



Annual Report 2021 - 2022

Letter from the Director

The Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center (DDDC) is an integral part of the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (<u>GSAPP</u>) at Rutgers University New Brunswick. The DDDC has been serving individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families and training the professionals providing service to them, since 1972. We are so proud to be celebrating our 50th anniversary.

Our goal with each aspect of the work we do at the DDDC is to increase the availability of high-quality services to meet the needs of autistic individuals. We provide services using applied behavior analysis (ABA) in our centerbased school and adult programs, as well as to individuals in the community. Training and Research are integral to our mission. Each year, we train undergraduate and graduate students in ABA and provide training about autism to students from other health and medical disciplines. We also provide trainings to the wider community. Research at our center contributes to a growing base of knowledge about how to support individuals with ASD with a focus on meeting the needs of those requiring more significant levels of support.

The work we do is so important. We are so excited to begin the next 50 years of work at the DDDC.

Catriona Francis DIRECTOR OF THE DDDC Ed.M., BCBA









PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Douglass School Program

The Douglass School Program serves children ages 3 to 21 diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The Douglass School has preschool, elementary, intermediate, and secondary level classes. Common to all classes is a consistent structure:

- Small staff to student ratio: 1:1 or 2:1
- Class size: 5-6 in preschool through secondary
- Staffing: teacher, lead instructor, speech and language specialist, highly trained paraprofessionals, and consultation by Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA)
- Parent training and family support services (observations, clinics, home consultation)

Douglass Adult Program

Douglass Adult Program (DAP) established in 1997 as a separate unit of the DDDC, provides employment and related day services to adults with autism spectrum disorders. DAP is a Medicaid-approved provider for the Supports Program and the Community Care Program. Services offered include:

- Full-day, Year-round, Special Needs Day Program
- Behavioral Supports
- Community-based Supports
- Community Inclusion
- Day Habilitation
- Pre-vocational Training
- Supported Employment

Douglass Outreach Services

Douglass Outreach Services provides the highest quality consultation and training to meet the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders, their families and the professional community. Experienced staff and consultants who hold a BCBA use the evidenced-based principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) in the delivery of service.

Other Services

A state-approved Clinic and Agency with the ability to conduct the following assessments:

- Functional Behavioral Assessments
- Program Evaluations
- Parent Training in ABA
- Workshops and Training

OUR HISTORY

The DDDC was started in September of 1972 in a very small, 2,500-square-foot trailer with three rooms on Douglass Campus. The new structure was donated by Carmine Dellapietro.

The program named the Child Behavior Research and Learning Center was a collaboration between Dr. Harris' team and the Midland School in North Branch. Under the supervision of Dr. Harris and special education teachers from the Midland School, instruction was provided by graduate students in clinical psychology and undergraduate students majoring in psychology, speech and learning, and special education. The original program supported nine children from nearby school districts who were placed in two classrooms, one of which supported children from 5-7 years of age, and the other was for those 8-12 years of age.

Suzie Dellapietro was one of the first students to attend the DDDC beginning in 1972.

"Susan, when she started, had no vocabulary; we were told she would be a vegetable-type person. Today, she is thriving, puts together three to four-word sentences, plays piano, and is a pleasure to have around. For a kid who had no language, now she never shuts up."

-Carmine Dellapietro

Founding families like Carmine and Blanche Dellapietro (Susan's parents) worked tirelessly with Dr. Harris to make this dream of starting a program become a reality.



KEY HISTORICAL EVENTS

1972

The School Program at the DDDC was founded by Dr. Sandra Harris. The University Board of Governors approved the establishment of an experimental school for autistic children to be operated by Rutgers University with consultation by the Midland School, North Branch.



1977

The Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center was sponsored by Rutgers University for five years and received a \$90,000 federal grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to begin an experimental program training parents of autistic children.

Clubwomen mobilize for autistic children

Federation raising \$60,000 to renovate Douglass center

THE SUNDAY STAR-LEDGER, November 4, 1979

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By BARBARA KUKLA



1980

The School Program moves into a building on the Douglass Campus, which is renovated to meet the needs of youngsters with special needs. Funding for the renovation is provided by the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs, which sold a total of 7,000 teddy bear stickpins to raise \$60,000 to support the project.

1992

Sandra L. Harris is appointed Dean of the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP) at Rutgers Univer. The DDDC is integral to the mission of GSAPP.



Division of Outreach Services opened to provide consultation to schools and families to design individual programs for children or to help school districts create indistrict programs to serve the children with autism in their community.

1995

The DDDC expanded the Douglass School building to approximately 24,000 square feet of space in order to accommodate a steady growth of incoming participant referrals. This additional space enabled the provision of additional programming and services to preschool students.

1996

The Division of Research and Training is established to strengthen research at the center and the dissemination of information regarding best practices within the field. Clinical faculty in the Division of Research and Training also provide support for the training initiatives led by the DDDC to make services more broadly available to the community.

1997

Division of Adult and Transitional Services is established at the DDDC. The Adult Program addresses a significant need for services supporting adults with autism and their families who face a dearth of services once their school-aged service entitlement ends. The Transitional Services component of the program is created for older students with significant behavior challenges. In 2002, the program moves into the Ryders Lane building.

A winning attitude through working

Disabilities center creates positions for autistic adults

THE STAR-LEDGER





THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1998





vs Enzo Zoroni, father o Mops staffer Adam, 32. Adds Linda Shaffer, mother of Matt, 25: "This nendous, unselfish thing as a tr for Don to do

V A HERO? SEND SUGGESTIONS TO HEROESAMONGUS@PEOPLEMAG COM



2002

Ryders Lane location opens and houses administrative offices, Outreach Services, the Douglass Adult Program and Transitional Services Unit, and Research and Training.

