

# DISCOVERY

Number 35 | Winter/Spring 2012 | Vanderbilt University

## Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Special Issue: Science with a Mission



VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER

## a MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR ELISABETH DYKENS

On a crisp night this past December, six students took the next step into their future as they walked across the Rotunda stage with their certificates. They were the first graduates of Next Steps at Vanderbilt, Tennessee's first postsecondary education program for students with intellectual and other disabilities. An historic moment. A moment celebrated by these proud students and their even prouder cheering parents, family members, friends, and so many Vanderbilt leaders, faculty, students, and staff.

These determined students spent 2 years working toward this step. The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center has spent 47 years taking steps to make this kind of progress possible. Every experiment, every study, every model intervention, every demonstration project is one more step that adds knowledge and practice. From microarrays of genes to cell cultures, from animal models to human studies, from brain imaging to engineering a virtual reality intervention for autism, our creative scientists and clinicians—and the future researchers and practitioners they mentor—are inventing a better future for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Families are our partners every step of the way.

This Special Issue of Discovery is a photo essay to share your stories and our stories. The photos trace our steps together. Travel with us toward a world in which individuals with disabilities are our valued friends, our co-workers, and our neighbors. Travel with us on our road to discovery. ■

*Elisabeth Dykens*

Elisabeth May Dykens, Ph.D.  
Annette Schaffer Eskind Chair  
Professor of Psychology, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry

## a MESSAGE FROM COMMUNITY LEADERS DONNA ESKIND AND DORIA PANVINI

When you have a son or daughter with a lifelong disability, life presents changing challenges and surprising rewards. Every developmental stage requires families to learn anew. Diagnosis. Early intervention. Transitions to and from school. Postsecondary education and vocational training. Work. Friendships. Health care. Assistive technology. Trusts.

You need the help of friends on this road. Families befriend one another on this journey. If they're fortunate, families find friends in professionals who listen and learn from them.

This past Fall, the Vanderbilt Kennedy University Center for Excellence received the 2011 Council on Community Advocacy Award of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities, which recognized the Center for its contributions to the Association and the disabilities field.

The VKC Community Advisory Council nominated the Center, because the Center's researchers, clinicians, and service staff partner with us, parents and self-advocates. They listen to us and learn from us.

Our Leadership Council advocates on behalf of the Center and the families who benefit from the Center's innovative research, model intervention programs, clinics, and training. Whether we have a child or grandchild affected by disability, or are touched in some other way by disability, we know that this Center is devoted to making life better. They're traveling this journey with us. ■

*Donna Eskind*

Donna Eskind, Chair  
Leadership Council

*Doria Panvini*

Doria Panvini  
Community Advisory Council



Elisabeth Dykens, Ph.D., with Seth Link, ACM Lifting Lives Music Camper and research participant



Doria Panvini and Donna Eskind with Next Steps at Vanderbilt students

Note: Many research summaries in this issue are excerpts from Vanderbilt University publications and news releases. Authors include Carole Bartoo, Craig Boerner, Leigh MacMillan, Melanie Moran, Bill Snyder, and Jennifer Wetzel.

Front cover background ©amtitus, istockphoto.com

“ The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center mission is to facilitate discoveries and best practices that make positive differences in the lives of persons with developmental disabilities and their families. ”

FROM OUR COMMUNITY

**(1) Darci Dolen, Teacher, Metro Nashville Public Schools** Thank you for providing such an amazing resource for new teachers like myself. Nothing prepared me for what ‘real life’ out in the schools held, but the TRIAD team provided me with the tools I needed to conquer the many trials that came and will come my way.

**(2) Randy Blakely, Allan D. Bass Professor of Pharmacology** Our research on ADHD began with a Hobbs Discovery Grant to collect DNA and to probe for genetic alterations in long-suspected pathways linked to the neurotransmitter dopamine. Indeed, we found such a change in two affected brothers. We now have a transgenic mouse carrying the mutation and have a window on the disorder we would not have had without the VKC.

**(3) Amanda and Chris Baron, Parent Stress Intervention Project participants**

We can't thank you enough for taking the time to teach us this amazing thing called ‘mindfulness.’ You have really made a huge imprint on us.

**(4) Tracy O’Neil, Parent** I really do appreciate the lessons learned and help that was given [at the Sleep Disorders Center]. I know that the talks and props helped me to get [my son] on target.

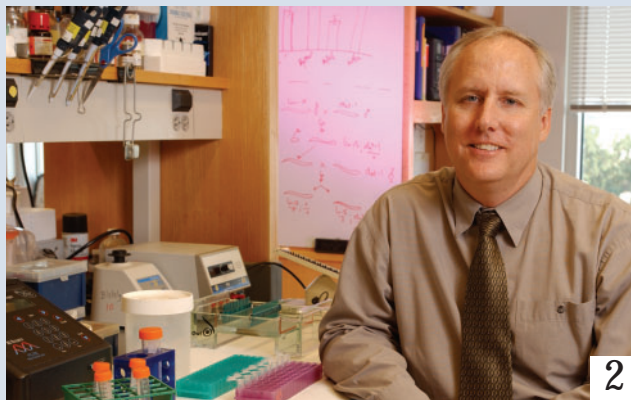
**(5) Edward Nesbitt, Next Steps at Vanderbilt graduate** When I first started [Next Steps] I felt excited and nervous about beginning a new chapter of my life, and I felt it was going to be the place for me to do more things. At graduation I felt like my journey at college is coming to an end, and I felt kind of sad at leaving Vanderbilt. I achieved my goal of being a college student! Next I'll be working at AmeriCorps, getting out in the real grown-up world of work.

