Joan Lombardi, a nationally recognized early childhood expert, gave researchers, faculty, and community practitioners valuable insight into new directions in early childhood programs during her Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture visit March 1 and 2.

Lombardi is deputy assistant secretary and inter-departmental liaison for Early Childhood Development for the Administration for Children and Families under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

More than 100 people attended her public lecture, “Early Childhood 2011: Policies for the Next Generation,” during which Lombardi traced the history of early childhood programs such as Head Start and predicted the direction of future programs. She described how the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is focusing its efforts on providing programs to support strong families, early education, healthy environments, and good nutrition for young children.

According to Lombardi, the programs being provided by the ACF are even more important today, as high unemployment rates have put additional stress on families, and child poverty rates continue to rise. In addition, the change in the nature and schedule of parents’ work has resulted in more children spending longer amounts of time in child care; furthermore, the geographical distance between generational family members makes it difficult for young families to access the support they need to be successful. All of these factors are having a profound effect on families, but Lombardi is optimistic about the future.

Her key message to those who work to improve early childhood development is that the course of development can be altered in the early childhood years. “What’s exciting to me right now, despite how difficult the times are, is that we have a lot of people saying ‘learning begins at birth.’ And that’s a major achievement,” she stated. “We’ve got to focus on the period prenatal to eight and beyond. We’re saying very clearly, ‘Early childhood is not eight weeks, it’s not a year, it’s not preschool.’ We’ve really got to focus on the whole period to make the kinds of lasting changes that we want to make.”

Continued on page 3
Dear Colleagues,

We have focused this past season on early childhood policy and programs. Our Center activities exemplify our goals of spanning from research to policy and practice, and then back again to research and teaching.

In March, we were delighted to host Joan Lombardi through our Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture Series. Joan is the deputy assistant secretary and inter-departmental liaison for early childhood programs for the Administration of Children and Families and one of the nation’s leading experts on public policy toward young children. She energized an overflow audience by highlighting the central role that early childhood is playing in President Obama’s policy planning.

During this same period, Professor Helen “Sunny” Ladd, Professor Clara Muschkin, and I made public the findings from our ongoing evaluation of North Carolina’s two major early childhood programs, Smart Start and More at Four. These programs were designed to improve the kindergarten readiness of children, especially children at risk. We have found that financial investment in each of these programs has led to important positive benefits in education. As I write, the future of these programs is being debated hotly by the North Carolina Legislature as it tries to reduce the state deficit.

On January 1st of this year, an early childhood intervention that has been developed, implemented, and evaluated by our Center, Durham Connects, was locally adopted for universal implementation. The program is led by Jeannine Sato with generous funding from The Duke Endowment. Now, all Durham residents whose babies are born in Duke and Durham Regional Hospitals are being offered this program that will be administered through the Durham County Health Department. Our evaluation of the program’s long-term impact on families is being led by Center Research Scientist Ben Goodman with funding from the Pew Charitable Trust.

At the end of March, the University-Based Child and Family Policy Consortium, headquartered at our Center and directed by our own Jenni Owen, held a forum at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development focused on early childhood policy. The keynote speaker, Jack Shonkoff, authored the National Academy of Sciences report Neurons to Neighborhoods that has fueled support for early childhood interventions.

The list of ongoing Center activities relevant to early childhood policy is much longer than can be described here. Lisa Berlin is generating attachment theory-based interventions and evaluating the impact of Early Head Start. Anna Gassman-Pines is studying how Mexican immigrants’ work settings affect the relationship with their young children, through funding from the Foundation for Child Development. Duke undergraduate students who are affiliated with the Center have immersed themselves in ambitious cross-discipline research. We have a team of scientists (Christina Christopoulos, Elizabeth Snyder, Nicole Lawrence, Katie Rosanbalm, and David Rabiner) examining mental health and educational interventions for young children. Professor Jane Costello’s longitudinal study of families in the western part of North Carolina continues to follow children from early life into adulthood. The list could go on.

Clearly, we have chosen to emphasize early childhood in our strategic planning. As we go forward, we will continue this emphasis and will benefit tremendously from the generous financial support for these efforts from the J. B. and M. K. Pritzker Family Foundation. We are more than grateful, and we look forward to the future.

Kenneth A. Dodge
Director, Center for Child and Family Policy
William McDougall Professor of Public Policy and Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience
At the local level in Durham, North Carolina, the East Durham Children’s Initiative (EDCI) has been working hard to make the kinds of lasting changes Lombardi advocates. The EDCI program, which is modeled after the Harlem Children’s Zone, is striving to provide a continuum of services to ensure that Durham children are healthy and successful from cradle to college or career.

Leaders from EDCI had the opportunity to outline their progress with Lombardi during her visit to Duke. “The meeting was a tremendous experience,” said EDCI Director David Reese. “Our community and EDCI were extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to communicate the intentions of our work within the early childhood and elementary school venues. The meeting provided an affirmation that we are on the right track as we work to change the lives of our youngest community members, as well as how to enhance the EDCI cradle-to-career model.”

EDCI Co-Founder Barker French agreed: “Dr. Lombardi’s experience with programs like the Harlem Children’s Zone makes her uniquely qualified to advise us as we roll out our comprehensive service plan in Durham this spring.”

Connecting child policy efforts with national experts is one goal of the Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture Series which began in 2006. The Center for Child and Family Policy sponsors the series to enhance the intellectual community among Duke University faculty and research scientists as well as practitioners and community members.

The programs being provided by the ACF are even more important today, as high unemployment rates have put additional stress on families and child poverty rates continue to rise. agencies’ commitment to working together for young children,” Berlin said.

This is, in fact, the first time an inter-agency person at the federal level has been tasked with linking the Department of Education with other departments, including Agriculture and the Department of Defense.

“I’m always embarrassed that my title is so long,” added Lombardi, “but I hope that it’s a metaphor for what is happening. We’re trying to focus not just on effective programs, but on strong and engaged families.”

Lombardi also discussed a new federal program called Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting, part of the Affordable Care Act, which will make $1.5 billion available to states for evidence-based home visiting programs for pregnant women and children birth to age five. The home visiting programs may focus on maternal and child health, child development, school readiness, child maltreatment, parenting skills, reductions in crime or domestic violence, or promotion of family economic self-sufficiency.

She pointed out that Durham residents are already served by a similar program, Durham Connects, which provides a newborn nurse visit to every child born in Durham County. The program is managed by the Durham County Health Department and the Center’s Durham Family Initiative.