2008

Dr. Jan Handleman, long-time Director of the DDDC, died on April 3, 2008. His leadership and creative planning skills never diminished, nor did his capacity to convey his love to his family and his friendship to his colleagues. He was a caring mentor to his younger colleagues and a role model for all of his colleagues at the DDDC.

2009

Dr. Lara Delmolino Gatley, the Director of the DDDC, leads the Center into strategic planning and developed goals for the Center that focused on restructuring to better meet the individuals served.

2012

Sandra L. Harris retires from the DDDC. By founding the DDDC in 1972, Dr. Harris shaped the service delivery system and the availability of services in New Jersey and nationwide evident today. While much of the work of the DDDC takes place on-site, its impact is felt far beyond through the training of career professionals and the fulfilled lives of students and clients at the center and in the community.

2018

Catriona Francis, M.Ed., BCBA, is appointed Director, Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center.

2019

The DDDC opens two Intensive Support classes serving intermediate and secondary-aged students with more significant challenging behavior.

2022

The DDDC continues to provide quality services to individuals with autism, their families, and the school districts they serve. The DDDC strives to do more as each year passes.



50 Years of Excellence



Faculty Scholarly Endeavors

Highlights

- 156 peer-reviewed articles
- 127 books (25) and book chapters (102)
- 837 presentations





Health and Medical Professionals Trained at the DDDC

Highlights _____

- The disciplines trained include:
 - 1) Education
 - 2) Speech Language Pathology
 - 3) Exercise Science
 - 4) Social Work
 - 5) Psychiatry
 - 6) Family Practice
 - 7) Horticulture
 - 8) Occupational Therapy
 - 9) Assistant Interns
 - 10) Nursing Students
 - 11) Medical Students
 - 12) General Psychology Residents



Staff Employed and Trained (since 2007)



• Staff presentations at state, national, and international events



University Students

Highlights

- We provided training for almost 100 university students per year
 - 70% in Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis, and approximately 30% from other disciplines in Graduate School programs
 - Undergraduate students- 12,444

1972 - 2022





Students Served in the Douglass School Program



Hours of Client-Paid Employment in the Douglass Adult Program (2009-2022)



Clients Served in the Douglass Adult Program



Hours of Client Volunteer Positions in the Douglass Adult Program



School Consultation Hours Provided by Douglass Outreach Staff (2018 -2022)



School Districts Served Per Year

Highlights

 Between serving students in our oncampus school program, and providing consultation to schools in their district, we serve 30-40 school districts per year













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50th Celebrations























Celebrating **50 years** of work supporting the autism community through service, research, and training

Our 50th Anniversary is a time to celebrate our achievements and honor the diverse community that has helped shape our center and build our legacy. Our 50 Faces campaign shines a spotlight on special people whose stories have shaped the DDDC and highlights how work at our center reaches far beyond our walls and helps to build professional support and services for the autism community.





Sandra Harris, Ph.D.

Former Dean of GSAPP and Executive Director of the DDDC, 1972-2017

Dr. Sandra L. Harris is a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor of Clinical Psychology (Emeritus) at Rutgers University. In 1972, Dr. Harris founded the Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center, a university-based program for the treatment of children with autism. She is a true pioneer in the field of autism who spent her entire professional career ensuring high-quality services for individuals with autism and high quality training opportunities for graduate students and professionals.

She has written extensively about Autism Spectrum Disorders, including several books, as well as dozens of journal articles and book chapters. Dr. Harris has consulted nationally for schools and organizations that serve people with autism and has served as an expert witness in legal cases concerning the rights of people with developmental disabilities. She served as an associate editor of the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, a fellow in the APA divisions of Clinical Psychology and Child and Youth Services, and a fellow in the American Psychological Society. Her book, Siblings of Children with Autism, received the 1995 Autism Society of America Award for Literary Achievement. Dr. Harris remained the Executive Director of the DDDC until her retirement in 2017.

While she has retired from professional practice, the families she has helped and the hundreds of professionals she has trained have left a lasting impact for years to come.



Jan Handleman, Ed.D. Former Director of the DDDC, 1974 - 2008 (Deceased)

Dr. Jan Handleman was a longtime director of the Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center where he unlocked the potential of many students across the autism spectrum by finding critical treatments, support services for their families and community outreach by raising public awareness of autism. Dr. Jan Handleman started his career as a teacher working directly with children and adults with autism. He loved to go to work every day when he was a teacher and later a director. He loved to see the joy of the children and adult learners of the center after skill acquisition. He loved working with the staff creating programming to make the school the best place it could be for the students. He worked until the day he passed away. Dr. Jan Handleman was a pioneer in the field of autism and devoted his life to helping individuals with autism.





David Celiberti, Ph.D., BCBA

Executive Director/Association for Science in Autism Treatment DDDC Doctoral Student, Assistant Research Professor, 1988-1992, 1997-1999

I was blessed to have the opportunity to work with Drs. Sandra Harris and Jan Handleman, along with an incredible group of teachers, speech pathologists, and paraprofessionals. I was treated like a valuable member of the team from my first day. It was wonderful to have the opportunity to mentor so many young professionals and see them grow into leaders in the field. I live in Hoboken, New Jersey. Aside from my work at ASAT helping providers and family members I keep science at the forefront of all decisions about autism treatment, I work with underserved students in rural and Native American communities.