**(5) Crystal Irene Finley, Vanderbilt student** Before coming to college, I had rarely been around individuals with disabilities. As a freshman, I made six new friends—Next Steps students—who taught me more than I ever expected to learn in my first year of college and forever changed the rest of my Vanderbilt experience. I am on track to become a special education teacher. I am so thankful to the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for providing me with opportunities to discover and grow in my passions.

**(6) Lynise Parisien, former LEND Trainee, Parent, and Community Advisory Council member** The LEND program was invaluable training. As a parent of a child with a disability, we have to look at our child from a global view. In LEND I spent time with each discipline to learn how to be a better advocate for my child and to assist other families in advocating for their children. ■



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MISSION



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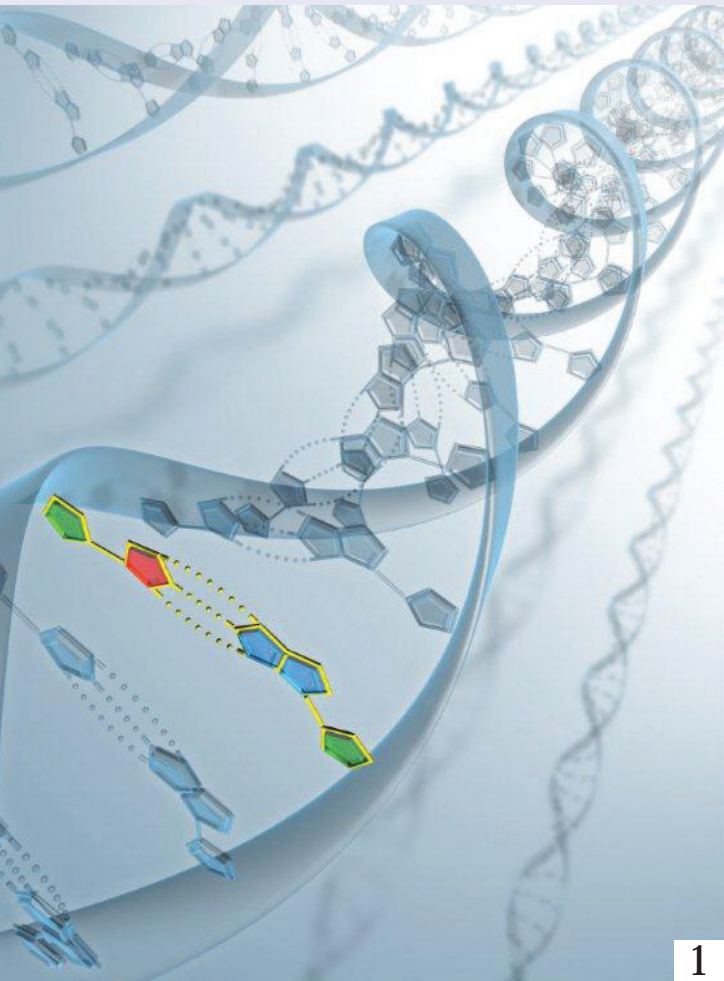
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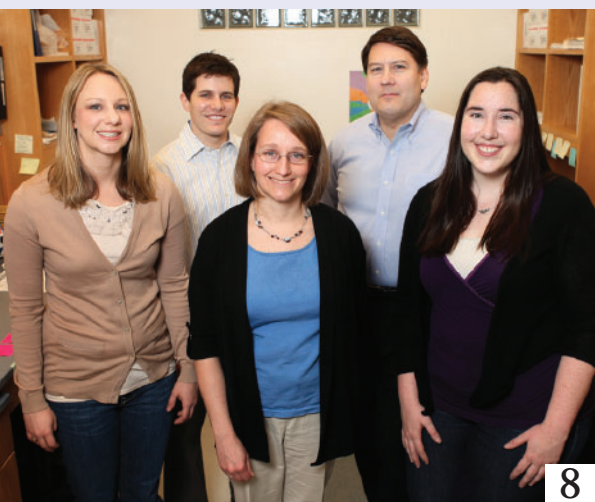
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“ The mission of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center is to facilitate



FACILITATE DISCOVERIES



& BEST PRACTICES

PHOTO CREDITS: (1) ©DREAMSTIME.COM\KTS (2) ©DREAMSTIME.COM\YURI ARCURS (3) COURTESY OF DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE (4) VKC PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGY LABORATORY (5) KYLIE BECK (6) VKC PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGY LABORATORY (7) DR. BILL KENNER (8) SUSAN URMYVANDERBILT

## discoveries and best practices . . .



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(1) An international team of scientists, which included Jonathan Haines (Pharmacology), has identified 29 new genetic variants linked to multiple sclerosis (MS), providing key insights into the biology of this neurological disorder. Many genes implicated are relevant to the immune system, shedding light on the immunological pathways that underlie MS.

