Four world-renowned social science experts will be speaking as part of the Center’s 2010-2011 Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture Series. The speakers include education expert John Q. Easton; Kelly Brownell, a leader in research on obesity and health policy; early childhood expert Joan Lombardi; and social epidemiologist Ichiro Kawachi.

Easton began the series September 22 with a talk entitled “Out of the Tower, into the Schools: How Relevant Research Can Transform School Practice and Shape Education Policy.”


The lectures are held from 3 to 4:30 p.m., with a reception following. The events, which are free and open to the public, take place in the Rhodes Conference Room of the Sanford School of Public Policy building, 201 Science Drive, on Duke’s West Campus.

The Center for Child and Family Policy sponsors the Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture Series to enhance the intellectual community not only for its own faculty, research scientists and staff, but also for Duke University broadly, Durham and the entire region. All of the speakers are world-renowned experts who have demonstrated unrivaled excellence in behavioral science and theory, as well as in science-to-policy applications.

John Q. Easton is director of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education. He began his six-year term as director in June 2009. The IES is the nation’s engine for educational research, evaluation, assessment and statistics, funding hundreds of research studies on ways to improve academic achievement, conducting...
Dear Colleagues,

Being a faculty member at Duke is a pretty wonderful lot in life. Each day brings us opportunities to interact with and learn from some of the most creative minds in all of child and family policy. This issue of *Bridge* focuses on education policy and reports just a few of the many faculty activities that we get to hear about on a regular basis.

We like to think that we have assembled the most outstanding group of scholars in education anywhere outside of a school of education. Being at a university that does not have a separate school of education might actually encourage the strong multidisciplinary scholarship that our faculty members exemplify. Our contributions are directed toward solving difficult problems in contemporary education and schooling, rather than being driven and bound by professional constraints and interests.

One important problem concerns policies about the use of standardized achievement tests that are mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Do these test scores validly indicate progress toward important outcomes in human capital, such as high school graduation, post-secondary education, labor market participation, early child bearing, delinquency, and criminal activity? Although test scores modestly predict student outcomes, the impact is not as strong as current policies would suggest, and other factors play important roles in student development. Financial support from the Smith Richardson Foundation enables our faculty members to investigate these questions using data from the 1.4 million students and 100,000 teachers in North Carolina public schools that have been linked in various ways to other administrative data sets. These data sets have been archived at our Center for Child and Family Policy under the leadership of Clara Muschkin. Read about her in this issue.

The data sets for this faculty work group are managed with the expertise of Kara Bonneau, Dorothyjean Cratty, and Sharon Eatmon. The faculty group is led by Charlie Clotfelter, and Duke participants include Liz Ananat, Phil Cook, William “Sandy” Darby, myself, Anna Gassman-Pines, Christina Gibson-Davis, Helen “Sunny” Ladd, Clara Muschkin, Seth Sanders, and Jake Vigdor.

In this issue, a policy report co-authored by one of our senior faculty members, Ladd, is highlighted and addresses an important question: Should student test scores be used to evaluate teacher performance and effectiveness?

Another important problem concerns suspension policies for student misconduct. With funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, faculty members at the Center’s Transdisciplinary Prevention Research Center, directed by psychologists Phil Costanzo and Rick Hoyle, are examining basic questions about the causes and consequences of student misbehavior; such as: How do genes and early adverse environments interact to lead to antisocial behavior? (By the way, with Avshalom Caspi, Jane Costello, Ahmad Hariri, and Terrie Moffitt on board, the world’s leading group of scholars on this topic is here at Duke.) What role does early truancy play in the pathway toward ultimate school dropout? (With Phil Cook leading a group on this question, major headway is being made.) What interventions are efficacious in preventing student misbehavior? And what school policies about suspensions and expulsions are most effective? In this issue, we highlight the activities of Center staff members in bringing scientific knowledge about these questions to policy makers. Jenni Owen, Joel Rosch, Clara Muschkin, and Anne-Marie Iselin recently led the annual Family Impact Seminar on this topic for the North Carolina State Legislature, and Jenni Owen teamed up with a local elected member of the Durham Public Schools Board of Education, Heidi Carter, to produce an op-ed piece on this topic.

Unfortunately, this issue of *Bridge* has room enough to describe only a small sampling of the full activities of Center faculty members in education policy. We were not able to report the research by Nicholas School of the Environment economist Marie-Lynn Miranda on the effects of exposure to lead on student achievement… or the op-ed piece by Bill Wilson and Cindy Kuhn that ran in newspapers across North America on using health education curricula to help students “take care of their brain” … or research by David Rabiner documenting the use of pharmacologic stimulants by college students to improve their academic performance… or the research by Beth Gifford, Lisa Berlin, and Leslie Babinski evaluating the impact of the national group America’s Promise Alliance on stimulating policies to improve high school graduation rates… or evaluation of school-based interventions to improve academic success for learning disabled students by Christina Christopoulos, David Rabiner, Liz Snyder, and Nicole Lawrence, or… more later.

