We are into a busy fall with promotion review committee meetings, several new grants beginning, and annual performance reviews almost completed for every non-retired faculty member. The summer party was a great success and TRI’s Social Committee is planning a time to celebrate and socialize again in November. Our annual staff meeting will be held in the Werner Center Columbia Room on Thursday, October 26, from 10:00 to 3:00.

**Triumatic Brain Injury Grant Award**

The Eugene TBI workgroup received notice this week that they have been awarded a five-year, $1.5 million grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to study hospital to school transition intervention for children who have experienced traumatic brain injury (TBI). Ann Glang and Bonnie Todis will lead the project, which begins October 1. The grant is the first Disability Rehabilitation Research Project funded by NIDRR that is specifically focused on the needs of children and youth with TBI and was the only one funded in the country.

A key factor in the under-identification of students with TBI, and lack of appropriate services, is weak or non-existent links between hospitals that treat students following injury and schools that educate them. Hospitals and schools have limited understanding of one another’s worlds, and poor communication and coordination efforts. This new project, in conjunction with TRI-Eugene’s current research projects on school outcomes for students with TBI, will allow us to explore creative solutions to this complex problem.

Our research team will work closely with hospital personnel, parents, and teachers of children with TBI to develop a process to improve communication between hospitals and schools when students return to school following hospitalization. Following focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, we will refine and pilot test the TBI Transition System (T-BITS), an intervention that includes components designed for all three systems—hospital, school, and family—that are essential for the promotion of child success at school. The effectiveness of the T-BITS intervention will then be tested in a randomized controlled study in Oregon and Colorado. The intervention will be made available nationwide through partnership with the TBI Technical Assistance Center and the Brain Injury Association of America.
ReadOregon is a five-university collaborative program coordinated through TRI. It offers online graduate-level literacy courses that enable classroom teachers to improve literacy teaching and assessment of PK-12 students and a 24-credit Teacher Standards and Practices Commission-approved reading endorsement program. ReadOregon draws on the combined expertise of literacy faculty at five public universities: Eastern Oregon University, Oregon State University, Portland State University, Southern Oregon University, and Western Oregon University. Forty-three online courses are offered in six thematic areas: literacy foundations, literacy strategies and methods, literacy for diverse learners, literacy assessment, literacy leadership, and literature. Courses are offered online so that teachers throughout the state can participate. Nine to eighteen courses plus practica experiences are offered each term.

Original funding for development of the online courses and shared reading endorsement program was through a grant from the federal Fund to Improve Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). Management of the program moved from the Oregon University System to TRI in July 2004 during a reorganization of the OUS Chancellor’s Office and Bonnie Morihara’s relocation to TRI. In recognition of ReadOregon’s support of literacy education for teachers throughout the state, the Oregon Department of Education has provided funding for centralized coordination of the program since December 2005.

Two Unique Features of ReadOregon
- The collaborative agreed to a common tuition at all five universities.
- Teachers are free to take courses from any of the five universities to fulfill their reading endorsement requirements. This greatly increases course options for teachers and takes advantage of the combined literacy expertise of five universities.

Who is Taking ReadOregon Courses?
Since spring 2003, 523 teachers have taken ReadOregon courses and 95 of these have completed the reading endorsement program. Teachers in 35 of 36 Oregon counties have taken ReadOregon courses, demonstrating the statewide appeal and impact of the program. Other statistics about the 523 teachers are shown in the following chart.

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<th>Project Spotlight: ReadOregon</th>
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<td>Bonnie Morihara</td>
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Centralized Coordination of ReadOregon at TRI
As ReadOregon Coordinator, Bonnie Morihara is responsible for website maintenance, updates and memos to students and faculty, student information-gathering and database-tracking, collection of faculty resumes and course syllabi, distribution of centrally-organized information to each university, information dissemination about the program, periodic program reviews to sustain program quality and integrity, and responding to email and telephone questions. Bonnie also teaches two ReadOregon courses for Western Oregon University: READ 556–Literacy and Cultural Competence and READ 541–Literacy and the Internet.