(2) The placenta not only transfers oxygen and nutrients from mother to fetus, it also produces the potent brain chemical serotonin during a critical stage in fetal development—a finding that overturned the idea that serotonin was supplied through the mother’s blood. This multisite study, whose co-authors included Randy Blakely (Pharmacology), suggests a future possibility of intervening in high-risk pregnancies where a “perturbed” intrauterine environment might negatively impact fetal brain development.

(3) A study of infants with Down syndrome found that they experience high rates of mortality at three distinct times in the first year, each tied to different causes of death. Knowing this, parents and physicians can be more alert to these life-threatening issues and more targeted treatment approaches can be developed. This study by Robert Hodapp (Special Education) and Richard Urbano (Pediatrics) shows how large-scale birth and death datasets can improve understanding of health issues in Down syndrome and other disorders.

(4) New research combines brain imaging and language interventions to help children with language delays improve their grammar. Paul Yoder (Special Education) and Alexandra Key (VKC Psychophysiology Lab) found that brain imaging techniques can accurately measure children’s language processing speed and also predict how well children will respond to intervention.

(5) Many children with neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1) have reading disabilities. Laurie Cutting (Special Education) examined cognition in children with this disorder, both those who have reading disabilities and those who do not, and compared them to children without NF1 who have reading disabilities and to typically developing children. Overall, findings suggested that a more refined classification of children with NF1 may be helpful for tailoring academic interventions.

(6) Attention deficits are an understudied feature of Williams syndrome (WS). Elisabeth Dykens (Psychology), graduate student Miriam Lense, and Sasha Key (VKC Psychophysiology Lab) used the attentional blink to show that, compared to controls, adults with WS showed poor attentional disengagement rather than inappropriate attention. This finding may help explain why people with WS can’t shift away from negative or fearful stimuli, which opens up new ways of treating their high levels of anxieties and phobias.

(7) Mouse or other animal models of complex brain disorders are needed to unravel their pathology and to find more effective treatments. A novel strategy to generate mouse models has been developed in the lab of Karoly Mirnics (Psychiatry). This technology has enormous potential for making animal models because it allows researchers to target any gene for silencing in a cell-type specific way.

(8) A Vanderbilt research team, which included Alfred George (Genetic Medicine), identified a new gene that can influence a person’s risk for developing epilepsy. The findings could improve molecular diagnostic tools and point to novel therapeutic targets for epilepsy.



“ . . . to facilitate discoveries and best practices  
that make positive differences in the lives



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MAKING POSITIV



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DIFFERENCES IN LIVES



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## of people with disabilities . . .



(1) Research on ways to improve reading and math instruction takes place in school classrooms. Lynn Fuchs, Doug Fuchs, and Donald Compton (Special Education) are conducting studies on RTI—Response to Intervention. The aim is to develop methods for quickly identifying the most difficult-to-teach children and to provide them with intensive, effective, and efficient instruction. In one study in Metro Nashville Schools, the team is studying the overlap between reading and math disabilities. Findings suggest that math instruction delivered in combination with reading instruction has synergistic effects on reading improvement.

(2) A virtual reality system equipped with an eye-tracking device is being used as a social skills intervention for teens with autism. Nilanjan Sarkar (Mechanical & Computer Engineering) and Zachary Warren (Pediatrics) developed a virtual reality system that simulates real-world interactions with computerized avatars.

(3) Some poor readers remain unresponsive to intervention, but little is known about the brain functional correlates of responsiveness. Nicole Davis (Radiology & Radiological Sciences) and colleagues did functional imaging in children identified at risk for reading disability who were grouped as responders, nonresponders, and a comparison group. Differences in brain activation levels were found among the groups, suggesting that future imaging studies should consider responders and nonresponders separately.

(4) Many high school students with autism spend their school days socially isolated from their peers without disabilities. Carolyn Hughes (Special Education) and Nicolette Brigham (Clinical Pediatrics) lead a project at a community high school in which social skills instruction and social inclusion activities for students with autism are facilitated by trained peer mentors.

(5) SENSE Theatre, founded by Blythe Corbett (Psychiatry), combines established behavioral strategies alongside theatrical techniques to target social interaction and stress responsivity in children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Preliminary findings from the inaugural 2-week SENSE Theatre provide early support for the inclusion of peers, play, and performance for improving social interaction in youth with ASD.

(6) The Academy of Country Music Lifting Lives Camp has the dual purpose of studying Williams syndrome (WS) and providing music enrichment. Led by Elisabeth Dykens (Psychology & Human Development), research promotes understanding of Williams syndrome and development of novel interventions.

