Rudd Chair Annual Report, 2012

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Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

The Rudd Family Foundation Chair is located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Psychology Department and is affiliated with the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Families. The program conducts state-of-the-art research on the psychology of adoption that will impact policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels. It also trains postdoctoral scholars, graduate students, and undergraduate students in theories and methods needed for the study of adoption. Conferences, workshops, and publications disseminate research-based information needed by practitioners, policy makers, and the public. And through key community partnerships, the Rudd Adoption Research Program demonstrates how adoption research can transform policy and practice for the benefit of all whose lives are touched by adoption.
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Dear Friends,

I invite you to explore this 2012 Annual Report of the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. This year brought new research advances, deepening community collaborations, and building capacity in the field for excellence in adoption research.

Academic year 2012 – 2013 celebrates the fifth anniversary of the Rudd Adoption Research Program, and it is exciting to reflect on how our reach has extended in that short time.

The annual conference has grown from a one day meeting with 10 speakers and 100 participants to a two day conference with 45 speakers and over 200 participants.

The Adoption Mentoring Partnership has grown from its first cohort of 6 mentors (UMass students who were adopted) and 6 mentees (adopted children from the Amherst community) to 14 matches, and growing. The program is seen as a national model.

The Re-Envisioning Foster Care initiative has grown from a regional project to a national movement, with western Massachusetts as its epicenter.

The Psychology of Adoption intensive advanced undergraduate seminar has served over 100 students from UMass and the Five Colleges. Over 25 advanced undergraduates aspiring to graduate school have received research mentoring in the Rudd adoption lab.

Research conducted by Rudd Adoption Research Program faculty, staff, and students continues to appear in the best journals and handbooks in the field.

Technology expands the program’s reach through our YouTube Channel (with videos from the conferences), Facebook page (with adoption news and events), website (with useful information for the public), and ScholarWorks (archiving papers for public dissemination).

In this report, you will also read about the important work being conducted by graduate students and postdocs mentored through the Rudd Program. This year, I would especially like to congratulate my first three clinical doctoral students at UMass: Quade French, Holly Grant-Marsney, and Danila Musante, all of whom successfully navigated the clinical internship match process. Next year, they will be applying their knowledge of adoption in clinical sites in Santa Cruz, CA: Durham, NH, and Cambridge, MA. Postdoc Rachel Farr was promoted to Research Assistant Professor of Psychology and has been awarded a grant from the American Psychological Foundation to extend her Contemporary Adoptive Families Study longitudinally.

The ripple effect from the Rudd Chair continues to grow, as we seek to conduct research on significant adoption issues and connect that work with practitioners, policymakers, and persons whose lives have been touched by adoption. The wisdom and experience provided by our new Advisory Board will guide us as we eagerly move forward into our next five years. And our continuing thanks go to Andrew and Virginia Rudd, whose vision and generosity established the Rudd Chair and made all of this possible.

I invite you to review this report of our activities for 2012 and see for yourself the exciting ways in which the programs developed through the auspices of the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology have developed since its inception. As always, thank you for your interest and your support.

With best wishes,

[Signature]

Harold D. Grotevant, Ph.D.
The Rudd Adoption Research Program is one vehicle through which the activities of the Rudd Chair are carried out. The program is located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Psychology Department and is closely affiliated with the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Families.

The Rudd Adoption Research Program advances knowledge about the psychology of adoption through original research, mentors the next generation of adoption-competent researchers, engages with community partners to incubate and evaluate innovative programs that have potential for national impact, and provides research-based information to influence practice and policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

The program seeks to develop synergy among scientists, practitioners, and policymakers from varied disciplines who share interests in the many topics relevant to adoption. The ultimate goal of these activities is to contribute to evidence-informed practice in adoption and to provide research-based information that will influence policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

The Rudd Program continues to be involved with two exciting university–community collaborations: the Adoption Mentoring Partnership and Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America. In addition, the Rudd Program is a key partner in a new initiative aimed at stimulating interaction among adoption professionals at all levels: the Mellon Mutual Mentoring Team. The work of these three community partnerships cuts across all program goals, as you will see in their descriptions that follow.
Adoption Mentoring Partnership

“When my mentee and I talk about my future or even my college workload he seems really interested. This makes me want to work harder to continue to be a good role model and influence in his life.”
- Story Recounted by a Mentor

The Adoption Mentoring Partnership was established over three years ago to directly address the lack of school and community support and understanding for adoptees and their families that were voiced by adoptive parents in the Amherst, Massachusetts area. By providing adopted children with a mentor who has also experienced the challenges related to adoption, race, and ethnicity, the child is introduced to a new friend and his or her family is matched with an invaluable resource: a person who has experienced the challenges of negotiating a balance between the culture of one’s adoptive parents, one’s own birth heritage and culture, and one’s own identity as an adopted person. In this truly collaborative undertaking, the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP) is a joint venture between the Rudd Adoption Research Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County, Adoption Journeys, and the Amherst Regional School District. The program’s goal is to provide adopted children with adopted mentors who can help them better negotiate complex issues such as adoption, race, and ethnicity, and to also provide support networks for both the mentors and the parents, in a comprehensive, unified program structure.

AMP utilizes the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County’s existing best-practices mentoring model. Mentor–mentee matches receive thorough screening, a rigorous intake process, match support contact, and clinical supervision. The matches are required to spend 3-5 hours a week, once a week in each other’s company. In addition to individual monthly supervision with a BBBS case manager, the adopted mentors also meet bi-weekly in a clinically supervised seminar to discuss the latest research in both adoption and mentoring; share perspectives on their matches and activities; and discuss, unpack, and process their own adoption stories.

In 2012, AMP included 14 matched pairs: 7 returned from prior years and 7 were new. A real sign of program success is that matches have continued far beyond the required one year of participation. Many mentors have
stated that the mentor group meetings continue to remain the only place they feel comfortable talking about their challenges with adoption, allowing AMP to support and enrich the lives of the mentors as well as the mentees. For his senior honors project, mentor Timothy Dillon created a prototype for a companion program linking the mentees together for socialization. He presented his project, “Social Normalization and the Formation of an Adoptive Identity,” at the Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference in April, 2012.

A strong research component has been built into AMP since its beginning. Mentors are being interviewed and completing questionnaires about their experiences and attitudes several times a year; a comparison group of adopted college students who are not mentors is also completing those measures. Mentees’ parents are being interviewed about their expectations and experiences, and a detailed evaluation of the mentees’ experiences is being planned. In light of the continued community interest and success of the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, efforts are being undertaken to fully document and research aspects of program development. With solid evaluation research undergirding the program, next steps will be to make the program available for replication at other sites across the U.S. In 2012, Quade French, Jen Dolan, and Hal Grotevant presented a workshop on AMP at the meeting of the North American Council on Adoptable Children in Crystal City, VA. In 2013, they will present at the National Mentoring Summit.