“It’s fantastic to have had the opportunity to sit down and discuss EDCI and Durham Connects with Joan Lombardi,” said Center Director Ken Dodge. “This Sulzberger visit was such a success because we were able to link community programs, researchers, students, and faculty with someone who has 30 years of experience in the field, much of it at the federal level. Accessing that vast amount of experience was invaluable.”

Lombardi has made significant contributions in the area of early childhood over the past 30 years as an innovative leader and policy advisor to national and international organizations, as a public servant, and as an active member of numerous boards and institutions.

Lombardi was founding chair of the Birth to Five Policy Alliance, served 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. ▲

Erika Layko is the Center’s meeting and events coordinator.
For the past 15 years, U.S. education policy has experienced an unprecedented amount of attention focused on standardized achievement tests. States adopted elaborate testing and assessment programs to serve as a springboard for improving the public schools, and the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* further increased the emphasis on using test scores to assess school progress. An area that remains poorly understood, however, involves what connections these test scores have to the important outcomes that signal or influence the accumulation of human capital, such as high school graduation, post-secondary education, labor market participation, early childbearing, delinquency, and criminal activity.

Supported by a grant from the Smith Richardson Foundation, faculty from the Sanford School of Public Policy and the Center for Child and Family Policy (CCFP) established the Beyond Test Scores (BTS) working group with the goal of examining these connections. The working group included a dozen scholars with ties to several different social science disciplines. For the past two years, a number of small teams within the larger working group worked on specific research projects, but they also continued to meet regularly as a full group to discuss the research and its policy implications. Convener Charles Clotfelter observed, “In the 30 years I have been at Duke, this is the largest group of scholars I have ever been part of who were working together on such closely related research topics.”

Because they were able to access comprehensive, statewide public school data from the CCFP’s North Carolina Education Research Data Center, these groups of cross-disciplinary researchers were able to link public school student records with other administrative records; for example, records from the North Carolina Community College System or the North Carolina Department of Corrections. Connecting these two streams of data enabled them to explore topics, including the effect of North Carolina plant closings on the educational progress of students; the connection between level of education and later criminal activity; the enrollment and success of students in community colleges; and the effects of using different policies for tracking student outcomes.

While the speakers represented a unique sampling of disciplines, attendees were also from diverse backgrounds: they included sociologists, economists, professors from psychology/neuroscience, economists, and political scientists. These researchers presented findings that demonstrated how factors other than test scores can influence student achievement. Richard Murnane, an economist from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, provided the keynote talk, discussing findings of several studies, including his research on the impact that exit examination requirements have on the probability that economically disadvantaged students graduate from high school. Rashmita Mistry, associate professor at UCLA’s Department of Education, and Aprile Benner, a postdoctoral fellow from the Population Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin, shared their joint research on how and why some at-risk adolescents defy the odds and excel academically beyond expectations. Jens Ludwig, a professor at the University of Chicago’s School of Social Service Administration, discussed results of a specific school-based intervention designed to increase non-academic skills.

Once the various investigations were completed, the BTS working group invited multi-disciplinary Duke and non-Duke researchers to attend a November 2010 conference hosted by the Sanford School of Public Policy, in cooperation with the Center for Child and Family Policy. Representing a broad range of disciplines, the presenters shared research findings that demonstrated how factors other than test scores can influence student achievement.
An economist might not be the first person one would expect to help the federal Department of Education hash out a key aspect of the upcoming reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). But as Thomas Nechyba, Duke economics professor and Center for Child and Family Policy faculty fellow, explains, over the past 15 years economists have been increasingly sought out to explore the relationship between competition and school choice and to assess accountability programs related to NCLB. “Economists are involved in education policy because schools function in an economic environment, and who gets to go to which school is determined by economic factors,” says Nechyba. “The other reason is that economists are pretty good at analyzing data. Lots of micro-economists look at the data that the North Carolina Education Research Data Center (NCERDC) collects and try to tease out how incentives are changing the behavior of principals, teachers, parents, and students.”

Nechyba is serving on a Brookings Institution panel, one of four convened to examine different elements of federal education policy. His panel has been examining the relationship between competition and school choice. In particular, the federal government would like recommendations on how the country’s most disadvantaged young citizens can access better education – either through expanded school choice or by incentivizing school improvement.

Nechyba’s enthusiasm for this challenge is apparent. “Public schools are not all the same. And there’s a reason they are not the same,” he says emphatically, clapping his hands and leaning forward. “It’s because of the link to the housing markets. The kids who are going to bad public schools are going there in large part because they don’t have another choice. The system of school assignment is still residence-based, and in that way it has absolutely boxed them in.”

Nechyba, who was Duke’s Scholar Teacher of the Year in 2007, speaks animatedly about how this panel proposed a framework that could ultimately improve the school options for those on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. “We know why there is no equality of opportunity in terms of schools. We have a pretty good idea of how to address it. And we have a way of addressing it that has appeal to a lot of people in terms of being able to raise the overall productivity of the entire school system.”

The panel is proposing that the link between a child’s home address and his/her assigned school be removed and a system of real, expanded school choice be introduced instead.
The “system of choice” will differ in every community. Some will include the nearest public schools, public schools across town and in the suburbs, charter schools, magnet schools, and parochial schools that have been incentivized to open up seats to non-parishioners. Vouchers might be offered, and virtual schooling might be adopted in some places.

This recommendation of an expanded system of choice was included in the panel’s report given to senate staffers who are crafting policy that will be incorporated into the reauthorization of NCLB. The idea of eliminating residence-based assignment to public schools and increasing competition by opening up a whole range of choices to all families “is not that radical of an idea anymore,” says Nechyba, “because it’s actually being done in some cities. Boston is doing it. New York is doing it. There are cities around the country that have experimented with this.”

Nechyba is quick to point out that every school and every district is different, and there is no “one size fits all” approach for improving all the schools in a district while expanding choice equally to all families. He emphasizes that “the federal government doesn’t want to dictate specifically how to increase choice but it could offer, in the spirit of Race to the Top, financial support for those schools and districts that are introducing innovations that create opportunities for lower-income kids through a more competitive environment that is less based on residential admissions.”

