



**Tufts**  
UNIVERSITY

**ELIOT PEARSON DEPARTMENT OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT**  
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## **Child Development Faculty Research Projects: 2009-2010**

### **Ann Easterbrooks, Ph.D.**

Project #1. (With Fran Jacobs and Jayanthi Mistry) Evaluation of Healthy Families Massachusetts. For the last ten years, we have been evaluating Healthy Families Massachusetts, the state-funded initiative to provide home visiting and other services to young mothers and their children during the first 3 years of life. Goals are to reduce child maltreatment, repeat early pregnancies, and to facilitate child health and development and maternal well-being. We are collecting data by visiting families in their homes, and use a mixed-methods design, with research interviews, questionnaires and observations of parent-child interaction. Constructs include parenting, childhood/family history, maternal mental health, and social/ecological context. We may need students to participate data collection or coding. There are ample data for students wishing to collaborate on writing projects, including independent studies, and to write theses and qualifying papers on this longitudinal data set.

Project #2. International Adoption Project. With Ellen Pinderhughes, Child Development, and Laurie Miller, M.D., Director of the International Adoption Clinic, Tufts New England Medical Center. We are collecting pilot data for a study of internationally adopted infants and their families. Families will visit Tufts, and data will be collected through interviews, observations, and psychophysiological measures. Students are needed to participate in data collection and coding.

### **Marina U. Bers, Ph.D.**

Virtual Communities of learning and care. We are exploring the potential of virtual environments to promote positive youth development by enabling users to become active creators of computational projects and participants in virtual communities. In particular, we are interested in how virtual environments can serve to complement and augment face-to-face psychoeducational programs for children and teenagers. For example, we are studying how on-line multi-user environments such as the Zora virtual city, developed by Prof. Marina Bers and her DevTech research group, can promote civic engagement and can help educators re-think democratic, multi-cultural and civics education. We are also collaborating with Boston's Children's Hospital Department of Psychiatry in a project to help post-transplant pediatric patients use Zora to support coping and medical adherence.

Several opportunities for independent study, senior honor thesis or directed research projects exist within these projects. For more information contact Prof. Bers ([marina.bers@tufts.edu](mailto:marina.bers@tufts.edu)) and check the project's website:

<http://www.ase.tufts.edu/devtech/vclc/> <<http://www.ase.tufts.edu/devtech/vclc/>>

Early childhood technology: Project Inter-Actions. We are looking at the role of computational technologies that are developmentally appropriate for young children and that help them learn about new things in new ways. We are re-examining the notion of what is "developmentally-appropriate" in the light of the opportunities for inquiry and active construction of knowledge offered by robotics. A paid two year RA position is currently open. No previous knowledge of computer programming or robotics is needed. However, the student needs to be willing to learn. Experience conducting literature reviews and working with Kindergarten-aged children is a plus.

More information about all of Prof. Bers' research projects can be found on line at her DevTech research group's website: <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/devtech/>. If interested on any of these opportunities, please contact Prof. Bers at [marina.bers@tufts.edu](mailto:marina.bers@tufts.edu) <<mailto:marina.bers@tufts.edu>>

### **Kathleen Camara, Ph.D.**

Research Projects: Several opportunities are available for students who wish to participate in research activities. Interested students may participate in pilot interviewing with children and families, assist in instrument development, and/or in a writing project focused on arts and child and youth development. Grant applications to fund these projects are in preparation. Research course credit may be earned for participation. Anyone interested may contact Professor Camara through her e-mail address: [kathleen.camara@tufts.edu](mailto:kathleen.camara@tufts.edu).

1. Music and Youth Development. Graduate or undergraduates interested in working as interviewers and research assistants on a collaborative project between Tufts and the Berklee College of Music are invited to apply. This project will gather data from city high school youths from Boston, L.A. and D.C. who are participating in "City Music," an outreach program offered by Berklee College faculty and alumni to engage teenagers in music. The research project, headed by Professor Camara, will examine students' perceptions of the role music plays in their lives; explore neighborhood and family contexts for the support of music and other types of learning; and analyze the effects of the City Music program in promoting achievement among city youth.

