The Center for BrainHealth Opens its New Doors

Though a prizewinner in its day, the circa 1970 building that stood at 2200 Mockingbird Lane looked heavy, dark, and unlovely when Dr. Sandra Chapman first saw it. But when she saw the site it stood on - near downtown yet tucked within an arbor of trees - she knew immediately that she’d found a new home for the Center for BrainHealth.

The Center for BrainHealth’s goal is to advance discovery and translation of new interventions (e.g., cognitive-linguistic, pharmacological, social) to maximize mental functioning for people who suffer or have suffered from brain injury, stroke, Alzheimer’s Disease and other brain disorders. With the opening of its new facility, the Center will have a vastly expanded opportunity for innovative research and collaborative initiatives.

An interactive learning laboratory is an exciting new collaborative project among the Center for BrainHealth, UT Southwestern Medical School, and the Shelton School that will be established at BrainHealth’s new headquarters to address social cognition, which is the ability to read people and successfully navigate social situations. This ability can be impaired in people with conditions such as Asperger’s, traumatic brain injury, schizophrenia and ADHD. A virtual world may help people with social cognition deficits learn to negotiate in the real world at the Center for BrainHealth’s new interactive learning center. World class researchers are currently designing tasks to target specific brain regions in the effort of finding a way to rewire the brain for this important ability. People who have problems with social cognition will learn the art of interaction through a combination of computer simulations and one-on-one interactions. Individuals will practice situations such as interviewing for a job, asking for a date, planning a vacation with friends and more.

The interactive learning center will be located on the ground floor of the Center for BrainHealth’s new headquarters. Near the UT Southwestern Medical Center, this state-of-the-art facility was designed by HKS, Inc., a Dallas based top-five architectural firm. In addition, The Center will house a virtual interactive ”World” medical classroom that provides video-link-ups with medical professionals worldwide.

The focus of the Center for BrainHealth continues to be real-world outcomes which are achieved by linking brain discoveries directly to clinical practice and the people who will benefit. A public dedication ceremony of the Center’s new building will take place after the first of the year 2007.

Article excerpts by Sophia Dembling
Message from the Dean

Recently the New York Times did a special section that they entitled "Giving." This collection of articles focused on the various forms that philanthropy takes. The articles motivated me to reflect on the role of "giving" in our School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences. We are the recipients of a great deal of generosity that has a significant impact on our ability to attract outstanding faculty, build new facilities, develop new programs, help the less fortunate and insure that students can further their education.

Sometimes I am asked, "Why does a state university need individual and foundation donations? Doesn't the state pay for your programs?" And the answer is that yes the state, as part of its educational mission does pay for many aspects of our programs. However, I go on to say that there are many things that the state does not support, and ultimately they do not provide the support for the difference between being "good" and being "excellent."

I thought that I would mention just a few of the ways that the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations have moved the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences forward on its goal of excellence. What is striking, and touching to me is the variety of sources of these gifts and the vision that the donors had in wanting to make the School a better and more effective place:

- In this issue of "Nexus" we announce the opening of the Frances and Mildred Goad Building, the new Center for BrainHealth facility. This building would not have been possible without the generosity of a lead gift which was made by Dianne Cash in honor of her mother and grandmother who each suffered from Alzheimer's disease. Ms. Cash really wished to insure that research and intervention programs for this devastating disease were supported.

- One of the School's own faculty members gave money to support the travel of students to present papers at professional meetings and to thus enhance their professional development. This enabled budding scientists to have the experience of presenting papers at national meetings.

- Funds were given by a couple associated with the Callier Center to establish a professorship in Pediatric hearing. Such professorships are critical in attracting the world's best faculty to UTD. Their vision will continue the leading role of the Callier Center in research on hearing disorders.

- One of our PhD. students and his family provided support for a scholarship for students to receive training for working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The student's son has ASD and he wished to attract top students-in-training to the kinds of programs that we provide.

- A local foundation funded joint research with the Center for BrainHealth, UT Southwestern Medical School, and the Shelton School on the causes and cures of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. This collaborative program will provide a national model for interdisciplinary research.