Edina Bekesi, Psychology M.A., BCBA

BCBA - Supervisor, Lecturer, Consultant - Founding Member of the Hungarian Applied Behavior Analysis Organization DDDC Volunteer, Classroom Assistant, Team Leader-Program

DDDC Volunteer, Classroom Assistant, Team Leader-Progran Coordinator II, 2012, 2013-2014, 2014 -2016

The DDDC has provided me with a strong foundation. Witnessing the effectiveness of ABA, it became my mission to disseminate its methods in Hungary. I still get inspired by the knowledge and passion of my supervisors and colleagues and it guides me in my current projects. My colleagues and I started Hungary's first postgraduate ABA course, where I am teaching now. I provide consultation to families and lead regular ABA workshops. Since Hungary is in desperate need of professionals, we started the Hungarian ABA Organization and with the knowledge that we provide, we are hoping to help many individuals with ASD.





May Chriseline Beaubrun, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA - New York Executive Director of Diversity & Training, Brett DiNovi & Associates DDDC Classroom Assistant, Teacher, 2004-2009

I learned more in my first year at DDDC than I have any other year in my career. I still use materials and resources from my time there as it is still valuable and relevant. I've presented at conferences and taught as an adjunct professor. I am located in central New Jersey. I have volunteered with Global Autism Project to provide staff and parent training at a clinic for children with autism. I also participated in the JumpStart Hospital program to provide early treatment for children recently diagnosed with Autism.



David Fischer, Psy.D., BCBA-D Behavioral Consultant

DDDC Doctoral Student, Outreach Consultant, Asperger College Program Founder, 2001-2011

The experience shaped me in multiple deep ways. Most critically, Sandra Harris served as an example that you can achieve great things while not compromising your values and continuing to treat others with respect. I am living in Hong Kong now. Since I moved here 10 years ago, I have worked with families across Asia to improve the quality of life for individuals with ASD.





Nathan Lambright Psy.D., BCBA-D Director/Owner of the Boston Child Study Center

DDDC Behavior Consultant, Program Coordinator and Training Coordinator, 2007-2009, 2009-2010

The DDDC created a passion for working with ASD across numerous levels of functioning. It developed a grounding in ABA that directs my understanding of every case, family, and system with which I work. It was the start of my love for consulting to school systems to help the most children.

I was at the May Institute where I integrated CBT services into their schools ABA programming for ASD and oversaw the clinical services of their 5 schools. Today I direct the Boston Child Study Center. I am most proud of BCSCs work integrating FBA data into neuropsychological testing for ASD.





Michael D. Powers, Psy.D.

Executive Director, CCSN: The Center for Children with Special Needs; Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychology, Yale Child Study Center, Yale University School of Medicine

DDDC Fieldwork Student; Supervising Special Education Teacher; Graduate Assistant 1973-74, 1978-80, 1980-82

My time at the DDDC was foundational to my career in autism services. It is where I learned that science guides treatment, that families are the most important resource a child will ever have, and that advocacy in the best interest of the child is primary. I also learned that when I had a question about treatment or process, I'd ask myself: "What would Sandy do?"

I founded and have been the Executive Director of CCSN: The Center for Children with Special Needs in Glastonbury CT for nearly 30 years. We are a lifespan multidisciplinary organization providing evaluation, treatment, and consultation to individuals with autism and related complex neurodevelopmental disorders, their caregivers, and families. CCSN provides consultation and training to programs in the US and internationally in South America, Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean. I am also on the faculty at Yale, where I have taught the Autism Seminar to psychology interns for nearly 25 years.



Carrie Bruey, Psy.D., BCBA-D

Program Supervisor, Autism Solutions DDDC Doctoral Student, 1978-1982

Working at DDDC with Sandy Harris was the springboard for my entire career over the past 40 years. Sandy's mentorship, as well as the opportunity to work directly with children on the autism spectrum, solidified my passion for this population and it's been the focus of my work ever since. I have specialized in supporting children on the autism spectrum, their families, and professional staff via overseeing group homes, special education classrooms, and clinical practice, all the while incorporating many of the axioms and standards gained during my time at DDDC.





Suzanne Buchanan, Psy.D., BCBA-D Executive Director, Autism New Jersey

DDDC Undergraduate Fieldwork Student, 1993-1995

I saw a teenage DDDC student at an art therapy group for which I was volunteering. There, without behavioral support, he walked the perimeter of the room and did not engage with anyone. The following Monday, I noticed him with his teachers and classmates engaged and productive. It was one of the first moments that showed me the power of effective behavioral intervention. As Autism New Jersey's Executive Director, my colleagues and I compassionately and systematically help the autism community through our 800.4. AUTISM Helpline, annual conferences, and statewide advocacy initiatives such as insurance coverage of ABA for children and adults, expanded housing availability for individuals with IDD, and a licensure law for behavior analysts.







Samreen Rizvi, M.A., BCBA., LBA

Behavior Analyst - Office of Special Education Instruction, Fairfax County Public Schools, VA. DDDC Classroom Assistant DAP, Graduate Fellow, 2019-2020, 2020-2021

My training at the DDDC included working with school-aged children and adults. I gained extensive experience in developing behavior intervention plans and programming for skill acquisition both aimed at reducing maladaptive behaviors and increasing student success in classrooms and community. This fellowship also provided me with opportunities to assist my supervisors in their ongoing research and present at state level conferences. I am now a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst working in the Fairfax County Public Schools in Northern Virginia. My research at the DDDC developed my interest in understanding the role of culture in ABA. With my multi-cultural background, coupled with my training at the DDDC, my current role in the school district helps me bridge the gap.



