As part of CARD’s Statewide Autism Initiative, Card- Albany held its first Statewide Conference, Promoting Best Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, on April 30th at the Crowne Plaza in New York City. 250 parents and professionals from 32 counties throughout the state attended this full day event.

The keynote address was presented by Dr. Lee Marcus, Clinical Director of the Chapel Hill TEACCH Center, Director of Psychology Training, and Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of North Carolina School of Medicine. Dr. Marcus has been with the TEACCH program since 1974 and has been involved in the diagnosis and assessment of children, adolescents and adults with autism. He presented on “The TEACCH Approach to the Education of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.”

Following the keynote presentation, there were 12 breakout sessions provided by regional and national experts in autism. Topics included: Best Practice for Young Children with ASD, ASD and the Expression of Anxiety, Transition Planning, Organization and Time Management, Fighting the Culture of Coercion, Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans, Self-Help Skills, Personalized System of Instruction, Treatments for ASD, IDEA, Positive Behavior Supports in the School, and Sleep Problems and Children with ASD.

CARD Albany would like to thank all of the presenters, The Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza, The Crowne Plaza, and all those who attended for making CARD’s first statewide conference a great success!

On February 1, 2007, CARD hosted an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating its new location at 1535 Western Avenue. The open house was an opportunity for members of the community to see CARD’s new facility, which is roughly three times the size of the previous site. The new location is more accessible for families than the previous space and includes a child care area, a large conference room for trainings, and more office space to accommodate CARD’s ever-growing staff. In attendance at the open house were Assemblyman Bob Reilly, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Joan Wick-Pelletier, Department of Psychology Chair Eldegard Wulfert, Provost and Officer in Charge Susan Herbst, other members of the University community, local T.V. stations, and numerous families. Refreshments were provided by The Old Daley Inn. Thank you to all who attended and all who made the new location possible.

Dr. Christodulu, Director of CARD Albany prepares to cut the ribbon with Mr. Reilly, Dr. Wulfert, graduate students Lindsay Washington and Suzanne Milnes, Dr. Wick–Pelletier, and Dr. Herbst

Dr. Lee Marcus from TEACCH delivered the keynote address

SAVE THE DATE

CARD’s 6th Annual Conference

Friday, October 19, 2007

The Desmond Hotel and Conference Center
Albany, NY

Keynote Speaker
Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D.

The Hidden Curriculum: Practical Solutions for Understanding Unstated Rules in Social Situations
The New York State Legislature, led by Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno and his colleagues Senators Hugh T. Farley, Elizabeth O’C Little, Stephen M. Saland, and James L. Seward, assisted CARD Albany in securing $1.5 million in funding to expand its programs statewide. Over the next year, CARD Albany will collaborate with six other colleges and universities to bring high-quality, cost-effective services to families and educators across New York State. The ongoing support of the New York State Legislature over the past several years has resulted in improved services for schools and families, and has been essential in expanding the CARD Albany program into a full regional network of centers throughout the state.

In February of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network released data that found about 1 in 150 8-year-old children in multiple areas of the United States had an autism spectrum disorder. The Autism Society of America estimates that 1.5 million Americans and their families are now affected. In New York State, there has been an almost 400% increase in number of students with autism from 1996 to 2005. The current statewide estimate of students with this disability is nearly 14,000. The drastic increase in number of children being diagnosed with autism has presented a major challenge to special education programs. A tremendous need for services has been identified locally and statewide, and this past year alone CARD Albany provided 130 school, community, and parent trainings to over 4,500 individuals in 45 counties.

Statewide Autism Initiative Update

New York State has seen a 400% increase in the number of students with autism from 1996 to 2005

Statewide Best Practices Training Concludes a Successful Year

Fifty regional conferences have been conducted by the Center’s training staff in the past six months as part of its new statewide initiative supported by IDEIA funds and designed to be part of an ongoing professional development and parent training series entitled “Best Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.” Approximately 3000 individuals representing dozens of school districts and counties in the state have received training.

Four members of the Center’s training team have exceeded the goals set for the statewide project this school year. In addition to their local activities, they have traveled hundreds of miles from Long Island to Jamestown, including many other stops in between, to conduct a series of training programs designed to assist parents and school district staff in addressing the challenging behaviors of individuals on the autism spectrum. The regional conferences have been followed by Center staff working in seven school districts across the state to conduct intensive workshops with school teams and parents and provide technical assistance in developing functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans for individual students.