To learn more about ReadOregon programs, go to http://ReadOregon.org. Specific pages on the site that may be of interest to TRI faculty include Reading Resource Links (http://readoregon.org/rdg_resources.htm) and Key Organizational/Resource Links in Teacher Education (http://readoregon.org/telinks.htm). Both serve as gateways to a wealth of valuable Internet resources.

Study of Cochlear Implants in Children Who Are Deaf-blind
Ella Taylor

Currently, very little information is available about children who are deaf-blind and have cochlear implants. The Outcomes for Children Who Are Deaf-Blind after Cochlear Implantation (CIDB) Project is studying the impact of cochlear implantation on auditory perception, language acquisition, and receptive and expressive communication. The primary goal of the study is to increase knowledge about this population. The project plans to include 250 children.

At the beginning of the study, four assessment questionnaires are completed for each child: three by family members and one by a state deaf-blind project staff member based on interactions with the child. Follow-up assessments depend on how long a child has had an implant.

The CIDB Project is a joint effort by TRI, the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas, and the Midwest Ear Institute at St. Luke’s Hospital. Fifteen state deaf-blind projects are participating: California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

Ann Glang Serves on CDC Expert Panel
Ann Glang was invited by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to serve on a Traumatic Brain Injury Needs Assessment Expert Panel. The CDC recently completed an extensive literature and website review to identify existing resources in the field of traumatic brain injury and is now planning a new national educational initiative. The expert panel’s input will help ensure the success of the initiative. The first meeting took place on September 12 at the CDC’s Global Communications Center in Atlanta, GA.
Research in the Rockies Conference

John Reiman, Kat Stremel, Ella Taylor, and Peggy Malloy recently attended a conference on research in children with low-incidence disabilities in Vail, Colorado. The conference, called "Research in the Rockies," took place September 14-16 and was sponsored by the National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities, which is based at the University of Northern Colorado.

A primary purpose of the conference was to provide an opportunity for students who are seeking doctoral degrees through the National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment program to share their research interests with one another and other conference participants. A number of the students, including Shawn Sweet-Barnard, who used to work at TRI on the NTAC project, are interested in research related to children who are deaf-blind and it was great to have an opportunity to talk to them both informally and during a roundtable discussion on deaf-blindness.

Conference session topics were focused primarily on how to conduct research, but there were two sessions that described specific research areas—access to the general curriculum and literacy. Other topics included program evaluation, issues to consider related to qualitative and quantitative research methods, and a federal perspective by Lou Danielson, from the US Department of Education.

A Lovely Summer’s Eve
Nancy Ganson

On Friday August 25, we gathered for the annual TRI Summer party. Our wonderful hosts Meredith and Gerry Brodsky graciously opened their home for our festivities again this year. It was an ideal summer evening and the beautiful guitar music of Alfredo Muro created the perfect background for the Brodsky's back yard where tables were set around the gardens. Even the neighbors enjoyed the music and joined in a big round of applause for the performance. We had a great spread with a huge brisket as the centerpiece of our feast, rounded out by numerous hors d’oeuvres, side dishes, and delicious deserts. No one went away hungry and we all had an opportunity to enjoy each other’s company and some tasty wines. Nary a work-related word was spoken. Thanks to Meredith and Gerry, it was lovely summer’s eve.
Staff Spotlight: Nancy Ganson

Nancy Ganson grew up in Kansas City, Missouri and attended Southwest Missouri State University on a theater scholarship. She completed a bachelor of fine arts degree in theater and communications in 1981 and was the first in her family to finish college in four years. She wrote her senior thesis on designing and opening a dinner theater. After graduation she worked as a cocktail waitress in a high-end restaurant in Kansas City, where she made her lifetime highest earnings. Her next job was with a paving construction company. Her boss was interested in opening a dinner theater and Nancy put her senior paper experience to work. Unfortunately, the company went bankrupt before the theater became a reality. She then became the banquet director for the Wooden Nickel Restaurant in Springfield, MO. On a visit to Kansas City, she was talked into applying for a position at a new downtown hotel, the Vista International, for the promise of lunch at the Top of the Crown restaurant, and was hired a day later as the front office supervisor and trainer.