The panel’s report also determined that parents often don’t have easy access to useful information about the quality of schools in their districts. Based on a portal designed by the Department of Education that helps families determine which colleges their son or daughter might like to explore, the panel envisioned creating a portal that helps parents choose which K-12 schools would be best for their children. “In order for choice to work, there has to be a way for people to get the most important aspects of information in an extraordinarily complex world,” says Nechyba. “It’s not like the portal is going to tell them which school to go to. It’s going to give them a set of schools to look at, and, in the end, they are going to use the information in a very different way because they know their kids best.”

Nechyba acknowledges the impact that the lack of cooperation between Democrats and Republicans is having on policymaking. He expects there will only be a few things they will come together on over these next two years, but the issue of improving schools for the most disadvantaged children through expanded choice is something he believes should resonate in both parties. “Clearly, to the extent to which we associate concern about underprivileged kids having bad school choices with the left, this issue is squarely part of what this panel is trying to address. But it’s also addressing something – this sort of instinctive faith in markets – that is associated with the right; the idea that through empowering people to make choices, good things can happen. So there ought to be enough in there for everybody. And again, different communities can adjust it in so many ways.”

Nechyba has spent a considerable amount of time investigating specifically what happens to housing prices when the link between home address and school assignment is eliminated. He designed a model, “an imaginary world that lives on my computer,” and was able to show that if choice is introduced, “depressed housing values in bad public school areas should increase as you sever the link because people can live there now and not go to the bad public school. And housing prices that are inflated because of the presence of a good public school will fall because suddenly there is no particular reason to live there to go that school or any other school.”

The panel submitted its report in February 2010 but is continuing to meet. Not only have the panel members taken on the challenge of envisioning the design of an information portal, but they are now grappling with how to create an index that can effectively measure the amount of real choice in a particular district.

Nechyba is hopeful that policymakers will seriously discuss the panel’s recommendations. “Policy changes the world because it changes how people make choices. And when all that aggregates up, the world looks different than it did before,” he says, clapping his hands, conveying an underlying sense of optimism.

For Thomas Nechyba, who once considered being a school teacher, if the United States is going to move closer to what he calls “this American ideal of equality in schools,” it is going to take people with a wide range of viewpoints and diverse areas of expertise to engage in innovation, research, discussion, and further exploration into uncharted waters.

Suzanne Valdivia is the Center’s communications specialist.
Multidisciplinary Approaches to Contemporary Children’s Issues
(CCS 210SB/PubPol 210SB/Psy 210SB)

Instructor: Phil Costanzo, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience; Associate Director, Center for Child and Family Policy

This is a 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. This is the capstone course required for the Children in Contemporary Society certificate program. The 2010-11 Sulzberger/Levitan fellows also are enrolled in this course.

Multi-Method Approaches to Social and Policy Research
(PubPol 183/CCS 183)

Instructor: Jose Sandoval, Statistician

The overall aim of this course is to prepare students for independent research in the social sciences and public policy. Students examine the crucial steps involved in conducting social science research, including developing research questions and hypotheses, research designs, and methods of data analysis. This class helps students understand and critically evaluate the research of others and provides the tools students need in order to develop their own research projects. This course fulfills the research methods requirement for the Children in Contemporary Society certificate program.

Children in Contemporary Society (CCS 150/PubPol 124)
Instructor: Leslie Babinski, Research Scientist

Using an interdisciplinary approach, this course provides an overview of issues facing today’s youth, from childhood through adolescence. This course is required for students working on the Children in Contemporary Society certificate.
The Children in Contemporary Society (CCS) certificate enables undergraduate students to pursue a course of study in which they use a multidisciplinary approach to analyzing the issues facing families, children, and the society that is responsible for their development. The signature feature of the certificate program is the opportunity for students to engage in a one-on-one mentored research experience to study these issues.

According to Faculty Director Clara Muschkin, “The CCS certificate program has provided talented students the opportunity to pursue their interests in issues related to childhood in an integrated and multidisciplinary manner that was not previously available to undergraduates. We are very pleased with the high quality of CCS students’ research and look forward to learning of much continued success in their chosen careers.”

Please join us in congratulating this year’s graduating seniors who come from a variety of disciplines: economics, public policy studies, and environmental science and policy.

We asked them to tell us about the classes they have taken, their experience in the program, and their future plans:

**Rebecca Agostino** is an economics major from the Boston, Massachusetts area. She reports, “I first became interested in child and family policy after teaching summer school in New Orleans. Since then, I started an afterschool service learning program for middle school students in Durham, and I have taken a number of courses in CCS and public policy. Dr. Helen Ladd has been particularly instrumental in the development of my interest in child and family policy. As one of her research assistants, a former student in her school policy course, and her thesis advisee, I have had the opportunity to benefit from her extraordinary wealth of knowledge on the topic. She has mentored me over the past several years and helped me select the start of my career path – working with Teach for America next year in New York City. I particularly enjoyed Dr. Ladd’s *Schools and School Policy* course and Jenni Owen’s *Making Social Policy* class. My honors thesis, in the economics department, investigates the correlation between academic performance and the demolition of dilapidated public housing projects.”

**Kiah Pape** writes, “The Children in Contemporary Society certificate program provided me with the opportunity to focus my major (public policy studies) on policy issues that are of extreme interest to me. After spending a summer interning with DukeEngage at Grandfather Home for Children, a residential treatment center for abused and neglected kids, I became aware of the need for community or evidence-based programs that treat children and respond to social needs in times of economic hardship. Upon my return to Duke, I enrolled in a semester-long independent study with Dr. Joel Rosch, a research scholar in the Center for Child and Family Policy. My research focused on evidence-based programs that have been shown to be cost-effective alternatives to juvenile incarceration. Upon graduation, I plan to work with a local non-profit organization on issues pertaining to children and families in Durham through Duke’s PathWays Fellowship. The Fellowship lasts for a year and also involves intentional community living in downtown Durham, as well as coursework with the Duke Divinity School. Once I complete this fellowship year, I plan to get a master’s degree in social work and possibly a degree in law.”

**Sarah Safley** explains, “I’m unique in combining this certificate with the environmental science and policy major. My main interest is environmental education and the effect that a connection with nature has on people, children in particular. I am interested in more traditional child/family policy issues, especially early care and education. I joined the certificate program because the courses were really interesting, and I was excited about doing my own research. My research project, *Discovery Room Visitor Characteristics and Preferences: A Portrait of Engaging Non-formal Environmental Education*, is tied to my interest in non-formal education venues and how to improve their quality and maximize their educational potential. My advisor is Dr. Charlotte Clark from the Nicholas School. During my North Carolina Youth Advocacy and Involvement Office internship...”
with the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences, I conducted research in the Discovery Room, a hands-on room for inter-generational learning. My future plans include looking for a job in the environmental education field in a park or museum. I may also apply for the AmeriCorps TEACH Early Childhood Corps.”