AMP benefits from its connection to the world of academics and adoption research through the involvement of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. Further, it is strengthened by the time-tested mentoring model developed by Big Brothers Big Sisters; this nationally recognized program can only further community support and interest as well. As a direct result of these strengths of the collaborative partners, AMP is uniquely positioned to expand as an effective intervention in the lives of adopted children and adopted emerging adults.

“I did not anticipate how meaningful this relationship would become to my daughter. It gives me peace of mind to know that my daughter will have a positive role-model in her life who is also adopted.”

– Parent

Funding for AMP has come from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, the Beveridge Family Foundation, the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County, and private donors.

“A comprehensive overview of the program is now available online, as follows:


PHOTO: Honors student and AMP mentor Timothy Dillon presents his honors project at the Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference in April, 2012.

“This program has helped me feel less alone as an adopted person. I don’t feel like the only one on campus who is adopted.”

– Mentor
"Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America is creating collaborative social change on behalf of our nation’s children and youth who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care. Our goal is to ensure that every child is rooted in family and community. Jen Dolan and Hal Grotevant have been active partners in moving this process forward and making sure that our programs are grounded in research.”

- Judy Cockerton, Founder and CEO, Treehouse Foundation

Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) seeks to change the culture and practice of how we perceive and support children and youth in the public foster care system. The vision of REFCA is that all children and youth who experience foster care are connected to stable, loving families and caring communities of individuals in order to ensure their health and well-being so that they can lead productive lives.

The Rudd Adoption Research Program (Hal Grotevant & Jen Dolan) was one of the original conveners of this initiative, along with the Treehouse Foundation (Judy Cockerton, Kerry Homstead), and Friends of Children (Jane Lyons). The initiative has now expanded considerably to include other community stakeholders, including the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

The work is initially being conducted in the Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin County region of Western Massachusetts, an incubator for a nation-wide model. REFCA envisions a collaborative, multi-sector and active “lab” that engages individuals and organizations in a vital process of dialogue, engagement, reflection and action over time to support change and positive outcomes for youth in care.

The Rudd Program was a major partner in the third Re-Envisioning Foster Care conference, which attracted over 100 leaders to Holyoke Community College on May 31, 2012. The group heard from leaders and innovators across the United States, including Vanessa Diffenbaugh of the Camellia Network, Derenda Schubert from the Bridge Meadows Community in Portland Oregon, Judge Lillian Miranda on Transitional Youth Housing, and more. Marianne Hughes of the Interactive Institute for Social Change in Boston facilitated a session to guide formulation of a road map and implementation plan for REFCA work.
Three key issues facing those concerned with children in care are organizing the work of the Initiative. Here are just a few examples of the work in progress:

**“Aging out” of Foster Care without a Permanent Family**
- launched HEROES (Helping Everyone Receive Our Everyday Stories) youth leadership group
- created post-high school transition support network
- investigated best practices for transitional youth housing

**Educational Continuity for Children Whose Lives are Disrupted by Foster Care**
- developed early childhood wellness project
- continued planning to import More Than Words job / life skills model
- created new early childhood literacy partnerships

**Permanent Family for Every Child**
- launched new rolling MAPP trainings for prospective foster and adoptive families in Springfield / Holyoke DCF offices
- created and distributed survey on training needs
- planned survey of foster & adoptive parents to identify resources and needs

The Rudd Program is continuing to conduct an evaluation of the first five years’ work of the Treehouse Community at Easthampton Meadows, documenting the unique history of this innovative community from the perspectives of its founder, staff, community volunteers, adoptive parents, teens (adopted from foster care), and elders who reside at the Treehouse Community. The experiences of those involved with this unique intergenerational intentional community have much to teach us about novel approaches to meeting the needs of youth in care.

Our partnership with the Re-Envisioning Foster Care Initiative was highlighted when U.S. Representative Karen Bass and staff of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth visited the Pioneer Valley to learn about our innovative work. Many partners from the region, including the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, described the important role that REFCA is playing on behalf of children in care.

A very special recognition was received in 2012 by REFCA lead partner and Treehouse Foundation CEO and Founder, Judy Cockerton. Judy received the $100,000 Purpose Prize for enriching the lives of foster care children in new and creative ways and for intergenerational innovation. The prize was awarded by encore.org and AARP, and its widespread publicity has already enriched the national conversation about best practices for children experiencing foster care.

Funding for Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America has come from the project conveners: Treehouse Foundation, Friends of Children, Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass Amherst, and from private donors.
Mellon Mutual Mentoring Project

Adoption scholars affiliated with the Rudd Program, led by Dr. Jennifer McDermott, Assistant Professor of Psychology at UMass, received support during 2011 – 2012 to form a mutual mentoring team focused on adoption. The purpose of the project was to bolster the research programs related to adoption and foster care of faculty and trainees across the Five College Consortium (UMass, Mt. Holyoke, Smith, Hampshire, and Amherst Colleges). Principal Investigator Jennifer McDermott is joined by co-investigators Patricia Ramsey (Professor of Psychology, Mt. Holyoke College), and Hal Grotevant, Jen Dolan, and Rachel Farr from the Rudd Program.

One activity in this initiative has been to design and conduct a needs-based survey of adoption-related issues across the region (Massachusetts Survey of Kinship, Foster and Adoption Placements; MSKFAP). Results of this assessment will be shared with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families and colleagues involved with the Re-envisioning Foster Care in America initiative. This survey also forms the basis for the creation of a database of families in Western Massachusetts willing to participate in research studies assessing family dynamics and developmental processes directly influenced by adoption, foster, and kinship care.

The second project aim is to cultivate the capacity for high quality adoption and foster care science in junior faculty and trainees by working with leaders in the field conducting integrated and translational research. This mentoring provides junior faculty with guidance in establishing viable programs of research through which to secure external funding. Outside funding will bring new scientists on campus in the form of graduate and post-doctoral students. Accomplishment of these aims will enhance superior adoption and fostering research within our community that in turn will have the capacity to inform policy and practice at the local, state and national levels.

“The connections formed through the mutual mentoring model will help junior faculty more effectively conduct research and secure independent funding in the field of adoption research.”

-- Jennifer Martin McDermott, Assistant Professor of Psychology
The MSKFAP survey has been designed and pilot-tested and will be disseminated in spring, 2013. This project has involved faculty, post-doc, graduate and undergraduate student participation and collaboration with local child and family welfare agencies. The Mellon grant has also supported campus visits by two research faculty, Dr. Philip Fisher of the University of Oregon and Dr. Stacy Drury of Tulane University, as well as Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao, a clinician, trainer, and lecturer in the field of adoption from Cambridge, Mass.

After the Mellon grant has ended, its work of engaging adoption scholars at all levels and linking with community needs will be continued by the Rudd Adoption Research Program.