2. Children's Concepts of Study and Preparation. The focus of this project is to examine children's understandings and behaviors related to preparation for academic and musical learning. Children and youth ages 5-16 will be interviewed about strategies and behaviors they use to study and practice as they attempt to learn musical and other academic subject matter. Analysis of children's meta-cognitive, rehearsal, and social-cooperative strategies, task analysis, focus, and time-on-task, responses to challenges and errors and achievements will be analyzed within the context of ability and performance.

3. Book on Arts and Children's Development. Any graduate students interested in topics related to children's development through music, visual arts, dance, drama and/or creative writing are invited to participate in this writing project.

4. National Case Studies of Programs Designed to Foster Child and Youth Development Through the Arts. A proposal is being prepared to identify, evaluate and prepare case studies of programs throughout the U.S. and Europe that are designed to engage children and youths in the arts. Analyses of the case studies will yield data for the development of generic models of arts/child and youth development programs that could be sponsored in a variety of settings, including arts organizations (orchestras, ballet, theater companies), museums, schools, community arts programs, government-sponsored programs, and private arts agencies.)

### **David Henry Feldman, Ph.D.**

Project #1. Project Title: Emotional Aspects of the Development of Expertise Number of students who may collaborate on projects: 2-4 Research on transition process between levels of expertise has been going on for several years. In recent years we have focused on relations between emotions and learning in young adults, hoping to find out about the role that emotions play in facilitating or impeding the process of moving toward more advanced levels within a challenging domain.

The primary method used in the research is case study. The subjects (usually students in our cognitive development courses) also do a self study, and their instructors provide information on their performance during the metahobby experience. Thus we hope to triangulate on the problem of change from three perspectives, yielding what should be a rich and detailed picture of the change process as it manifests itself during learning a new domain.

Project #2: Developmental Science Initiative. This is a broad based effort to build a conceptual and theoretical base for the emerging field of developmental science. Anyone interested is more than welcome to participate.

Project #3: Spiritual Exemplars: studies of children and young adults in the realm of spirituality and religious belief; Studies of exemplars, particularly children who exhibit remarkable qualities of spirituality. We are also studying religious conversion as a possible instance of developmental change.

### **Lawrence Gianino, Ph.D.**

Culture, Religion, Identity, and Economic Socialization. For the past three years, with support from the William T. Grant Foundation (WTGF), my research team and I have recruited and conducted interviews in the Boston metropolitan area with Lebanese Christian and Muslim immigrant parents and their 8 to 14 year old children. In this initial study, we have begun to examine the ways in which culture, religion, and identity are linked to the economic socialization of children of these immigrants, and to identify

family and community-related experiences that contribute to the development of effective day-to-day economic values and practices.

We believe that the overall program of research we have undertaken may be the first to systematically examine the relationship that culture, religion, and identity may play in shaping the day-to-day economic values and practices of children of immigrants and their parents, including such fundamental concepts and practices as spending and saving, interest, credit and debt, career planning, work, entrepreneurship, wealth and property ownership, philanthropy or almsgiving, and the like. An eventual goal of our research is to help develop empirically-based, culturally-relevant and socially-meaningful economic and financial literacy curricula and programs through our collaboration with school teachers, after-school program directors, curriculum specialists, and others.

In our work, we sample immigrant groups whose strategies in adapting to, and preparing their children for, the economic environment in this country might ultimately serve other groups as models for successful economic socialization. Using that criterion, we selected the Lebanese as the focal ethnic group in the WTGF-funded study, a group that is prototypical of other immigrant groups that tend to adapt especially well to the economic challenges of living and working in the United States, based on their educational, occupational, and language skills. In addition, the Lebanese are more likely than many other immigrant groups to be self-employed (i.e., engaged in entrepreneurial behavior), and they typically belong to two of the major world religions, Christianity (mainly Maronite Catholics) and Islam. Thus, the first phase of our program of study has involved research on Lebanese Muslim and Christian immigrant families who have at least one child between the ages of 8-14 years. Future research of ours—now in proposal stage--will involve other immigrant groups which meet these same criteria, such as Asian Indians, as well as the Lebanese.

Opportunities for Undergraduate and Graduate Students: Interested students are welcome to participate in a variety of project activities, including: coding; analysis of both quantitative (using SPSS) and qualitative (using HyperResearch) data; making use of the data that are available for collaboration on various writing projects, including independent studies, qualifying papers, and theses, and assisting in the preparation of manuscripts for publication; helping to update literature reviews on economic socialization, youth entrepreneurship, career planning, and children of immigrants and their families; participating in our search for economic and financial literacy curricula and texts used in elementary, middle, and high schools in the United States; and working to help develop research questions, designs, and instruments for new proposals for funds to support the comparative and longitudinal features of our research program.