Dana Weiner is a public policy major who is also working on the Markets and Management Studies certificate. She tells us, “The certificate program was the highlight of my undergraduate career. It has provided me with a unique perspective on broader policy issues, which I am presented with in my other classes. It has really allowed me to tailor my education in a way that has been meaningful for me. My research project mentor was Jenni Owen, and I am planning to enroll in law school in the fall. An elective I took for the certificate, Soc 150 Changing American Family, was the most amazing class I have taken at Duke. Dr. Linda Burton is an incredible woman, teacher, academic, researcher, and role model. Her course material was engaging and her teaching methods are some of the most motivating I have ever experienced. I took her class my freshman year and our relationship has continued throughout these four years. I know I will keep in touch with her even after I graduate.” ▲

Undergraduate Student Fellowships

Jacqueline Morris was the Center’s first undergraduate honors thesis student. She was a rising senior, majoring in psychology and public policy, when she passed away in a tragic car accident in her native Arizona in 2000. Her parents established the Jacqueline Anne Morris Memorial Foundation to support undergraduate students who, like their daughter, are “dynamic, bright, ambitious, and idealistic.”

The foundation has endowed a fellowship program to support students who are interested in conducting research in an area of child and family policy. Up to four awards are granted each year. Each student who is selected receives $500 to cover research-related expenses.

Congratulations to the 2010-2011 Morris Fellows:

- **Rebecca Agostino**, economics major, Children in Contemporary Society certificate
  **Project:** Impact of Hope VI Demolitions on Children in North Carolina
  **Mentor:** Charles Becker, research professor of economics

- **Miatta Echetebu**, psychology and history majors
  **Project:** Stretching the Scope: An Analysis of the Influence of Five Factors in African American Males’ Decision to Participate in Higher Education
  **Mentor:** David Rabiner, associate research professor of psychology and neuroscience; associate director, Center for Child and Family Policy

- **Anne Marie Gordon**, public policy and Spanish majors, education minor
  **Project:** Immigrant Transition Support in Durham Public Schools and Its Implications for Policy
  **Mentor:** Clara Muschkin, assistant research professor of public policy; director of the Center’s Undergraduate Education Program, the Children in Contemporary Society Certificate Program, and the North Carolina Education Research Data Center

- **Stephanie Kenick**, sociology major, Children in Contemporary Society certificate, Latina/o Studies in Global South certificate
  **Project:** The Effects of Adultification in Latino Immigrant Children through Language Acquisition
  **Mentor:** Linda Burton, James B. Duke professor of sociology; faculty fellow, Center for Child and Family Policy

- **Jenessa Malin**, psychology and neuroscience major, education minor, Latina/o Studies in Global South certificate
  **Project:** Gifted Ability Messages and Self-Handicapping
  **Mentor:** Lisa Linnenbrink-Garcia, assistant professor of psychology and neuroscience

- **Amanda Morrall**, public policy major, history and theater studies minors
  **Project:** The Effects of College Preparatory Programs on Interclass Mobility
  **Mentor:** William “Sandy” Darity, Arts and Sciences professor of public policy, professor of African and African American studies and economics; faculty fellow, Center for Child and Family Policy ▲
Durham Public Schools’ Strategic Plan Highlights Collaboration with Center

by Suzanne Valdivia

Durham Public Schools’ (DPS) new strategic plan underscores a growing collaboration with the Center for Child and Family Policy. Released in late January, the strategic plan lists six different strategic areas of focus, one being Communications and Partnerships. In that section, one of the strategies describes the commitment by DPS to “expand the current partnership with Duke’s Center for Child and Family Policy to conduct research and program evaluation of district initiatives.” The Center will work with DPS to effectively address specific challenges in a time of extremely constrained budgets.

Currently, Center scholars and some undergraduate students are leading a number of intervention programs and research studies with DPS support. In addition, DPS leaders regularly consult with Duke faculty members about programs and policies, such as reading and math learning, social behavior of high-risk children, and policies involving teacher recruitment.

“Much of our work deals with solving complex social problems that have multiple layers of determinants,” said DPS Board of Education member Heidi Carter. “We are very lucky to have in our own backyard resident experts on child policy issues and program evaluation…. Duke in turn can benefit from our relationship by learning about the research questions to which policymakers and administrators are seeking answers.”

Through Duke’s School Research Partnership projects, the Center matches an undergraduate student with a leader from DPS or another community agency who has identified a specific issue he/she would like the student to research in depth. Issues covered during past semesters have included the effect of school nutrition on student learning, alternatives to school suspension, and best practices for after-school tutoring programs.

Students benefit from direct interaction with school leaders including principals, Superintendent Eric Becoats, and Board of Education members.

“Not only have I enjoyed spending time with these young idealists, I have also depended on them for information that my board colleagues and I might not have had time to research and discover on our own,” Carter said. “I will use the information and recommendations they have prepared to design better programs and policies for our school system.”

Center Director Ken Dodge said faculty members are thrilled about the growing partnership with the school system. “DPS Board of Education members and administrative leadership have great vision, and we feel fortunate that they want to include our faculty members and students in the task of educating the children of Durham.”

Suzanne Valdivia is the Center’s communications specialist.

What’s New with Durham Connects?

Durham Connects Expands to Serve All Babies Born at Duke and Durham Regional Hospitals

Durham Connects hosted a celebratory lunch and press conference on January 4th at the Durham Public Library to mark the program’s expansion to provide nurse visits to all babies born at Duke or Durham Regional Hospitals in 2011 and their families. In place since 2008, Durham Connects has already conducted over 2,000 nurse visits to families of newborns, providing them with links to a range of important community resources. Of the total number of families that have received a referral to a community agency, 60 percent made contact with that agency.

Addressing the crowd, Commissioner Ellen Reckhow recognized the collaborative efforts of Durham agencies, the Center for Child and Family Policy, nurses, project staff, and volunteers, as well as the support from local government and The Duke Endowment for enabling the program to effectively reach many families and refer them to other community resources. “This is truly an example of a great public-private partnership,” said Reckhow. “This expansion will open up this village – this network – to all of our youngest citizens.”