- Funds given to the University's Loyalty Fund by Behavioral and Brain Science Alumni enabled me to provide support for current undergraduate students to conduct research and to receive scholarship support.

These are just a few examples of how gifts to the School impact many people both within the University and within the larger community. We are committed to insuring that the generosity and confidence shown by the donors turns those gifts into investments with payoffs immediately and into the future. And we are deeply in the debt for the wonderful "giving" that so many people and institutions have provided.

Bert S. Moore, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences
New Faces at the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences

Dr. Thomas Campbell

Dr. Thomas Campbell, of the University of Pittsburgh, has been named Executive Director of the Callier Center. Dr. Campbell, a certified speech-language pathologist, assumed his new duties in September.

Dr. Campbell previously held an administrative position as Professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Campbell concurrently served as director of the Center for Research on Acquired and Neurologic Communication Disorders at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. Dr. Campbell recalls, "Over the past 20 years, my research has focused on understanding the environmental, physiological and behavioral markers that underlie speech and language disorders in children. In recent years, I have been especially interested in understand both the genetic and physiological processes that are associated with childhood motor speech disorders. I have also had a keen interest in developing an outstanding clinical program at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh and intergrading clinical service delivery with clinical research. One important aspect of my plan or vision for Callier is to continue to develop the center into a world-class institution for clinical service delivery for both children and adults with hearing and communication disorders. I believe that this goal cannot be achieved without innovative clinical research and clinical education programs that are carefully integrated with the clinical programs."

"When I’m not doing these clinical and administrative duties, I’m an avid baker and gardener!" proclaimed Dr. Campbell.

Dr. Christine Dollaghan

Dr. Christine Ann Dollaghan, a former professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Pittsburgh, joined Callier in August, 2006. Dr. Dollaghan studies child language development and language disorders, biologic and sociodemographic influences on speech and language development and evidence-based diagnosis and intervention in communication disorders.

"I've long been interested in questions about the validity of diagnostic and other categories," Dr. Dollaghan said, "but answering such questions requires very large samples. One of my more grandiose hopes is to make UTD the core of a global network of researchers and practitioners interested in large-scale collaborations to address these kinds of questions." Dr. Dollaghan has been studying some parallels between complex self-organizing systems in other domains and the complex self-organizing system of young children’s language. Also interested in the potential applications of more integrative, systems-level approaches to identifying, preventing, and treating language disorders. Dr. Dollaghan will continue to work with Dr. Tom Campbell, her husband, on the recovery of children’s speech and language skills after traumatic brain injury and on statistical modeling of developmental change in typical and atypical speakers.

"I am eager to develop collaborations with other faculty at UTD; the breadth and depth of work that is going on in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences played a major role in our decision to head south," remarked Dr. Dollaghan.

Articles by Eloyce Newman
New Faces at the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (continued)

Dr. John Hart

The University of Texas at Dallas’ nationally recognized Center for BrainHealth received a $2-million gift from a Dallas couple, Jane and Henry J. (Bud) Smith, to endow a chair for the center’s medical director, and UTD hired Dr. John Hart, a neurologist from The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, to fill that key position.

Hart, director of the Cognition and Brain Imaging Laboratory at the Donald W. Reynolds Center on Aging and a nationally recognized expert in the rapidly expanding field of cognitive neuroscience, joined the Center for BrainHealth as its first medical director in November, 2005. He is also the first person to hold the newly established Jane and Bud Smith Distinguished Chair for the Medical Director for the Center for Brain Health. Hart is a graduate of the University of Maryland School of Medicine and received his bachelor’s degree from Johns Hopkins University, where he did his residency in neurology and went on to become a member of the faculty in the School of Medicine.

Dr. Bert Moore, dean of UTD’s School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences, of which the Center for BrainHealth is a part, said the hiring of Hart, coupled with the Smiths’ endowment of a chair, ultimately had the potential “to help us identify better ways of achieving brain repair and brain health in children and adults and of dealing with such illnesses as dementia, stroke, attention deficit disorder, autism and schizophrenia, as well as normal aging.” Hart has published extensively in his field and is a member of numerous medical societies. He currently serves as president of the Behavioral Neurology Section of the American Academy of Neurology and president of the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience. He has conducted research on memory and cognition in healthy aging and on a broad spectrum of brain maladies, including Alzheimer’s Disease, West Nile Virus, Gulf War Syndrome and psychiatric disorders, to name just a few.