*Funding for the Mellon Mutual Mentoring Team Project is from the UMass Center for Teaching & Faculty Development’s Mutual Mentoring Initiative, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.*
Rudd Adoption Research Program Goals
Advancing Knowledge about the Psychology of Adoption

Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project

The Rudd Adoption Research Program is currently home to two major adoption studies: the Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project (Hal Grotevant, Principal Investigator) and the Contemporary Adoptive Families Study (Rachel Farr, Principal Investigator). In addition, research data are being collected in association with the Adoption Mentoring Partnership and Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America partnerships; see the “Community Partnerships” section for details on the latter two projects.

Dr. Grotevant continued to serve as the Principal Investigator on the Minnesota / Texas Adoption Research Project (MTARP), a longitudinal research study that focuses on the consequences of variations in openness in adoption arrangements for all members of the adoptive kinship network: birthmothers, adoptive parents, and adopted children, and for the relationships within these family systems. The sample includes children adopted domestically as infants through private adoption agencies across the United States. The project was begun in the mid-1980s in collaboration with Dr. Ruth G. McRoy, Ruby Lee Piester Centennial Professor Emerita at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work and currently the Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professor in the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work. Dr. Grotevant and colleagues have completed three waves of this longitudinal study: when the adopted children were school age, adolescents, and emerging adults.

A recent study to be published in the Journal of Adolescent Research (Farr, Grant-Marsney, Musante, Grotevant, & Wrobel, in press) revealed that the openness arrangements experienced by adopted emerging adults (age 20 – 28) were complex, variable, and dynamic. Most emerging adult adoptees had had some form of contact with birth family members in their lifetime. Although the majority did not have current contact with birth mothers, birth fathers, or other birth relatives, a sizable minority reported current contact with birth mothers and other birth relatives (usually a grandparent or sibling). Fewer adoptees had contact with birth fathers. For those with contact with birth relatives, contact varied from rare (once a year or less) to frequent (once a month or one extended visit per year). The type of contact varied, but phone calls and visits were the most commonly reported forms of contact with birth mothers, birth fathers, and other birth relatives. Multiple types of contact, such as email, gifts, and photos, were also common. Thus, frequency and type of contact, as well as with whom contact occurred, were notably heterogeneous. These findings parallel earlier findings of individual variation in contact among this sample as adolescents (Grotevant et al., 2007).

Emerging adult adoptees’ satisfaction with contact with birth families was moderate overall. Satisfaction was highest among those with ongoing contact with birth parents, including meetings. Consistent with earlier MTARP results, satisfaction with contact was higher among adult adoptees with more, rather than less, contact with birth mothers and
The results extend the literature by indicating that openness is important for adoptees across the lifespan, from childhood into adulthood.

Data are now being collected for the fourth wave of MTARP. The target children are now in their mid-20s to mid-30s, entering committed relationships and building their own families. These data are laying the foundation for a major grant application in progress for the National Institutes of Health, “Pathways to Partnering and Parenting in Adopted Young Adults,” which will use the four waves of MTARP and four waves of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health to examine how adopted young adults develop committed relationships and build families. Work on this grant application is being facilitated by Dr. Grotevant’s appointment as Faculty Research Scholar in the Center for Research on Families during 2012 – 2013.

Primary support for the Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project has come from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Science Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, and the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology, UMass Amherst.

Contemporary Adoptive Families Study

Dr. Rachel Farr, Research Assistant Professor of Psychology (and former postdoc with the Rudd Program), has actively contributed to new knowledge about the psychology of adoption through her Contemporary Adoptive Families Study, a large study of adoptive families from across the United States, headed by lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parenting couples, all of whom had completed domestic infant adoptions. The study has examined the ways in which parental sexual orientation impacts child outcomes, parenting, and family dynamics in adoptive families with young children.

Farr’s dissertation research, completed with her graduate advisor, Dr. Charlotte J. Patterson at the University of Virginia, is currently in press in the journal Child Development. The article focuses on coparenting, or the ways in which two parents work together to care for their children, among a sample of lesbian, gay, and heterosexual couples with preschool-age children adopted at birth. While coparenting has found been to be linked with children’s behavior in families with heterosexual parents, few studies have addressed this topic among families with lesbian and gay parents or among adoptive families.

The research revealed that adoptive lesbian and gay couples were more likely than adoptive heterosexual couples to share parenting tasks evenly. Heterosexual couples, in contrast, were more likely to specialize; in other words, mothers did more childcare than did fathers. Observational data were consistent with this pattern – lesbian and gay couples participated equally during family interaction, while mothers participated significantly more than fathers in the heterosexual couples. All couples, on average, showed more supportive than undermining coparenting behaviors during family interaction, but several differences emerged among couple types. The study next explored how couples’ coparenting dynamics were associated with children’s behavior problems. Actual divisions of labor were unrelated to children’s adjustment, but parental satisfaction with their arrangements was strongly associated with children’s adjustment. The best predictors of child behavior problems were observed competition between parents and dissatisfaction with division of childcare labor – neither of which differed by parental sexual orientation.

Overall, lesbian and gay couples were likely to share childcare tasks, whereas heterosexual couples were likely to specialize. These findings suggest the possibility that lesbian and gay couples are creating new ways to live together and rear children, outside of traditional gender roles. Furthermore, aspects of coparenting emerged as more important correlates of child outcomes than did parental sexual orientation. Parental sexual orientation was linked more with qualitative differences in family experiences than with differences in outcomes for children. These findings contribute new information about how lesbian and gay adoptive couples divide childcare labor; as well as about how coparenting shapes child development in diverse family structures. The results are also important to adoption professionals who work with current and prospective adoptive parents.

The Contemporary Adoptive Families Study has received funding from the Williams Institute at UCLA and the Lesbian Health Fund (awarded to Charlotte J. Patterson), the American Psychological Association Dissertation Award (awarded to Rachel Farr), and the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology, UMass Amherst.
The Rudd Adoption Research Program, in partnership with the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, sponsored the fourth annual Rudd Adoption conference, “New Worlds of Adoption: Navigating the Teen Years,” on March 30, 2012 in the Student Union of UMass Amherst. Conference registration of approximately 250 exceeded that of all prior conferences.

Dr. Megan R. Gunnar, Regents Professor and Director of the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota, delivered the keynote address: “Post-Institutionalized Children Become Teenagers: Early Deprivation and the Developing Teen Brain.” Her presentation provided current information about knowledge that neuroscience is contributing to the understanding of children’s development after adoption, particularly for children who experienced significant deprivation prior to placement. A panel of researchers and clinicians responded to Professor Gunnar’s keynote: Sally Powers (UMass Amherst, panel chair); David Scherer (UMass Amherst), Susan Smith (Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute), John Sobraske (private practice clinician, Rochester NY), and Ellen Pinderhughes (Tufts University).