Durham Connects Nurses to Deliver Library Cards during First Home Visit

Durham Connects nurses are adding even more to their new parent welcome bag starting this spring. In addition to helpful literature, a baby book, and gifts for the new parents, nurses will also be including a genuine Durham County Library card for each new baby, which parents can activate at any Durham County Library branch.

The team effort between Durham Connects and the Durham County Library is part of the library’s At Birth Card (ABC) Drive, which aims to promote early literacy and school readiness. “We want parents to know that it’s never too early to start reading to their child,” said Durham County Library’s Youth Services Administrator Karlene Fyffe.
This spring, eight Duke undergraduates are linking up with key community partners in Durham to examine specific issues in local policymaking. Through these projects, coordinated by Duke’s School Research Partnership Office, each student meets with his/her community partner to collaboratively refine the research question. “The process of working with a school principal or community leader to figure out how research can help inform decision-making is a terrific opportunity for students,” according to Leslie Babinski, one of the advisors for the program. Students are encouraged to identify those aspects of the research question that are most relevant to the needs of the community client.

The community partners represent a range of organizations, schools, and agencies, including Communities in Schools of Durham, the Duke Hospital School, the Carter Community School, the Durham School Board, Durham Public Schools, and the N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Students and their faculty advisors meet several times as a group over the course of this semester-long independent study. They round out the semester by submitting a policy brief with specific recommendations, as well as a 25-page paper, with the intention that the community partner will use this information to inform future policymaking discussions and decisions.

This focus on applying research to practice and policy is clearly valued by the community partners. Several who have participated in prior Student Research Partnership projects have been enthusiastic to continue in the partnership, exploring a different issue of concern. Eric Becoats, superintendent of Durham Public Schools, is collaborating this semester with Catalina Hidalgo. He has asked Hidalgo to research the best way to measure teacher effectiveness.

This past fall, public policy major Alex Reese partnered with Becoats and was asked to explore different models of differentiated teacher compensation. Becoats suggested that Reese might begin by looking at model programs in Guilford County and Charlotte-Mecklenburg districts. “What I found that was sort of surprising and refreshing,” explained Reese, “is that the incentives that are working to draw the best talent to the lowest-performing schools are both monetary and non-monetary. There are some incentive programs that offer recruitment bonuses, retention bonuses, and performance incentives. But one of the things that teachers cared most about, in addition to those things, was that they were working for a visionary school leader.”

In January of this year, Reese was invited to present his recommendations before the Administrative Services Committee of the Durham Board of Education. Reese remembers spending most of winter break preparing for his presentation with help from his advisor, Professor David Malone of Duke’s Program in Education. Reese made a comprehensive presentation and board members responded by asking a number of thoughtful questions.

While preparation for the presentation may have been intense, Reese enjoyed the challenge and it has helped prepare him for his next professional opportunity: teaching in inner-city Baltimore through the Teach for America program. “In terms of this project fitting into larger plans, it was really helpful in understanding some of the district-level work. As I’m about to come in as a teacher at the school level, I think it will be tremendously valuable in understanding and navigating that whole landscape.”

The Durham Board of Education has found these partnerships with students to be fruitful as well. “The School Research Partnership Office can help the school system determine the relative benefits of our education interventions in order to ensure we devote our resources to programs that work,” said Heidi Carter, a member of the DPS Board of Education. “They help us translate research into sound policy and practice that will have real-world relevance right here in Durham.”

Since the program’s inception in 2009, nearly 30 students have participated in School Research Partnership projects. To date, all of the students have been public policy or psychology majors. However, the two co-leaders of the Partnership Office — Jenni Owen, director of policy initiatives at the Center for Child and Family Policy, and David Rabiner, director of program evaluation services at the Center and associate research professor of psychology and neuroscience — say that with additional resources the program could expand to include many more students across a wide range of disciplines.

These opportunities for “real world research” are unique for Duke undergraduates, but they are going to become more common as DPS turns to Duke scholars and students to help find answers to questions facing local schools. In fact, the latest DPS strategic plan expands the school system’s current partnership with the Center for Child and Family Policy to include Center staff “conducting research and program evaluation of district initiatives.” ▲
The team that manages the North Carolina Education Research Data Center (NCERDC) can’t remember the days when the first computers were introduced, weighing tons and occupying huge square feet of office space. But today, on a secure but unassuming server, one part-time and one full-time staff member from the Center for Child and Family Policy are managing and storing an immense amount of data that has been collected by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) covering all North Carolina public schools since the mid-1990s.

In 2008-09 alone, the NCDPI provided the Data Center with records on over 1.3 million North Carolina K-12 public school students, 102,000 teachers, and 2,400 schools. District-level data were supplied as well. The range of data tracked and transferred by NCDPI is extensive. Among the available student data are test scores, suspension and dropout status, and course enrollment; teacher data includes the degrees obtained and licensure acquired, in addition to salary and work histories. School records include demographic makeup, average End of Course scores, End of Grade scores and SAT scores, dropout rates, and the school’s current status under the state’s accountability model. At the district level, records are available on district finance, incidents of violence, and demographic composition.

The information is sent to the Data Center in a range of different formats. The files then need to be merged, cleaned, and eventually output as user-friendly SAS data files that researchers can more easily access. Advantages to accessing these kinds of data are that a single student can be followed over time and a wide variety of information is available on each student.

Because this information portal is so comprehensive, researchers who are deeply involved in education policy — as many as 60 per year — contact the Data Center to apply for access through a rigorous process that ensures the confidentiality of all records. Associate Director Kara Bonneau and Analyst/Programmer Sharon Eatmon are responsible for nearly all aspects of receiving, processing, and documenting data, as well as helping users by setting up accounts for them to access the data, fielding all kinds of questions, and providing as much technical assistance as possible. As Data Center Director Clara Muschkin explains, “Our data are accessed by established researchers and doctoral students who are experienced data users. One specific part of our mission is to support junior scholars, as well as doctoral students, for their dissertation research.”

Duke doctoral student Sara Pilzer is studying the effect of school district policies on student achievement, grade promotion and retention, and proximal private school enrollments. “I started working with the Data Center during a research assistantship a couple years ago, and I now use it for my dissertation. The richness of the data and the potential for new and interesting research questions is endless.”

Over the past ten years, hundreds of studies have been made possible by the existence of the NCERDC. Published studies have explored issues related to the minority achievement gap, school accountability and choice, the academic performance of at-risk children, and problem behavior in schools.

