

news

from the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development at Tufts University

Inside

The Child and Family WebGuide: Gateway to Trust

“When our second grandson was born, he had a newborn breathing syndrome called TTN — Transient Tachypnea of the Newborn. It involved rushing him from the delivery room to NICU, giving oxygen, IV’s etc. and was quite frightening for his parents. My son Sam had his laptop with him, and the hospital had wireless Internet service. So, I went to one of the WebGuide medical sites, found a concise description of the syndrome (which none of us had ever heard of and the doctors were too busy to explain), emailed the link to him, and he was able to get good info on the condition, which relieved his anxiety greatly.”

A New Hampshire grandmother

For the past seven years, the Child and Family WebGuide (<http://www.cfw.tufts.edu/>), under the direction of Fred Rothbaum, Nancy Martland and, of late, Elizabeth Hooper, has been serving parents, students and professionals seeking trustworthy information and advice. Worried about whether co-sleeping with your baby is a good idea? Need

... continued on page three

Child Health at Eliot-Pearson

CHILDREN’S HEALTH: AN ELIOT-PEARSON PRIORITY

Emily Cappetta, an Eliot-Pearson child life intern at the Tufts New England Medical Center, had just led a child into the operating room. Emily knew the child was anxious and loved singing. Putting the two together, she began a quiet rendition of “The Wheels on the Bus,” and soon everyone in the operating room, chief pediatric anesthesiologist included, joined in.

Scenes such as this are happening frequently as more and more Eliot-Pearson students, alumni, and faculty choose to work with children with serious health problems. Sometimes the work focuses on improving the quality of an experience – such as the child life work exemplified in the opening example. Sometimes it focuses on prevention – such as the research being done at Eliot-Pearson to determine what works best to prevent child abuse. And sometimes it focuses on treatment – such as Eliot-Pearson’s applied research on innovative approaches to educating children with serious emotional problems.

... continued on page two

Child Health at Eliot-Pearson continued 2

The Child and Family WebGuide continued 3

Maria V. Mayoral Working with Hospitalized Children in Guatemala 5

The “Abby’s” 6

Silver Lining: Update on New Orleans 7

Faculty, Student & Alumni News 10

Elkind Festschrift 12

Alumni Events 13

continued from page one

A Foreword Eliot-Pearson and Children's Health

Nothing is more basic and important than our children's health. It's no wonder, then, that over the years, Eliot-Pearson has become a community focusing on children's health. We see this in the courses offered, in the internships supervised, and in the research projects undertaken. And now, we see it in the outreach to parents and professionals — not just in the United States, but around the world. This issue of the E.P. News is dedicated, then, to demonstrating just some of the ways that E.P. is making a difference to improve the quality of life for children with health problems.

This work to make life better for children with health problems represents a transition over the past several decades at Eliot-Pearson — from Eliot-Pearson's focusing on how best to educate young children to Eliot-Pearson's focusing more broadly on how best to support diverse groups of children and adolescents — including children and adolescents with serious health problems. Now, it is common to find a child development major headed for medical school, a graduate student preparing for a career in child life, an alumnus working in a hospital, and a faculty member overseeing research aimed at improving the lives of children with chronic health problems.

The transition that has made children's health a central focus can be seen clearly in current course offerings and programs for Eliot-Pearson students. Undergraduates and graduate students can now choose from a wide variety of courses introducing students to health-related fields such as pediatric psychology (Don Wertlieb), developmental psychopathology (Don Wertlieb), and child life (Paul Thayer). In many

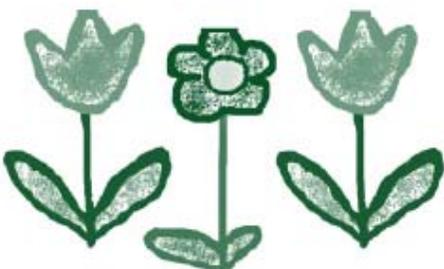
other courses, issues of physical and mental health are also central — such as the issue of how the legal system can treat rather than punish juvenile offenders (Jenny Weisz), how health care professionals can become culturally sensitive (Martha Julia Sellers, Ellen Pinderhughes), how



Phoebe Stone Nitekman at the Brown Family Life Center

babies with profound hearing problems can be helped through ASL (Terrell Clark), and how children at-risk for developing mental health problems can become "resilient" (Ann Easterbrooks). In addition to the health-related Eliot-Pearson courses, students can co-major in community health and get additional education about important issues such as how to help teens stay away from smoking.