Craig Domanski, Ph.D., BCBA-D Founder and Director, DATA Group Central DDDC Classroom Assistant, 1999-2004

Working at Douglass was my first experience in ABA. My mom worked in the adolescent program, and I would meet her for lunch as a Rutgers undergrad. The DDDC staff I met were so friendly and welcoming and shared so much helpful information about working with the students. Teamwork and collaboration were such a major influence on how I view training and supervision of others. I'm currently the Director of DATA Group Central, predominantly focusing on putting highquality home programs together. After having my children, I realized that parents need more good supports in their own homes. Our practice was one of the first in NJ to work with insurance plans, and I've helped families navigate the insurance process to access ABA services, as well as helped ABA providers as the Service Delivery Chair in my role on the NJABA Board.



Erica Thomas-Hill, M.A., BCBA, LBA Behavior Analyst DDDC-DAP Teaching Assistant,

Outreach, 2010-2015

Being part of the DDDC family allotted me several different experiences within the field of ABA. I was able to experience teaching, conducting research, hands-on experience with FA's, and working with adults. I didn't realize until I moved how much I experienced and how fortunate I was to experience it at DDDC. My experience has allowed me to assist others in the field and be part of administration meetings to further help our community.

Currently living in Memphis, TN. Worked for a residential agency for 6 yrs. I recently started my own company with a focus on providing ABA services to the community in homes and other settings. I will also provide training support to residential companies. I am also in the process of starting a daycare for children with autism between the age of 3yrs. old to 5 yrs. old.

I sit on the Human Rights Committee for the West region Department of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, and the CEU Coordinator for Black Applied Behavior Analysis (BABA).





Maria Arnold, M.Ed., BCBA

Chief School Administrator/Director of Educational Services, DDDC 1976-2019

Maria Arnold has been an advocate for individuals with autism and their families for over 40 years. From her start at the DDDC in 1976 until her retirement at the end of 2019 she served as Teacher, Assistant Director, Director of Douglass School, and Director of Educational Services. She was an integral part of the DDDC's evolution over the years, playing a key role in the institution of the DDDC's integrated preschool program as well as the establishment of the DDDC's Adult Program. Maria also played a key role in starting an adaptive physical education program, an afterschool program, and a swimming program at the Douglass School. Through her oversight of the school's home programming services, she had an impact on so many DDDC children and families. Maria has also had a powerful impact on numerous professionals whom she supervised and mentored during her time at the DDDC.



Mary Jane Weiss, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA Executive Director of ABA and Autism Programs, Director of Doctoral Programs in ABA, Endicott College

DDDC Director of Research and Training and Clinical Director, 1984-2010

I am a Professor in the School of Education at Endicott College, where I also serve as Executive Director of Programs in ABA and Autism and Director of the Ph.D. in ABA. I also do research with the team at Melmark.

I was a doc student, originally running an entry level classroom (2 years) and then serving as Research Coordinator. (2 years) As an employee, I served in several roles including Director of Research and Training and Clinical Director, 1984-1988, 1994-2010. I learned the value of compassionate care working with Sandra Harris and Jan Handleman and all of the DDDC staff. Families were maximally supported and individuals with ASD were appreciated and valued. I learned to be a scientist-practitioner; to research problems that mattered, and to find solutions that would change lives.

As a Professor at Endicott College, my focus is on educating the next generation of interventionists and doing research that advances our understanding of best practice. I remain focused on the core values of compassion and engagement in clinical practice, supervision and training, and in mentorship.



Todd Frischmann, Ed.M., BCBA Behavior Analyst, 1990 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

I was thrilled to be offered a classroom assistant position after I finished both semesters of the fieldwork course while pursuing my undergraduate degree in Psychology. Working at the DDDC has been the most challenging and rewarding professional experience of my life, as evidenced by the 28+ years I've been here. Some catchphrases that reflect my experience at the DDDC: "Always appreciate the small steps achieved!"; "Show me the data."; and "Never a dull moment!"







Pierre Louis, M.S., BCBA Behavior Analyst Perth Amboy School District DDDC Classroom Assistant, Outreach Consultant, Fieldworker 1989-2002

My role as a floating assistant shaped my entire career. I learned to be flexible. to collaborate with multiple team members, to engage community members, and to work with learners aged 3-21. These skills and experiences have positively impacted each subsequent role in my career! I am currently in New Jersey and primarily focus on leadership and professional development. Since leaving DDDC I've consulted with school districts, worked in group homes supporting people with ASD, and have provided in-home services. I'm enjoying disseminating the science at conferences, on social media, and on podcasts.



Ryan J. Madigan, Psy.D. Founder & Director, Boston Child Study Center Boston, Los Angeles and Maine

DDDC Doctoral Student 2007-2009

The DDDC taught me the science and principles of behaviorism and the art of learning to listen even when an individual struggles to communicate. I am running 3 clinics in Boston, LA and Portland, Maine with the mission to expand access to evidence based treatment including assessment and interventions for youth on the Autism Spectrum.



Rachel Davis, Ed.M., LDTC-C, BCBA

Behavior Analyst, 2012 - Present DDDC Fieldworker, Special Education Teacher, 2002, 2007-2012

The DDDC was my first experience with ABA as a fieldwork student in 2002. I was immediately drawn to the community and started my education to become a special education teacher and a boardcertified behavior analyst. Over my 18+ years at the center, the DDDC has been a place of support, knowledge and growth. It's a place where foundation skills are taught, advanced skills are strengthened, and community is built.







Dongjoo Chin, BCBA

Behavioral Analyst, Seoul National University Hospital DDDC Visiting Scholar 2020

Experience at DDDC is a big milestone for me as well. DDDC showed me how much clinical practice based on research can be effective. Every problem behavior management and skill acquisition programs were implemented consistently as a written manual. It drives me to implement evidence-based practice the same way. I am working as a BCBA at Developmental Disability Center in Seoul National University Hospital, Seoul, Korea. Right after I left DDDC, I started working as a behavior analyst at Developmental Disability Center in SNUH. The center is also for managing severe behavioral problems in inpatient and outpatient settings.