The conference also included 20 posters describing current research and innovative programs.

**Afternoon concurrent sessions included the following:**

“Who Am I? Where Do I Belong?”
with David Brodzinsky and Sally Popper

“Adolescents and Identity”
with Amanda Baden and Jeanne Howard

“Youth Speak: The Teen Years from the Inside Out”
with Kim Stevens and a panel of teens who have experienced foster care and/or adoption

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**Fascinating information and great delivery. Interesting, educational, complex, but explained in a way that I understood and can wrap my head around and could draw connections to my work.”**
- Conference Participant on Dr. Gunnar’s Talk
“Resources and Opportunities for Students and New Professionals Focused on Adoption”
with Abbie Goldberg and Rachel Farr

“A Adoption and the Internet: Untangling the Web”
with Adam Pertman and Mary Fournier

“Medical Perspectives on International Adoption: Adolescent Growth, Health, and Development”
with Dana Johnson and Laurie Miller

“Experiences of Adolescent Birth Parents”
with Ruth McRoy and a panel of birth parents

The day prior to the 2012 conference, the Rudd Program hosted the annual meeting of the Evan B. Donaldson Senior Fellows for a discussion of the topic, “Rethinking Adoption in the 21st Century.” Senior Fellows included Amanda Baden, Abbie Goldberg, Hal Grotevant, Dana Johnson, Laurie Miller, and Ellen Pinderhughes; EBD Senior Staff included David Brodzinsky, Martha Henry, Jeanne Howard, Adam Pertman, and Susan Smith. Participating Rudd Program staff included Jen Dolan and Rachel Farr.

Plans are now well underway for the Fifth Rudd Conference, “New Worlds of Adoption: Contact between Adoptive and Birth Families: What Works?” to be held April 11 – 12, 2013 at UMass Amherst. Information about the upcoming and past conferences may be found at:
http://psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/annualconference/

Presentations from the 2011 and 2012 conferences are available on the Rudd Adoption Research Program YouTube Channel, where they can be watched at any time, by anyone, anywhere, at no cost. Visit us at: http://youtube.com/user/RuddAdoption/videos/

“As a parent and not a clinician, it was absolutely incredible to be exposed to all of the current research and discussion around adoption and transracial adoption. I hope to make more of these conferences in the future.”
- Parent Participant
Communication and Dissemination

The Rudd Chair has a strong presence on the internet, using the latest technology to inform and network with others. Here are just a few examples of current tech projects:

**YouTube Channel: The Rudd Adoption Research Program**

The Rudd Adoption Research Program YouTube Channel disseminates videos from our prior conferences at no cost to viewers. This fulfills an important part of the Rudd Program mission, of connecting adoption research with practitioners, policy makers, and the public.

http://www.youtube.com/user/RuddAdoption/videos

**Facebook: Rudd Adoption Research Program**

The Rudd Program Facebook page includes current news about the program as well as links to internet news about adoption research, practice, and policy. Please visit, “like” us, and subscribe to our newsfeed.

http://www.facebook.com/RuddAdoptionResearchProgram

**Home Page: Rudd Chair**

The Rudd Chair home page in the Department of Psychology contains up-to-date information about the activities of the Chair, including news about current and past conferences as well as the program’s community partnerships.

http://www.psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/

http://www.psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/annualconference/

**ScholarWorks**

ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst is a digital repository for the research and scholarly output of members of the University of Massachusetts Amherst community, administered by the UMass Amherst Libraries. The Rudd Adoption Research Program has its own page, hosting information about its annual conference, doctoral dissertations, masters theses, presentations, and publications.

http://scholarworks.umass.edu/rudd/
Building Capacity for Excellence in Adoption Research

Adoption Research Lab Graduate Students

Quade French

Quade French (BS, Psychology, Univ of California San Diego; MA, Clinical Psychology, California State University Northridge) is a fourth-year doctoral student in clinical psychology. He will begin his pre-doctoral clinical internship at the University of California at Santa Cruz in August, 2013. He is currently working on his dissertation which looks at the lived experiences of adopted college students who participated as mentors in the Adoption Mentoring Partnership. This qualitative research is designed to strengthen current conceptualizations and theory of adoption by examining the experiences and perspectives of adopted persons themselves. Over this past year, Quade has had a manuscript accepted for publication in Adoption Quarterly, the only research journal in the United States dedicated solely to issues of adoption. His multidisciplinary manuscript draws on theories in social, developmental, and clinical psychology to underscore profound effects of social attitudes toward adoption on whether an adopted person may be motivated to view his or her adoption as a positive aspect of self and identity. In addition to completing his dissertation, Quade remains an active consultant for the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP) which he helped develop over the previous three years. Quade first-authored a manuscript which detailed the development and maintenance of AMP and joined other members of the Rudd program in presenting AMP at the 38th Annual Meeting of the North American Council of Adoptable Children in Washington, D.C. in July, 2012. Quade continues to strengthen his academic and clinical portfolio as he prepares to depart UMass Amherst, further extending the reach of the Rudd Adoption Research Program emphasis on connecting research, policy, and practice in the field of adoption studies.

Karin Garber

Karin Garber (B.A., Psychology, Scripps College; Ed.M. and M.A., Psychological Counseling, Teachers College, Columbia University) is a second year clinical psychology student working with Dr. Harold Grotevant. Her current research interests are related to delineating the themes of microaggressions committed towards adolescent adoptees, as well as how these negative communications may be associated with their perceptions of their own adoptions. Karin also is the current Program Coordinator for the Adoption Mentoring Partnership wherein she educates and
supervises college-aged adoptive mentors in their community “matches” with younger adoptees between the ages of 8-12 years. She is also the current Program Coordinator for the fourth wave of the Minnesota-Texas Adoption Research Project.

Holly Grant-Marsney

Holly A. Grant-Marsney (BA, Psychology and Neuroscience, Mt. Holyoke College; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is in her fifth year as a doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at UMass. Ms. Grant-Marsney’s research interests include close relationships and attachment in the adoptive family, adoptive identity and narratives, particularly in adolescence and emerging adulthood. She is finishing her dissertation entitled: Emotion in Adoptive Narratives: Links to Close Relationships in Emerging Adulthood. She has recently been accepted for a clinical internship position at the University of New Hampshire Counseling Center, where she will continue her clinical work with emerging adults. She plans to graduate in 2014, and pursue an academic position in Clinical Psychology that will allow her to integrate her interests in research, education, and clinical practice.

Danila Musante

Danila Musante (BA, Psychology, Harvard University; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is currently a doctoral candidate in the Child, Adolescent, and Family concentration in clinical psychology at UMass. She studies the family as a context of individual development, particularly during adolescence and emerging adulthood, in adoptive families. She has specifically examined attachment in adoptive families during adolescence and emerging adulthood and its association with feelings of negative instability during emerging adulthood. In 2012, Danila was awarded a Graduate Student Fellowship from the UMass Center for Research on Families (CRF) to work on her dissertation which examines whether adolescent individuation has concurrent and long-term effects on adjustment in adopted young adults. In 2012, Danila also conducted a research project, with the help of undergraduate coders, examining career achievement status in adopted emerging adults.

