interviews with mothers to gain information about family routines, Dr. Bagatell thinks this limits the scope of understanding, saying that “while mothers have been shown to be the main orchestrators of family life, the privileging of the mother’s voice denies the agency of children and other family members.” Dr. Bagatell seeks to extend the depth of her research by conducting interviews of the family as a whole, facilitating discussion of routines, participant observation, and video recording daily activities.

Her research methods also include the use of participatory photo interviewing and occupational mapping. Participatory photo interviewing involves giving family members disposable cameras and asking them to take photos of family routines and activities. Interviewers will later use these photos to facilitate discussions between family members. Dr. Bagatell is also developing a method of data collection involving occupational mapping, which she hopes will reveal “a deeper understanding of the home and community’s physical geography and where families engage in occupation.”

Seed Grant Helps Fund Development of Hamstrings Muscle Stretching Prototype by Interdisciplinary Team

Researchers with the UNC Department of Allied Health Sciences (DAHS) and the North Carolina State University (NCSU) Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering have received $25,000 in seed grant funding from the Rehabilitation Engineering Center (REC) to further development of a hamstrings muscle stretching device prototype.

The project, titled “Development of a Hamstrings Muscle Stretching Device for Older Adults and Individuals with Neurological Disorders,” is under the direction of co-principal investigators Dr. Vicki Stemmons Mercer and Dr. Richard Faldowski, both Associate Professors with DAHS, and Dr. Russell King, Professor and Director, and Dr. Ron Aman, Research Scholar, with NCSU.

Dr. Kendra Heatwole Shank, a 2013 graduate of the UNC Occupational Science PhD program; Gabrielle Scronce, a third-year UNC Doctor of Physical Therapy student; and Austin Isaacs and Spencer Thompson, NCSU Engineering graduate students, are also assisting with the research.

Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of static stretching programs for increasing the range of hamstrings muscle extensibility, but many older adults and individuals with neurological disorders are unable to achieve an effective hamstrings muscle stretch and thus cannot obtain the benefits that these stretches provide. Researchers with this project seek to further the development of a prototype hamstrings muscle stretching device that will assist these individuals.

The research will focus on obtaining feedback on the device from potential end users, using that feedback to modify the device, and obtaining preliminary evidence concerning the feasibility and effectiveness of use of the device by target populations.
UNC Launching Unprecedented Collaboration to Improve Services for Young Children with Autism and Their Families

Researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have received a State Implementation Grant of $900,000 from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to improve services for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families.

This three-year project has the primary purpose of linking both university and state partners to lower the ages by which young children receive appropriate developmental screening, ASD-specific screening, diagnostic assessments, and early intervention. North Carolina was one of only four states to be awarded funding by the Bureau during this cycle, and this initiative is one of the first to involve nearly all of the major ASD programs on UNC’s campus.

The grant is under the directorship of Dr. Stephen Hooper, Associate Dean and Chair of the UNC School of Medicine’s Department of Allied Health Sciences (DAHS), and in collaborative leadership with Dr. Rebecca Edmondson Pretzel, Associate Director of the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities (CIDD). In addition to its primary goals, this grant will allow researchers to examine strategies to increase access of families to family-centered medical homes that coordinate care with pediatric subspecialities, increase public and provider awareness of the signs and symptoms of ASD, and complete a statewide needs assessment addressing family needs and barriers to coordinated care.

To accomplish the grant’s objectives, DAHS and CIDD collaborators have enlisted the expertise of key UNC programs with a major focus on ASD, including the AHEC TEACCH Program, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, the Gillings School of Global Public Health, the School of Social Work, and the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research.

“While this is certainly not the first project where various programs have collaborated on issues of ASD, it is the first project where programs have collaborated around improving the coordination of state services to children suspected of having ASD and their families,” Dr. Hooper said. “We are fortunate to receive these additional resources from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, and excited about this opportunity to enlist the expertise of our UNC partners and key state agencies, such as the Autism Society of North Carolina, the state of North Carolina Early Intervention Program, and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction pre-kindergarten programs, in addressing these ASD-related needs across the state.”