For further information about the project and/or about participating in any of these opportunities, please contact Professor Gianinno through his email address: [Lawrence.Gianinno@tufts.edu](mailto:Lawrence.Gianinno@tufts.edu).

**Calvin L. Gidney, Ph.D.**

Children's Television Project. (CTV) The CTV project is an on-going investigation of the sociolinguistic dimensions of children's animated television. In the first two phases of the project our research team watched and coded several episodes of 36 cartoons. Our sample included well-known shows such as Arthur and The Simpsons as well as more obscure offerings such as Samurai Pizza Cats or C. Bear and Jamal. In the third phase of our research, we will investigate what cues ? linguistic or visual ? children use to determine a cartoon character's status as hero or villain. We are looking for interested and motivated graduate or undergraduate students to work as researchers on this project. Researchers will engage in many aspects of the project including (1) research design, (2) piloting of research protocols on children at the Eliot-Pearson Children's School, (3) administration of protocols to children in our sample, (4) production of video tapes, or other research-related work and (5) library research. Researchers will meet biweekly (every other week) for 90 minutes for training and discussion. If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact Prof. Gidney (ext. 7-2213 / Calvin.Gidney@tufts.edu) or Prof. Dobrow (Julie.Dobrow@tufts.edu).

**Francine Jacobs, Ed.D.**

I am in the midst of two multi-year evaluation projects: The Massachusetts Healthy Families Evaluation (MHFE) and the Touchpoints Early Childhood Care and Education Evaluation (ECCE). Healthy Families Massachusetts is a statewide teen parenting program; MHFE (for which Professors Ann Easterbrooks and Jayanthi Mistry are co-investigators) has been in operation since 1998. We are now in its final stages, conducting secondary analyses of data we collected over the period of the study.

The ECCE program trains early childhood professionals in an approach to establishing partnerships with parents of young children that builds on the clinical work of pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton. This evaluation began in April, 2005, and will be gathering pre-test data in infant and toddler child care centers during the fall, 2005. Professor Ann Easterbrooks is also the co-Principal Investigator of this study.

**Debbie LeeKeenan and Heidi Given**

Eliot-Pearson Children's School: School-Wide Inquiry on Teaching and Learning

The faculty of the Eliot-Pearson Children's School is engaged in a multi-year, classroom-based inquiry project. This project focuses on issues of social competence, self-regulation, and group participation. The project incorporates the collection and examination of documentation, as a means to support teacher development and effective classroom practice. We invite students who are interested in early childhood education, teacher research, and communities of practice to join the Children's School faculty in this collaborative inquiry of teaching and learning. Opportunities are available to practice documentation, participation in a professional learning community, literature search and review, project and provocation design, data collection and analysis, and writing and dissemination. Independent study credit available.

**Richard M. Lerner, Ph.D.**

The Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development was developed to create research projects that use the theory involved in applied developmental science to frame studies seeking to understand how to promote healthy, positive development among diverse children, adolescents, families, and communities. Richard M. Lerner, Bergstrom Chair in Applied Developmental Science, is the Director of the Institute. Erin Phelps, Research Professor in the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, is the Deputy Director and Director of Research in the Institute. Heidi Johnson is the Managing Director of the Institute. The Institute is the home of several research, training, and outreach projects:

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development is completing the sixth of its currently planned eight waves of data collection. In this study we longitudinally assess across adolescence the key characteristics of positive youth development, that is the "5 Cs" of positive development—competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring (or compassion). The research also evaluates the impact on positive youth development of key ecological assets— found in families, communities and community-based programs for youth. Jacqueline V. Lerner, Professor of Developmental and Educational Psychology at Boston College, is the scientific director of the project.