Kim Sloman, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Director of The Scott Center for Autism Treatment at Florida Tech DDDC Coordinator of Research, Associate Director of Behavioral and Research Services, 2008-2018

The DDDC was my first job after I graduated from my doctoral program. My role allowed me to see behavioral intervention truly translated from the laboratory to practice. My experience at the DDDC shaped my clinical skills and strengthened my research interests in creating durable and generalizable treatments for individuals who exhibit severe challenging behavior. After 10 years at the DDDC, I took a job as Director of Autism Services at The Scott Center for Autism Treatment in Melbourne, FL. I knew I would only be happy at another university-based center with a mission similar to the DDDC. I've since been promoted to Director of the center, which provides ABA treatment services and serves as a practicum training site.



Barbara Kristoff, Ed.D., CCC-SLP, BCBA-D Assistant Director/Principal, 1979 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

Dr. Kristoff has been with the DDDC since 1979 and has served in a variety of positions providing services to DDDC students and working collaboratively with educational staff and parents to determine and implement appropriate individualized programming. She has been affiliated with the Rutgers Speech and Hearing program as adjunct faculty and over the years has mentored undergraduate and graduate students in the field of speech pathology. She has also presented at numerous conferences and has co-authored several articles on topics related to speech, language, and communication, and learners diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Dr. Kristoff earned her doctorate degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Rutgers, the State University. In addition to being a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, she holds a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Hearing Association, New Jersey certification as a Speech-Language Specialist, and is a New Jersey licensed Speech Pathologist.





Julia Iannaccone, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA

Assistant Professor of Clinical Practice, GSAPP Applied Psychology Department, Director of the Intensive Outpatient Clinic - Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services

DDDC Fieldworker, Classroom Assistant, Research Assistant, Doctoral Intern 2011–2020

I always knew I wanted a career helping people with Autism. I considered various professions, but when I started my fieldwork experience at the DDDC, I fell in love with Behavior Analysis. I was very eager to help and learn, and, luckily for me, the DDDC was incredibly supportive.

As the Director of Clinical Services and Training at the May Institute for Adult Services (Massachusetts), I oversee the clinical care of our men and women with autism and related disorders. I also oversee the training of direct support and administrative staff to continuously improve the quality of our services.



Joe Novak, Ed.D., BCBA-D, CCC-SLP, ATP Director of Clinical Initiatives REED Autism Services DDDC Speech Intern, Speech-Language Pathologist 2009-2010

My BCBA supervision experience and training at DDDC was second-to-none. It provided me with the foundational knowledge, the clinical skills, and the understanding of how to provide effective intervention services for students with autism while maintaining their dignity. I have also maintained positive relationships with several staff at DDDC and this has allowed for wonderful opportunities for collaboration throughout the years. Since 2015, I have been at REED Academy in leadership positions. Supporting the start of speech therapy services, developing an in-house curriculum, and migrating to electronic data collection have been some of my accomplishments at REED. In my current position, I am leading the launch of several new organization-wide initiatives.





Christopher Manente, Ph.D., BCBA

Executive Director - Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services, Associate Professor of Clinical Practice, GSAPP Applied Psychology Department

DDDC Undergraduate Fieldworker, DAP Program Coordinator/Behavior Analyst 2005-2014

The education and training that I received at the DDDC beginning with my time as an undergraduate fieldwork student, which was my very first opportunity to work in the field of ABA/Autism, in addition to countless opportunities for advanced graduate study, research, and leadership experience has shaped the clinician and administrator that I am today and has inspired the framework and model that the RCAAS is built upon. Founding Executive Director - Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services (RCAAS): The RCAAS offers adults on the autism spectrum one-of-a-kind support programs that make an independent and fulfilling life possible. Simultaneously, it advances research and ensures that each year, our graduates leave Rutgers prepared to enter careers in support of this underserved population. https://rcaas.rutgers.edu



Denise Sanders, Certified Substitute Teacher Program Coordinator/Lead Instructor

Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

DDDC Program Coordinator, Lead Instructor, Classroom Assistant 2003-2022

I began my career as an occupational therapist assistant in a school for children with autism and multiple disabilities. I gained extensive experience through training and mentoring by some knowledgeable and respected professionals in the field of ABA. I succeeded in multiple other roles including teacher assistant, home trainer, and outreach therapist, using my knowledge of behavior analytic principles to assist students, teachers, families, and supervisors to create a more successful environment in the individual classrooms.

It was at an Autism conference where I had my first glance at DDDC. When a coworker later discussed DDDC and its ABA program, I did my research. It was DDDC's affiliation with Rutgers University that affected my decision to apply and accept a full-time assistant teacher position in Level 3. I saw opportunities to advance in both my ABA experience and my accounting education. In both my support and leadership roles at DDDC, I was provided with opportunities for independence which fostered my confidence to assist teachers, train staff, and fieldworkers, while effectively using the best practice applied behavior analysis across learners. The environment at the DDDC has cultivated many new skills for me. I have become more organized, detail-oriented, and comfortable working with diverse teams shaped here at the DDDC. I have gained the remarkable qualities of both patience and perseverance as well as solid analytical skills.



Pamela Withers Lubbers, M.A., P.D.

Program Manager, Spectrum Scholars, Center for Disability Studies, College of Education & Human Services, University of Delaware Teacher, Coordinator, College Support Program (CSP) 2004-2014

The DDDC provided me my first opportunity to be trained and guided as I taught, coached and developed support services for high school and then university students. Lessons learned at DDDC from students, their families and skilled DDDC colleagues created my professional foundation.