Marykate Oakley

Marykate Oakley (BA, Princeton University; MA, Clinical Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University) is a first year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at UMass. Her primary research interests include adolescent development, mentoring, and family systems, particularly within the LGBT population. For her Master’s thesis, Marykate will be working with Dr. Rachel Farr and her Contemporary Adoptive Families Study to examine how gay and lesbian adoptive parents socialize their school-age children around their family structure. She will also investigate the degree to which diverse family socialization is associated with child social competence. Looking ahead, Marykate hopes to become involved in the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, focusing specifically on the effects of mentorship for LGBT adopted youth.
Ashley Sherrill

Ashley Sherrill (BA, Bennett College, Psychology) came to the Rudd Program through the Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. PREP, a federally funded program from the National Institutes of Health, is a one-year internship with the goal of strengthening research skills and academic competitiveness of participants in pursuit of a doctoral degree. Ashley initially began working in the Rudd Adoption Lab as a part of PREP’s required Summer Program for Undergraduate Research (SPUR), during which she assisted with ongoing research projects and completed preliminary original research titled Religiosity and Civic Engagement: Links to Well-being in Young Adult Adoptees based on Dr. Grotevant’s longitudinal Minnesota/Texas Adoption Research Program. This paper is being prepared for publication and will be presented at the 4th International Conference on Adoption Research in Bilbao, Spain. Ashley has also assisted Karin Garber with coding for her masters research on microaggressions encountered by adopted adolescents. Ashley is also taking a laboratory course in Clinical Psychology that offers students the opportunity to provide services at the Veteran’s Administration Medical Center and the Hampshire County Jail and House of Corrections. She aspires to pursue a doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology with a concentration in Forensic Psychology. After completion of her Ph.D., she hopes to gain field experience working in the courts, with police departments and in correctional facilities. Ultimately, she aspires to work with federal or international law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, as a Crime Analyst or a Violent Crime Resource Specialist, providing case management advice and interview strategies.

Yesel Yoon

Yesel Yoon (BA, Psychology, University of Maryland; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is a third year student in the Clinical Psychology doctoral program at UMass Amherst, with a special focus on children, adolescents, and families. Yesel has examined the role of family practices during adolescence, in the form of routines and rituals, and the extent to which these practices are protective during a particularly important transition period. She has extended her interests in family routines and rituals in various family contexts such as working-class, dual income-earner families. In addition to examining family practices, Yesel has focused on positive psychological outcomes and begun to examine how to most accurately capture “psychological well being” in emerging adulthood.
ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Promoting Adoption Research Initiatives of Emerging Scholars

The work of the Rudd Program is greatly enhanced by the efforts of three extraordinary emerging scholars, each of whom contributes in multiple, significant ways to the work of the program. Meet Drs. Jennifer McDermott, Rachel Farr, and Jen Dolan.

Jen H. Dolan, Ed.D.
Rudd Adoption Research Program, Program Manager, UMass Amherst

During 2012 Jen was in charge of two evaluation projects; one focusing on the Adoption Mentoring Partnership program (AMP) and the other on the Treehouse Community, an intergenerational community committed to supporting families who are caring for children from the public foster care system.

The first project involved interviewing the adoptive parents of the mentees who are participating in the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP) program. Jen interviewed seven parents of the first cohort of AMP matches. Overall, the parents were very pleased with the program. However, we learned that activities that were acceptable for their child and mentor needed to be clearly understood, and parents were unclear as to what their relationship with their child’s mentor should be. This information has already been useful in clarifying procedures for the new group of college student mentors.

The Treehouse community evaluation has involved interviews with 21 elders, parents, youth and staff. The interview transcripts, over 500 pages to date, are currently being analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program for replication purposes, enhance the well-being of those who live on Treehouse Circle, and provide data that will assist with grant funding opportunities.

Jen has been a key member of the Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) Design Team, which grew out of consultations with the Interactive Institute for Social Change in Boston. The charge of the Design Team is to create a road map and implementation plan for innovative activities in western Massachusetts and beyond. One key activity is the REFCA annual conference about how to best support youth who are in foster care. Jen played an important role in helping to organize the REFCA third annual conference that was held at Holyoke Community College in May.

Jen is also working closely with Jane Lyons at Friends of Children in an effort to support foster youth who are in higher education. Jen and Jane are spearheading a committee that is working with the Department of Children and Families to best meet the needs of current and former foster youth who are enrolled in post-secondary institutions.
In the fall of 2012 Jen taught an undergraduate course, Community Health Education (PH 301), for the UMass School of Public Health and Health Sciences. Jen is also managing the day-to-day operations of the Adoption Mentoring Partnership.

Rachel Farr, Ph.D.
Research Assistant Professor of Psychology, UMass Amherst

Rachel H. Farr, PhD, joined the Rudd Program in February 2011 as a postdoctoral research scholar. During 2012, she was promoted to the title of Research Assistant Professor. With her colleagues in the program, Rachel is working with the MTARP data set on several research projects related to openness arrangements among birth and adoptive families, particularly as adoptees enter adulthood. A central question in this work regards how adoptees conceptualize “family” in adulthood and how primary tasks of adulthood (e.g., entering long-term romantic relationships, marriage, establishing a career, having children) are influenced by adoptees’ ongoing relationships with adoptive and birth family members.

Prior to her postdoc, Rachel’s graduate work at the University of Virginia included a large study of adoptive families from across the United States, headed by lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parenting couples, all of whom had completed domestic infant adoptions. The study examined the ways in which parental sexual orientation impacts child outcomes, parenting, and family dynamics in adoptive families with young children. In 2012, Rachel won the Placek Award from the American Psychological Foundation to fund a second wave of data collection with these families now that children are school age. Rachel is working with a team of graduate and undergraduate students at UMass Amherst to begin data collection. She is helping advise the Masters thesis research of Marykate Oakley, who is seeking to explore how lesbian and gay parents socialize their children about their diverse family structure and how this socialization is relevant to children’s well-being and self-perceptions.