The Role of Spiritual Development in Growth of Purpose, Generosity, and Psychological Health in Adolescence is a three-year project funded by the John Templeton Foundation. This pilot study ends in August 2008 and we are submitting a proposal to build upon our findings to launch a multi-university/multi-site longitudinal study of positive youth development (PYD), spirituality, and youth generosity (contribution) to self, family, community, and civil society. The overarching purposes of this research grant are threefold: (a) to organize a community of junior and senior scholars who are committed to engaging in collaborative science on the relation between spirituality and positive development during the second decade of life; (b) to conduct a cross-sectional piece of pilot research in the Boston, MA area that focuses on conceptualization and measurement of spirituality ↔positive youth development relations at the neural, psycho-physiological, mental and social environmental levels among middle, high school, and college students; and (c) to prepare to launch a subsequent national longitudinal study of these same issues in the future in conjunction with our collaborating scientists and spiritual/religious advisors. We are in the midst of publishing two books concerning spirituality and positive youth development. The first book, which will be published in 2008, outlines various perspectives on how scholars might go about studying spirituality ↔positive youth development relations at various levels of analysis (brain/body, mind, person-in-context). The second book will be a companion work that presents the measures and empirical findings the pilot research and sets out an agenda for future longitudinal work at the national and international levels.

**Tama Leventhal, Ph.D.**

Project #1: NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development-Phase IV. This study extends the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development into its fourth phase, to follow the study participants through age 15. Recruited from hospitals in 10 geographically diverse sites at the time of their births, 1,346 children and their families have been followed intensively and extensively through 6th grade. Originally, the study was designed to examine early child care and its effects on children's development. Researchers also collected information on multiple contexts of children's development, including home, school, and after-school environments. The principal purpose of this phase is to investigate how earlier functioning and experiences, in concert with contextual and maturational factors in adolescence, influence social relationships, health, adjustment, and intellectual and academic development during middle adolescence. Information on a wide range of adolescent outcomes and contextual features were collected from a laboratory assessment, a home visit, etc. Additional information was collected from health and pubertal maturation examinations, monitored physical activity, analyses of school transcripts, and surveys of school personnel.

Student Opportunities: Preparation for a possible fifth phase of data collection. Data are available for students wishing to collaborate on writing projects, including independent studies, and to write theses and qualifying papers on this longitudinal data set.

*Project # 2: Neighborhood Influences on Adolescent Development: Timing, Gender, and Processes.* This study, using a mixed-methods approach that draws on experimental and non-experimental data, addresses several issues related to adolescent development in neighborhood contexts. The importance of the timing of neighborhood socioeconomic effects on development and whether adolescence is a particularly sensitive period will be investigated. This study also focuses on gender differences in neighborhood effects on adolescent development and the generalizability of findings across income groups. Mechanisms of transmission of neighborhood socioeconomic effects will be explored as well.

Student Opportunities: Assist with data analysis and manuscript preparation. Some data sets are also available to students wishing to collaborate on various writing projects per above.

*Project #3: How Parenting Modifies Neighborhood Risks Related to Low-Income Children's Health.* This study's objective is to explore the extent to which positive parenting behaviors may help buffer children from the consequences of detrimental neighborhood structural and social conditions (beyond poverty) and foster optimal health outcomes among children from low-income, urban families. Understanding the protective role of parenting within high-risk settings is important to the design of effective interventions aimed at improving health among this vulnerable population. We investigate intersections between parenting and neighborhoods as related to child health during two critical developmental transitions: early childhood into school entry and early to late adolescence. To explore this topic, we are using three waves of data, collected over six years, from the Three-City Study (of Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio). This study provides a random sample of 2,400 low-income children from low-income neighborhoods, half of them aged 0-4 and half aged 10-14.

Student Opportunities: Assist with data analysis and manuscript preparation.

## **Lynn Meltzer**

SMARTS Boston Leadership and Mentorship Program (ResearchILD). SMARTS Boston is a ground breaking peer-to-peer mentorship program designed to build a supportive inclusive (high achieving, at-risk of failure, learning difficulties) community of student leaders who want to make a change in their school environment. Through a project called the “Initiative for Positive Action and Change” (IPAC), students develop questions about an important problem they observe in their school, hypothesize about why it exists, develop methods for testing their hypothesis, draw conclusions and suggest solutions at conference to school administrators based on the results of their investigations. Paralleling the IPAC, students are also taught research based learning strategies and participate in metacognitive activities to build awareness of their own individualized learning styles. This delicate balance of problem-posing learning, collaborative learning, and action research fosters the development of student mentors and leaders who can succeed in school due to their increased *motivation, effort, persistence, resilience, positive-self concept and effective strategy-use*.