Kenneth A. Dodge
Director, Center for Child and Family Policy
William McDougall Professor of Public Policy and Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience

From the Director

Philip Costanzo
Associate Director for Mentoring and Teaching

E. Jane Costello
Associate Director for Research

Rick Hoyle
Associate Director for Data Services

Clara Muschkin
Director of CCS Certificate Program

Jenni Owen
Associate Director for Policy and Translation

Barbara Black Pollock
Associate Director for Administration

David Rabiner
Associate Director for Program Evaluation Services
large-scale evaluations of federal education programs, and reporting a wide array of statistics on the condition of education. Throughout his career, Easton has directed rigorous projects aimed at providing the best evidence about what it takes to spark meaningful policy debate and sustained change in urban schools. In 1990, Easton was a founding member of the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) at the University of Chicago, a research organization whose mission is to rigorously analyze the policies that govern Chicago Public Schools. For two decades, he was a key member, and eventually director, of the consortium as its research guided policies for Chicago’s schools and districts around the country. Easton is the author or coauthor of numerous reports and articles, and two books: Charting Chicago School Reform: Democratic Localism as a Lever for Change and Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago.

Kelly Brownell is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Yale University, where he also serves as professor of epidemiology and public health and as director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. His research deals primarily with obesity and the intersection of behavior, environment and health with public policy. In 2006 Time magazine listed Brownell among “The World’s 100 Most Influential People” in its special Time 100 issue featuring those “...whose power, talent or moral example is transforming the world.” He was cited as a “moral entrepreneur” with special influence on public discourse in a history of the obesity field and was cited as a leading “warrior” in the area of nutrition and public policy. Brownell has advised members of congress, governors, world health and nutrition organizations and media leaders on issues of nutrition, obesity and public policy. He has published 14 books, including Food Fight: The Inside Story of the Food Industry, America’s Obesity Crisis, and What We Can Do about It, which he wrote with Katherine Battle Horgen, and more than 300 scientific articles and chapters.

Joan Lombardi, a national and international expert on early childhood, is deputy assistant secretary and inter-departmental liaison for Early Childhood Development for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Lombardi was founding chair of the Birth to Five Policy Alliance and, prior to that, served during the 1990s in ACF as deputy assistant secretary for policy and external affairs, the first associate commissioner of the Child Care Bureau, and the project director of the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Head Start. She has been an advisor on early childhood development to a number of organizations, including the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and UNICEF. Lombardi is the author of Time to Care: Redesigning Child Care to Promote Education, Support and Build Communities, and co-editor of A Beacon of Hope: The Promise of Early Head Start for America’s Youngest Children.

Ichiro Kawachi is professor of social epidemiology and chair of the Department of Society, Human Development, and Health at the Harvard School of Public Health. He is also the director of the Harvard Center for Society and Health. Kawachi has studied the social determinants of population health and health disparities. For the past decade he has been conducting investigations on the damaging health consequences of growing inequality, summarized in the book, The Health of Nations (with Bruce Kennedy). Kawachi has taught internationally, in Australia, Mexico, Chile, Taiwan and New Zealand. He is a member of the research advisory committee of the Pan-American Health Organization/WHO and serves as the senior editor (Social Epidemiology) of the journal Social Science & Medicine, as well as Editor pro tem of the American Journal of Epidemiology.

The Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture Series, begun in 2006, is endowed by the Arthur Sulzberger Family.

For more information or to register, call (919) 613-9350, e-mail ehlayko@duke.edu or visit www.childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu.

Erika Hanzely-Layko is the Center’s meeting and event coordinator.
Student test scores are not reliable indicators of teacher effectiveness, even with the addition of value-added modeling (VAM), according to a new Economic Policy Institute report. Though VAM methods have allowed for more sophisticated comparisons of teachers than were possible in the past, they are still inaccurate, so test scores should not dominate the information used by school officials in making high-stakes decisions about the evaluation, discipline and compensation of teachers.

Among the 10 co-authors of the report, Problems with the Use of Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers, is Helen F. Ladd, Edgar T. Thompson Distinguished Professor at the Sanford School of Public Policy and president-elect of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management.

Student test scores cannot fully account for the wide range of factors that influence student learning, particularly the backgrounds of students, school supports and the effects of summer learning loss. As a result, teachers who teach students with the greatest educational needs appear to be less effective than they are.

The Obama administration has encouraged states to adopt laws that use student test scores as a significant component in evaluating teachers, and a number of states have done so. The Los Angeles Times recently used value-added methods to evaluate teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District based on the test scores of its students, and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan supported the paper’s decision to publicly release this information, asserting that parents have a right to know how effective their teachers are.

The conclusions of the EPI report suggest that the Times’ analysis, which attempts to analyze teacher effectiveness, is unreliable and inaccurate. The co-authors make clear that accuracy and reliability of analyses of student test scores, even in their most sophisticated form, are highly problematic.

Analyses of VAM results show that they are often unstable across time, classes and tests. Thus, test scores, even with the addition of VAM, are not accurate indicators of teacher effectiveness. Student test scores cannot fully account for the wide range of factors that influence student learning, particularly the backgrounds of students, school supports and the effects of summer learning loss. As a result, teachers who teach students with the greatest educational needs appear to be less effective than they are.

The authors point to other negative consequences of using test scores to evaluate teacher performance: Teachers have an incentive to “teach to the test;” incentives to collaborate within schools are reduced; and teacher morale can suffer.

The authors conclude that, “Although standardized test scores of students are one piece of information that school leaders may use to make judgments about teacher effectiveness, test scores should be only a small part of an overall comprehensive evaluation.”