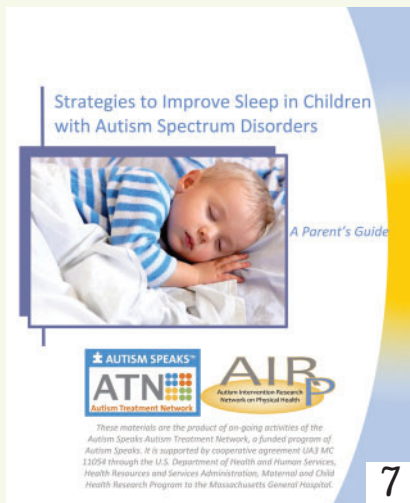
(7) Amy Needham (Psychology & Human Development) and colleagues found that early motor experiences can shape infants' preferences for objects and faces. The study suggests that infants at risk for autism or who show signs of atypical social development may benefit from early motor training using special velcro mittens that help them explore new objects.

(8) Next Steps at Vanderbilt, the first Tennessee postsecondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities, graduated its inaugural class. The program has been transformative for the Next Steps students as well as the 100 undergraduate students who volunteered as peer "Ambassadors" and the faculty and students in the classes they attended.

“ . . .that make positive differences in the lives of families . . .



## POSITIVE DIFFERENCES



## FOR FAMILIES

PHOTO CREDITS: (1) GLENN AND LORI FUNK FAMILY (2) JOE HOWELLVANDERBILT (3) SALUD CON LA FAMILIA PROJECT (4) KC.VANDERBILT.EDU/KINDREDSTORIES (5) JOHN RUSSELLVANDERBILT (6) KYLIE BECK (7) VANDERBILT AUTISM TREATMENT NETWORK AND AUTISM SPEAKS (8) SIBLING SUPPORTS PROJECT



(1) As the lifespan of persons with developmental disabilities has increased, so has the likelihood that caregiving will pass from parents to siblings. VKC Sibling Programs provide information and support through SibSaturdays, for young siblings, and the Tennessee Adult Brothers and Sisters (TABS) network.

(2) Teaching parents to support language development is an important component of effective early language intervention. Megan Roberts (Hearing & Speech Sciences) and Ann Kaiser (Special Education) evaluated in many published studies the effects of parent-implemented interventions on the language skills of young children. They found that parent-implemented language interventions have a significant, positive impact on receptive and expressive language skills of children with and without intellectual disabilities.

(3) Preschoolers often take their activity cues from their parents as shown in a study by School of Medicine student Rachel Ruiz with mentor Shari Barkin (Pediatrics). The activity level of children was highly correlated with their parents' activity levels. The next step is determining interventions to increase physical activity and childhood health.

(4) Stories can be powerful tools that educate and encourage systems change. With The Arc Tennessee and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, VKC UCEDD staff created Tennessee Kindred Stories of Disabilities ([kc.vanderbilt.edu/kindredstories](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/kindredstories)) as a way to share stories. The website is searchable by disability type, age, topic, county, and perspective. Share your story!

(5) American parents spend millions each year on videos and DVDs marketed to promote infant development, but little research has been done on whether babies learn from them. Georgene Troseth (Psychology & Human Development) and colleagues measured how many new words young children learned from viewing a popular DVD under different viewing conditions. They found the highest level of learning among children taught by their parents.

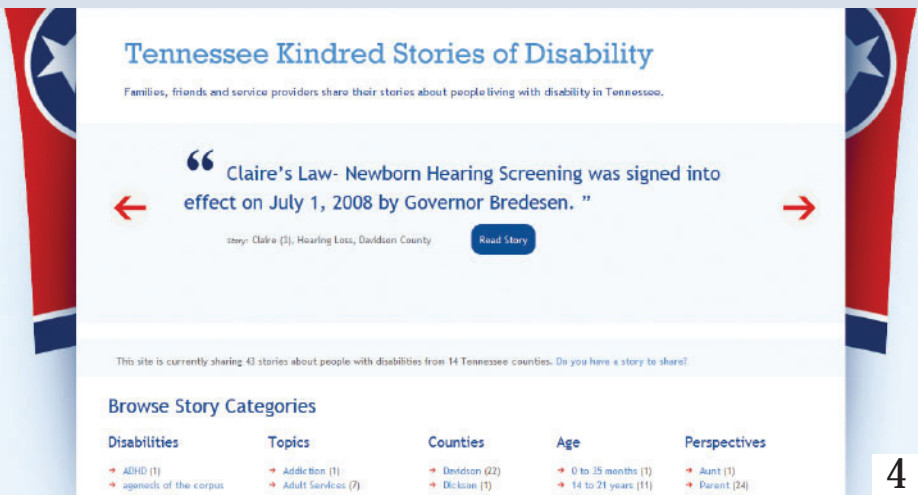
(6) Families come first! TRIAD provides this free monthly series for parents of young children with autism. Each 3-hour workshop provides strategies to use at home, school, and in the community to promote social and communication skills and manage challenging behavior. Families First has reached hundreds of families in over 34 Tennessee counties as well as families in Kentucky and Alabama.

(7) Sleep is a common struggle for many children with autism or other developmental disabilities. Beth Malow (Neurology and Vanderbilt Sleep Disorders Center) and Kim Frank (VKC TRIAD) have created a toolkit with Autism Speaks to help improve sleep for children and teens affected by autism: *Sleep Strategies for Children with Autism: A Parent's Guide*. See VKC website ([kc.vanderbilt.edu](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu)) Resources page for this and other autism-related materials.