Rachel continued to participate in the Re-Envisioning Foster Care Initiative sponsored in part by the Rudd Program. In this line of work, she has helped to develop and administer a survey (MSKFAP) about post-adoption services among families who have adopted, fostered, or provided kinship care for children, particularly in Massachusetts. In addition, Rachel sat on several adoption-related dissertation and masters committees for students at UMass and other collaborating universities in 2012. She gave several guest talks on adoption research in undergraduate classrooms at UMass during 2012, and she taught an online undergraduate seminar course at UMass Amherst on diverse families in the U.S. during the Fall of 2012. In the Rudd lab, Rachel supervised approximately ten undergraduate research assistants throughout 2012 who assist her and others with a variety of research tasks and independent projects.
Jennifer M. McDermott, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology, UMass Amherst

My work examines how children’s early experiences influence cognition, socio-emotional processes and developmental trajectories. One avenue of research focuses on the impact of early psychosocial deprivation. In collaboration with the Bucharest Early Intervention Project (BEIP) and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, we are finding that stressful early caregiving contexts can negatively influence a range of cognitive and affective skills including response monitoring, emotion recognition and reward processing. However, placement into a high quality caregiving context, such as the foster care intervention in the BEIP, leads to improvements in some of these skills. Overall, the results from these studies have strong implications for the design of future intervention programs aimed at improving outcomes among children experiencing early adversity.

A second avenue of research involves studying the impact of early adversity on adopted and foster care children here in Massachusetts. A major step in starting this work is the launch of the Massachusetts Survey of Kinship, Foster, and Adoptive Parents (MSKFAP), scheduled to occur in Spring 2013. This survey lays the groundwork for the establishment of a regional database that will allow UMass-Amherst scholars and affiliates to more efficiently undertake adoption and foster care research that uses a range of designs from neuroscience to family dynamic perspectives.
Publications and Presentations

Note: Rudd Program faculty, staff, and students are highlighted in bold.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


Dolan, J. (March, 2012). White adoptive parents communicating about racism with their Asian born children. Poster presentation at the 4th New Worlds of Adoption Conference, UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.


Farr, R. H., & Goldberg, A. E. (March, 2012). Resources and opportunities for students and new professionals focused on adoption. Invited presentation and facilitated workshop, 4th Annual New Worlds of Adoption Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
ANNUAL REPORT 2012


GUEST LECTURES AND LOCAL PRESENTATIONS


Farr, R.H. (October, 2012). Adoption by lesbian and gay parents. Invited presentation for Psychology of Adoption course (PSY 391AD), University of Massachusetts Amherst.


Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology
Rudd Chair Teaching, Mentoring and Service
In spring 2012, Dr. Grotevant taught Psy 645, the graduate research methods course for students in clinical psychology, for the first time. In addition to covering advanced issues in research design and statistics, students prepared preliminary drafts of their thesis proposals and presented them to the clinical faculty at the end of the semester.

During fall, 2012, Dr. Grotevant continued to offer the advanced undergraduate seminar that he created for UMass, The Psychology of Adoption (Psy 391AD). In addition to UMass students, the seminar included an international exchange student from Germany. Guest speakers from the community included Marla Allisan, JD, Executive Director of Full Circle Adoptions in Northampton; Debra Shrier, Director of Post Adoption Services for Jewish Family and Children’s Services in Waltham, MA; and Rachel Farr, Research Assistant Professor of Psychology, UMass Amherst. Further information about the course, including a copy of the syllabus, may be found at http://psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/teaching/

Research mentoring of graduate students, undergraduate psychology majors, and supervision of projects by students in the Commonwealth Honors College comprised a significant part of Dr. Grotevant’s teaching activity. All four of Dr. Grotevant’s graduate students in clinical psychology successfully defended their thesis proposal (Karin Garber) or dissertation proposal (Quade French, Holly Grant-Marsney, Danila Musante.) In addition to serving on thesis and dissertation committees at UMass Amherst, he also served on committees at Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, and the University of Minnesota.

In spring 2012, three undergraduate seniors supervised by Dr. Grotevant completed honors theses through the Commonwealth Honors College. They also presented their work at the Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference in April.

**Timothy Dillon**
(co-supervised with Quade French)
Thesis Title: “Social Normalization and the Formation of an Adoptive Identity”

**Deanna Julian**
(co-supervised with Rachel Farr)
Thesis Title: “Impact of Community Climate on Mental Health Outcomes for Lesbian, Gay, and Heterosexual Adoptive Parents”

Ms. Julian received two major university-wide awards: The 2012 Senior Leadership Award from the UMass Amherst Student Alumni Association, and Honorable Mention for the Honors Thesis / Capstone Project in Family Research from the Center for Family Research, UMass Amherst.

**Andrea Norton**
Thesis Title: “College Preparation with High School Students in the Treehouse Community”

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“Dr. Grotevant is a fantastic professor. You can tell that he is really passionate about adoption. I learned so much from his class and he really increased my interest in the subject. He’s a really genuine person.”  
- Student, Fall 2012
During 2012, Dr. Grotevant provided service to a number of professional, community, and university organizations.

- **North American Council on Adoptable Children, Board of Directors**
- **Editorial Boards / Consulting Editor Positions:**
  - Adoption and Fostering
  - Adoption Quarterly
  - Emerging Adulthood
  - Family Process
  - Identity: International Journal of Theory and Research
  - Journal of Early Adolescence
  - Journal of Family Psychology
  - Journal of Research on Adolescence
- **University Service:**
  - Advisory Committee, Center for Research on Families, UMass Amherst
  - Distinguished and Chaired Professors Committee, College of Natural Sciences
  - Faculty and Staff Awards Committee, College of Natural Sciences
  - Executive Committee, Department of Psychology
  - Research Committee, Department of Psychology
  - Clinical Psychology Program Review Committee (co-chair)
Rudd Program Personnel

Faculty

Harold D. Grotevant, Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology
Jennifer M. McDermott, Assistant Professor, Developmental Psychology
Rachel H. Farr, Research Assistant Professor of Psychology

Staff

Jen H. Dolan, Program Manager, Rudd Adoption Research Program
Carla Williamson, Events Coordinator (with the Center for Research on Families)
Laura Oestreicher, Intern
Brittney Smith, Intern

Graduate Students

Quade French, Clinical Psychology; Adoption Mentoring Partnership Research Coordinator (2011-12)
Karin Garber, Clinical Psychology, Research Assistant; Adoption Mentoring Partnership Research Coordinator (2012-13)
Holly Grant-Marsney, Clinical Psychology, Research Assistant
Danila Musante, Clinical Psychology, Research Assistant
Marykate Oakley, Clinical Psychology, Research Assistant
Yesel Yoon, Clinical Psychology, Research Assistant

Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)

Ashley Sherrill

Undergraduate Students

Tobias Bennett
Ally Budnick
Lisa Cappellucci
Kevin Chandler

Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

In-Jun Chon
Martha Cunningham
Tim Dillon (honors)
Calvin Downes
Yasenia Dudley
Meg Fallon
Margaux Flood
Tobias Gale
Joanna Hong
Deanna Julian (honors)
Jennifer Lee
Kaitlyn McNamara
Andrea Norton (honors)
Sofia Shaikh
Rebekah Simeone
Brittney Smith
Rosana Urbaez

Note: The "honors" designation indicates that the student was completing an honors thesis or project relating to adoption under the direction of Dr. Grotevant and/or Dr. Farr. Tobias Bennett and Joanna Hong were also pursuing honors projects in other psychology labs while working with Rudd programs.