The program just successfully completed its second wave of pilot data collection. Beginning this fall, the program will embark on a three year longitudinal study. We will be assessing program efficacy using ResearchILD designed pre-test, post-test, and follow-up quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

We are looking for qualified graduate students who are interested in any of the following: program implementation, on-site quantitative and qualitative data collection, data entry and analysis, ongoing program evaluation, and manuscript preparation. A *minimum* of a *six month* commitment is required.

For more information, please see our websites ([www.researchchild.org](http://www.researchchild.org) and [www.ildlex.org](http://www.ildlex.org)) and/or contact Lynn Meltzer at [lmeltzer@ildlex.org](mailto:lmeltzer@ildlex.org) or mimiballard at [mballard@researchchild.org](mailto:mballard@researchchild.org).

Drive to Thrive Program (ResearchILD) An exciting and innovative program, “Drive to Thrive: Fostering Persistence, Effort, and Resilience,” with EP faculty member Lynn Meltzer as principle investigator, is a field research initiative designed to teach students effective strategies and focused effort and to promote academic success in all students. Over the past two years, pre-post data has been gathered from students in grades 3-6 at a number of schools in Acton and Watertown using the METACOG questionnaire system, designed by ResearchILD to evaluate student and teacher perceptions of effort, executive function processes, strategy use, metacognition, and academic performance. In addition, workshops and consultations have been conducted to educate teachers about strategic teaching in their classrooms. Beginning this fall, our goal is to analyze pre-post questionnaire data from elementary school students and teachers further and to develop a curriculum for on-line use.

We are looking for graduate students to participate in all aspects of this project, including data collection, data entry, data analysis, and workshop preparation. A minimum of a sixth month commitment is required.

For more information, please see our websites ([www.researchchild.org](http://www.researchchild.org) and [www.ildlex.org](http://www.ildlex.org)) and/or contact Lynn Meltzer at [lmeltzer@ildlex.org](mailto:lmeltzer@ildlex.org) or mimiballard at [mballard@researchchild.org](mailto:mballard@researchchild.org).

### **Jayanthi Mistry, Ph.D.**

#### ***Navigating Multiple Cultural Worlds***

The overall research agenda is focused on understanding the processes through which socio-cultural, economic, and community-level contexts interact with family and individual practices to create the conditions under which children develop expertise in navigating multiple cultural worlds and identities. The process of navigating between multiple worlds and identities is a critical component of the development of self and identity – especially for children of immigrants and those from underrepresented racial and ethnic communities who experience life as minorities in the U.S. Our interest in the process of navigating multiple worlds is based on the assumption that children and youth from diverse ethnic and racial minority backgrounds - the ability to maintain flexible identities or integrate multiple facets of self and identity has implications for psychological adjustment and school achievement.

*Opportunities:* There are opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students interested in independent study, directed research, or theses to get involved in the overarching project. During the past year, 2-3 theses and 2-3 directed research studies were undertaken by undergraduate and graduate students. Typically students chose to focus on a single under-represented community, and collected and analyzed data using the methods and measures of the overarching project. This enabled us to examine variation among individuals from diverse family backgrounds (including immigrant and non-immigrant, ethnic or racial minorities) across sub-studies as a first step in exploring potential features of background experience and community context that facilitate expertise in navigating multiple cultural worlds.

#### ***Massachusetts Healthy Families Evaluation***

*Research Objectives:* The MA Healthy Family Evaluation (Jacobs, Easterbrooks, Mistry) aimed at assessing the outcomes of a home-visiting program for teen families is now in its second cohort phase.

*Opportunities:* There are continuing opportunities for independent study or directed research projects on secondary analysis of the ethnographic data set from the first cohort phase.

### **Erin Phelps, Ed.D**

Gay Fathers Project Ellen Perrin, MD (Tufts Medical Center), Erin Phelps, EdD (E-P), and Ellen Pinderhughes, PhD (E-P) are collaborating on research on gay fathers and their children. To date, we have completed a pilot study of 12 families, in which fathers

completed questionnaires and were interviewed. Transcribing interviews and data entry are underway. Current tasks are to analyze further the quantitative data and develop ways to code the open-ended interviews. In the coming year, we will seek funding for a larger study and prepare manuscripts for publication. Students could work on the project in several capacities, and our particular need for the 2008-09 academic year is for qualitative coding. This work could be done as an internship or for course credit.