One of the more powerful ways that Eliot-Pearson students explore health issues is through internships sponsored by Eliot-Pearson. For example, through a generous grant from the Stone Foundation and at the initiative of Phoebe Stone Nitekman (who now runs the very busy Brown Family Life Center at the Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago), Eliot-Pearson offers a Child Health course which places students in hospital settings and provides them with an accompanying seminar taught by a pediatrician.



... continued on page four

advice around issues related to adoption? Confused about how to help children who have just been bullied at school (and why bullying occurs)? For these and hundreds of other child-related questions and issues, you can consult the WebGuide. There you will find not the usual “wisdom” of a single expert, nor the not-so-wise advice of chat rooms but links to hundreds of highly evaluated websites giving clear and authoritative reviews of the issues. The WebGuide doesn’t tell you what to do or what to think. Rather, it gives you the research-based information from multiple perspectives needed to help you make informed decisions about what to do – even if the decision is to be less anxious.

So, how can we know the websites listed on the WebGuide are trustworthy – and isn’t that what we get using different ways to search the Internet? Search engines link users to a large number, sometimes millions, of related websites – many which give useless advice or worse, incorrect information. Furthermore, it is difficult for even web savvy users to determine a site’s trustworthiness because many that are not trustworthy look very professional. The key to knowing whether a website is trustworthy is whether it is tied to the world of good research. This is what the WebGuide evaluates. It connects us to those websites and organizations that give advice or discussion that comes from the best available research – research relating to its five main categories of family/parenting, education/learning, typical child development, health/mental health, and medical.

One would think that helping people connect to trustworthy websites is a feature of many search engines. But that’s not the case. The WebGuide serves, then, a special need – which is why it has been written up in both the New York Times and Wall Street Journal – and why the state of Minnesota has the WebGuide as a special feature on its own website. It is also why Tufts’s Associate Provost, Mary Lee, Provost, Jamshed Bharucha, President Bacow, and others in the Tufts administration have been so supportive of the WebGuide. The WebGuide is fast becoming not just a symbol of Eliot-Pearson but also of the University. Not only does the administration appreciate the community service provided by the WebGuide, it also appreciates the extraordinary leadership provided by Tufts undergraduate and graduate students. All important functions, from evaluating sites, to outreach, to web design have been conducted by students in teams that are led by students.



The WebGuide is also generating new research. For example, in a recent study headed by Professor Rothbaum and Dr. Martland, the WebGuide’s team of researchers found that parents were getting very different kinds of information from the web depending on social class. Parents with less education and less income had less knowledge of how to find and evaluate information they were seeking from the web. Furthermore, they were more likely to find and settle for bad information and bad advice.

The Child and Family WebGuide is being constantly refined, updated, and improved – both to meet the needs of those who have been using the WebGuide and to address the problems that turn up in the WebGuide’s own research. Two new initiatives currently being considered are to evaluate information about child- and family-based volunteer experiences and to offer a prize to students who present the best documentary about such an experience. The WebGuide team is currently seeking funding from foundations to support both initiatives. Both new and old initiatives give a good feeling that we will be able to count on this gateway to trust for a long time to come.



Professor Fred Rothbaum

continued from page two

As for research, the transition to a focus on health shows in the many health-related research studies and other scholarly work carried out at Eliot-Pearson. Among students and alumni, the research studies include research on children with cystic fibrosis (Peggy Powers), respite care for children with chronic illness (Nancy Terres), adolescents with diabetes (Dorothy Warner), maternal depression and its effects on children's mental health (Cherilyn Davidson, Jo-Ann Donatelli, and Tiffany Field), children with epilepsy (Mor Barzel), children with autism (Dena Shade), and the integration of the fields of infant mental health and early intervention (Jane Hochman). This is only a partial list. The actual list is much longer.