A key component of this program will be assessing the needs of families from across the state, particularly with respect to their experiences with early screening, diagnostic assessments, and early intervention. Increasing public awareness of the early signs and symptoms of ASD also will be an annual objective, with significant efforts being devoted to rural and underserved regions of the state and examining the pathways by which families have access to the necessary services to address their child’s medical and developmental needs.

“The state of North Carolina is fortunate to have a number of service systems in place to address the needs of young children with developmental disabilities and their families. We are confident that this new funding will enhance current efforts and facilitate additional improvements for young children with ASD and their families.”

- Dr. Rebecca Edmondson Pretzel

Hooper Receives AUCD Outstanding Achievement Award

Dr. Stephen Hooper, Associate Dean and Chair of the UNC School of Medicine’s Department of Allied Health Sciences, received the 2013 Outstanding Achievement Award from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD). The award recognizes an executive, faculty, or staff member who has demonstrated excellence in three major areas of the developmental disabilities field – teaching, scholarship, and service to the wider community. Hooper was presented the award at the AUCD Conference Awards Gala on November 19, 2013, in Washington D.C. Read more at www.alliedhealth.unc.edu/news/hooper-aucd-award.
When she’s not running half-marathons in Alaska or playing with her Black Lab mix, Speech and Hearing Sciences doctoral candidate Jennie Zoski is working to combine her passions for literacy and language with her love of children.

Zoski’s focus on literacy and language began early in her career. After completing her undergraduate degree at Stony Brook University in New York, she became a high school English teacher. However, teaching didn’t feel like a good fit, so she applied to master’s programs in speech-language pathology, this time choosing to attend UNC.

After receiving her degree, she moved to the Boston area, where she worked as a speech pathologist, visiting the homes of infants and young children who were at risk for language and learning difficulties. Later, she transitioned to working at an elementary school and developed an interest in language and literacy connections that eventually prompted her to pursue a PhD.

Zoski had noticed that speech pathologists tend to focus on oral language, but there are numerous overlaps between oral and written language. “I want to expand the role of the speech pathologist in the school system to work on both oral and written language disorders,” she said.

One of the primary reasons Zoski chose to attend UNC for her PhD was to work with her mentor, Dr. Karen Erickson, Director of the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies (CLDS). Through the CLDS, Zoski is involved in several projects, most notably Big Words II, a computer-based intervention that seeks to help struggling readers decode challenging science words. Zoski, now in the third-year of her PhD program, said she enjoys bouncing back and forth between these projects and her own research.

This spring Zoski will begin working on her dissertation research, which will take place in a local school district. Her study will involve administering three different types of interventions to three groups of kindergarten students and seeks to determine which is the most beneficial. In terms of elementary school kids, Zoski says that kindergartners are her favorite to work with because “they have fun just playing and you can get them engaged really easily.” After graduating, she hopes to continue her research and become an assistant professor. “I’d like to work as an academic, but also have a strong connection to local school systems, working with teachers, speech pathologists, and students,” she said.

Last year Zoski crossed running a half-marathon in Alaska off of her bucket list. She says that running is great stress reliever. “It’s a struggle, in a doctoral program, to make time for it, but I really try to because I know it’s not just for physical health, but it’s for mental health too.”

Student, researcher, teacher, runner, dog-lover, and soon Zoski will be adding a new title to her repertoire: mother. She and her husband are expecting a baby boy in June.

Autism Grant (from page 1)

In addition to the grant’s co-principal investigators, Drs. Elizabeth Crais and Grace Baranek from the DAHS and Dr. Harriet Able from the School of Education, several other faculty will teach courses and provide mentorship, including Drs. Linda Watson, Brian Boyd, and Brenda Mitchell from the DAHS, Drs. Becky New and Lynne Vernon-Feagans from the School of Education, and Drs. Sam Odom, Cara Hume, and Gary Martin from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute.

