We have had a busy spring and summer, with many grant writing initiatives. Last month we finished an active year in the Child Development Center and said goodbye to several CDC staff members at an end of year lunch. TRI summer activities include several major conferences and training sessions, as well as continued work on new grant applications. Save the date for the TRI summer party on August 25. I hope you all find time for relaxation while the Oregon weather is at its best.

TRI Sponsors Oregon Mentor Academy
Bonnie Morihara

The Oregon Teacher Recruitment and Mentoring, Transition to Teaching grant, managed by TRI, sponsored a 4-day Oregon Mentor Academy at WOU, June 19-22. Fifty beginning and mentor teachers came from throughout the state to learn coaching and communication skills for successful teaching and mentoring, under the expert guidance of national facilitator Steve Barkley. The Academy also included general and concurrent sessions focused on the needs of new and mentor teachers in high-need schools. There were 15 presenters. The event was enhanced by the knowledge and experience of public and private university faculty, K-12 teachers and administrators, the Oregon Education Association, and the Oregon Department of Education. TRI personnel involved in planning, implementing, and supporting the Academy included Gary Glasenapp, Nancy Ganson, Bonnie Morihara, Meredith Brodsky, Cindi Mafit, Debbie Kenyon, and Courtney York. In addition, Ella Taylor, Mark Shalock, Dianne Ferguson, and Meredith Brodsky served as presenters.

National Deaf-Blind Center Grant Award

TRI, in collaboration with the Helen Keller National Center and the Hilton/Perkins Program, received a grant award notification that our cooperative agreement for the National Technical Assistance & Dissemination Center for Children and Youth Who Are Deaf-Blind was approved for funding. The center will begin October 1, 2006 and is funded for five years for a total of $10.5 million. We are excited about the partnerships and new projects. We look forward to working with the state deaf-blind projects and other agencies to improve the outcomes and quality of life for children and youth who are deaf-blind and their families.
In 2002, the Ford Family Foundation (TFFF), Roseburg, Oregon, awarded TRI’s Evaluation and Research Group Office (ERGO) a grant to conduct a 3-year evaluation of the Foundation’s program to recruit and support teacher candidates for National Board Certification® by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards™ (NBPTS). Headed by Joe Hansen, all of ERGO participated in this project, including Laurel Cuthbertson, Mark Schalock, Bob Ayres, and an amazingly astute student worker, Laura Ogo.

Since 1993, the NBPTS has granted National Board Certification (NBC) to qualifying teacher candidates. NBPTS’s mission is, in part, “to advance the quality of teaching and learning by maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do.” Ken and Hallie Ford established TFFF in the 1950s. The foundation is a substantial supporter of rural communities and schools across Oregon, and strives to promote excellence in teaching and scholarship.

The NBC is a rigorous, performance-based, year-long assessment process based on a portfolio of exercises that teachers must complete, and a day-long assessment center experience. Achieving certification is not easy for many teachers, who can try again each year for up to 3 years. For example, only 28.6% of TFFF Program candidates were successful on their first attempt. After three attempts, the success rate increased to 42%, which reflects the national average. If a teacher achieves certification, the NBC is a 10-year “license” that is transportable and reputable across states, and in some states and districts, earns a teacher financial gain and notoriety.

Throughout the NBC process, candidates perform their usual teaching responsibilities and juggle families, school committee work, graduate coursework, and caring for ailing family members—we heard many stories. The ideal situation for an NBC candidate includes a supportive environment in and out of school. At the end of ERGO’s 3-year contract, TFFF had supported

224 NBC teacher candidates in rural Oregon communities (population under 30,000) and Siskiyou County, CA. TFFF provided much of the application fee for each candidate (approximately $3,000 at the time); the assistance of an on-demand, very accessible professional consultant for candidates; a preparation workshop; an e-mail “mentor” available throughout the process; informational mailings; and a post-process celebration for successful candidates.

ERGO’s formative and summative evaluation design relied heavily on triangulation—the use of multiple methods to answer a question—which helps to validate findings and ensure their reliability. We used a survey, interviews, site visits, and focus groups to collect information. The evaluation questions included the following. Who are the candidates and why did they choose to pursue NBC? How useful did the candidates find the various methods of support, encouragement, and facilitation? In what ways have the candidates’ teaching strategies changed as a result of their participation in the process? What are the positive effects of NBC on students, teachers, and schools? What evidence exists that student outcomes are affected by instruction from a teacher who is NBC, is a candidate for NBC, or has completed the NBC process? How do teachers who were not successful at gaining National Board Certification view this method of professional development, and what do they gain from it?

The majority of program participants agreed that going through the NBC process is an intense, enlightening professional development experience for a teacher, no matter how seasoned or early career. Overall, teachers believed their teaching practices had improved as a result of the process, and their principals reinforced that finding. As a result of participation, teachers believed their students were performing better and would perform better in the future. Participants expressed that they could not or would not have participated without the TFFF support program.
News from Hank Bersani

This is the official end of my year at TRI. My sabbatical ended June 26, and I am returning to the College of Education to be Chair of the Division of Special Education. But, as we are waiting to hear about three grant submissions that I have been involved in, including one on personnel preparation in high incidence disabilities, I am hoping to maintain some involvement with TRI in the future.