Among faculty, a partial list of research studies carried out recently includes studies on infant mental health (Ann Easterbrooks), behavioral medicine (Ellen Perrin), and the use of technology to support adolescents with chronic health problems (Marina Bers). In addition, several faculty are involved in programs serving children with health problems or at risk for developing health problems – such as programs in the Ukraine for children with disabilities (Don Wertlieb), programs for the psychological evaluation of deaf children (Terrell Clark) and programs for hospitalized malnourished children in Guatemala (Martha Julia Sellers).

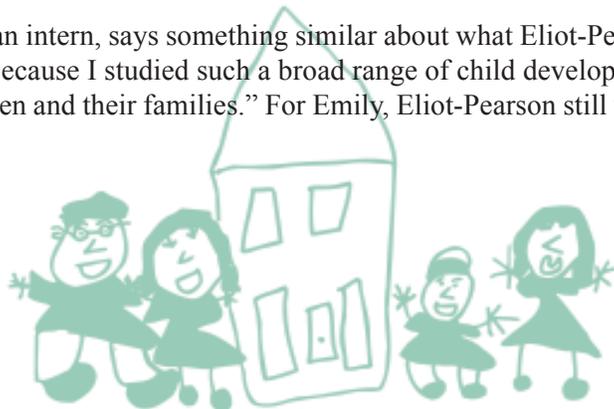


Professor Donald Wertlieb

What, one might ask; does Eliot-Pearson provide that other communities and programs might not – communities and programs that focus solely on children with health problems? One frequently given answer is that Eliot-Pearson helps everyone focus on the child or adolescent and not simply or even mainly on the health problem. As an admittedly extreme example, several years ago, an annual report given on one child at one of the department's laboratory schools, opened with a two page account of the child's interests, strengths, and accomplishments. Readers who stopped after reading these two pages would have felt that they had a good understanding of this engaging and interesting child – and to a certain extent, they would have been right. On the third page, the report mentioned that the child was paralyzed from the neck down. How different this report was from the usual clinical-medical reports that lead with such information and that often miss the child through focusing on the disability or health problem.

This message about focusing on the child or what makes the child typical comes through also in the how EP alumni convey what they have carried away from Eliot-Pearson. For example, Isabel Legarda, a pediatric anesthesiologist and graduate of Eliot-Pearson's master's program, said she felt she had a special and different perspective than her peers in medical school, one that led her to evaluate child patients first as children and second as patients. Fran Rosenberg, head of the school within the renowned Walker Home and School for "troubled children" and also a graduate of Eliot-Pearson's master's program, has repeatedly emphasized that Eliot-Pearson has helped her define her task as first and foremost offering the children in her school the best possible education. Just as it is for children in regular schools, at the Walker School, reading, writing, math, science, music – everything we mean by schooling – is the focus.

Emily Cappetta, who is no longer an intern, says something similar about what Eliot-Pearson has meant in her work as a Child Life specialist. She says, "Because I studied such a broad range of child development issues, I feel I am better prepared to work with (sick) children and their families." For Emily, Eliot-Pearson still works to keep the wheels on the bus turning.



Working With Hospitalized Children in Guatemala

Maria Mayoral, a student in Eliot-Pearson's master's program, has been working in Guatemala on a project directed by Professor Martha Julia Sellers. The project aims to improve the quality of life for a large group of children suffering from malnutrition and living in a rural hospital. For her work on this and other child health projects, Maria recently received the Presidential Award for Citizenship and Public Service, an honor bestowed on only a handful of Tufts students.

To talk with Maria about her work in Guatemala can be a moving experience, because of her descriptions of the families, the children, and the work being done. The drama in that work and its significance come across even more because Maria is so upbeat and so matter-of-fact. One can assume that the families and children she works with appreciate her for the way she makes giving a matter of course, something natural, not fabricated.

At the hospital in Guatemala, Maria and Professor Sellers have developed a way to screen and assess the child patients for developmental delays, a specialty of Professor Sellers. The methods used provide an important tool to track children's progress, conduct program evaluation, and generate applied research. However, Maria's work also directly helps the children thrive. These children come to the hospital because they are severely malnourished, and many remain in the hospital for months, even years. They come from rural villages far away and so are separated from their families. For weeks on end, they are treated as patients – with toys, play materials and other child-friendly equipment kept in closets. As patients in a hospital, the children are, then, in an environment not designed for children, not designed for children to express their natural inclination toward exploration and play. Maria is making significant changes by helping to transform the hospital environment into a child-friendly environment where the children can explore and play.



