



February 15, 2008

ICI's Evaluation Group Expands its Services to ICI, U

In 2005, the Institute on Community Integration (ICI) launched The Evaluation Group to offer evaluation services to organizations around the country that serve people with disabilities and other special needs. Last month, The Evaluation Group welcomed a new director, Mary McEathron, who is joined by research associate Karen Evans Stout. Under their leadership the group will not only continue to provide evaluation expertise to clients outside the University who need to evaluate their work and document outcomes as part of accountability processes, but it will also help clients within the University and ICI carry out a variety of evaluation activities. "For instance, we can work with projects within the Institute to carry out the evaluation component of their contracts or grants," says Mary. "We can also work with academic programs, administrative units, and research centers throughout the University to plan and conduct evaluations of their work or to assist with evaluation contracts they may have with outside companies or agencies."

The Evaluation Group is guided by a holistic approach. It strives to:

- Begin at the beginning. Facilitate strategic or systems-level planning that supports a solid, clear connection between project/program and evaluation activities.
- Build on current activities. Identify sources of data collection already in operation and align new data collection procedures to meld with current activities.
- Clarify and distill the pivotal questions. Help clients clarify *what* they need to know, *why* they need to know it, and *how* they plan to respond.
- Increase evaluation capacity. Provide evaluation training in a variety of venues including tailored programs presented to individual organizations and topic-specific mini-courses offered to the community.
- Tell the story well. Engage diverse audiences in discussions about evaluations, reports, and recommendations.

The Evaluation Group is staffed by Mary, who has worked at ICI for four years and has a Ph.D. in evaluation studies, and Karen, who is a long-time member of the University of Minnesota community and has a Ph.D. in educational policy and administration. In addition, a roster of associate consultants across ICI is available to provide specific content expertise to meet the needs of clients. "The Institute has a decades-long history of providing evaluation services around the country, and through The Evaluation Group we have the opportunity to offer an even broader set of customized services through a single point of contact," says Mary.

For further information about The Evaluation Group, contact Mary at (612) 624-1450 or mceat001@umn.edu, or visit ici.umn.edu/evaluation.

Staff Update

- **Staff Hires:** **Karen Evans Stout**, Research Associate, Transition Services; **Joshua Goldberg**, Temporary Employee, RIPM; and **Krista Paterson**, Temporary Employee, RIPM. **Staff Departures:** None.
- The article "Loneliness and Living Arrangements" by **Roger Stancliffe, Charlie Lakin, Bob Doljanac**, Soo-Yong Byun, Sarah Taub, and Giuseppina Chiri was published in the December issue of the journal, *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 45(6). It is online at www.aaid.org.
- **Chee Soon Tan** and **Magdalena Brockel** presented a poster titled, "Supplemental Education Services in Minnesota" at the annual conference for the National Association of School Psychologists in New Orleans, February 9. **Jim Ysseldyke** co-authored the poster.
- **Laurene Christensen** presented, "Improving Academic Outcomes for English Language Learners with Disabilities" at the 2008 English-Language Learners Symposium in Princeton, NJ, January 16.
- **Pam Stenhjem** co-wrote the chapter, "Transition Practices for Persons With Developmental Disabilities," in *Research-Based Practices in Developmental Disabilities*, 2nd ed. (2008), published by PRO-ED.

Dates to Remember...

- **February 20: EFS Information Session**, 2-4 p.m., 325 Education Sciences Building
- **February 22: Pizza Forum**, 12-1, 118 Pattee Hall