Each of the regional conferences has attracted heterogeneous audiences (continued on page 3)

What’s Happening this summer at CARD– Albany?

July 2007

July 11th: Adirondack Animal Land, 11am– 2pm, Broadalbin, NY
July 18th: Fort William Henry, 10:30am – 12:30pm, Lake George, NY
July 19th: Family Barbeque, 4– 6pm, The Crossings, Colonie, NY
July 25th: Hoffman’s Playland, 12:30pm – 3pm, Latham, NY

Summer Fun Events

All Summer Fun and Family Events are open to all of our registered families. To find out more about these events, or how to register your family, please call us at 442-2574.
Make and Take Workshop

CARD’s third Make and Take Workshop was a great success. Over 100 participants, including parents, teachers, and related services providers attended the workshop, held in Albany. During the workshop, CARD staff members gave a brief presentation detailing the different ways that visual supports can be used and how to choose the type that is most appropriate for a particular child. Each person then had the opportunity to create personalized visual schedules, choice boards, and transitional aids. Staff members and students were available to answer questions and help participants find pictures to complete their schedules and aids. This event is a wonderful avenue to learn more about the different ways that children on the autism spectrum can use visual supports at home, in school, and in the community.

Thank you to all of our undergraduate students for their help and to everyone who attended. We hope to see you at our next workshop!

Save-the-Date

Make and Take Workshop

November 14, 2007
10am–6pm

Communication in Autism Seminars

As part of Autism Awareness Month, CARD-Albany and the Upstate New York Chapter of the NFL Alumni Association, Inc. sponsored guest speaker Loisa Bennetto, Ph.D. at the Albany Marriot on April 25th. Dr. Bennetto, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Clinical and Social Sciences at the University at Rochester. She spoke to parents and family members regarding “Communication in Autism.” The night was a huge success with participants reaching nearly 50.

The following night, CARD-Albany, Four Winds Saratoga, and the Upstate New York Chapter of the NFL Alumni Association, Inc. sponsored a dinner symposium for medical professionals where Dr. Bennetto presented on “Communication in Autism: A neuropsychological perspective.” Over 100 medical professionals attended the symposium.

Thanks to the Upstate New York Chapter of the NFL Alumni Association, Inc. and Four Winds of Saratoga as well as the Albany Marriot for making both nights a huge success!

Parent and Sibling Workshops

Parents and siblings of children with autism spectrum disorders are invited to attend an exciting program that is designed to help improve communication and support within the family. Parents will participate in activities and discussions with CARD staff, while siblings will take part in games and fun projects with each other. Eligible siblings must be between 7 and 12 years of age, without a disability, and have a brother or sister with a diagnosed ASD. If you would like more information about the program or are interested in participating, please contact Lindsay Washington at 442-2574 or card@albany.edu.

Summer Parent & Sibling Workshops

Saturday, July 14th
Saturday, July 28th
Saturday, August 11th
Saturday, August 25th

All sessions will be held at Columbia–Greene Community College from 10am–12:30pm
CARD Welcomes New Staff

**Jane Ann Worlock-Peer, M.S. Ed.,**

*Education Specialist*

Jane Ann received a B.A. degree in Sociology with a concentration in Social Work from Siena College and a M.S. in Ed. degree from The College of Saint Rose. Her professional experience includes more than 25 years experience in the health and human services field, of which 15 years were spent in the area of professional development and public education. Jane Ann has an extensive background working in the areas of community mental health care and in services to individuals with developmental disabilities, including autism. In addition to being the parent of a child with autism, she is involved as a parent representative to her local school district’s committees on preschool special education and special education.

**Maria Licari, M.A.**

*Administrative Assistant*

Maria earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from SUNY Buffalo and her Master of Arts degree in Political Science from SUNY Binghamton. She has also taken graduate courses at the City University of New York Graduate Center. Maria has extensive administrative office experience within both public and private sectors. In addition to her prior experience working in the university setting, mainly within the SUNY and CUNY systems, Maria also has experience working and interacting with international student populations.