Maria Mayoral receiving the Citizenship Award from President Bacow

The “Abbys”

This Year’s Winners of “Abbys”: Eliot-Pearson’s Award for Excellence in Children’s Media



On March 28th, faculty, students and friends of children’s media gathered for the 4th Eliot-Pearson Awards Ceremony for Excellence in Children’s Media – otherwise known as “the Abbys” – after Eliot-Pearson’s founder, Abigail Eliot. Julie Dobrow, Director of the Communications & Media Studies Program, introduced each of the award recipients – with an explanation of their specific media achievement.

Peggy Charren received an Abby for her decades of work advocating for better television programming for children. Early on, when it became clear that television had the potential to commercialize childhood and replace good care with not-so-good television programming, Peggy Charren was there to set the guidelines and keep everyone mindful that television should serve children’s needs and not vice versa.

Dorothea Gillim received an Abby for producing *WordGirl*, a PBS animated series about a superhero who fights crime and simultaneously increases the vocabulary of viewers. The series is targeted for school-age children – a population difficult to reach, but not so difficult for the superhero *WordGirl*.

Michael Flaherty received an Abby for his leadership at Walden Media, whose films include *Charlotte’s Web*; *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*; *Holes*; and *The Bridge to Terabithia* – all based on children’s books that have become classics. These films foster both a love of films and a love of books and reading.

Mitchel Resnick received an Abby for producing *Scratch*, a computer program and way for older children and adolescents to become skilled in technology and knowledgeable about the power of numbers.

In recognizing Resnick’s achievement, the organizers of the Abbys underlined that excellence in children’s media refers to more than television and movies.

As an exciting addition to this year’s awards ceremony, Julie Dobrow announced that Tufts University has been given Marc Brown’s collection of drawings from his famed books and television series, “Arthur.” Arthur chronicles the life and times of third grader Arthur Read, his pesky kid sister DW, baby sister Kate and his parents. Arthur is an aardvark.

The Abbys occur every two years, so we will have to wait awhile to see what comes next. Whatever comes, it is sure to prove interesting – and a validation for those dedicated to improving the lives of children through creating excellence in children’s media.



Peggy Charren, Dorothea Gillim, Mitchel Resnick and Michael Flaherty after receiving their ‘Abbys’



As the child care industry in New Orleans recovers from Hurricane Katrina, students and faculty at Tufts are committed to helping and learning along the way.

When a bus full of volunteers from Tufts pulled up at Gilda's Day Care in New Orleans, they had already driven past boarded-up windows and abandoned homes. Now they saw a child care center with no children, and a pile of dirt where grass and toys should be.

But what they also saw were the center's founders, Warren and Gilda Toledano, arms open wide.

"When we got off the bus, every one of us got a hug," recalls child development doctoral student Laura Beals. "When we got on the bus to leave the last day, we all got a hug again."

Fueled by Toledano's Cajun cooking, the volunteers spent a week cleaning, painting and planting. By the end of it, the outdoors' area had been transformed into a clean, bright and lush space. On the fence, the handprints of Tufts volunteers formed a colorful mural.

"There was nothing there and then all of a sudden there's this beautiful courtyard," says Mallary Swartz, a doctoral student who helped to organize the trip.

As New Orleans continues to recover from Hurricane Katrina, some child care facilities in this embattled Gulf Coast city received a much-needed boost this May from the efforts of these 20 undergraduate and graduate student volunteers, led by faculty members Chip Gidney and Betty Allen. The trip was only the latest step in what the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development foresees as a long-term partnership to help bolster the child care industry in the region.

This was no ordinary cleanup mission. The trip also presented an opportunity for the students to apply their knowledge in a cross-cultural context and understand the impact the child care industry has on the infrastructure of an entire community.

"Getting a glimpse at the lives that other children are leading really is an eye-opener when thinking about how children develop and how families work together," says Beals. "We learn from them and they learn from us."

A Critical Need

Even before Hurricane Katrina battered the Gulf Coast, the child care industry in that area was suffering, with Louisiana ranking 49th nationally in child well-being for the past several years.