**Ellen Pinderhughes, Ph.D.**

Project #1 Fast Track Fast Track is a long-term randomized clinical trial designed to prevent the onset of serious conduct disorder and other problematic outcomes in adolescence. Initiated in 1991, the study is ongoing in 4 sites in the country with 445 intervention youth, a matched group of 446 controls, and another more normative comparison group of 387 youth. Services were delivered to intervention youth from grades 1 through 10. Yearly data collection provides opportunities to examine the effect of the intervention and the development of children living in high-risk communities.

Here at Tufts, students could participate in qualitative and quantitative analyses that are being conducted. For more on Fast Track, go to [www.fastrackproject.org](http://www.fastrackproject.org).

Project #2 Adoption Research Adoption research focuses on a couple of areas within adoption. First, the Adoption and Development Project (ADP) examines the understanding of adoption, ethnic identity and self-image of children adopted from China and their families' experiences raising children who are from a different ethnic background. We are currently collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data from up to 75-100 families with children ages 6-8 from around New England.

Opportunities for graduate students include interviewing families, scoring/coding data, and data analyses. Opportunities for undergraduate students include scoring/coding data and data analyses. For more information on the ADP, go to <http://www.tuftsadp.org/>.

The second study focuses on families adopting or fostering older children. Questions of interest include how families readjust after the child enters the home, and how parents help children develop competencies at home and in the community. This heavily qualitative research is conducted with small samples of adoptive families and has as its goal generating an understanding of the normative challenges facing these adoptive families. Opportunities for students include data analyses.

**Martha Pott, Ph.D.**

Project # 1: *Family Rituals and Celebrations*: Families define themselves partly by the occasions in which they all get together. These family ceremonies (e.g., marriage, baptism), celebrations (e.g., birthdays, reunion), or rituals (e.g., having supper together nightly, vacationing at the same spot every year) are documented in this research project. Interviews and questionnaires are the means of data collection. Course credit is available.

Project # 2: Eye contact / eye-gaze: This project explores the use of eye contact and eye gaze in humans from an evolutionary as well as developmental perspective; socio-cultural influences will be an important piece of the work. Students will participate in a research group to read literature about eye contact. In addition, we will observe and code child behavior in a semi-structured live paradigm, as well as videotapes of eye contact during a task in which the child has the opportunity to behave selfishly or altruistically. Course credit is available.

**Fred Rothbaum, Ph.D.**

Project #1: Child & Family WebGuide The Child & Family WebGuide (<http://www.cfw.tufts.edu>) is the first online resource for parents, students, child-care professionals, policymakers and others that systematically evaluates the sites it lists. Created by faculty in the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development at Tufts University, the WebGuide identifies, describes and evaluates research-based Web sites that contain the most credible child development information available. In addition to its normal functions, the WebGuide is about to launch a new initiative involving promoting non-profit organizations (that serve children and families) by gathering videos describing them. We are seeking graduate students who can participate in executive positions in which they would: provide leadership for our new initiative; assist in marketing and public relations; serve as evaluators of new websites; provide web-based technical (and SEO) support. This project can accommodate a range of student interests and backgrounds (the media, parent education, health education, etc.). If students have work study, the positions are paid; if not, internships providing course credit are available.

Project #2: Treatment of Depression. I am engaged in ongoing research and writing about emotion regulation and the treatment of depression. The research consists of two projects: (a) a workshop for teaching emotion regulation skills to undergraduate students; (b) a treatment for depression involving neurofeedback—a cutting edge intervention in which people receive feedback about their brain’s functioning, as well as feedback that their brain can grow and develop. The papers focus on depression and culture, and the goals that people adopt when they experience negative mood.

**W. George Scarlett, Ph.D.**

Project # 1: Parents own Methods for Managing Behavior Problems: This is a brand new project involving collecting methods that parents, not professionals invent and use to manage their children’s behavior problems. The goals are to (1) show how creative parents can be when pressed, and (2) provide a way to help parents evaluate their own home-grown methods.