I followed the program as it transitioned to Rutgers Counseling Center and in 2019 was hired by the University of Delaware to help them launch their new program. Both programs were student-centered and integrated in the university. Both were college-to-career programs that afforded students the opportunities for academics, leadership, relationship building and career support that was fated to foster success and independence. Training and collaboration were initiated with staff, faculty and students, as well as employers and agencies, to build inclusive, holistic cultures where everyone can thrive.



Hyein Lee, Psy.M., BCBA Psychology Intern

DDDC Doctoral Student 2017- 2019

My work at the DDDC deepened my understanding of assessment and treatment in applied behavioral analysis. Assessing the function of the behavior to develop function-based treatment is one of the key experiences I got from DDDC that I will continue to implement throughout my career.

I am currently a psychology intern at AHRC NYC serving individuals with developmental disabilities through assessment and psychotherapy. I am also working on my dissertation project with goals to add more voices of autistic adults in the literature and improve clinical practice in assessment and treatment.



Daniela Silva, M.S., BCBA, LABA Behavior Consultant Kindle Behavior Consultants

DDDC Undergraduate Research Assistant, Research Coordinator 2014-2020

I was first exposed to Applied Behavior Analysis while working as an undergraduate research assistant at the DDDC and instantly was hooked. My experience at the DDDC provided me with the foundations needed to succeed in my graduate studies and future clinical work.



Heather Jennett, Ph.D., BCBA-D VP Clinical Services Little Leaves Behavioral Services DDDC Doctoral Student, Behavior Consultant, Research Coordinator 1999-2003

Working at the DDDC shaped my entire career in ABA and autism. Based on my experiences as a graduate assistant at the DDDC, there were two things I wanted for my career going forward – to continue to learn how to implement high-quality ABA and to be involved in a center-based program that provides comprehensive ABA services for children with autism.

After leaving the DDDC, I was a predoctoral intern, postdoctoral fellow, and faculty member on the Neurobehavioral Unit at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore, MD for 9 years.

For the past 10 years, I have been working as the VP of Clinical Services for Little Leaves Behavioral Services. We provide center-based ABA services for preschool-aged children with autism in 11 centers across three states (Maryland, Virginia, Florida).



Suzannah ladarola, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Associate Professor of Pediatrics University of Rochester Medical Center

DDDC Doctoral Student 2006-2011

At DDDC I worked with people who integrated evidence-based clinical interventions, strong team collaboration, and high dedication to learning experiences for trainees, staff, and faculty – all with an overlay of familyfocused support. I have worked to emulate this commitment to individual experience and family systems in my current efforts.

I am a psychologist and Associate Professor of Pediatrics who specializes in evaluation and intervention in ASD. With my colleagues, I conduct community-partnered research related to developing, disseminating, and evaluating community interventions to support individuals with ASD and their families. I also focus on developing programs to help address parent stress and well-being.





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Shawna Ueyama Psy.D., BCBA-D

Clinical Psychologist/Owner of Island Behavioral Health DDDC Doctoral Student, 2012-2014

The DDDC introduced me to the field of ABA and allowed me to get my BCBA while in a Psy.D. program. The skills I learned from the DDDC make me a much stronger therapist, especially in Hawaii where it is very difficult to find a psychologist with strong behavioral skills. As someone who provides therapy for clients and families with ASD, OCD, Tic disorders, social anxiety, and ODD, I find myself drawing on my behavioral skills every day. My training at DDDC made me passionate about working with adolescents and young adults. I live in Hawaii with my husband (who also got his BCBA!) and 6-year-old son. I own a practice called Island Behavioral Health which started off as an ABA clinic in a highly underserved area of West Oahu. I changed my clinic quite a bit this year and have narrowed my focus to providing psychological services and ABA therapy for teens and young adults. I am most proud of our social skills groups and social skills parent training groups that I run with my husband and practicum students/RBTs. I also volunteer as a behavioral consultant for a few autism programs in Japan.





Amy (Hansford) Cohen, Ph.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor, Dept of Psychology, University of Illinois; Director, University of Illinois Autism Clinic; Director, Psychological Services Center

DDDC Doctoral Student 2008-2012

Only 50 words! The relationships I built at the DDDC were tremendously impactful. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to every student I worked with and to the families that shared their children with us. Sandy, Bob, Sharon, Todd, Meredith, Cat, Kate, Lara, M.J., Kim, Tina, Jill, and David...truly the best DDDC family!

I am at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, where I founded the University of Illinois Autism Clinic. We offer diagnostic and therapy services across the lifespan at free to no cost for members of our community and the state at large. I have the pleasure of training and supervising doctoral students through this clinic. I also collaborate with the University and Microsoft to make our campus neurodiversity-affirmative and create pipelines to employment.



Antonio Horn, B.A.

Program Coordinator, 2004 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

DDDC-DAP Program Coordinator, Classroom Assistant Where did the time go? It's been and honor and a pleasure working with so many people that are extremely knowledgeable in the field of ABA. There are too many

people that are extremely knowledgeable in the field of ABA. There are too many people to name but from the Director to Teachers, every day here is a learning experience.



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Mark J. Palmieri, Psy.D., BCBA-D Co-Director

CCSN: Center for Children with Special Needs

DDDC Doctoral Student 2002–2006 The DDDC played an instrumental role in shaping my professional career and the experiences I gained there continue to inform my work. At the DDDC I learned to work compassionately and effectively with some of the most amazing students I have ever met and I had the tremendous benefit of learning from professional role models who pushed me to grow while always supporting me. I am forever grateful for my time at the DDDC.