In New Orleans, where Tufts is currently focusing its efforts, Hurricane Katrina severely affected the child care business. In August 2005, 275 child care centers were in operation. Today, just 98 are open—a 64 percent drop, and many of those are at capacity. In some cases, according to the nonprofit, parents who would like to return to the city for a waiting job cannot due to the lack of reliable child care.

With the storm exacerbating an already dire situation, national attention has been drawn to the struggle for quality child care in Louisiana. In that sense, the storm had a silver lining.

"The storm presented opportunities," says recent Eliot-Pearson graduate Lisa Schlakman, a key organizer of the efforts. "All of this could have happened had there been no Katrina. On the other hand, I think there wouldn't have been the urgency."

Finding a Way To Help

The initiative came together through a partnership between Tufts and the United Way cultivated by Schlakman and Associate Professor Fran Jacobs. The common bond was Carol Wise, a cousin of Schlakman's and a leading supporter of Success By Six, a United Way program to improve early childhood education. When Wise spoke to Jacobs' class about the situation in New Orleans, students began asking how they could help.

“One of the reasons I chose Eliot-Pearson is their commitment to really becoming involved in the community. They are not an ivory tower academic institution but have people using their skills as they're learning,” says Schlakman. “I think there is an awareness that reaching outside the immediate community is an important thing to do.”

An initial January fact-finding trip by Allen, Eliot-Pearson Department Chair, Ellen Pinderhughes and Eliot-Pearson Children's School director, Debbie LeeKeenan, as well as trips by United Way officials to Tufts, helped generate ideas on how best to apply Tufts' expertise and laid the groundwork for the May trip. In the meantime, other elements of the partnership — including an ongoing pen-pal and sister-to-sister program between students at Eliot-Pearson Children's School and Royal Castle Child Development Center, as well as fundraising and book drives—began taking shape.

The Tufts team concentrated their efforts on Gilda's Day Care as well as Royal Castle and Happy Kids Preschool, two understaffed centers that needed help unpacking, organizing and, of course, taking care of the children. Their efforts are beginning to bear fruit. At Royal Castle director Pearlie Harris recently received good scores on her preliminary assessment by the state and Gilda's has since received its license and is completing renovations while marketing for new customers.



Tufts volunteers paint a landscape at Gilda's.

A Shift in Perspective

The child care centers in New Orleans have more staffing and funding challenges and a different cultural and socioeconomic context than many of the centers where the Tufts students had previous experience. But the shift in setting did little to dampen their enthusiasm.

“They didn't miss a beat,” says Schlakman. “They were in there reorganizing closets, scrubbing floors, and there wasn't a moment's hesitation on anyone's part. It was really wonderful to see. I think it was good for them to see that everything is not like things are in Boston and at Tufts.”

Such outreach is as educational as it is altruistic. Pinderhughes emphasizes that as much as the Tufts students can lend a hand in the Gulf Coast classrooms, the exposure they receive to cultural variations in child care is invaluable for them as well. The students had to find a way to put their academic training to use without overstepping their welcome and treading on practices carried out in the classrooms.

“I think it will be interesting to see what some of these people end up doing with their child care specialties,” says Schlakman. “You talk about advocacy in the abstract but this is one of those cases where they desperately need people to be advocating, not only for New Orleans but for childcare.”

As child care centers continue to struggle to find qualified staff and funding, Swartz believes that the determination she observed in New Orleans will sustain them.

Lasting Connections

With the new academic year underway, Swartz—who is working with Schlakman to develop her curriculum for training family child care providers in Louisiana—is looking forward to resuming her involvement with the New Orleans initiative. Expanding the partnership between Eliot-Pearson and the child care community in New Orleans is also high on the to-do list for Pinderhughes and the rest of the department.

“You don’t just go to a community, do what you do for a day and leave,” says Beals. “This is hopefully developing an ongoing relationship to really help them and help us learn about them as well.”

Future plans include possible field work opportunities for the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning addressing needs in child care, in addition to exploring ways to address the mental health needs of both children and caregivers traumatized by the storm and its aftermath and to help teachers deal with classroom and family issues. Tufts also hopes to establish additional partnerships with schools and community organizations in the New Orleans area. And of course, a return trip is on everyone’s wish list, likely tied to a course.