Muschkin pointed out that it is not only the number of consecutive years these data have been gathered, tracking individuals from elementary school through high school, that makes this database so valuable, but the ability to link the NCDPI data to administrative data sources like the North Carolina Department of Corrections or the North Carolina Community College data system. “That matching capability has brought researchers together from multiple disciplines. For example, we’re just starting to work with two researchers from UNC-Charlotte who have asked us to link education data from grades 6-12 with information from the UNC system, looking back at the high school experiences of a cohort of UNC freshman and asking questions about who goes into math and science careers and what helps students to succeed.”

The Sanford School of Public Policy, in cooperation with the Center for Child and Family Policy, recently hosted a Beyond Test Scores conference (see p.4 in this issue of Bridge) during which several multi-disciplinary groups presented their research on education topics which effectively linked Data Center records with data from other agencies and sources. For example, a trio of Duke researchers with backgrounds in economics, public policy, sociology, and psychology gave a presentation on the short- and long-term impacts of plant closings in North Carolina on student outcomes.

“Our data provide a unique opportunity,” Muschkin emphasizes. “We are able to give researchers access to these administrative education records so they can look at education in a broader lifecourse context.” ▲
Gassman-Pines Named First Sulzberger Family Faculty Fellow  by Erika Layko

When Ken Dodge, director of the Center for Child and Family Policy (CCFP), realized the opportunity afforded by a gift from the Sulzberger Family to award the first Sulzberger Family Faculty Fellowship, Anna Gassman-Pines was the perfect fit.

Gassman-Pines, a CCFP faculty fellow and assistant professor of public policy and of psychology and neuroscience at Duke, will take a junior research leave during the next academic year, supported in part by the Sulzberger Family Faculty Fellowship. Her sabbatical research will focus on how specific workplace policies affect the quality of life of workers and their families.

Gassman-Pines said the faculty fellowship is instrumental in supporting her work as a researcher. “It’s giving me the time to dig into this new area, to spend time reading and thinking and synthesizing. I’m really grateful to the Center and the Sulzberger family for providing me with an opportunity to spend time focusing on an important area of research.”

The Center for Child and Family Policy aims to translate research into policies and practices that benefit children and families. “The Sulzberger family has given generously and flexibly for us to fulfill this mission, which is also consistent with the Strategic Plan of Duke University to bring knowledge in service to society,” said Dodge.

“Professor Gassman-Pines has been conducting rigorous empirical analyses that shed light on the ways that a parent’s workplace influences a child’s social and educational development, and so she is an ideal scholar to take the next step to identify corporate policy changes that could improve children’s outcomes. I am delighted that she is doing this work.”

Gassman-Pines’ research has a consistent focus on families and work and how the two interact. She has completed extensive research on how job quality, flexibility, workplace climate, and work hours impact the well-being of low-income parents and their children. Currently, she is studying Mexican immigrant fathers and mothers in North Carolina and how their employment impacts their relationships with their children. A previous study focused on the effects of non-standard working hours on the well-being of low-income mothers and their children.

During her sabbatical, Gassman-Pines will begin a new project that integrates elements of her previous research. She plans a systematic review of evidence on how workplace policies affect not just workers but their families. She hopes to hone in on specific policies and benefits within employers’ control that they could change to improve work-life balance for their workers – changes that could possibly spill over into other employment sectors. Gassman-Pines would like to determine, for example, which type of benefits have the most impact on workers’ quality of life – health insurance or options for paid time off, retirement benefits, or some other offering?

“My previous research on low-wage working moms led me to this question, particularly the kinds of stresses they feel when they’re working night-time schedules,” said Gassman-Pines. “The reality is we’re living in a 24-7 economy, and there is demand for workers around the clock. That’s not likely to change.”

Gassman-Pines said she would like to determine if employers can make changes in the workplace that would help lessen the stresses for workers. “Is it about flexibility, allowing more break time to be able to call home? Is it about assistance with child care so that parents who are working at night can know that their children are in a safe place? That’s where the idea started, but it expanded to be more all-encompassing, so that now I’m not just looking at night-time employees but all employees.”

Her interest in workplace policy and its effect on low-income parents began before she started graduate school. As a researcher with MDRC in New York City from 1999-2001, she studied evaluations of various welfare policies prior to the Welfare Reform Act of 1996. At that time, states were given waivers to try different approaches to changing welfare policy, and one recurring theme was that work should be required in order to receive benefits. Several different plans were put in place across the nation with the goal of getting people off welfare and into the workplace. Gassman-Pines evaluated some of these approaches to determine if they were effective.

“In general, the approaches worked,” said Gassman-Pines. “That, coupled with the booming economy in the late 1990s, moved a lot of women from welfare into the workforce. We knew some things about how children in those families were doing. But it seemed to me that one of the biggest gaps in our knowledge was around what it meant for these women to be working. What did those workplaces

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Gassman-Pines
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Look like? What kinds of jobs did these women get? What happened to their children while they were at work? How did the change in their own context have implications for how their children were doing?”

Pursuing those questions has become her life’s work, but it is clear that her childhood in Madison, Wisconsin, influenced her future research as well. “Another strand of what led me to this research is that I grew up in a two-parent household where both parents worked since I was really little, so I always had a role model of a working mom in my family,” said Gassman-Pines. Indeed, she benefitted from the overlap between her mother’s work and her own future research, as her mother just finished an eight-year term as the Wisconsin State Secretary of Labor. “I think being close with her and knowing about her work life rubbed off on me as well,” Gassman-Pines said. “There are many intersections between the work that we do, which has been fun.”

Going forward, Gassman-Pines said she would like to be able to make stronger causal statements about how parents’ experiences in the workplace affect families and children. She would also like to help facilitate discussions between two historically separate entities. “I’d like to merge what tend to be two fairly different foci of both researchers and policymakers. There tend to be folks who focus on the workplace and workers, and those who focus on family functioning and children. And those two groups don’t often intersect,” she said. “In general, we still have work to do on getting groups with those different interests to communicate more.”

“Obviously, I hope there will be clear implications for workplace policies and for things that private organizations could do to improve the lives of their workers and, potentially, for the workers’ families. But I think there could also be a role, potentially, for government or for the public sector to either provide incentives to workplaces to improve their practices or different kinds of government support that might help businesses implement these changes.”

Erika Layko is the Center’s meeting and events coordinator.