The American Association on Mental Retardation has officially changed their name. Effective Jan 1, 2007, it is the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). Last year, I was President Elect, and July 1, I began my term as President.

Heading Back Home

Sylvia Carnes

After nearly seven years with the Oregon Deafblind Project and the Teaching Research Institute, I am moving back to Texas. My husband and I have been feeling a pull to move back for the last year. Our grandchildren are growing up so quickly, and I want to be there for the swim meets, band concerts, etc.

As excited as I am about going home, I am equally sad to be leaving the wonderful northwest and the great people I have met. My job as the Coordinator of the Oregon Deafblind Project has helped me grow professionally. Jay Gense, our Project Director, the Deafblind Working Group, the NTAC folks, the staff at TRI, and of course, my wonderful office mates here in Eugene, have made my stay in Oregon wonderful.

I will be working in San Antonio as an Itinerant Teacher of the Visually Impaired. My experience teaching at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and with the Oregon Deafblind Project has given me a terrific background for this position. I will be working a teacher’s schedule, so will have summers off to enjoy my family.

Thanks to all of you for the support and friendship you have given me during my time in Oregon. I will have only fond memories of the time I have spent here.
Carnegie Corporation Award to Support Work in Teacher Preparation

A grant of $10,000 was awarded to the College of Education and TRI as part of WOU’s designation earlier this year as a member of the Teachers for a New Era (TNE) Learning Network. The funds will be used to help support two major initiatives.  
(1) Oversight, editing, and coordination of two volumes of empirical evidence and case studies on the Teacher Work Sample Methodology (TWSM). The two volumes will provide a needed resource on the nature of TWSM, its demands on faculty and students, and the strength of the evidence it provides related to the readiness of teacher candidates to function effectively in today’s standards-based schools and to help students make progress in states’ designated standards for learning.  
(2) Development and piloting of subject specific Teacher Work Sample requirements that document preservice teachers’ abilities to identify research and best practices essential for effective instruction within a specific content area. The project will also study ways in which the effectiveness of instruction within the TWSM can help students specifically meet state standards within a content area.

The TNE Learning Network is a forum of 30 higher education institutions dedicated to reforming teacher education. It is supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Annenberg Foundation and expands a previous network of eleven institutions funded by the Carnegie Corporation, the Annenberg Foundation, and the Ford Foundation, to redesign schools that prepare teachers. As the eleven TNE institutions approach the midpoint of their multi-year redesign of teacher education, they can share valuable lessons learned as well as benefit from the experience of other reform-minded institutions within the network.

Teacher Work Sample Conference

TRI and WOU’s College of Education and Division of Extended Programs hosted a national conference, Extending the Culture of Evidence: Teacher Work Sample Methodology and Other Promising Practices, July 19–21. The conference was also sponsored by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Education Commission for the States. Keynote speakers included Dr. Lee Shulman, President of the Carnegie Foundation, Dr. Sharon Robinson, President and CEO of AACTE, and Dr. Donna Gollnick, Senior Vice President of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education.

The field of teacher preparation continues to respond to the call for increased accountability, documentation, and evidence about what teacher candidates are prepared and able to do. Teacher Work Sample Methodology, which originated at WOU, continues to emerge as one of the more viable tools for demonstrating teacher candidates’ ability to effectively instruct students and impact their learning.

Dr. Hilda Rosselli, Dean, College of Education

**NTAC News**

NTAC conducted its annual parent workshop in collaboration with the National Family Association for Deaf-Blind on July 13–15 in Tampa, Florida. The theme was "Achieving the Vision!" and the focus was advocacy and leadership. Participants learned about key deaf-blind issues at state and national levels, leadership roles, and advocacy in areas such as communication, collaboration, and systems navigation.

NTAC will also participate in the OSEP Project Directors’ Conference, July 31–August 2. NTAC staff will present two regular sessions, one on providing effective technical assistance to underserved families, and another on using outcome evaluation in national and state TA delivery. NTAC will also have a poster session on the *Classroom Observation Instrument for Educational Environments Serving Students with Deaf-Blindness*. A meeting with the state deaf-blind projects will be held on August 3.

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**Data and Technology Services News**  
*Pattie Johnson*

The Systems Performance Review and Improvement team that developed a district level reporting system for special education administrators in Oregon has received funding to bring that same system of data reporting and accountability to the area of assessment for all students in Oregon, through secure district level reports. Jeff Denton, Andrea Fewx, Brian Johnson, and Mark Schalock will be working with Pattie Johnson to meet stringent timelines to have the system in place by the fall. We have hired a programmer, Bhavana Jaiswal, to assist us. She will work through November.