(8) A serious concern of family members and professionals is that adults with intellectual or other developmental disabilities (IDD) will go without regular educational, vocational, or social activities. Julie Lounds Taylor (Pediatrics) and Robert Hodapp (Special Education) found that nearly 13% of adults with IDD were without daytime activities. Their siblings, in turn, showed worse health, mental health, and sibling relationships, possibly affecting their own long-term caregiving.



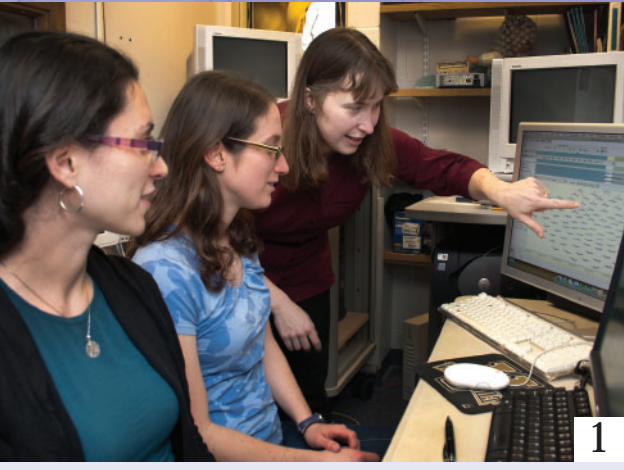
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# FUTURE LEADERS



## “ . . .training the next generation of leaders. . . ”

(1) Miriam Lense, a doctoral student in clinical psychology, and Reyna Gordon, a research fellow, conduct research involving electrophysiological methods of brain imaging with the mentoring of Alexandra Key (Hearing & Speech Sciences). Every day, graduate students, trainees, and postdoctoral fellows are receiving research or clinical training with more than 200 VKC-affiliated faculty members. At our 2012 VKC Science Day, young researchers—the future of the developmental disabilities field—presented research representing 72 research labs or programs.

(2) The 2011-12 LEND trainees represent 13 different disciplines at Vanderbilt University and area colleges and universities. Through LEND—Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities—trainees receive year-long training to prepare them for leadership roles in interdisciplinary, family-centered, culturally competent, community-coordinated services for children and youth with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families. Special emphases include pediatric audiology and autism.

(3) Relative to the general population, persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (IDD) are at higher risk for experiencing behavioral, emotional, and psychiatric problems. Most psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers do not receive specialized training in IDD. With support from the John Merck Fund, the Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities Clinic at Vanderbilt, a collaboration with Psychiatry, has provided services to persons with IDD while also providing interdisciplinary training to students from Vanderbilt, Belmont University, and Tennessee State University.

(4) The VKC Reading Clinic is the classic win-win. Young struggling readers receive individualized, one-to-one tutoring using assessment and instructional methods proven by research to promote reading. Many of the tutors are students in special education who learn and practice proven methods in reading assessment and instruction under the supervision of reading specialists. Students receive exceptional help. Future educators are better prepared to teach reading to diverse learners.

(5) The Volunteer Advocacy Project (VAP) trains interested individuals to become special education advocates so they can provide support to families of children with disabilities. Over 100 advocates across the state have been trained. VAP was developed and has been led by Meghan Burke, a doctoral student in special education. Burke received the 2011 Anne Rudigier Award for outstanding trainee from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.

(6) Megan Griffin, doctoral student in Special Education and VKC UCEDD trainee, was 1 of 5 students selected nationally as a 2011-12 Think College Emerging Scholar. The program aims to build a network of the next generation of research professionals in postsecondary education for students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Griffin soon will receive a Student Award of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities for her extraordinary service in developing and implementing postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities at Vanderbilt and in Tennessee. ■



# . . . thanks to donors—our partners in discovery to improve lives ”

(1) Endowed chairs recognize transformative and wide-ranging scholarship. The benefactors who support these high honors lift the capacity of the University to benefit society by attracting and retaining renowned faculty whose vision enlightens their disciplines and inspires the next generation of leaders. Annette Eskind, founder and first chair of the Center’s Leadership Council, endowed the Annette Schaffer Eskind Chair held by VKC Director Elisabeth Dykens.

(2) Leadership Council members Linda Brooks and Anne Nesbitt and the Louise Bullard Wallace Foundation are supporting postsecondary education for young adults with intellectual disabilities through gifts to Next Steps at Vanderbilt and through contributions to an endowment.

(3) The Britt Henderson Training Series for Educators shares innovative, evidence-based methods to improve academic performance for

diverse learners. The annual series, which offers a different topic September-April, is open to Middle Tennessee educators at no cost through an endowment created by Carol Henderson and her late husband Robert, in memory of son Britt Henderson.

(4) Grandparents play many important roles in the lives of grandchildren with disabilities—including funding pilot research to help create a better future. The Robert E. and Donna Landreth Family Discovery Grant was used to study sensory processing in autism. The successful pilot work led to a study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. Preliminary data generated by Discovery Grants allow VKC researchers to compete successfully for federal or foundation grants.