Profile written by Georgiana Cohen, Office of Web Communications

Photos courtesy of Eliot-Pearson doctoral candidate Laura Beals ('10).

Adapted from story originally ran on Sept. 24, 2007.



Sarah Conroy (L) and Sarah Colwell (R) are working with the children at Royal Castle



Faculty, Student & Alumni News

Mona Abo-Zena (student) received a Graduate Student Research Award for her project “Parental Support of Arabic-English Bilingualism.”

Ellen Aiken (student) and **Lang Ma (alum)** are the 2008 recipients for the Eliot-Pearson Alumni Award. The award is for academic, professional and personal qualities which have made the recipient a leader in the Eliot-Pearson community and in their chosen profession.

Aida Balsano (alum) is now vice president for evaluation and policy at the Eisenhower Foundation.

Marina Bers (faculty) was featured in a Boston Globe article on technology and its role in supporting children’s social and emotional development. She also had a new book come out, *Blocks to Robots: Learning with Technology in the Early Childhood Classroom*.

Neda Bebiroglu (student) had her research accepted for presentation at the meetings of the European Association for Research in Adolescent, in Torino, Italy this May.

Laura Blackwell (student) will enter the clinical psychology program at the University of Miami, one of the nation’s top pediatric psychology programs.

Michelle Boyd (student) has an article in the most recent issue of the *International Journal of Behavioral Development*.

Stacie Clayton (alum) will become the director of the Highrock Church and Covenant School’s new early childhood education program.

Kristen Fay (student) will present her research at the 2008 International Conference on Eating Disorders.

Rachel Fowle (student) received the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development Prize for “high scholarship and promise for teaching” in April 2008.

Chip Gidney (faculty) received the Lerman-Neubauer Prize, given to the Tufts faculty member who graduating seniors said had the greatest impact.

Sonia Issac (student) received a Graduate Student Research Award for her research on “Role of Spiritual Mentors in Adolescent Religion, Spirituality & Identity.”

Lynn Asnath Jeudy (student), Maria V. Mayoral (student) and Kimberly Petko (student) all received the 2008 Presidential Award for Citizenship and Public Service.

KeAndrea Jones (student) was awarded the Class of 1911 Prize Scholarship.

Megan Kiely (student) and Heather Kleinberger (student) were awarded the Frederick Melvin Ellis Prize.

Jason Koza (student) received the Bennett Memorial Scholarship.

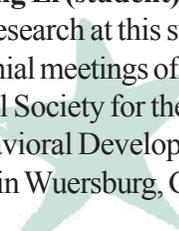
Allison Kutner (student) received the Community Service Award.

Micela Leis (student) was awarded the Alex Elias Memorial Prize Scholarship.

Richard Lerner’s (faculty) latest book, *The Good Teen*, came out last October and has resulted in a number of media interviews, reviews, and quotes.

Tama Leventhal (faculty) has had two articles accepted for publication – both reporting results of research helping to explain the effects of neighborhood poverty on adolescent development and adult mobility. Tama was recently named a Neubauer Faculty Fellow by Tufts.

Yibing Li (student) will present her research at this summer’s biennial meetings of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development – to be held in Wuersburg, Germany.



Crista Marchesseault (alum) was appointed director of strategic development at the Gesell Institute in New Haven, CT.

Jennifer McQuaid (alum) is now a clinical psychologist with two children and a husband plus one dog – living in Bedford Hills, N.Y. She reports that she is comfortable about her knowledge of child development, but not canine development. **Jana Chaudhuri (alum)** was a maid of honor at her wedding.

Lynn Meltzer (faculty) had two books she co-edited and co-authored come out this winter: *Executive Function in Education: From Theory to Practice* and *Parent Guide to Hassle-Free Homework*.

Michael Niewiecki (student) received the “Wind Beneath Their Wings Award” from the Westborough, MA Special Education Parent Advisory Council – for his clinical and consultation work on behalf of students with autism and emotional disorders.

Elizabeth Norton (student) received a three-year National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.

David Pellegrini (alum), who practices clinical psychology in Washington, D.C., is now also an artist whose medium is black-and-white fine art photography.