She met her future husband, Greg, in Kansas City when he was in town for the NAIA basketball tournament and a year later, in 1986, followed him to Monmouth. Nancy worked at the Executive Inn in Salem and the US Bank in Monmouth before moving to Colorado in 1989 to work in her family’s property management business. She returned to Oregon in 1991 after marrying Greg in Breckenridge, CO and made Monmouth her home. Although she initially planned to develop her own landscaping business, Debbie Kenyon talked her into working at Kelley Services. The Kelley Services work took Nancy to a variety of jobs in Salem, Corvallis, Albany, and McMinnville. She also worked at Away Travel where her responsibilities included making Governor Kitzhaber’s travel arrangements and working on travel for TRI. She ended up coming to work at TRI in 1998 and claims that she will be here until she retires. At TRI, Nancy has worked with NTAC, the teacher quality grants, and is the administrative assistant to the director.

Nancy’s future plans include retiring (at an appropriate age), traveling to Greece and Italy, and biking the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail. When not at TRI, Nancy likes to play with her adorable dog Beau, read, and follow college sports. She is currently active in an NFL Fantasy Football League. Her other passion is her role as aunt to Dallas, Crosby, Gabe, Betty, and Samantha.

New Publication

Taylor, Ella L., Stremel Kathleen, & Steele, Nancy. (2006). Classroom Observation Instrument for Educational Environments Serving Students with Deaf-Blindness. Monmouth, OR: NTAC, The Teaching Research Institute, Western Oregon University. This instrument is designed to assist in the identification of model classrooms that serve students with severe and profound disabilities, including students with deaf-blindness. It has three main components: a teacher interview, a student cumulative folder review, and a classroom observation rubric. Available on the web: http://dblink.org/pdf/coi-2006.pdf
New TBI Regional Services Model
Lauren Loos

TRI-Eugene and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) are collaborating to build a regional infrastructure—the TBI Regional Services Model—that will expand access and build state capacity for educational services for students with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Given the significant challenges faced by many students with TBI and by their parents and educators, TBI was recently designated a regionally eligible low-incidence disability through Oregon Senate Bill 167A. ODE’s eight regional programs for children with low-incidence disabilities will now include services for children with TBI.

The TBI Regional Services Model will be implemented in stages over the next 4 years. It will optimize existing TBI resources including TRI’s TBI Consulting Team and the Oregon Brain Injury Resource Network, and regional programs and school districts. TRI will be responsible for recruiting, training, and providing ongoing technical assistance to an interdisciplinary team of school-based professionals who provide consulting services to school districts and families of students with TBI throughout Oregon. Each of the eight regional low-incidence programs will be linked to the model through a regional program TBI liaison who will be responsible for identifying regional training needs, collaborating with TBI Consulting Team members to provide training, assisting with the correct identification of students with TBI, and arranging referrals for students to meet with TBI Educational Team members. The regional TBI program liaisons, in conjunction with TRI, will provide both technical assistance and TBI awareness training to school districts.

ODE, TRI-Eugene faculty, and the management team that represents the eight regional programs have spent the past year developing goals and a general framework for the TBI Regional Services Model. In May 2006, under the coordination of Lauren Loos, Ann Glang, Don Hood, and Bonnie Todis, TRI conducted a focus group comprised of educators, administrators, and TBI consulting team members to refine this framework to better serve students with TBI. It will be submitted to state advisory groups for further suggestions prior to implementation.

Happy 50th Cindi!