Dr. Christa McIntyre

"UTD has a rich and growing atmosphere of neuroscience and I am looking forward to many possible collaborations," states Dr. McIntyre.

After earning her Ph.D. at the University of Virginia, where she studied the neurobiology of learning and memory, Dr. Christa McIntyre did her post-doctoral work at the University of California, Irvine. There she felt privileged to work with James McGaugh, who she describes as "a world-renowned researcher in the field of the neurobiology of memory".

Christa’s research at UTD focuses on why we remember things that are emotionally arousing including events such as September 11, 2001, but we don’t really remember less significant dates like September 19, 2001. "Our bodies are set up to help us remember things that are significant or important and I'm really interested in exploring the mechanisms the body uses to do that," says Dr. McIntyre. Christa is currently teaching a new course to graduate students in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences entitled "The Neurobiology of Memory & Emotion".

"UTD has a rich and growing atmosphere of neuroscience and I am looking forward to many possible collaborations," states Dr. McIntyre.
New Faces at the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (continued)

Dr. Daniel Krawczyk

Dr. Krawczyk was an undergraduate student at Fredonia State College in New York where he first became interested in experimental psychology and worked on memory studies. Daniel then did his graduate work at UCLA where he picked up his current interest in executive functions, and working memory in particular. Upon graduating in 2003, Dr. Krawczyk did a post-doctoral fellowship at UC Berkeley where functional neuroimaging became his focus, enabling him to integrate several of his previous research interests.

"I wanted to be able to work in a center where functional imaging was being studied," said Krawczyk. "It seemed like UTD had a phenomenal scale of operations with very interesting colleagues and a very exciting fertile environment for the work I was doing," Krawczyk comments. Daniel divides his time between teaching courses at UTD and being involved in the Advanced Imaging Research Center at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Krawczyk is currently teaching graduate executive functions and undergraduate cognitive psychology.

Dr. Bart Rypma

Dr. Rypma earned his bachelor's degree from New York University, his Master's degree from Duke, and his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from Georgia Tech. He then went on to do post-doctoral work at both Stanford and the University of Pennsylvania.

"I was specifically interested in the big neuroscience initiative that is underway here and in the amount of effort that is going into developing neuroscience and neural imaging," commented Dr. Rypma when asked about what attracted him to the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences at UTD.

Rypma also spends time at UT Southwestern and has been appointed by Dean Bert Moore as the faculty liaison between UT Dallas and UT Southwestern (UTSW). At UTSW, Dr. Rypma works with fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) while focusing on his specific interests in short-term memory, what the brain mechanisms are that permit working memory, and how brain processes change with age. Dr. Rypma is currently co-teaching a graduate seminar on the Neuroscience of Working Memory and Executive Function.

For more information on the advanced imaging center at UT Southwestern, please email Dr. Rypma at bart.rypma@utdallas.edu.

Dr. Deborah Wiebe

Dr. Wiebe's training is in clinical health psychology and she has always been very interested in mind/body associations. She obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Alabama at Birmingham which has one of the first medical psychology training programs in the nation. At the same time, Deborah earned her Master's degree in Public Health. Before Dr. Wiebe joined the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences in the summer of 2006, she was a professor in the psychology department at the University of Utah for 18 years, and helped to develop a specialty there in health psychology.