Project # 2: Religious and Spiritual Exemplars Before beginning study of religious and spiritual development, it is always good to have an understanding of endpoints or models of perfection and maturity. This is a writing project to do just that – a book whose chapters deal with individuals and communities who are considered to be religious or spiritual exemplars by most. The book looks at positive examples as well as negative (pathological) examples. This project can use the help of anyone interested.

### **Martha Julia García-Sellers, Ph.D.**

#### **Project #1: Parent-Teacher Connection Program (P-TCP) in New Haven**

The P-TCP is an applied research project being carried out in New Haven, Connecticut under the direction of Crista Marchesseault of the Gesell Institute. The program is an outgrowth of the Home-School Connection Program (H-SCP) founded and directed by Dr. Martha Julia García-Sellers. Professor García-Sellers, has directed the H-SCP for several years in collaboration with the Somerville public schools. The program has received recognition for strengthening the communication between home and school for children, parents and teachers, while at the same time providing an exceptional training venue in research and practice for graduate and undergraduate students of Tufts Child Development Department and from the departments of Psychology, Education and Nutrition. Crista Marchesseault began the Parent-Teacher Connection Program (P-TCP) last spring in New Haven modeled on the H-SCP. The P-TCP, a partnership between the Gesell Institute and the New Haven Public Schools, is implementing the H-SCP with 4-year-olds who attend four preschools in New Haven. Crista is at present Associate Director of the Gesell Institute. She received her MA (Applied) in 2002 from Tufts having worked and carried out an internship with the H-SCP. Professor García-Sellers serves as consultant to the P-TCP regarding the various stages and activities of its implementation. She has been gratified to witness how research and practice skills that were nurtured in Child Development are now taking root in other communities through the efforts our alumnae. Graduate and undergraduate students interested in working in this project should contact Professor García-Sellers. Responsibilities will include direct participation in classroom activities with children and teachers, working with parents and children during home visits, as well as entering and analyzing data. Students will be expected to travel to New Haven and travel expenses will be reimbursed. Salary will be determined depending on prior experience and level of responsibilities assumed by the student. Knowledge of Spanish will be desirable.

#### **Project #2: Child Rearing Study in Costa Rica**

An interdisciplinary and collaborative longitudinal study on the development and rearing of Costa Rican toddlers is underway. Students will be needed for translating, transcribing and coding videotaped observations of toddlers taken in their home and at daycare centers in San José, Costa Rica. Other responsibilities may include entering, analyzing and preparing data for publication. Spanish fluency is required. Please contact Professor Martha Julia García-Sellers for details of the study and work opportunities.

### **Donald Wertlieb, Ph.D.**

#### **Human Services and Special Education in Global Perspective.**

Collaborate on international projects in Israel and/or Ukraine. In Ukraine, we have established an educational resource center that serves children with disabilities and trains teachers in special needs; this developing democracy is only just beginning to grasp the issues of inclusion and the potentials of human rights advocacy. Recent funding from CIBC World Markets has launched the family support components of this project. In Israel, we are working with an innovative child, adolescent and family treatment center, evaluating its programs and disseminating new approaches to neighboring clinics.

Cultivation of social capital and policy-relevant themes are among the conceptual frameworks in this applied developmental science. Both projects also involve internet collaborative modes.

**Maryanne Wolf, Ed. D.**

We have opportunities this year for 3 to 5 Masters level and Ph.D. students.

The Center for Reading and Language Research is one of several interdisciplinary reading-research centers around the country that bring together cognitive neurosciences, linguistics, child development, and education. The Center offers a variety of theoretical and applied experiences for undergraduate, Masters and Ph.D. students: for example, undergraduates and graduate students may become involved in tutoring at-risk impaired readers in community schools in the Tufts Literacy Corps with Dr Cindy Krug. Trained graduate students may become involved in an extensive range of research activities , including assessment experiences, curriculum development, and preliminary data collection and entry tasks. Examples of collaborative projects are: 1) the design and implementation of activities and short stories included in an ongoing, innovative reading intervention program that includes a computerized component, 2) an analysis of reading and language skills of African-American children who speak vernacular English (this project in conjunction with Professor Chip Gidney); and 3) the study of different patterns of genetic markers and behavioral, cognitive, linguistic, and emotional differences in children with a range of reading issues. Volunteers are a welcome part of the operation of the Center. Potential volunteers are to contact Stephanie Gottwald or Wendy Galante at 627-3815.