(5) In 2005, Andrea McDermott Sanders banded together with others to establish an endowment for reading scholarships for children with Down

syndrome—an effort inspired by William Spickard. She raises funds by running in the Country Music Marathon and by sending letters soliciting support. Anna Spickard added a 5K run. The William Hart Spickard Andrea Blake McDermott Team William Endowment funds scholarships for students with Down syndrome at the VKC Reading Clinic. Their next goal is to fund a Team William Discovery Grant.

(6) The love and joy that Martin brought to the lives of his family and all who knew him is remembered by his parents David Jespersen and Leila McCoy through the Martin McCoy-Jespersen Discovery Grants in Positive Psychology. One study involves assessing the effectiveness of SENSE Theatre as an intervention for improving social skills and reducing stress in children with autism. The other is a study of spirituality, supports, and well-being of youth and adults with significant disabilities. ■



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## PARTNERS



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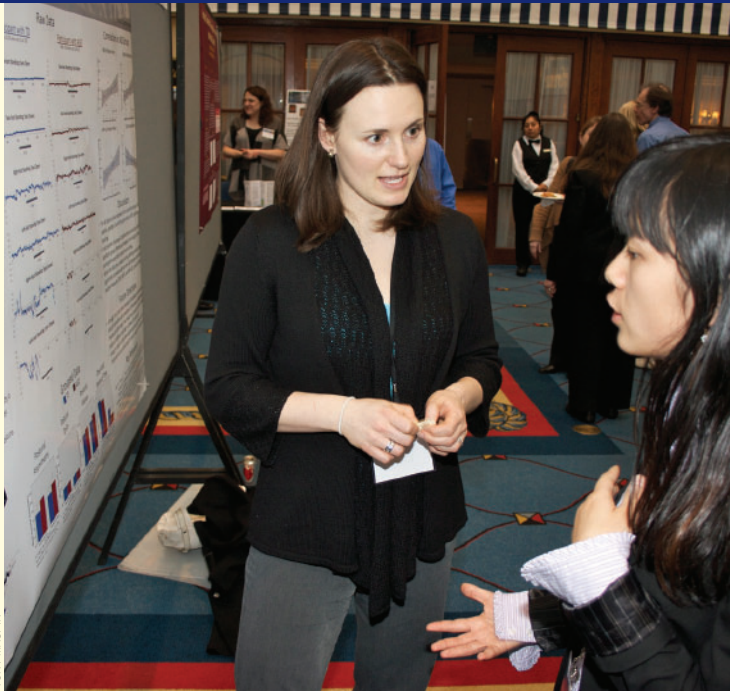
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Find us on Facebook for frequent updates and discussions on news, events, and research going on at the Center. [tinyurl.com/vkcfacbook](http://tinyurl.com/vkcfacbook)

Giving [kc.vanderbilt.edu/giving](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/giving)



TONY MAUPIN

## 45th Annual Gatlinburg Conference on Research and Theory in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Rare and neglected intellectual and developmental disability (IDD) disorders, a case study in 15q, was the theme of the 2012 Gatlinburg Conference, the premiere U.S. conference for interdisciplinary scientists in the IDD field, supported by NICHD. See program with research abstracts and photo gallery at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/Gatlinburg](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/Gatlinburg).

*Discovery* is a quarterly publication of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center designed to educate our friends and the community, from Nashville to the nation. *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center funded by the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. *Discovery* is supported in part by Grant No. HD 15052 from EKS NICHD, Administration on Developmental Disabilities Grant #90DD0595, and LEND Training Grant No. T73MC00050 MCHB/HRSA.

[kc.vanderbilt.edu](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu)  
(615) 322-8240 (1-866) 936-VUKC [8852]

Elisabeth Dykens, Ph.D., *Kennedy Center Director*  
Karoly Mirnics, M.D., Ph.D., *Associate Director*  
Jan Rosemergy, Ph.D., *Deputy Director and Director of Communications*  
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Elise McMillan, J.D., *Co-Director; Services*  
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LEND  
Terri Urbano, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N., *Director*  
Tyler Reimschisel, M.D., *Associate Director*

Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Zachary Warren, Ph.D., *Director*

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*Editor/Writer:* Jan Rosemergy, Ph.D.  
*Graphic Designer:* Kylie Beck  
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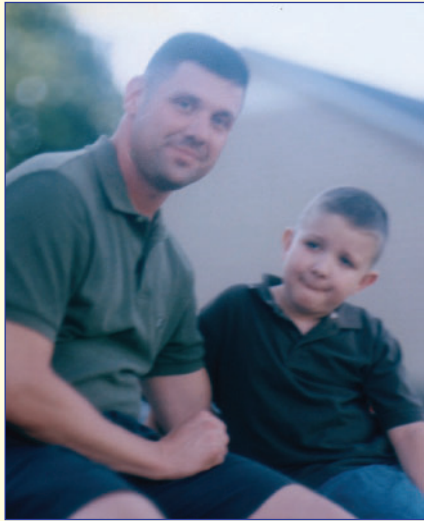
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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS | APRIL-AUGUST 2012



JOHN KENT, MENT CREATIVE

April as national Autism Awareness Month will be marked by a VKC Community Forum on Autism Research, April 21.