Reprinted by permission. For complete version see Education Policy Institute. Contact: Phoebe Silag or Karen Conner, news@epi.org, (202) 775-8810
Clara Muschkin, an Interdisciplinary Scholar
by Nancy E. Oates

An interdisciplinary scholar, Muschkin appreciates the cross-disciplinary nature of the certificate program...
Youth, Crime and Public Policy (CCS 49S)

Instructor: Joel Rosch, Senior Research Scholar

First-year seminar for students interested in learning more about public policies dealing with crimes committed by young people. This course uses crimes as a focus to introduce students to the variety of issues involved in child and family policy. Students will learn about juvenile crime, the criminal justice system, how public policy is made, what different kinds of research tell us about juvenile crime, and the role of research in the policy making process. Students also learn about: 1) how juvenile crime policy is impacted by different kinds of societal values; 2) how the nature and “causes” of criminal behaviors are understood; and 3) the kinds of resources and technologies different societies have at their disposal.

Children in Contemporary Society (CCS 150/PubPol 124)

Instructor: Clara Muschkin, Assistant Research Professor of Public Policy Studies; Director, Children in Contemporary Society Certificate Program

What does it mean to be a child in the 21st century? Using an interdisciplinary approach, this course provides an overview of issues facing today’s youth, from childhood through adolescence. Students begin by exploring social forces that shape the definition of childhood across place and time and review how different disciplines study children. They then consider the many social contexts of childhood, including the family, schools, the economy, the media and the dynamics of race and gender. One of the objectives of this course is to gain an understanding of issues of childhood adversity—including poverty, violence, delinquency and health inequities—and how some public policies are addressing these issues. In fall 2010, students have the opportunity to participate in a research service learning component coordinated by the Hart Leadership Program. Participation in the service learning component is optional. This course is required for students working on the Children in Contemporary Society certificate.

Multidisciplinary Approaches to Contemporary Children’s Issues (CCS 210SA/PubPol 210SA/ Psy 210SA)

Instructor: Phil Costanzo, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience

Two-semester course during which students will identify a problem facing children in contemporary society and learn how to analyze its historical, political, economic, psychological and sociological contributions. They will learn how to conduct a policy analysis and translate their scholarship to policy solutions. In addition, students will learn how to present their analyses in oral, academic and lay-public forums. Capstone course required for the Children in Contemporary Society Certificate program.
Making Social Policy
(CCS 270S/PubPol 234S/Soc 234S)

Instructor: Jenni Owen, Associate Director for Policy and Translation and Director of Policy Initiatives

Looking at a range of social policy issues, this course focuses on 1) the policymaking process; 2) the role of different sectors in policymaking (public, non-profit, etc.); 3) when and why policymakers use research – and when and why they don’t; and 4) communicating with policymakers. The course exposes students to current social policy challenges stemming from health and human services, education and other domains. Readings include research, policy and practice articles and analyses from multiple disciplines. Experiential and written exercises will help students develop skills for using research to inform policy and practice. The course includes visits from policymakers and visits to policymaking “events,” student work that combines policy and research considerations; and the potential for students to contribute useable insights to policymakers and others. Students will learn about the value of research in informing policy and the constraints within which policymaking occurs. They will complete independent and group assignments that combine their knowledge from the readings with their observations of “live” policy events.

Sulzberger Family and Dan Levitan Social Policy Graduate Research Fellowships

The Center for Child and Family Policy selected five doctoral students as graduate research fellows for 2010-11. The fellowships encourage the career development of promising students who are interested in academic careers that blend basic social science with public policy.

The 2010-2011 Sulzberger/Levitan Social Policy Graduate Research Fellows are:

Erin Kim  public policy studies
Dimitri Putilin  psychology and neuroscience
Maeve Gearing  public policy studies
Kate Snyder  psychology and neuroscience
Amy Sanchez  (not pictured) psychology and neuroscience

“Our Center is committed to involving Duke students in the scholarly research it conducts,” said Ken Dodge, director of the Center for Child and Family Policy, “and the students benefit by their involvement in cutting-edge research. We are fortunate to have such well-qualified fellows this year.”

These fellowships are made possible through generous donations by the Sulzberger family, which has made significant contributions to society through publishing The New York Times and is now contributing to the development of outstanding scholars in child and family policy, and by Dan Levitan, a 1979 Duke graduate and co-founder of Maveron, a Washington State-based venture capital firm.
“Stimulating” and “relevant” best describe the 2010 North Carolina Family Impact Seminar held at the North Carolina legislature on April 27. The seminar focused on school suspension policy—an issue that has recently received media attention, in part due to North Carolina having the third highest rate and fourth highest number of K-12 school suspensions in the nation. Addressing the issue is a priority for legislators, education leaders, and a range of other stakeholders because of the impact suspension has on academic achievement and future employment.

Seminar attendees included legislators, legislative staff, executive branch officials, representatives of child- and family-serving nonprofit agencies, Department of Public Instruction representatives, researchers, school board members, legal experts, and college students. Attendees were highly invested in the topic and engaged in a spirited discussion about how they might address the challenging issue of school suspension. As with all N.C. Family Impact Seminars, this one was in response to policymaker interest and sought to highlight what the research says about a current issue, as well as giving recommendations for possible policy action.

Presenters provided participants with research and policy evidence on school suspension and offered recommendations for possible policy and practice enhancements. Presentations covered:

- The importance of examining school suspension
- The legal issues that frame suspension policy
- The data on suspension policy from 14 southern states
- The research evidence on the effects of suspension and alternatives to suspension
- North Carolina data on the nature of suspension and its effects
- Possible policy approaches for addressing the suspension problem.