JD/MPP Graduate Selected to Clerk for Supreme Court Justice Alito
by Debbie Selinsky and Suzanne Valdivia

Sarah Campbell, who received her JD/Master of Public Policy dual degree from Duke in 2009, has been selected as a clerk for the next Supreme Court term by Justice Samuel A. Alito. Campbell’s involvement with the Center for Child and Family Policy began with her enrollment in a social policy course at the Sanford School of Public Policy, where she impressed faculty with her intellect and engagement.

Campbell also participated in Center seminars and collaborated on a research project with Center Director Ken Dodge and Duke Law School Professor and CCFP Faculty Fellow Dorian Coleman. “That research project,” said Dodge, “which culminated in a special issue of the journal Law and Contemporary Problems, is a great example of the multidisciplinary work that the Center fosters.”

Campbell appreciates how the degree in public policy has enabled her to approach legal issues with a perspective and expertise from an area outside of law. “Everything I learned in the Master of Public Policy program, from statistical analysis to in-depth studies of particular policy areas such as education, complemented my JD studies. Outside the classroom, there were plenty of opportunities to organize events and engage in research that bridged the two programs.”

In addition to the dual degree that has helped to prepare her for this exciting and high-profile clerking opportunity with Alito, she also clerked for Judge William H. Pryor on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Birmingham, Alabama.

“I loved everything about clerking,” Campbell said. “I wrote bench memos to provide a summary of the case and to recommend an outcome for the judge. I read all the briefs submitted for the case and conducted independent research to understand the relevant area of law. Then I would discuss the case with Judge Pryor. That was an especially fun part of the job — getting to discuss cases with the judge and seeing his decision-making process.”

It is no surprise, then, that when another opportunity to clerk came along, this time with a Supreme Court Justice, Campbell accepted on the spot. Justice Alito called to offer her the post after Thanksgiving and, although he told Campbell she could take some time to consider it, she recollects, “I told him I didn’t need time to think about it; I accepted immediately. To work for a year for a Supreme Court Justice — especially one for whom I have such respect and admiration — is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.” She will begin her clerkship in July.

Debbie Selinsky is a freelance writer who lives in Durham. Suzanne Valdivia is the Center’s communications specialist.
Funding Awards

Congratulations to Center researchers Beth Gifford, Leslie Babinski, David Rabiner, and Ashley Corra who received funding from the Council for Children’s Rights to evaluate the Larry King Center for Building Children’s Futures’ new initiative aimed at improving the lives of children in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Larry King Center has identified the following key objectives: improve school readiness, reduce the incidence and impact of child abuse and neglect, and increase access to health and mental health care. Center researchers will evaluate this initiative in three phases: (1) information will be gathered from key stakeholders; (2) this information will be used to revisit the theory of change and to help align future activities with the intended outcomes; (3) an evaluation plan will be developed, including a quantitative impact evaluation for the longer term. This one-year project has a budget of $50,000 and began on November 1, 2010.

Funding to support a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the impact of Durham Connects, a universal home visiting program in Durham, was awarded to Center researchers by The Pew Charitable Trusts/The Pew Center on the States. This program aims to motivate families to connect with needed community services. Evaluation at age six months includes assessments of parent-infant relationship, parenting, and maltreatment. Center Director Ken Dodge is the principal investigator of this 15-month project entitled “Advancing Home Visiting Research to Inform Public Policy,” which began in September 2010 and has a budget of $185,000.

Center researchers Anne-Marie Iselin, Nicole Lawrence, Joel Rosch, and Liz Snyder assisted The Durham Center in securing a six-year, $5.4 million federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This funding builds upon the existing infrastructure of Durham’s child and adult System of Care by targeting transition-age youth (16-21) who are exiting foster care and/or group home institutions. This project enables the Durham Center to expand upon the community’s capacity to serve transition-age youth with serious emotional disturbances through the development of a coordinated identification and referral process, programs and services that meet the unique needs of transition-age youth, clinician training programs on evidenced-based practices to serve this population, and comprehensive care management/coordination. Center researchers Nicole Lawrence, Liz Snyder, and Joel Rosch will evaluate the work being done by the Durham Center. The evaluation will include both quality improvement and outcome measurement at the system, program, and individual levels. The project began on October 1, 2010.

United Way Worldwide has provided grant funds to 14 United Way agencies in three states to increase the demand for teacher effectiveness. The underlying assumption of this initiative is that creating policies that promote the training, recruitment, and retention of effective teachers will lead to increased student success. Furthermore, it is assumed that elected officials, policymakers, parents, and a diverse array of other community members will drive the demand for effective teachers. Center researchers Leslie Babinski, Jenni Owen, and Ashley Corra received nearly $100,000 to evaluate this initiative during the period August 2010-August 2011.

The Justice and Mental Health Collaboration is an outreach program designed to provide intensive follow-up to police service calls involving persons with mental health issues and to divert them into community-based treatment. The program has four key goals: (1) increasing the percentage of calls to the police that result in individuals becoming engaged in mental health services; (2) reducing the rate of repeat arrest for persons with mental illness charged with minor or non-violent offenses; (3) decreasing the number of repeat calls for services; and (4) increasing the number of patrol officers trained in de-escalation and identification of mental illness. Center for Child and Family Policy researchers Nicole Lawrence and Joel Rosch contracted with the Durham Police Department to provide technical assistance, data analysis, and development of a report highlighting key program outcomes. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Justice and runs from October 1, 2010, to September 20, 2012.

Congratulations to CCFP Faculty Fellow and Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience Tim Strauman who received $1.8 million from NIH for his project entitled “Self-Regulation Failure: Identifying and Modifying a Risk Phenotype.” The three-year project began September 30, 2010. The aims of this R01 are: (1) to validate a hypothesized gene/environment/self-regulation risk phenotype conferring vulnerability to failures of self-regulation; and (2) to test a set of cognitive/behavioral techniques that we predict will acutely reverse the dysfunctions that underlie self-regulatory failure. The term “self-regulation” denotes the processes through which people intentionally or automatically initiate, maintain, and terminate their own thoughts and behaviors in the service of pursuing personal goals. The importance of understanding self-regulation lies in the array of public health problems that can be traced to problematic goal pursuit.
Recent Publications


Recent Presentations

Jennifer Nolan, visiting research fellow at the Center, was invited to present her research at the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center on October 7 at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. She presented to faculty in the social sciences, and the talk was entitled “Serious Mental Illness, Cultural Attitudes, Quality of Life, and Public Policy: American and Tanzanian Patient Perspectives and Experiences.”