Unless otherwise noted, events are free and open to the public. Events are subject to change. Please check the website calendar at [kc.vanderbilt.edu](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu) or contact (615) 322-8240 or toll-free (1-866) 936-VUKC [8852].

Please keep this calendar and check the Event Calendar on the VKC website for updates. If you wish to receive event announcements by email, send your email address to [kc@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kc@vanderbilt.edu).

For disability-related training and other events statewide and nationally, see the Pathfinder Disability Calendar [www.familypathfinder.org](http://www.familypathfinder.org).

\*Event will be held in Room 241 Vanderbilt Kennedy Center/One Magnolia Circle Bldg (110 Magnolia Circle).

## ■ TRIAD FAMILIES FIRST WORKSHOPS

Free monthly workshops serving parents and caregivers of young children of all ages with an autism spectrum disorder and professionals. Focuses on strategies to use at home, at school, and in the community. Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration). Information (615) 322-6027 or [families.first@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:families.first@vanderbilt.edu)

### • APRIL 28\*

**Out and About: Grocery Stores and Restaurants**

Saturday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

### • JUNE 16\*

**Addressing Challenging Behaviors**

Saturday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

### • JULY 21\*

**An Introduction to the "Rapid Method" of Toilet Training**

Saturday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

### • AUGUST 11\*

**Out and About: Grocery Stores and Restaurants**

Saturday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

## ■ BRITT HENDERSON TRAINING SERIES FOR EDUCATORS

For school teams, individuals, parents Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration). Information (615) 936-8852

(also for 2012-13 series)

Wednesday 5-7 p.m.

### • APRIL 18\*

**Training and Utilizing Paraeducator Support**

### ■ APRIL 18\*

**Developmental Disabilities Grand Rounds**

**Reducing Stress in Parents of Children with Disabilities**

Elisabeth Dykens, Ph.D., Annette Schaffer Eskind Chair, VKC Director, and Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry, and Pediatrics Wednesday 12 p.m.

### ■ APRIL 18

**SENSE Theatre Benefit**

A Stage of Hope for Children with Autism Proceeds benefits SENSE Theatre Program and Summer Camp, a collaboration with VKC and University School of Nashville. Featured performances by: Jeri Sager – Veteran Broadway lead actress best known for her portrayal of Grizabella in *CATS* as well as *Les Miserables* and *Evita*; SENSE Theatre participants; Singer-songwriter Tammy Vice; Ryan Michaels Band; Conductor Emelyne Bingham with members of the Nashville Philharmonic Orchestra. Tickets \$25 available for purchase at <http://tinyurl.com/SENSEbenefit2012> Turner Recital Hall, Blair School of Music. Wednesday 7 p.m.

### ■ APRIL 19\*

**Lectures on Development and Developmental Disabilities**

**The Cognitive Consequences of Early Life Epilepsy**

Frances Jensen, M.D., Professor of Neurology and Director of Epilepsy Research, Harvard University and Children's Hospital Boston Thursday 4:10 p.m.

### ■ APRIL 20-21

**Fourth Annual Tennessee Adult Brothers and Sisters (TABS) Conference**

This conference will empower and educate adult siblings who have a brother or a sister with a disability with information and resources, and will develop local and statewide networks of adult siblings. Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration) Contact (615) 343-0545 [ashley.coulter@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:ashley.coulter@vanderbilt.edu) \$50 (\$25 students) includes meals. Limited financial assistance available. Holiday Inn Nashville-Vanderbilt, 2613 West End Avenue Friday-Saturday

### ■ APRIL 21\*

**Community Forum**

**What's on the Forefront of Autism Research?**

Zachary Warren, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and TRIAD Director; Moderator, Carissa Cascio, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry; Julie Lounds Taylor, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Special Education; Jeremy Veenstra-VanderWeele, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry; Paul Yoder, Ph.D., Professor of Special Education. No cost. Advance registration preferred. Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration) Saturday 9-11 a.m.

### ■ APRIL 25\*

**Assessment Core Training Series Assessment Resources**

Evon Batey Lee, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Pediatrics; VKC Psychological Assessment Coordinator Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration). Wednesday 3-4 p.m.

### ■ APRIL 25

**Next Steps at Vanderbilt Graduation**

Rotunda of Wyatt Center, Reception in Wyatt Lobby RSVP [laurie.fleming@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:laurie.fleming@vanderbilt.edu) Wednesday 5 p.m.

### ■ APRIL 30

**Think College Capacity Building Institute Tennessee**

**Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities** Co-sponsored by VKC UCEDD Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration). \$40 includes meals and materials. BridgeView Event Venue, 900 Neyland Drive, University of Tennessee-Knoxville Monday 8 a.m.-3 p.m.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS | APRIL-AUGUST 2012

■ **MAY 3\***

*Statistics and Methodology Core Training Seminar*

Sensitivity, Specificity, and Useful Measures of Diagnostic Utility

Frank Harell, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of Biostatistics. Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration) Thursday 12:30 p.m.