Before reviewing the seminar highlights, it is useful to briefly review the nature of suspension in North Carolina. There are multiple types of suspension, including short-term (up to 10 days), long-term (over 10 days), and 365-day suspension. Misbehaviors that could lead to short-term suspension are highly variable across districts, including (but not limited to) repeated violations of cell phone use, chronically disruptive behaviors, gambling, distribution of prescription or non-prescription drugs, fighting, bullying, horseplay, and altering report cards (i.e., falsifying information). More serious and repeated misbehaviors lead to long-term suspensions and include such behaviors as physical assault causing serious injury, theft, breaking and entering, sexual activity, alcohol or drug use, refusal to allow a search of possessions, and gang activity. Misbehaviors that lead to 365-day suspension may include possession of a firearm, physical assault causing serious injury to a student or school personnel, use of a controlled substance, and communicating a bomb or terrorist threat.

Districts must have an appeals policy and must have an alternative education setting that may be used for suspended students. Districts decide whether a suspended student will receive the alternative education option. Some alternative education programs include activities to alleviate the misbehaviors that lead to the suspension, in addition to academically-focused activities. The state has no figures on the percentage of suspended students who receive alternative placements.

**Seminar Highlights**

The seminar started with Jenni Owen, director of policy initiatives at the Center for Child and Family Policy (CCFP), noting the importance of examining school suspension from both research and policy perspectives. Owen highlighted the...
challenges that policymakers face, especially the challenges of meeting the needs of students, schools, and communities while also infusing disciplinary approaches with evidence-based practices. She noted that these challenges are especially complex, given that resources are limited and that reconciling statewide standards with desires to allow local control over practices is a formidable task. Owen suggested that suspension policies should have minimum standards while also being flexible, allowing for a range of evidence-based options to address individual student needs. To do this, she recommended building on existing community partnerships as well as forging new ones.

Ann McColl, a practicing attorney focusing on school law and a faculty member at the UNC School of Government, summarized the legal aspects of suspension that frame policy and practice. She gave details on several key issues including the responsibilities of maintaining safe school environments, of ensuring the accountability of school personnel in maintaining school safety, of providing professional development to school personnel, and of providing an array of mechanisms to address the unique behavioral needs of students.

To contextualize the suspension policy and practices of North Carolina, Joel Rosch, senior research scholar and policy liaison at CCFP, discussed policies and practices from 14 southern states. He emphasized that state and local policy is crucial to understanding the nature of suspension. Rosch noted that some states require that alternative learning opportunities be provided to students while they are suspended.

After discussing the state of suspension in North Carolina, Anne-Marie Iselin, research scientist at CCFP, reviewed the research evidence on school suspension and alternatives to suspension. She reported that the evidence suggests that suspension has more negative than positive effects on students and schools. Iselin commented that research suggests that alternatives to suspension should be used as frequently as possible. She highlighted that suspension rates are related to factors that cut across and interact with student, teacher, administrative, institutional, and community characteristics. Iselin concluded by saying that research supports school-wide practices that are positive, collaborative, consistent, and sensitive to individual student needs.

Clara Muschkin, assistant research professor of public policy studies, followed with a discussion of data from the North Carolina Education Research Data Center, which she directs. She commented that there has been an increase in the use of short-term suspension and a decrease in the use of long-term suspension over time. The use of suspension, however, varies drastically across school districts. Muschkin highlighted that the increased use of suspension is strongly related to (1) decreased student achievement, (2) decreased student progression within grade level, and (3) increased probability of dropping out of school. She suggested that policies aimed at reducing suspension should evaluate both cross-school and cross-district characteristics, in addition to evaluating student characteristics. She concluded by noting that academic support is often a necessary component of successful policy for reducing suspension use.

The seminar concluded with a lively discussion among presenters and participants who asked important questions about a range of suspension issues, such as tracking suspension data across the state, and whether there are models of promising alternatives to suspension that could be replicated district- or state-wide.
POLICY

Getting a Handle on Suspension  
by Jenni Owen and Heidi Carter

“School’s out for the summer” was the happy refrain for most K-12 students across North Carolina last June. But for students suspended for disciplinary infractions, school ended days, weeks, even months earlier.

Research shows that suspended students are more likely to drop out of school, to exhibit behavioral problems and to be involved with crime. Social deviance, isolation, poor academic achievement and unemployment are also more likely, making this everyone’s problem—taxpayers, employers and the public at large.

Recent data show North Carolina with the third-highest rate and fourth-highest number of suspensions in the nation. In 2008-09, more than 150,000 students in our state received short-term (up to 10 days) suspensions. Nearly 2,500 received suspensions of over 10 days. That’s a minimum of two weeks of school. In many cases, the same student received multiple suspensions.

With a new school year about to begin, the suspension problem deserves attention.

Consider these two hypothetical but realistic scenarios:

**Scenario 1:** Three students are each suspended for 25 days. As part of the suspension, one is required to spend two hours per day at a tutoring center. The second student must attend a full-time alternative school. And the third student is not required to do any educational activity while suspended.