Adoption Mentoring Partnership Mentors

Michael Abbate
Gabriela Bishop
Samantha Calabrese
Will DeVault-Weaver
Tim Dillon
Alannah Driscoll-Sbar
Elena Faltas
Rebecca Felcon
Melissa Gately
Kristin Hanley
Sarah Hurst
Maria LaPierre
Elizabeth Markee-Behrends
Lila Nair
Jasmine Offley
Alexander Puchrik
Rebeka Robillard
Rudd Program Partners and Collaborators

University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Department of Psychology
- Center for Research on Families
- College of Natural Sciences
- College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Office of Family Resources
- Psychological Services Center
- Commonwealth Honors College

Community Associates
- Adoption Journeys
- Amherst Regional Public Schools
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County
- Boston College Graduate School of Social Work
- Clark University Department of Psychology
- Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute
- Friends of Children
- Mt. Holyoke College
- Treehouse Community at Easthampton Meadow
- Treehouse Foundation

Visiting Scholars, 2012
- Robin Banerjee, University of Sussex, UK
- Maria Barbosa Ducharme, University of Oporto, Portugal
- Joana Ferreira, University of Oporto, Portugal
- Abbie Goldberg, Clark University, Worcester, MA
- Susan Golombok, Cambridge University, UK
- Joyce Maguire Pavao, PACT, Cambridge, MA
- Joana Soares, Universidade de Oporto, Portugal
- Julia Vich-Bertran, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
- Gretchen Miller Wrobel, Bethel University, St. Paul, MN
Recollections

Dr. Grotevant received the Outstanding Scholar in Adoption Award from the St. John's University Adoption Initiative, in collaboration with Montclair State University. The award was presented during the Adoption Initiative’s 7th Biannual Conference on Adoption, October 18 – 20, 2012, in New York City.

The citation read as follows:
“As a scientist and scholar he has contributed significantly to making adoption an important subject of discussion in the field. Thanks to his pioneering work we have made tremendous strides in our efforts to achieve a more profound and comprehensive understanding of the adoption experience in all its complexity. We remain indebted to you for your outstanding research contributions over the years and your academic leadership that has contributed to creating an important dialogue about adoption among academics, professionals and members of the triad.”

ADDITION INITIATIVE

St. John’s University in Collaboration with Montclair State University

Dr. Grotevant was also named as one of the Family Research Scholars in the UMass Center for Research on Families for 2012 – 2013. The Family Research Scholars Program provides selected UMass faculty with the time, technical expertise, peer mentorship, and national expert consultation to prepare a large grant proposal for their research support. Family Research Scholars participate in a year-long interdisciplinary faculty seminar that includes presentations and discussions of the Scholars’ developing proposals, consultation on the details of successful proposal submission and the resources of the university, individualized methodology consultation, and information about relevant funding agencies. National experts are also chosen and invited to campus to provide individual consultation to each of the scholars on their specific projects and present a public research lecture. Dr. Grotevant is preparing a proposal for the National Institutes of Health, entitled “Pathways to Partnering and Parenting in Adopted Young Adults,” for submission in 2013.
Advisory Board

Amanda L. Baden, Ph.D.

Amanda Baden is Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership at Montclair State University, New Jersey. Her research and clinical practice are focused on adoption triad members, transracial/international adoption issues, racial and cultural identity, and multicultural counseling competence. Dr. Baden co-created the Cultural-Racial Identity Model for transracial and international adoptees. She co-edited the *Handbook of Adoption: Implications for Researchers, Practitioners, and Families* (Sage, 2007) and serves on the editorial board for *Adoption Quarterly*. She also co-chairs the Biennial Adoption Initiative Conferences held at St. John’s University, New York City. Dr. Baden was named an Angel in Adoption by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and is a Senior Research Fellow of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute.

Dana E. Johnson, M.D., Ph.D.

Dana Johnson is a Professor of Pediatrics and member of the Divisions of Neonatology and Global Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota Medical School, where he co-founded the International Adoption Program in 1986. His research interests include the effects of early institutionalization on growth and development and the outcomes of internationally adopted children. Dr. Johnson is an invited speaker worldwide, a Senior Research Fellow in the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, serves on the editorial boards of *Adoption Quarterly* and *Adoptive Families Magazine* and has authored over 200 scholarly works. He received the Distinguished Service Award from Joint Council for International Children’s Services, Friend of Children Award from the North American Council on Adoptable Children and the Harry Holt Award from Holt International. He serves on the boards of directors of Joint Council on International Children’s Services, Half The Sky Foundation and SPOON Foundation.

Femmie Juffer, Ph.D.

Femmie Juffer is Professor of Adoption Studies at the Centre for Child and Family Studies, Leiden University, the Netherlands. She was the first person to hold the Chair on Adoption Studies, which was established at Leiden University, Centre for Child and Family Studies, in 2000 by Wereldkinderen (Worldchildren), The Hague. Her research interests include international adoption and foster care, parental sensitivity and attachment in adoptive families, attachment-based interventions, adopted children’s development, and child rearing in institutions. Dr. Juffer received the Casimir Award in 2005 for excellence in teaching in the Faculty of Social & Behavioral Sciences at Leiden University and the Piet Vroon Award in 2004 for research into practice. She is a member of the Editorial Board of *Adoption Quarterly*, *Adoptietijdschrift*, and *Mobiel, tijdschrift voor Plegezorg*. She co-edited *Promoting Positive Parenting: An Attachment-Based Intervention* (Erlbaum, 2008) and co-directs the Adoption Meta-Analysis Project at Leiden University. She hosted the Third International Conference on Adoption Research in 2010.
Ruth G. McRoy, Ph.D.

Ruth G. McRoy is the Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professor at the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work as well as Research Professor and the Ruby Lee Piester Centennial Professor Emerita at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work. A practitioner, academician, researcher, trainer and lecturer in the field for over 30 years, her work has focused on such topics as open adoptions, kinship care, adoptive family recruitment, minority recruitment, racial identity development, transracial adoptions, family preservation, adolescent pregnancy, African American families, family violence, disproportionality in child welfare, older child adoptions, and post-adoption services. Recent honors include the 2004 Flynn Prize for Social Work Research from the University of Southern California, the 2005 George Silcott Lifetime Achievement Award from the Black Administrators in Child Welfare, the 2006 Distinguished Achievement Award from the Society for Social Work and Research and the 2006-2007 University of Texas at Austin Graduate School’s Outstanding Alumna Award. In 2010 she was selected as a fellow in the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare and also was named the recipient of the St. John’s 2010 Outstanding Scholar in Adoption Award.