On October 21, Center Director Ken Dodge presented “Lies Our Parents Told Us” at the Bryan Center as part of Team Kenan’s iThink Café series. The presentation focused on the role of lies, large and small, in the moral development of children and young adults. The iThink Cafe series consists of informal discussion events that focus on a new topic each session and provide an opportunity for students to talk about everyday ethics in a fun and relaxed atmosphere.

If you were unable to attend the October 28 Sulzberger Distinguished Lecture, “Bold Actions to Reduce Childhood Obesity,” given by Kelly Brownell, director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University, you can link to the audio recording and view the PowerPoint presentation on our Web site at http://www.childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu/events_detail.php?id=54. The talk is also featured in a Duke research blog posting, which can be found at http://research.duke.edu/blog/2010/10/food-fight-comes-duke.

On November 1, Jacob Vigdor, professor of public policy and economics and a CCFP faculty fellow, gave a presentation to the Durham School Board and Durham community members on current issues in educational research, including best practices in assessment and testing.

Presentations were made by several Center researchers and faculty fellows at the 32nd annual Association for Public Policy and Management (APPAM) meeting held in Boston on November 4-5:

Jenni Owen, Center director of policy initiatives, organized and presented at two roundtable sessions. She moderated “The Moment of Truth?: Evidence-Based Policymaking in a Time of Fiscal Constraints,” which included panelists Jon Baron (Coalition for Evidence and a 2009 Family Impact Seminar speaker), Gordon Berlin (MDRC), Mary Fairchild (National Conference of State Legislatures), and Jeff Liebman (until recently, deputy director at OMB). Owen was a panelist for “Translating Social Science to Inform Public Policy: Experience and Recommendations from University Centers,” which included Gabriella Celeste (Case Western), Cybele Raver (NVU), Matt Stagner (Chapin Hall), and discussant and Massachusetts Commissioner of Early Care and Education Sherri Killins. The panelists all represented the University-Based Child and Family Policy Consortium.

CCFP Faculty Fellows and Sanford School of Public Policy faculty Phil Cook and Clara Muschkin presented the paper “Will efforts to reduce school dropout also reduce criminal involvement?” on the panel “Policy Changes as Natural Experiments in Crime and Justice.”

“New Destinations, New Trajectories? The Educational Attainment and Persistence of Hispanic Youth in North Carolina” is the title of a presentation made by Charles Clotfelter, a CCFP faculty fellow, Z. Smith Reynolds Professor of Public Policy, and Professor of Economics and Law. He reported on joint work with Sanford colleagues and CCFP faculty fellows Helen (Sunny) Ladd and Jake Vigdor.

On November 8, as part of the UNC Center for Developmental Science’s Carolina Consortium series, Center Research Scientist Lisa Berlin gave a presentation entitled “Maternal and infant emotion regulation in the context of early interventions for high-risk families.”

On November 8, at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting held in Denver, Colorado, Janet Abboud Dal Santo, Center research scientist and associate director of research and administration for the Transdisciplinary Prevention Research Center, gave a presentation entitled “Effect of Child Labor Violations on Reported Injuries among Working Youth.” She discussed the associations between illegal work, working in hazardous occupations, working long hours on school days and late hours on school nights, and serious reported injuries among working high school students. The presentation applied the Bronfenbrenner bioecological framework as a developmental approach for injury prevention strategies at multiple levels of intervention: individual, school, neighborhood, community, state and national policies (child labor laws), and interactions among the different levels.

A number of Center-affiliated faculty participated in the conference, “Schooling and Life-Course Outcomes in Early Adulthood,” which was held at the Sanford School on November 11-12 (see article on page 4). The conference highlighted research conducted by participants in the Beyond Test Scores Project, a research program sponsored by the Smith Richardson Foundation, which also included
related work by other scholars. The individual studies within this program examine connections between standardized test scores and the important outcomes that signal or influence the accumulation of human capital, such as high school graduation, post-secondary education, labor market participation, early childbearing, delinquency, and criminal activity. These are the individual studies that were presented at the conference:

**The Effects of Local Employment Losses on Children’s Educational Achievement** – Liz Ananat, Anna Gassman-Pines, and Christina Gibson-Davis

**Determinants of Advanced Course-Taking in Mathematics in North Carolina Schools** – Sandy Darity, Karolyn Tyson, Kara Bonneau, DJ Cratty, and Dania Frank

**Success in Community College: Do Institutions Differ?** – Charles Clotfelter, Sunny Ladd, Clara Muschkin, and Jake Vigdor

**High School Dropout and Felony Conviction before Age 20: How Closely Are They Linked?** – Phil Cook and Clara Muschkin

**From Birth to School: A Research Strategy for Examining the Effects of Early Childhood Programs on Educational Outcomes in North Carolina** – Ken Dodge, Sunny Ladd, and Clara Muschkin

On November 12, Center Director of Policy Initiatives Jenni Owen presented “Policy and practice strategies for addressing problems with school suspension” as part of the day-long “Safe Schools, Fair Schools: A Community Dialogue about School Suspensions in North Carolina,” sponsored by the North Carolina Partnership for Educational Opportunity. The presentation drew heavily from materials sponsored by the North Carolina Partnership for Educational Opportunity. The presentation addressed problems with school suspension, which was held at the North Carolina Legislature on April 27.


CCFP Senior Research Scientist Joel Rosch made a presentation to the State Epidemiological Workgroup (SEW) on January 19 on the recently updated report *Substance Abuse among North Carolina Adolescents* (http://substanceabuse.srri.duke.edu/subabuse/maps.php). This web-based report enables state and county officials across North Carolina to look at how substance abuse is impacting their communities and compare their county with other counties. The report also allows counties to look at historical trends in their county as compared to other counties and as compared to the whole state. The report was prepared by CCFP Research Scientist Beth Gifford. Rosch and other CCFP staff assisted in the preparation of the report. The State Epidemiological Workgroup is responsible for improving the use of data in substance abuse prevention policymaking.

Linda Burton, CCFP faculty fellow and James B. Duke Professor of Sociology, presented “Adultification in Childhood and Adolescence: A Matter of Risk and Resilience” on January 25 as part of the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Developmental Brown Bag Series.

Charles Clotfelter, CCFP faculty fellow and Z. Smith Reynolds Professor of Public Policy and Professor of Economics and Law, made a presentation on February 2 at North Carolina State University’s School of Education entitled “American Universities in a Global Market,” as part of a series on the future of universities.


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 policymakers 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.