This scenario highlights two challenges with the current suspension landscape. First, while school districts in North Carolina must have alternatives for suspended students, they are not required to offer those alternatives to every suspended student. Second, following current reporting practices, while all three students would be logged as long-term suspended students, the dramatic differences among their suspension requirements would not be reported.

**Scenario 2:** Two classrooms each have 10 girls. In classroom A, five girls were suspended one time during the school year. In classroom B, one girl was suspended five times. The problem this scenario illustrates is that in both cases, the suspension rate for girls is reported as 50 percent, even though one classroom had five out of 10 girls suspended, and the other had only one.

Policymakers and education leaders are grappling with what to do about the “suspension problem.” But how can they develop sound policy when scenarios like these lose their differences when officially reported? Strategies might focus on an entire class when the problem involves only a few students. Conversely, one might assume from reports that a few students are responsible for most of the bad behavior, when in fact it involves many students.

Policies and strategies for addressing high rates of suspension can be misguided because of misinterpreted data.

What should education and policy leaders do?

At the state policy level, revised reporting guidelines could include details of infractions and their consequences to differentiate among them more specifically, thereby painting a more realistic picture of the suspension problem from which policy can be developed.

At the school level, innovative alternatives to suspension are possible.

In Durham, Southwest Elementary is using a new strategy that had a huge impact in its first year. As an alternative to suspension, students continue to attend class but serve after-school detention for as many days as they would have been suspended. If parents decline this alternative, the student is suspended.

Parents have opted for suspension over detention only twice. Southwest has seen a 75 percent drop in suspensions and roughly a 50 percent decrease in the number of students committing offenses that would merit suspension. As principal Ari Cohen says, “The best thing for children is to stay in school, not to be at home missing days of instruction. The detention alternative is not only keeping students in school, but we think it is also preventing many behavioral infractions from occurring in the first place.”

Ideally, schools, families and communities work together to prevent suspension through strong partnerships, effective positive behavior support programs and services for students and families. We endorse consequences that are appropriate and reformative for problem behaviors, but we believe alternatives exist that could decrease suspensions and the negative outcomes associated with them.

Cohen’s approach is one alternative. Another is a sanction where students perform a needed service to the school or the community at-large. Business and nonprofit leaders—students’ future employers—could be enlisted to offer other settings for productive and educational “punishments.”

A district may not have enough alternative education opportunities for every suspended student. But with a new school year about to begin, one thing is clear: suspension to idleness—forced truancy—should not be an option. With innovative alternatives to suspension, more students will truly be able to say, “School’s out for the summer.”

Heidi Carter is vice chair of the Durham Public Schools Board of Education; Jenni Owen is the director of policy initiatives at Duke’s Center for Child and Family Policy. Both are parents of students in the Durham Public Schools.

Last spring, Elizabeth Ananat, assistant professor of public policy and economics and faculty fellow of the Center for Child and Family Policy, was in the middle of her yearlong sabbatical at the Brookings Institution when an unexpected call came. She was asked to serve as a senior economist for the White House Council of Economic Advisers for three months.

The council’s three members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, and they are supported by six senior economists and a group of junior staffers. The senior economists usually serve for a year; however, the early departure of an economist left a three-month gap that needed to be filled. A common expression among White House employees, Ananat reports, is that each agency is running “a relay race where we’re always looking for fresh legs.”

Beginning on April 15, 2010, Ananat stepped into the relay carrying the portfolio for labor, education and welfare. By her third day, she was preparing a briefing for the president. “It was a steep learning curve,” Ananat said.

Among her responsibilities was working with the chair of the council, Christy Romer, and others to prepare the monthly employment memo, which reports the growth in the number of jobs in the U.S. since the previous month. The day before release of the memo all communication about it had to be done on secure lines, so that no information would leak and affect the stock market. A hard copy would be delivered to the president in the evening, prior to the release of the data to the media the next morning.

Ananat also represented the White House in an interdepartmental working group tasked with developing a new set of questions for the Current Population Survey about “nontraditional education,” such as classes required by employers, certification programs, and training conducted by community colleges and for-profit colleges.

“We don’t know much about these programs, what’s out there and what is effective in helping people increase their employability and their wages,” she said. Collecting this data will allow researchers to examine how such programs help with economic mobility. Council member Cecilia Rouse pushed to establish the group, which is led by the Department of Education’s Institute of Educational Sciences and involves IES Director John Easton. (Easton gave the Center’s Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture on September 22.)

The pace of the job was intense. When a question came to her, Ananat often had only a few hours to provide the answer. She rarely left the office before 7 p.m., and then would continue to work on her Blackberry during her Metro commute and after she arrived home. In spite of the demanding schedule, Ananat found the job rewarding.

“It was a very satisfying feeling that you are changing the conversation, that the things you know matter,” she said. “This is the most evidence-based administration ever seen in D.C. People care about having the best possible information. It’s a great environment for policy researchers.”

The experience will inform her teaching this fall. She can now say to her students, “Here’s why you need this tool.” For instance, when she needed to discover how many jobs proposed funding would save, the programming language Stata, which is taught in Sanford’s statistics courses, helped her analyze the data. Data memo writing and documentation skills are crucial, “so you can explain your conclusions clearly to an audience that doesn’t have economic training.” It also provides fresh motivation for her own research, she said.

Now she knows that “for every topic I study there are people waiting to hear the answer.”