I am currently the Co-Director of the CCSN: The Center for Children with Special Needs. We work extensively with individuals with ASD and related neurodevelopmental disorders by providing educational consultation as well as outpatient care. Our practice is devoted to supporting individuals with ASD across the lifespan and we are fortunate to have the opportunity to play a role in the lives of so many amazing individuals.



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Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D. Executive Director EPIC School DDDC Research Assistant Professor 1997-2001

I would not be the professional I am today if I did not have the education, training, and support of the DDDC early in my career. I am forever indebted to the staff and students at the DDDC for igniting a lifelong passion to change the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum via science of Applied Behavior Analysis.

Currently, I am the Executive Director of the EPIC Programs, Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Behavioral Sciences, and Founding Chair of the Scientific Council for the Organization for Autism Research. There is not a thing I do today that is not fully informed by what I learned and the DDDC.



Michael Alessandri, Ph.D. Clinical Professor of Psychology and Pediatrics, Executive Director, Center for Autism and Related Disabilities, and Assistant Chair, Department of Psychology, University of Miami

DDDC Graduate Student, M.S./Ph.D., 1986-1990

My time at the DDDC was critical to shaping who I am today as an autism researcher and service provider in every way, but most importantly in how I care for my clients and their families, and my attention to work that has true relevance to their lives. Dr. Harris along with the incomparable Rita Gordon shaped my professional development in such important ways, and I am forever grateful to them both.

I have been a university professor since graduating from Rutgers. My career has spent researching, teaching, and providing services to individuals with autism and their families. I have served as the Executive Director of the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Miami since 1996. Our program currently serves over 14,000 families in South Florida.



Karen Keenan

Program Coordinator, 2007 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

DDDC Classroom Assistant, Lead Instructor, Program Coordinator

The DDDC has shaped my professional career by focusing on the developmental needs of all young children. Each year that I worked in the Small Wonders Preschool classroom I was challenged by three-, four- and five-year-old children who were ready to engage in learning, playing, and having fun! The resources at the DDDC and Rutgers allowed me to incorporate a variety of hands-on activities like visits from Rutgers Police and the Seeing Eye Puppy Raising Club, music lessons from a Mason Gross drum major, and many field trips!

My first position at the DDDC was in the Small Wonders classroom as an assistant. My classroom transitioned to become the Small Wonders Preschool where I eventually became a Lead Instructor to oversee the instruction of peer students. I have since gained experience working with older students in Upper School 3 and currently, Upper School 1. Soon, I will transition to Upper School 2 and expand my range of instruction yet again!





Mariana Torres-Viso, Psy.D., BCBA-D Assistant Professor of Child Psychology Yale Child Study Center, Yale School of Medicine DDDC Doctoral Student, 2010-2014

The time I spent at DDDC taught me how to be a data-driven, compassionate, and ethical clinician. It also taught me about best-practices support for children with developmental disabilities and how to also support the family unit as a whole. My work continues to center on families with ASD! I provide diagnostic evaluations for young children at the Yale Child Study Center and provide interventions and consultations to caregivers and school providers. I also work to ensure that evidence-based assessments and interventions are reaching underserved communities (e.g., Spanish Speaking families).



Shin Teh, Psy.M., BCBA Clinical Psychology Doctoral Intern Kennedy Krieger Institute DDDC Graduate Student, M.S./Ph.D. 1986-1990

My training at DDDC was impeccable at solidifying my interest in continuing working with individuals with autism, from an evidence-based perspective. More importantly, the warmth, professionalism, wisdom, and perseverance of every colleague that I have worked with at DDDC strengthen my personal aspirations of becoming a practitioner with these qualities.

Doctoral intern at Kennedy Krieger Institute's Behavior Management Clinic & Child and Family Therapy Clinic, Maryland



Jaimee White, Ed.M., BCBA Behavior Analyst, 2019 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

DDDC Field Worker, Classroom Assistant, Teacher, Home School Consultant 1998-2019

As I approach my 25th year at the DDDC I think back to my start as an undergraduate fieldworker and having no experience with the autism population. Everything I know about autism I learned from spending over half my life at the DDDC from pioneers in the field.

The most valuable skill I learned, and the one I cherish the most, is how to effectively speak with families to identify and assist with the challenges they encounter during everyday life.



Naomi Coral, B.A. Lead Instructor, 2001 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

DDDC Field Worker, Classroom Assistant, Lead Instructor

I enjoyed my experience as a fieldworker for 2 semesters and applied for a job as soon as I heard there was an open position.

My experience of working at the DDDC has taught me patience and compassion towards others, but most of all has taught me the importance of teamwork. Daily at the DDDC, we work cohesively as a unit to help the students achieve certain goals and help each other with haste in times of crisis.



Joseph Gironda, B.S. (Health and Physical Education) Adaptive Physical Education Teacher, 2002 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center DDDC Adaptive Physical Education Teacher, DOORS

Afterschool Program Director I was working at another school and was

unhappy there, I saw an ad in the newspaper, and I applied for a position at the DDDC as an Adaptive Physical Education Teacher.

Working here has shown and taught me that autism represents itself to various degrees. I enjoy working with such talented, hardworking staff, that really help make a difference in the lives of the students











Meredith J. Bamond, M.Ed., BCBA Training Coordinator, 2002 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

DDDC Fieldworker, Classroom Assistant, Research Assistant, Research Coordinator and Training Coordinator

I had always loved science, psychology, and helping others, but it wasn't until my undergraduate fieldwork at the DDDC that I discovered ABA and fell in love. Through my years at the DDDC, I have had the opportunity to perform many different roles - each presenting new challenges and yielding new triumphs that have shaped me into the BCBA I am today.