The project is currently recruiting its first cohort of six students from the Speech and Hearing Sciences, Occupational Science, and Education doctoral programs to begin training in August. The grant funding will last for five years, offering two post-doctoral positions to two of the trainees during the grant’s final year.

Much like our previous Autism Leadership Training Grant, which helped launch the careers of nine promising new researchers, this project will provide invaluable interdisciplinary training and insight for participants,” said Dr. Crais.

Eight of the nine previous grant students are currently in positions in academic settings as faculty or post-doctoral fellows, with the final student graduating this year.

The project’s interdisciplinary courses, research opportunities, and teaching experiences will target specific leadership competencies related to expertise in theoretical models and empirical literature related to ASD, community engagement and translational research, professional development and teaching, grant writing, and interdisciplinary leadership/ advocacy focused on children and youth with ASD. Infused throughout all project activities will be strategies to raise awareness, understanding, and competency in working with diverse learners with ASD and their families. The project also emphasizes strategies to collaborate with community stakeholders, including practitioners and family members, of children with ASD across all phases of research from planning to implementation and dissemination.

“We anticipate that the participants in the current grant will become leaders in their individual disciplines at the same time that they cross traditional disciplinary boundaries to collaborate with professionals from other fields,” said Dr. Crais.
Research, like so many other fields, has been revolutionized by technology, with investigators employing high-tech tools and specialized software to more precisely collect and interpret their data, and federal, state, and institutional guidelines requiring that information be managed, stored, and shared using current best practices in data security for human subjects research.

John Bulluck, Research Systems Analyst, has been helping researchers with the Sensory Experiences Project (SEP) determine the best strategies for tackling these ever-evolving technological challenges since 2008. In mid-2012, he began devoting 20 percent of his time to assisting other researchers throughout the Department of Allied Health Sciences through the DAHS Office of Research (DAHS-OOR).

Originally from Atlantic Beach, NC, Bulluck earned his BS in psychology with a special interest in research and statistics from East Carolina University. He worked directly with children with autism and their families and then with HIV-positive patients before becoming involved with software application and development. After 10 years in the internet and e-commerce database business world, Bulluck felt compelled to return to a helping role.

“I wanted to do something that was going to help someone,” he said. “I wanted to know I was part of a team or a process that was trying to do some good.”

Bulluck found that opportunity with the SEP, part of the PEARLS (Program in Early Autism Research, Leadership and Service) program. Researchers at the SEP examine the development, functional impact, and cause of various sensory features in children with autism, developmental delay, and/or typical development.

Through the SEP, Bulluck has enjoyed contributing to a variety of endeavors, including the development of experimental models as part of the innovative use of eye-tracking tools and the design of video enabled assessment labs with full capture and multi-angle and split-screen functions. He also works with various software and programming languages, such as SAS, MatLab, SQL, and, most recently, SharePoint programming to help create a grant submission mechanism for the DAHS.

Grappling with data security issues takes up a good deal of Bulluck’s time and attention. He partners with the School of Medicine’s Office of Information Systems to help ensure SEP and DAHS researchers are adhering to protocols for data collection, storage, and sharing. Once an afterthought in the research process, Bulluck says security compliance and the resources needed to maintain this compliance are now something that must be considered at the earliest stages of any project.

“Most of the risks are the same as they have always been; we’re just more aware of it now, and doing more to prevent problems before they happen,” he said.

While his new role with the DAHS-OOR has meant a challenging expansion in the breadth of his work, especially since only 20 percent of his time is available for that purpose, Bulluck said he is optimistic about the OOR’s continued evolution and enjoys interacting with an even broader range of faculty.