Cynthia Monahon, Psy.D.

Cynthia Monahon is the Founding Director of the Cutchins Children’s Clinic in Northampton, Massachusetts. The mission of the Clinic is to match the best trained and most experienced clinicians with the children and families most in need. Dr. Monahon received her Psy.D. from the University of Denver, and is the author of *Children and Trauma; a Parent’s Guide to Helping Children Heal* (Jossey Bass, 1993). Dr. Monahon has lectured frequently on childhood trauma, models of intervention with parents of traumatized children, and child psychotherapy. She has taught at the Smith College School for Social Work and at the Antioch New England doctoral psychology program. Dr. Monahon has a long history of building multi-disciplinary teams to address the needs of abuse victims in western Massachusetts and is the child mental health consultant for the Northwest District Attorney’s office.

Elsbeth Neil, Ph.D.

Elsbeth Neil is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. Dr. Neil has been undertaking research in the field of adoption for 16 years. She has conducted a longitudinal study, following young children placed for adoption and studying the impact of birth family contact on these children and their birth and adoptive parents. In 2012 she will begin a follow up of this sample, the adopted young people now being in late adolescence/early adulthood. She has also recently completed two studies funded as part of the UK government’s Adoption Research Initiative: the ‘Helping Birth Families’ study has examined support services for birth relatives of children adopted from care, and the ‘Supporting Direct Contact’ study has looked at how adoption agencies support face-to-face contact arrangements between adoptive children and their birth relatives. Both of these studies have recently been published by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF). She has also published a number of journal articles about her research and has edited two collections of adoption research (E. Neil and D. Howe, 2004, *Contact in Adoption and Permanent Foster Care* published by BAAF; and G. Wrobel and E. Neil, *International Advances in Adoption Research for Practice*, published by Wiley in 2009). In 2006 she organised and chaired the Second International Conference on Adoption Research, held at UEA.
Melinda Novak, Ph.D.

Melinda Novak is Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and serves ex officio on the Advisory Board. She established the UMass Primate Laboratory, a small primate facility in which students receive training in handling and managing captive primates, performing behavioral and health assessments, and conducting research. Dr. Novak is Head of the Behavioral Primatology Unit at the New England Primate Research Center at Harvard Medical School where she conducts her federally funded research on the causes of and treatment for abnormal behavior in primates. She regularly reviews primate facilities and provides advice and guidance on psychological well-being programs. Dr. Novak has over 100 publications related to behavioral development in rodents and primates. At the University level, she is a past recipient of the College Outstanding Teacher Award, the Distinguished Faculty UMass Alumni Association Award, and a recent recipient of the Chancellor’s Medal for Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, the highest honor bestowed on faculty for exemplary research and service contributions.

Jesús Palacios, Ph.D.

Jesús Palacios is Professor of Developmental Psychology at the University of Seville, Spain. He has conducted research on both domestic and international adoption in Spain, especially focusing on issues of parent-child relationships and parenting stress. He has published numerous books and articles on foster care and adoption, including *Psychological Issues in Adoption: Research and Practice*, co-edited with David Brodzinsky (Praeger, 2005). He has also co-authored a preadoption training program for prospective adopters as well as a book for adoptive parents (*Adelante con la adopción* [Ahead with Adoption]). He consults regularly with governmental agencies about how to improve systems of foster care and adoption on behalf of children, and he has played a leadership role in connecting adoption researchers around the world. He is hosting the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research in Spain in 2013.

Sally Powers, Ed.D.

Sally Powers is Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Director of the Center for Research on Families, and Associate Dean for Faculty Development in the College of Natural Sciences. Dr. Powers’ research investigates psychosocial risk factors (particularly adolescent and family-related social and behavioral stressors) and biological risk factors (endocrine dysregulation) that influence gender differences in the longitudinal course of depression and anxiety. Her research has been funded by NSF, NIMH, NICHD, and the William T. Grant Foundation, and is currently funded by the National Cancer Institute. At UMass, Dr. Powers has been awarded a Conti Faculty Fellowship for outstanding research, and the Chancellor’s Medal for Distinguished Faculty Lecturer. She recently served as a member of the Committee on the Science of Family Research of the National Academies’ Institute of Medicine.

David Scherer, Ph.D.

David Scherer is Professor of Clinical Psychology and Director of Clinical Training at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He earned his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Virginia in 1989 and has been on the Psychology faculty at UMass Amherst since 2005. Dr. Scherer’s research has focused on the ethics and process of adolescent and family decision-making in medical and research contexts. He also has conducted research on and published about psychotherapy for troubled adolescents and their families. In addition, he supervises clinical students wishing to gain expertise in working with children, adolescents, and families.
Transformative Generosity

Andrew and Virginia Rudd established the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology with a generous gift in 2005. They are so enthusiastic about the progress that has been made to date that they want to inspire others to join them in raising the program to a new level of excellence. To that end, the Rudds have pledged another $250,000 with the promise to match every contribution, dollar for dollar, to increase the endowment. Good progress has been made toward this goal, but additional gifts are needed to complete the opportunity.

Gifts made to the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology support the priorities of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. Donations will build the endowment, increasing the annual income over time in support of programs such as the annual conference, the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America, adoption research training, graduate student and post-doctoral scholar stipends, and visiting scholars.

For further information about this unique opportunity, please contact Laurie Benoit, Director of Principal Relationships, in the office of the Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Relations. She may be contacted at (413) 577-4712 or lbenoit@admin.umass.edu
The Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice
University of Sussex, United Kingdom

Excited by the success of the Rudd Chair in Psychology at UMass Amherst, Andrew and Virginia Rudd have created a second Rudd Chair in Psychology at Andrew’s undergraduate alma mater, the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom. The Chair will serve as director of the new Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice at Sussex.

Psychologists, social workers and education specialists at the University will be looking at the many and profound ways through which early separation or trauma followed by adoption shapes the lives of all those involved. Specific areas of interest will include:

• How separation, institutionalisation, maltreatment and other trauma influence child development and family life in adoption
• How new research insights in fields ranging from neuroscience to social policy can be used to inform practice
• International adoption and cross-cultural placement

“A presence of Rudd adoption programs in the U.S. and U.K. will give us unprecedented opportunities for collaboration as well as fascinating opportunities to explore the ways in which national and cultural perspectives shape adoption policy and practice,” stated Dr. Grotevant.

A press release about the new center may be found here: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/newsandevents/?id=10363
Contact Information

Rudd Adoption Research Program
623 Tobin Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
135 Hicks Way
Amherst, MA 01003

(413) 545-0547
adoption@psych.umass.edu
www.psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/

For information about supporting the Rudd Adoption Research Program, please contact Laurie Benoit, Director of Principal Relationships, in the office of the Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Relations. She may be contacted at (413) 577-4712 or lbenoit@admin.umass.edu