Iris Ponte (student) returned from completing her research in China and Japan, finished her dissertation, won the AERA 2008 award for dissertation research, and finished the book she co-authored with **George Scarlett and Jay Singh**. In between, she took cat-naps.

Iris is also the 2008 recipient of the Eliot-Pearson Graduate Research Practice Integration Award, which is presented to the graduate student with accomplishments and promise in the integration of research and practice in child development.

Dmitro Say (student), a Fulbright Scholar, was awarded a Tisch Active Citizenship Fellowship to carry out the Civil Rights Camp for Orphans in Ukraine.

George Scarlett (faculty) gave four lectures at the Nanjing Normal University in China and two at Sophia University in Bulgaria – all part of ongoing efforts to develop long-term relationships between the education departments in these two universities and Eliot-Pearson. His book (co-authored with **Iris Ponte and Jay Singh**), *Approaches to Behavior and Classroom Management*, was finished this spring.

Robyn Silverman (alum) won a “writing award” from Parenting Publications of America – for her series on body image.

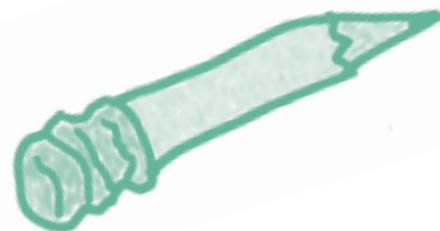
Jay Singh (student) was awarded the Eliot-Pearson Undergraduate Research Practice Integration Award, which is presented to the undergraduate student with accomplishments and promise in the integration of research and practice in child development.

Oanh Tran (student) was awarded the Ethel M. Hayes Scholarship.

Maryna Vashchenko (student) received a Graduate Student Research Award for her research on “Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Orphanage Personnel in Ukraine.”

Donald Wertlieb (faculty) was this year’s recipient of the Massachusetts Psychological Association’s Career Contribution Award. He also was nominated to be President-Elect of the Board of Directors of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

Maryanne Wolf’s (faculty) new book *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* has led to several radio and T.V. interviews and to her receiving the 2008 Margot Marek Annual Book Award from the New York International Dyslexia Association.



David Elkind's Festschrift



David Elkind with some of his colleagues

For a scholar, there is no greater honor than to be given a festschrift on his or her retirement. Last May, David Elkind was given this honor, as the Eliot-Pearson community and distinguished guests gathered at the Granoff Family Hillel Center on the Tufts campus. The theme was “It All Begins With the Child.”

The day began with noted scholars presenting work that directly relates to David’s lifelong concern for understanding children’s development in context, particularly in the contexts of school and home. Barbara Bowman (Erikson Institute), Jason Sachs (Boston School Department), and Robert Sternberg (Tufts) focused on children and adolescents in schools. Robert Selman (Harvard), Marina Bers (Eliot-Pearson) and Fred Rothbaum (Eliot-Pearson) focused on children and adolescents in homes and neighborhoods. The lively discussions that followed were on issues that David himself has written about extensively, such as the issue of how to insure developmentally appropriate practice in early education, how to assess children in meaningful and culturally fair ways, and how to understand children’s development by better understanding developments in the larger society. There are plans for the presentations plus other papers to eventually become a book, tentatively titled “The Enduring Child Amidst Change: Essays in Honor of David Elkind.”

At the dinner itself, Sharon Lynn Kagen (Yale) was the main speaker. She led the gathering through a light-hearted list of reasons why, with respect to children, David has always gotten it “right.” The ceremony closed with faculty and staff giving David a picture with cartoons of David engaged in sailing, gardening, and pottery – all hobbies we imagine are central to David’s retirement.

Please join us May 17th!

The Eliot-Pearson Alumni Afternoon Tea

Join alumni, staff, students, and faculty on the Tufts Medford campus as we welcome back Eliot-Pearson alumna and honor the Class of 1963 who will be attending their own 45th year reunion!

Date: Saturday, May 17, 2008

Time: 3:00 - 4:30 pm - Afternoon tea

Location: Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development
Evelyn Pitcher Curriculum Lab
105 College Avenue, Medford/Somerville campus



Thank you donors!

January 2007 - January 2008

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