“Day-to-day, I like working with the different people in the various divisions and learning about things I wouldn’t otherwise be exposed to,” he said. “I really like being able to solve a problem that researchers are having. Even though it’s a small piece of the whole picture, it feels good to contribute.”

When he’s not working at UNC, Bulluck likes playing tennis, hitting the beach, and spending time with family and friends.

*From the DAHS Chair (from page 1)*

years, I believe that with our faculty expertise we will continue to “push the needle forward.” We are housed within a strong school of medicine, and an unquestionably outstanding university system, and faculty should not hesitate to reach out to colleagues in other departments, programs, or campuses to pursue new ideas. These types of collaborative endeavors will facilitate our grant success, encourage long-term interdisciplinary relationships, and promote innovative scientific discoveries. I want to be “bullish” on research as these efforts will provide for expansion within the department.

I also am pleased to see the excellent clinical initiatives that serve clients in the local community, hospital, and across the state. This is clearly an area for ongoing, strategic growth for our department, with a particular eye toward involving our students and faculty in various clinical research enterprises. These types of activities will distinguish the DAHS as the “go to place” for research expertise in allied health, and will encourage active involvement of our faculty in changing systems-of-care and practice policies based on evidence-based models for allied health providers across the country.

I am excited to assume a leadership role in the DAHS and pledge to work diligently to further research endeavors as part of our larger mission. I know that the research enterprise of the DAHS is a key component of our strategic plan, and consequently a targeted starting point for our moving forward together. I look forward to working with everyone over the years ahead to make our research initiatives, and our department, the best in the country.

For a full introduction to Dr. Stephen Hooper, visit www.alliedhealth.unc.edu/news/hooper-dahs-chair.
Klinger Receives Grant to Study Interventions for Improving Employment Skills of Adolescents with ASD

Dr. Mark R. Klinger, Associate Professor, has received a two-year, $120,000 grant from Autism Speaks to research ways to better prepare adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) for productive, long-term employment.

The project, titled “Using Structured Teaching to Promote Employment Skills in Adolescents with ASD,” will study the efficacy of the TEACCH School Transition to Employment Program (T-STEP) intervention modules.

“As the number of children diagnosed with ASD rises each year, it’s crucial that we identify effective strategies to prepare young adults with ASD for the workforce, both for their personal development and to avoid overwhelming our adult service programs.”

- Dr. Mark Klinger

2014 David E. Yoder Symposium Scholar

Dr. Laura Justice

Dr. Laura Justice is the EHE Distinguished Professor in the College of Education and Human Ecology in the School of Teaching and Learning at The Ohio State University. She is also the Executive Director of the Children’s Learning Research Collaborative at OSU. Dr. Justice publishes and speaks widely on topics related to assessment and intervention of literacy and language skills in preschool and early elementary aged children. She focuses on working with these populations in school settings using a collaborative approach across classroom teachers and related service providers. The Yoder Symposium, “Combining Literacy and Language Intervention for Young Children,” will be held March 28. Registration deadline is March 19. For more information, visit www.alliedhealth.unc.edu/sphs/research/2014-yoder-symposium.

2014 Mitchell Symposium Scholar

Dr. Gelya Frank

Dr. Gelya Frank is a Professor at the University of Southern California, Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. As a founding contributor to OS, her work bridges OT, OS, and anthropology in projects such as the interdisciplinary NAPA-OT Field School in Guatemala that she has led since 2008. Dr. Frank is the author of Venus on Wheels: Two Decades of Dialogue on Disability, Biography, and Being Female in America; Defying the Odds: The Tule River Tribe’s Struggle for Sovereignty in Three Centuries; and the forthcoming Occupational Reconstructions: Embodiments of Social Justice. Dr. Frank will deliver the 2014 Mitchell Symposium public lecture, “Occupational Activism for Global Justice,” at 6 p.m. March 4 in Bondurant G100. For more information, visit www.alliedhealth.unc.edu/ocsci/events/2014-mitchell-symposium