A major interest of Dr. Wiebe's is how people regulate their emotional and physical well-being in the face of different kinds of health threats. "This can be how they maintain positive emotions, how they avoid depression and anxiety when they are facing a very serious illness, and simultaneously how they regulate and manage their health," explains Wiebe. Her current focus is on children with Type 1 Diabetes and their transition into adolescence - a research effort being funded by the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Wiebe is jointly appointed between UT Dallas and UT Southwestern. "The growing collaborations between UT Southwestern and UT Dallas are happening at a perfect time for someone like me, given my interests in developmental processes, there is a natural fit," says Dr. Wiebe.
Shayla Holub Receives Grant to Study Childhood Obesity

The subject of child obesity is a hot topic in society today. Dr. Shayla Holub, an assistant professor in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences, received a grant from The Timberlawn Psychiatric Research Foundation in January, 2006, to further her research on parental feeding practices and child eating attitudes and behaviors. The basis of the project is to examine parental restrictive feeding practices. Previous research has suggested that when parents restrict their children's eating, their children have less self-control in eating, which may lead to an increase in weight. In experimental settings, when these children are given free access to food, they will eat it even if they are not hungry, which is known as "externally motivated eating". However, Dr. Holub's research suggests that the relationship between restrictive feeding and preschoolers' eating outcomes is much more complex than previously thought. Her work highlights the importance of parenting style and context because during the preschool period, parents play a large role in guiding eating behaviors and some parental restriction may be necessary to promote child health.

The protocol for Shayla's research includes observing parents and their preschool age children after they have just eaten a meal. Parents and children are given fun toys to play with as well as appealing snacks. Dr. Holub, along with a group of research assistants, then observe whether or not the children respond to the snack food even after being full, and if they do, she takes note of how the parents react. "Do they let them eat it? Do they restrict? If parents do restrict, what messages do they use to restrict or limit their child's snack food intake?" are a few of Shayla's questions. She also observes related parent feeding practices, such as whether parents use

Dr. Holub and her research assistants prepare for a family session

the snack food as a reward for good behavior or whether they use this opportunity to teach the child about healthy food choices. The overall parent-child relationship is examined, as well. After about ten minutes, the parents are asked to leave the room and the group observes the children to see what they will do on their own. The behaviors of the parents and children are compared to reports of their behaviors at home, to see the relation between the two settings. "The families really enjoy the sessions," states Dr. Holub. "It's an hour and a half where parents and their children get to enjoy a meal together with no phones or TV's in the background. The parents love it and the kids think it's fun."
Royalyn Batiste Reid and the Value of a School of BBS Education

Royalyn went to the University of North Texas for her undergraduate degree and then went on to get her Masters degree in Human Development from UT Dallas in 1986. While at UTD, Mrs. Reid helped to start the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (BBS) Psi Chi organization (a national honor society in psychology), an organization that continues to thrive on campus today.

After completing her studies at UTD, Royalyn worked at Mary Kay, where, for about 10 years, she was a scientist in the company’s Research and Development department. The skills Royalyn used at Mary Kay "came straight from working in a research program at UTD," says Reid. After her time with Mary Kay, she continued to give research support by starting her and her husband's own company, Reid Consulting Solutions (RCS). RCS provides services including customer satisfaction surveys, focus groups, and mystery shopping (acting as a legitimate shopper in order to gather information and measure quality of retail service) to small and mid-sized companies. Once again Royalyn's research background at UTD was helpful. "The research principles don't change when you have a good foundation," states Reid. With RCS, Royalyn has done research for several organizations such as the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, City of Dallas, Love Field Airport, and Texas Instruments.

Recently Mrs. Reid returned to UT Dallas to talk with the Dean of the School of BBS, Dr. Bert Moore, about offering internship opportunities to graduate students who could help with her research initiatives. "I know the graduate students here are getting good training and a valuable research foundation as I did and I would like to provide real-world opportunities for the students as well," says Mrs. Reid.

School of BBS 2006 Colloquium Series: Exploring Behavior and the Brain

Join us! All presentations will be held on the UT Dallas campus in Green Hall, room 4.428, with refreshments following.

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Please fill out the following questionnaire and mail it to:
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The University of Texas at Dallas
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Title or Position ___________________________

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Business Phone ___________________________

Other (Special projects or interests) ___________________

Awards, recognitions, professional involvement, marriages, babies?

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THIS EDITION’S “SCRAMBLER”

Unscramble each group of letters and write the words on the dashes. Then transfer each letter on a numbered dash to its correspondingly numbered dash at the bottom and you’ll complete the sentence.

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Visit www.bbs.utdallas.edu to learn more about our

Answer to last edition’s “Scrambler”:
New Faculty