Jackie Ogburn is a communications specialist in the Sanford School of Public Policy.
three years ago, Jenni Owen found herself in Wentworth, South Africa, a small community outside of Durban, on a day visit as part of a larger trip through South Africa as an Eisenhower Fellow. The community of Wentworth and the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and families Owen met during her visit remained in her thoughts after returning to Duke and her position as director of policy initiatives and associate director for policy and translation at the Center for Child and Family Policy.

Through funding from DukeEngage, Owen has developed a program for Duke students in Wentworth that ties some aspects of the Center’s work to on-the-ground service and learning. This past summer marks Owen’s first year as director of the DukeEngage program in Wentworth, South Africa. Under Owen’s lead, nine Duke students spent eight weeks living with families, serving with local organizations, and immersing themselves in the community.

For many reasons, the community of Wentworth faces unique challenges, which were evident to Owen during her first visit. Pollution associated with local industry has had a significant impact on residents’ health. As an economically diverse community, there are areas where residents live comfortably but also areas of extreme poverty. Wentworth is also distinct as it was initially populated almost exclusively by “coloured” South Africans. Owen identified multiple community partners that welcomed additional support to address the many pressing and diverse issues facing the area.

DukeEngage seemed the perfect vehicle for putting that support into place. The program empowers students to address critical human needs through immersive service, in the process transforming students, advancing the University’s educational mission, and providing meaningful assistance to communities in the U.S. and abroad.

The Wentworth program focuses on child and family issues, and Owen hopes to connect the program more directly with the Center’s work in the future. During this first year, students worked with a variety of community partners on issues such as domestic violence, education and youth leadership. Although students were in Wentworth for only a short time, they contributed meaningfully to the community. The students’ many projects included:

- Succeeding with the request for one organization’s first computer donation from a local corporation
- Assisting with direct service activities in children’s homes and local schools
- Writing grant proposals
- Aiding the development of a new awards program to highlight the good work of local nongovernmental organizations and businesses.

In addition, students participated in group service projects, including preparing and transforming a trash-strewn plot of land into a productive garden for community members who were seeking assistance through a domestic violence initiative.

Participating in a DukeEngage program is more than just an opportunity for students to engage and serve communities. Over the course of the program, Owen observed that students became better at viewing challenges that arose as part of the cultural learning experience rather than seeing these differences as inconveniences. In addition to learning about and contributing to the Wentworth community, multiple students expressed that the DukeEngage experience had a significant impact on their lives, whether influencing their cultural perceptions and understanding, their future coursework and involvement at Duke or their long-term professional plans.

Owen intends to run the program again next year. She remarked, “I’m hopeful that we will continue to grow the relationships with the Wentworth community leaders and local NGOs and that this will yield possibilities for additional engagement and collaborative research with the Center and possibly elsewhere at Duke.”

Owen acknowledges that without the generosity of the Wentworth community, the DukeEngage program there would not have been possible. To learn more about DukeEngage or this program, please visit http://dukeengage.duke.edu/immersion-programs/international-programs/south-africa-durban.

Emily Durham is a program coordinator in the DukeEngage office.
Administration of the University-Based Child and Family Policy Consortium Moved to Duke

The members of the University-based Child and Family Policy Consortium consist of centers and programs housed in universities across the country that represent the social, behavioral and health sciences fields, including anthropology, economics, human development, nursing, pediatrics, political science, psychology, public health and sociology. The consortium, which began in 2002, fosters scientific collaboration around child and family policy issues, cross-disciplinary undergraduate and graduate training, and effective translation between research, practice and policy issues.

Although Jenni Owen, the Center’s director of policy initiatives, has been the part-time director of the consortium since 2008, Deborah Phillips of the psychology department and Public Policy Institute at Georgetown has, until recently, managed the administration of consortium membership and finances. On July 1, the administrative and financial management of the consortium moved to Duke’s Center for Child and Family Policy.

“The Consortium brings together over 30 leading university centers for child and family policy. It is an honor, a responsibility and a reflection of the strong leadership provided by Jenni Owen to have it based at Duke,” commented Ken Dodge, director of the Center. Center staff working with Owen in managing activities includes Barbara Pollock who oversees finances, Shannon Smith who handles administrative duties such as correspondence and scheduling, and Joy Stutts, who assists with the Web site - http://www.childpolicyuniversityconsortium.com/.

Says Consortium steering committee member Phillips, “As one of the founders, with Professor Dodge, of the Consortium, I’ve been thrilled to see the growth in its capacity to have a substantive and lasting impact, not only on the field of child development and social policy but also for the state and federal policymakers who make decisions every day that affect the well-being of our nation’s children and families.”

New Researchers Join Center on July 1, 2010

Research Scientist Ben Goodman is working with Center Director Ken Dodge on the Durham Family Initiative (funded by The Duke Endowment), as well as the NIDA-funded project entitled “The Development and Prevention of Substance Use Problems.” His primary responsibilities involve leading research examining the implementation of the Durham Connects program, as well as subsequent evaluations of its impact on Durham families. Prior to joining the Center for Child and Family Policy, Goodman was a postdoctoral scholar at Penn State’s Prevention Research Center, working with Dr. Mark Greenberg on a longitudinal study of child development among families living in predominantly low-income, rural communities. Goodman completed his Ph.D. in human development and family studies at Penn State in December 2009. His research focuses broadly on the influence of stress and support on the quality of parent-child relationships and parents’ own well-being, including the factors that contribute to fathers’ relationships with their infants and young children; the study of family processes among low-income and underrepresented populations; and the use of person-oriented methodologies to examine patterns of family dynamics and parent-child relationships.