From the Front Office

News from ICI's Administrative Staff

- **P&A Vacation Records.** January/February records are due February 29. Please submit them to Beth Nelson in 107 Pattee Hall.
- **P&A Performance Review.** Materials for Professional and Administrative (P&A) Merit/Performance Review were e-mailed to P&A staff on January 28. Completed materials, including a copy of your completed FAR, are due to Amy Kurowski (kuro0008@umn.edu) in 102A by March 3. Contact Amy for questions regarding the materials. Questions about the process or the FAR? Contact Beth Nelson at nelso106@umn.edu or 6-8042.
- **Performance Evaluations.** Information on performance evaluations for undergraduate students, GRAs, Civil Service, and Bargaining Unit employees will be sent via e-mail by February 29. Please watch your e-mail.
- **Research Associates.** On February 1, an e-mail was sent to all Research Associate staff inviting them to request a review for promotion to Senior Research Associate. Formal requests must be in writing and submitted to Beth Nelson in 107 Pattee Hall by March 31. Refer to the e-mail for details.
- **ICI Orientation.** Information on an ICI New Hire Orientation Brownbag will be coming soon. Watch your e-mail for an invitation.
- **Rosemount Storage.** If anyone has files they wish to ship offsite to the University's storage facility in Rosemount, and/or wish to retrieve any stored files for review, contact Amy Kurowski at kuro0008@umn.edu for procedural details. Principal Investigators may also contact Amy to receive a list of materials currently in storage.
- **ICI Council Update.** The Institute Council met February 5 and discussed new grant opportunities, participation in the College Research Day event, the promotion process for Senior Research Associate and Senior Research Fellow, changes in External Sales/Billing invoicing processes, the College budget's impact on ICI, and various announcements and committee updates.

Miscellaneous

- **Interfaith Inclusion Network Meeting.** The Interfaith Inclusion Network will meet February 20 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at Arc Greater Twin Cities, 2446 University Ave. W., Suite 110, in St. Paul. The network is a group of parents, professionals, and self-advocates working to enhance opportunities for meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities in all faith communities. To RSVP or FFI, call Arc at (952) 920-0855.
- **Theology and Disability Talk.** Nancy Eiesland, professor at Emory University and author and editor of books on disability and religion (including *The Disabled God*), will speak at United Theological Seminary, 3000 Fifth Street NW, New Brighton, on March 3 at 7:30 p.m. The lecture, "Disability: An Alternate View from the Underside of History," is free and open to the public. FFI, call (651) 255-6125.
- **Changing Landscapes.** The Meet the Artists event on February 7 was a success. Forty-four people attended the video/panel discussion with staff and artists from Partnership Resources, Inc.; including ICI staff, guests from the University and community, and a reporter from *Access Press*.
- **Birthdays.** Erin Jann (2/19), Joe Timmons (2/24), Renata Ticha (2/24), Anick Tolbize (2/24), David R. Johnson (2/26), Angie Pohl (2/28), Kathy Gustafson (3/3), Beth Nelson (3/8), and Amy Kurowski (3/17). Did we miss your birthday? Let us know! Call 4-2380 or e-mail kuro0008@umn.edu

Bits & Pieces

Information from the Institute's Web Development Team (11 Pattee, 6-8649) and Publications Office (109 Pattee, 4-4512)

- **New Publications.** The following new ICI publications are available:
 - *NCEO Synthesis Report 67: States' Alternate Assessments Based on Modified Achievement Standards (AA-MAS) in 2007* (December 2007). Published by the Institute's National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO). Available only on the Web at <http://cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Synthesis67/Synthesis67.pdf>
 - *NCEO Synthesis Report 66: English Language Learners with Disabilities in State English Language Proficiency Assessments: A Review of State Accommodation Policies* (December 2007). Published by NCEO. Available only on the Web at <http://cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Synthesis66/Synthesis66.pdf>
 - *NCEO Policy Directions 20: Planning Alignment Studies For Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Achievement Standards* (November 2007). Published by NCEO. Available only on the Web at <http://cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Policy20/Polic%20Directions20.pdf>
 - *NCEO Policy Directions 19: Aligning Alternate Assessments to Grade Level Content Standards: Issues and Considerations for Alternates Based on AAS* (November 2007). Published by NCEO. Available only on the Web at <http://cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Policy19/PolicyDirections19.pdf>
- **FYI Deadline.** Items for the next FYI should be submitted to Tom in 109 Pattee Hall or e-mailed to donag003@umn.edu by Tuesday, March 11, 2008.