Margaret Mateyka, B.S. Lead Instructor, 1997 - Present

DDDC Classroom Assistant and Supervisor for After-School Program

I was moving back to New Jersey from Florida and one of the gentlemen I worked with had given me a letter of recommendation to the DDDC. I really do not know what to say, except that I love my job. The DDDC has given me a passion for doing my best in everything I do and fighting for what I believe in.



Jacqueline Molnar

Secretarial Assistant, 2000 - Present Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center

I started working at DDDC on 9/25/00. My aunt Diane Johnson worked in the office at the time and had told me about an opening. I started as the receptionist at the center not knowing much about the world of autism at the time. As the years went on I became more and more educated on autism and more and more driven to help in any way that I could. I am so proud to work at DDDC and watch on a daily basis the hard work and commitment of our staff who work with

watch on a daily basis the hard work and commitment of our staff who work with our students. I have and will continue to try my best to help our staff members, parents, districts and administrators in any way that I can.





Debra Paone, Ph.D., BCBA-D Director of Consultation and Training, 2005 - Present

DDDC Training Coordinator, Assistant Director of Outreach

In 1998, I was fortunate to begin my career in a program that used the principles of behavior analysis to teach individuals on the autism spectrum. After observing the effectiveness of applied behavior analysis, I decided to pursue my doctorate in psychology with a concentration in behavior analysis/learning processes. I found myself incorporating the research I was exposed to in my graduate program in my applied work with my students and clients. The DDDC has given me the opportunity to continue this work alongside a group of incredibly dedicated and passionate staff, who share a common goal of improving the lives of those we serve.

As a center, our work is reinforced by the success of our learners and the accomplishments of our staff. Being part of the DDDC community has shaped my professional values and continues to motivate me to meet the expectations and goals I set for myself every day.



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Marlene Brown, M.S., BCBA, LBA (NY) Associate Director Consultation and Communications, 1999-Present

DDDC Fieldworker, Research Assistant

I have worked with children and adults for more than 3 decades using the principles of applied behavior analysis to improve the lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Early in my career, I was very fortunate to have exceptional mentors in Drs. Jan Handleman and Sandra Harris, and Rita Gordon. They taught me to understand the needs of students. families, and service providers. Through my work at the DDDC, I witnessed pioneers in influencing statewide policy changes for individuals with developmental disabilities. The many talented individuals that I worked with have inspired me to focus my career on training and advocacy. I have served as a mentor to more than 100 practitioners, many of them new to the field of applied behavior analysis. My goal when mentoring or supervising new practitioners is to foster the same level of passion and pride for providing highquality, family-focused behavior analytic interventions.

I am also passionate about helping to establish programs in areas with limited access to behavior analytic services. As a member of the BACB Board of Directors, I have the opportunity to contribute to the continued growth of the field and protect consumers and practitioners of behavior analytic services.





Donna Sloan, M.A., BCBA Assistant Director - School and Adult Program, Assistant Director/Adult & Transitional Services, 2001 - Present

I have been an advocate for individuals with autism and their families for over 37 years. My career at the DDDC started in 2001 as the Assistant Director of Adult and Transition Services. In 2008 my role expanded to include oversight of the school program. My work at the DDDC has been shaped by the many students, adult clients and families that I have had the pleasure of working with and I continue to learn from them daily. I am most proud of the work that the staff at the DDDC has done in preparing our students to transition to adulthood and to live healthy and happy lives. It's exciting for me to see the potential in our students and help them and their families maximize that potential. Over the years our work at the DDDC has been impactful and touched many lives. I am proud and humbled by the experience.





Robert LaRue Ph.D., BCBA-D Clinical Professor/Director of Behavioral Services, 2004 -Present

I accepted a faculty position at the DDDC after having worked at the Kennedy Krieger/Marcus Institutes. Over the last 18+ years, the DDDC has provided me with the opportunity to develop as a professional. Everything I have accomplished can be attributed directly to the brilliant and compassionate staff of the DDDC.



Catriona Francis, Ed.M., BCBA Director, DDDC, Present

DDDC Field Worker, Classroom Assistant, Teacher, Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Director,1996

After a semester of fieldwork at the DDDC as part of the undergraduate Fieldwork in Psychology course, I knew that I wanted my professional future to involve working with individuals with autism. Upon the completion of my fieldwork experience and my graduation from Rutgers, I applied for and was accepted into a Classroom Assistant position in the school program at the DDDC. From my first day as a Classroom Assistant, I knew that the DDDC was an environment in which I would thrive professionally and where I would have the impact that was so important to me personally. The passion and dedication of a group of professionals working at the DDDC over the past 26 years has been so inspiring.



Lara Delmolino Gatley, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Executive Director, Present

Graduate Assistant; Home School Consultant, Assistant Director of Research and Training, DDDC Assistant Director, DDDC Director as a student 9/1/1994; as a staff/faculty 9/13/1999

I applied to the PhD program at Rutgers because I wanted to work with Sandra Harris.

My work at the DDDC has helped me continually connect my interests in providing direct service to people with autism and their families, supporting the research which helps us understand their needs and experiences, and to provide training to generations of students who become, advocates, researchers, and service providers.









Our Team

Faculty

Lara Delmolino Gatley Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of DDDC

Robert H. LaRue Ph.D., BCBA-D, Director of Behavioral Services

Staff

Catriona Francis Ed.M., BCBA, Director of DDDC

Debra Paone Ph.D., BCBA-D, Director of Training and Consultation

Marlene Brown M.S., BCBA, LBA, Associate Director of Consultation and Communications

Barbara Kristoff Ed.D., CCC-SLP, BCBA-D, Assistant Director/Principal of Douglass School

Donna L. Sloan M.A., BCBA, Assistant Director of Douglass Adult Program & Douglass School

Jill Atschinow Senior Department Administrator













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