Amy Schulting is a newly hired research scientist working with Ken Dodge and Phil Cook on the TPRC-funded pilot project entitled “Truancy: Social costs, causes, and prevention.” The truancy pilot project has been utilizing Fast Track data to better understand both the patterns and correlates of school truancy over time, with a particular emphasis on understanding early elementary truancy. In addition to earning her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Duke in May 2010, Schulting also earned the child development certificate. Her dissertation was entitled “The Kindergarten Home Visit Project: A Kindergarten Transition Intervention Study.” She will be working from her home office in Minnesota.
New Transdisciplinary Prevention Research Center (TPRC) Executive Committee Members Named

Two Duke faculty members have joined the TPRC executive committee: CCFP Faculty Fellow Phil Cook, who is senior associate dean for faculty and research, ITT/Sanford Professor of Public Policy, professor of economics and sociology; and Kathy Sikkema, professor of psychology and neuroscience, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences and director of the Duke Center for AIDS Research, Social and Behavioral Sciences Core. Cook and Sikkema join current executive committee members Phil Costanzo, Jane Costello, Ken Dodge, Rick Hoyle and Tim Strauman. Committee members Linda Burton and Terrie Moffitt are on sabbatical this year.

Funding Awards

Congratulations to Center Faculty Fellow Elizabeth Ananat who was recently named a William T. Grant Scholar. Ananat is an assistant professor of public policy and economics. The William T. Grant Scholars Program supports promising early-career researchers from diverse disciplines who have demonstrated success in conducting high-quality research and are seeking to further develop and broaden their expertise. Four to six scholars are named each year. Ananat received $350,000 for her five-year project entitled, “Economic and Social Determinents of the Educational, Occupational, and Residential Choices of Young Adults.”

The Parenting Across Cultures project (PI Jennifer Lansford, Investigator Ken Dodge, Research Coordinator Ann Skinner) recently received funding from the Jacobs Foundation via a research prize awarded to Laurence Steinberg, Ph.D. of Temple University. These new funds will be used to conduct an assessment of judgment, decision-making and psychosocial development in China, Colombia, India, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand and the United States. The assessment includes questions about several aspects of development that affect the choices young people make, including choices to engage in risky and antisocial behavior. These aspects of development include impulsivity, foresight, sensation-seeking, planning and reward salience. The results will have important policy implications with respect to issues such as making judgments about the criminal responsibility of juvenile offenders and understanding the age at which individuals develop the capacities to be held fully responsible for their actions.
Funding Awards Continued

Avshalom Caspi and Terrie Moffitt, Center faculty fellows and professors of psychology and neuroscience at Duke, received $488,916 for a project funded by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The major goal of the four-year project entitled “Social Inequality and Children’s Mental Health (The E-risk Longitudinal Twin Study)” is to explore how social inequalities influence children’s development. The research is being conducted on three levels of analysis: neighborhood, family and individual.

Desiree Murray, CCFP faculty fellow and assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, and CCFP Associate Director and Research Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience David Rabiner received $933,878 (direct costs) from the Institute of Educational Sciences/Department of Education for a project entitled “Effects of Classroom Management Training on Early Learning Skills.” This four-year project, which began in July 2009, is a randomized, controlled evaluation of the Incredible Years Teacher Training Program on K-2 students’ reading and math skills and social and emotional competence.

Desiree Murray also is implementing the Incredible Years Teacher Training Program in one of the inner-city Durham schools. Funding for her consultant work comes from Communities in Schools.

Clinical psychology graduate student Shelley Alonso-Marsden, who is mentored by Center Director Ken Dodge, recently received four years of funding for a diversity supplement on Dodge’s award entitled “Development and Prevention of Substance Abuse Problems.” Alonso-Marsden will conduct studies of the processes through which early social experiences lead to healthy or maladaptive outcomes for children, using the data sets from the Child Development Project and the Fast Track Project. The funding also will support her training in developmental psychopathology toward the goal of leading an academic research career.

Grad Student Selected for Fellowship at Carolina Consortium on Human Development

Psychology graduate student Sandra Nay McCourt has been selected for a one-year appointment as a predoctoral fellow of the Carolina Consortium on Human Development (CCHD). Sandra is mentored by Center Director Ken Dodge and is studying developmental processes that underlie maladjustment or resilience in response to early traumatic experiences. The predoctoral fellowship program is unique in that it provides formal support (i.e., NICHD-sponsored fellowships) for one year in the final years of doctoral training. This is an optimal point for involvement in the program because, after several years of study, graduate students are well prepared for the undertaking, and they have time for the intense participation of CCHD’s demanding program.

Nay McCourt
Recent Publications


Gallagher, R., Abikoff, H., Wells, K., **Murray, D.W.** (Nov., 2010). Pushing the Envelope in ADHD Treatment: Testing Promising Psychosocial Interventions for Organizational Skills and Social Behavior. Symposium accepted to the annual meeting of the Association of Behavior and Cognitive Therapy, San Francisco, CA.