■ **MAY 12\***

*SibSaturday*

For siblings 5-7 and 8-13 years who have brother/sister with disability Games, friends, conversation Register at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration). Further dates to be announced. Contact [ashley.coulter@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:ashley.coulter@vanderbilt.edu), (615) 343-0545

■ **MAY 31-JUNE 1**

*Tenth Annual Tennessee Disability MegaConference*

Tools For Empowerment and Change World-class speakers, interactive workshops, educational sessions, exhibits, awards banquet and dance. Information at [www.tndisabilitymegaconference.org](http://www.tndisabilitymegaconference.org).

Fees (includes breakfast/lunch) \$100 one day (Thursday or Friday), \$190 for 2-days (Thursday-Friday) Nashville Airport Marriott

■ **JUNE 6**

*Neuroscience Graduate Program Seminar Series*

*A Tail of Two Genes: Using Mouse Genetics to Study Auditory System Development and Function*

Stephen Maricich, Ph.D., M.D., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Neurosciences, and Otolaryngology, Case Western Reserve University Co-sponsor Vanderbilt Brain Institute Room 1220 MRB III Lecture Hall Wednesday, 4:10 p.m.

■ **JUNE 14\***

*Community Advisory Council Meeting*

For details contact (615) 936-8852 Thursday 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

■ **JULY 12-13\***

*Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) Clinical Training*

For psychologists, pediatricians, behavioral specialists, and speech and language pathologists.

Fee: \$250; \$200 if 4+ register from the same school district Application by June 28 required at [kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/registration) Thursday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4p.m.

■ **ARTS AND DISABILITIES**

*Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Exhibits* Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Lobby VKC/One Magnolia Circle Information contact (615) 936-8852

• **THROUGH MAY 31**

*provocateurs, entrepreneurs*, Art by Jerry Adams and Matthew Drumright

• **JUNE-AUGUST**

*Heroes* Super Hero Costumes designed by youth with autism in a fashion design course in the Human Sciences Department, Middle Tennessee State University, a project with VSA Tennessee

■ **VKC SUMMER PROGRAMS**

★Registration is closed. Contact TN Disability Pathfinder for information on summer activities.

• **JUNE 11-23**

*SENSE Theatre Camp*★

For youth, 7-18 years of age, with and without autism spectrum disorders.

• **JUNE 17-23**

*ACM Lifting Lives Music Camp*★

Residential camp for individuals

with Williams syndrome or other developmental disabilities, 16 yrs up.

• **JULY 16-21**

*Next Steps at Vanderbilt Summer Institute*. A residential college transition program for rising high school juniors, seniors, and young adults with developmental disabilities up to age 26.

■ **LEARNING ASSESSMENT CLINIC**

Multidisciplinary academic assessments of students, 5-25 years, to identify learning strengths and challenges and to recommend strategies to improve academic learning. Contact (615) 936-5118 [patty.abernathy@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:patty.abernathy@vanderbilt.edu)

■ **NEXT STEPS AT VANDERBILT**

A 2-year certification postsecondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities providing individualized Programs of Study in education, social skills, and vocational training. Information (615) 343-0822, [NextSteps@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:NextSteps@vanderbilt.edu)

■ **READING CLINIC**

Assessment and tutoring for students through middle school Contact (615) 936-5118 [patty.abernathy@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:patty.abernathy@vanderbilt.edu)

■ **TRIAD SCHOOL-AGE SERVICES**

With the TN Dept. of Education, TRIAD offers free autism-specific workshops for parents and school personnel statewide. Information and registration, contact [Linda.Copas@tn.gov](mailto:Linda.Copas@tn.gov), (615) 741-7790 See also [www.state.tn.us/education/Speced/announcements.shtml](http://www.state.tn.us/education/Speced/announcements.shtml)



MATTHEW DRUMRIGHT

Matthew Drumright's photos are featured in the VKC exhibit *provocateurs, entrepreneurs*, along with the abstract art of Jerry Adams.

■ **TAKE PART IN RESEARCH**

*VKC Research Studies*

For children and adults, with and without disabilities

Lynnette Henderson (615) 936-0448 Toll-free (1-866) 936-VUKC [8852]

• **Research Family Partners**

[kc.vanderbilt.edu/rfp](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/rfp) Register and be notified of research studies

• **StudyFinder**

[kc.vanderbilt.edu/studyfinder](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/studyfinder) View lists of studies, criteria, and contact information

• **See also VUMC Clinical Trials**

[www.vanderbilthealth.com/clinicaltrials](http://www.vanderbilthealth.com/clinicaltrials)

■ **TENNESSEE DISABILITY PATHFINDER** ■ **MULTI-CULTURAL OUTREACH**

Helpline, Web-Searchable Database with Calendar and Resource Library, Print Resources [www.familypathfinder.org](http://www.familypathfinder.org) English (615) 322-8529 Español (615) 479-9568 Toll-free (1-800) 640-INFO [4636] [tnpathfinder@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:tnpathfinder@vanderbilt.edu) Project of VKC UCEDD and TN Council on Developmental Disabilities