June 30, marked the conclusion of the multi-year Cook School project. Cook School is a teaching simulation for student teachers. Faculty in teacher education programs can choose to use it with their students. Hopefully, the simulation software will be purchased by a publishing house. Negotiations are currently in progress. The project has been led by Jerry Girod, with support from Mark Girod. Jeff Denton did the programming, with student help provided by Candace Fleener.

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**Summer at the Teaching Research Institute**
Members of the TRI’s Think-and-Link Email research team were recently awarded a new grant from the U.S. Department of Education. *TeenMail: Using Electronic Communication to Connect Teens with TBI to their Peers*, will be funded under the Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students with Disabilities Program. The project will begin October 1, 2006. McKay Moore Sohlberg, Ph.D., from the University of Oregon will serve as project director. From TRI, Ann Glang, Ph.D., and Bonnie Todis, Ph.D., will serve as consultants; Laurie Ehlhardt, Ph.D. will serve as project coordinator; and Cathy Thomas will administer all TRI-related aspects of the grant.

The project will develop and test the feasibility of a promising technological intervention to improve social outcomes for a growing and extremely challenging population of children—adolescents with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Adolescents with TBI have unique social, behavioral, cognitive, and academic challenges that can lead to problems with social interaction and result in the loss of a peer network. The project will build upon the success of *Think-and-Link Email*, a similar program for adults with TBI.

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When it comes to searching the Internet, there is no more successful or popular search engine than Google. Innovative technology and the size and relevance of its retrieved results have kept Google as the premier search engine for more than six years. Web search technology is a competitive field, and dynamic techniques and technologies continue to make their entrance onto the market hoping to become the next Google. Peggy Malloy and I had an opportunity to explore the features of a number of new and not so new search engines at a workshop at the OSU Valley Library. Here are some sites whose features may tempt you to try something different when you are searching for that elusive bit of information:

**Vivisimo** (vivisimo.com) clusters search results into subcategories that allow searchers to view results by groups that are conceptually related. It is especially useful if you are looking for something that is unfamiliar to you.

**Kartoo** (kartoo.com) is for those of you tired of the same old display format. It displays a conceptual map of search results. It is a metasearch engine, which means that it searches a number of search engines.

**Zapmeta** (zapmeta.com) is another metasearch engine that offers a number of useful features. Quicklook allows users to open an interactive window and browse a page without leaving the search results. It also has something called the WayBack machine that archives what a site looked like on a particular date. (It’s there . . . Teaching Research, December 12, 1998).

**Ujiko** (ujiko.com) is flashy. It makes use of a variety of customizing features that are accessed based on the number of searches you have performed.

**Search Engine Watch** (searchenginewatch.com) is a Web site that provides comprehensive information about these and other search engines.

Also, don’t forget to look for and make use of the Advanced Search Options on most search engines. There are many useful features to help you locate just exactly what you need.
Staff Spotlight: Marilyn Barlow

Marilyn Barlow grew up in Nevada and graduated from high school with a dream to move to Oregon. She began her freshman year at Oregon State University, planning to become a dental hygienist, but quickly discovered that it was not the career for her and that she was not ready to be a serious student. She returned to Nevada to study early childhood education. After getting married, she decided to return to Corvallis and pursue her original goal of obtaining a degree from OSU. She started out at Linn-Benton Community College to study accounting, had her first child, and left school to focus on her family. As she was raising two children, she returned to OSU to work on a degree in housing services for older adults. Her interest was prompted by close relationships with her own older relatives. She completed a Bachelor of Science degree in 1994, with a minor in gerontology. Encouraged by her professors to apply to a master’s degree program, and with significant scholarship support, she completed a graduate degree in family resource management, again with minor in gerontology. As she finished the master’s degree program, she was again encouraged to seek another advanced degree. Marilyn worked as a graduate research assistant at the Oregon Geriatric Education Center (OGEC) throughout her doctoral program, and completed her Ph.D. in 2003 in family resource management, with a focus on human development and gerontology.

Shortly after completing her degree, she was hired to work at the OGEC to conduct training and conferences on issues for older adults. However, when she saw a position opening at TRI, she decided to make a change and was very excited about the possibilities. She was hired to work on the secondary transition project with John Killoran and Pattie Johnson.

Marilyn has raised two children. Jaci is 25 and has just completed a master’s degree. She was married on July 9. Jared is 23 and a senior at Simon Frasier University, majoring in theater arts. Marilyn and her family have hosted a student from Ecuador for six years. Jose Cedeno has lived with them since he was a high school student and is now an industrial engineering major at OSU and a computer science devotee. “Inviting Jose to come live with us was one of the best decisions I ever made.” When not at TRI, Marilyn takes care of her dogs and likes to garden, travel, read, quilt, write children’s books, and go to museums and the theater. She also does quite a bit of caregiving for family and friends.

Marilyn likes working at TRI, mainly because of the people. It’s also important to her that the work being done here is making a positive difference in people’s lives.