Anna Gassman-Pines, professor of public policy and Center faculty fellow, made a presentation at UNC-Greensboro, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, on March 26. The presentation was entitled, “Daily associations between low-income mothers’ nonstandard work schedules and family outcomes.” The study investigated low-income mothers’ daily, nighttime and weekend work and family outcomes. Sixty-one mothers of preschool-aged children reported daily on work hours, mood, mother-child interaction and child behavior for two weeks (N = 724 person-days). Although nighttime and weekend work are both nonstandard schedules, results showed adverse associations of working nighttime hours on family outcomes – more negative mood and mother-child interactions; less positive child behavior – but no relationship between weekend work and family outcomes. The study is currently in press in *Family Relations*.

In April, CCFP Faculty Fellow Jennifer Lansford delivered a keynote address, “Managing Behavior Problems in Today’s Schools,” at a conference called “Education in a Changing World” in Zarqa, Jordan. Lansford’s address focused on risks associated with aggregating high-risk youth in education settings and promising alternatives that do not aggregate high-risk youth. The conference brought together scholars, practitioners and policymakers from throughout the Middle East to discuss evidence-based best practices in education. In July 2003, Jordan became a leader in education reform in the Middle East when the Ministry of Education launched a major initiative called Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy to achieve sustainable learning outcomes relevant to a knowledge economy. Four major components are part of this broad reform: (1) Reorienting education policy objectives and strategies and reforming governance and administrative systems; (2) Transforming education programs and practices to achieve learning outcomes relevant to a knowledge economy; (3) Supporting the provision of quality physical learning environments; and (4) Promoting school readiness through expanded early childhood education.

CCFP Faculty Fellow and Assistant Research Professor of Public Policy Studies Clara Muschkin attended the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, held in Denver, Colorado, April 30-May 4. She presented a paper (co-authored with Audrey Beck) entitled “Changing Contours of the North Carolina Public Schools: The Influence of Immigration on Enrollments of Non-Hispanic White Students” in the paper session entitled “Immigration, Migration and Language Policies: Issues in the Education of Latino Students.” The paper focused on the fact that researchers, policymakers and parents share a perception that school composition is a major influence on school quality. An important source of change in school populations is the withdrawal of white and more affluent families in reaction to perceived reallocation of resources toward limited English speakers and a general devaluation of social capital in schools. This study focused on North Carolina, which experienced an increase of over 66 percent in the school-age population of Latino origin between 2000 and 2006, as well as large increases in the proportion of students from poor families, many of whom are Latino. Longitudinal administrative data are used to estimate the impact of immigration on racial, ethnic and socioeconomic composition within and across schools.

The Duke University School Research Partnership Office held an end-of-semester dinner on May 4 during which poster presentations were made by Duke undergraduates on their consultation work during the 2009-10 academic year with Durham Public Schools (DPS) administrators, principals and board members. Other highlights of the evening included a presentation by William (Sandy) Darity on racialized tracking in schools; a discussion of current research priorities by Heidi Coleman and Jeanette Avery of DPS, including areas of potential collaboration with Duke researchers; and remarks by Durham Board of Education member Heidi Carter regarding future DPS-Duke partnership possibilities.

On May 6, Research Scientist Lisa Berlin was an invited discussant at the Frank Porter Graham Institute’s meeting to launch its infant/toddler child care initiative, where she spoke on “Regulating the Hothouse or Applying What We Know about Child Characteristics to the Development of a Model for Center-Based Infant/Toddler Care.” Berlin’s remarks followed those of Jack Bates (University of Indiana), who stressed the importance of child care providers using information about infant temperament to tailor their caregiving behaviors. In addition to agreeing with Bates’ points, Berlin emphasized the importance of understanding caregivers’ characteristics, which may influence their flexibility and receptivity to different infant qualities. Some caregivers, that is, may be more able than
others to tailor their caregiving behaviors to various infant temperaments. Berlin also discussed her own, related, work on maternal characteristics affecting their responsiveness to Early Head Start services. Berlin found that mothers’ initial attachment styles (orientations about forming close relationships) influenced the effects of the Early Head Start program on their parenting behaviors, such that there were more positive program effects for mothers who began the program with less initial attachment avoidance or attachment anxiety. This research is forthcoming in a special issue of the journal, *Attachment and Human Development*, on “Attachment Processes in Early Head Start Families,” guest-edited by Berlin.

Center Faculty Fellow Jennifer Lansford made a presentation entitled “The Role of Personality in Pathways of Peer Relationships from Childhood to Young Adulthood” at the biennial meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (ISSBD), held in July 2010 in Lusaka, Zambia. This presentation was authored by Lansford, Ken Dodge, Tianyi Yu, Greg Pettit, and Jack Bates and addressed the question of how personality characteristics interact with cultural factors in leading to behavioral development. Lansford also presented an invited paper entitled “Parents’ discipline strategies and cognition about discipline in nine countries” that used data from the Parenting Across Cultures project to describe links among parents’ use of different discipline techniques, parents’ and children’s beliefs related to discipline, and children’s adjustment. The meeting was attended by child development researchers from across the world. Other Duke attendees included Center Faculty Fellows Avshalom Caspi and Terrie Moffitt.


Mission
Bridging the gap between research and public policy to improve the lives of children and families.

Vision
The Center for Child and Family Policy is working to solve problems facing children in contemporary society by bringing together scholars from various disciplines with policy makers and practitioners, in an effort to improve the lives of children and families. We are dedicated to teaching, research and policy engagement and focused on the areas of early childhood education, education policy and adolescent problem behavior.