Nikki L. Murdick, PhD, FAAIDD
Chairperson, Awards and Fellowship Committee

Wednesday, June 5, 2013—8:00 am • Ballroom 1 & 2

Geert Van Hove, PhD .......................Dybwad Humanitarian Award
Zachary E. Warren, PhD ................................. Early Career Award
Melanie H. Johnston, MA ............................Education Award
Jos van Loon, PhD .................................International Award
Ann Cutler, MD ............................................Leadership Award
Vectors of Autism ...........................................Media Award
Paul Yoder, PhD .........................................Research Award
Barbara Roos Brennan .................................Special Award
Tangram ..................................................... Full Community Inclusion Award
Grace Francis, MA ...........................................Student Award

AAIDD 137th Annual Meeting
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www.aaidd.org
Robert (Bob) Shalock, PhD, is Professor Emeritus at Hastings College (Nebraska) where he chaired the Psychology Department and directed the Cognitive Behavior Lab from 1967 to 2000. He currently has adjunct research appointments at the University of Kansas (Beach Center), University of Salamanca (Spain), Gent University (Belgium), and University of Chongqing (mainland China). Bob has been involved in the field of intellectual disability for the last 40 years, initially as a research psychologist studying the biochemical and behavioral basis of cognitive disabilities. Since 1972, his work has focused on the development and evaluation of community-based programs for people with disabilities and the key roles that the concept of quality of life and the supports paradigm play in planning and delivering individualized supports within a service delivery system. Bob has published widely in the areas of personal and program outcomes, the supports paradigm, adaptive behavior, clinical judgment, quality of life, and the transformation of disabilities organizations.

Bob has been actively involved in the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities since 1972. He has served as President of the Board of Directors (AAMR, 1997–1998) and President of the Academy on Mental Retardation (1988–1991). He is currently a member of the following AAIDD Committees: Terminology and Classification, Supports Intensity Scale, and Diagnostic Adaptive Behavior Scale.

Bob is a frequent speaker at national and international conferences and has assisted a number of jurisdictions in their efforts to develop community-based programs for people with intellectual and closely related developmental disabilities within the context of the supports paradigm, the quality of life construct, and outcomes-based evaluation. Bob and his wife Susan are “semi-retired” and live in the mountains of northeast Washington State. His hobbies include gardening, camping, fishing...and writing.
Dybwad Humanitarian Award
Geert Van Hove, PhD

Geert Van Hove, PhD has worked for over 30 years in the field of disabilities. Together with some loyal companions, in 1984 he founded an NGO that provides support for people with intellectual disability to fully participate in society.

Geert’s career at Ghent University began in 1989. He received a doctorate there in 1991 and in 1993, became a Professor in Disability Studies and Inclusive Education within the Department of Special Education.

Together with colleagues and students in the Dutch speaking part of Belgium, Geert is promoting the self-advocacy movement and building stable networks among parents of children with disabilities who choose inclusive education. Within these networks, students can become coaches for self advocates and personal assistants of children in schools.

At Ghent University, Geert uses the department as an “academic incubator” for innovative projects, including those services that offer personal future planning trajectories and greater independence for those with intellectual disability and mental health concerns.

As a co-promotor, Geert donates his time to the Flemish expertise center for students with disabilities studying in higher educational institutions. This center provides technical support to colleges and universities to address certain student/professor interactions or to acquaint them with the principles of universal design for learning.

Geert is also director for a university-based service that provides job coaching to people with disabilities who hope to participate in the regular labor market.

Being an avid traveler, Geert works together with colleagues in: Cape Town around inclusive and health promoting schools, Uganda about quality of life of children with spina bifida, Vietnam about inclusive education, Cameroon about inclusive education in secondary schools, Ecuador about inclusive education and children with multiple or complex labels, Senegal around inclusive education of children with visual impairment, U.S. about disability studies in education, and Canada with an exchange program with students.
Early Career Award
Zachary E. Warren, PhD

Zachary E. Warren, PhD, is an associate professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Special Education at Vanderbilt University. He also directs the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center’s (VKC) Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD), a Eunice Kennedy Shriver Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center. He received his bachelor of arts in philosophy and psychology from the College of William and Mary and both his master’s of science and doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Miami. Zachary subsequently completed a clinical internship at the Children’s Hospital Boston/Harvard Medical School and a postdoctoral fellowship at the Medical University of South Carolina before joining the Vanderbilt University faculty in 2006.

For the past seven years at Vanderbilt, his work has focused on improving systems of care for individuals with autism and their families, especially improving early identification and intervention. Zachary presently heads autism clinical services for the Division of Developmental Medicine within Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital and serves as co-PI of the Autism Treatment Network at Vanderbilt, a consortium of medical centers attempting to improve medical care for children with autism. In these roles, and in partnership with the Vanderbilt Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program, he has spearheaded several initiatives to develop enhanced community training and tertiary care processes that streamline identification of autism at early ages, including developing training support for state-wide pediatric identification practice networks in Tennessee and several other states and developing and implementing the VKC/TRIAD Families First program, a free training series that has reached over 2,000 families in Tennessee to date.

Zachary has co-authored some 37 journal articles, chapters, and commentaries related to autism and developmental disabilities, including his participation as a lead content expert on two recent Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality reports reviewing the evidence base for intervention for young children, adolescents, and adults with autism spectrum disorders. Another line of his research focuses on the prospective study of infants at high-risk for autism with the aim of developing enhanced early detection and intervention methods. He also co-leads AUTOSLab, a partnership between VKC/TRIAD and researchers within the Vanderbilt School of Engineering, which is developing and testing virtual reality and adaptive robotic technologies for potential use in autism-related interventions.
Melanie H. Johnston, MA, is the Executive Director of BRITE Success, LLC, providing services to people with developmental disabilities and autism spectrum disorders, families, and professionals. BRITE Success provides assessment and consultation services and teaches children and adults the communication, behavioral and readiness skills that are essential for independence. She completed a bachelor’s degree at Texas Christian University in speech pathology and a master’s degree at University of Texas, Austin in early childhood intervention and special education. Melanie has over 30 years of experience as a Speech and Language Pathologist and an Autism/Behavior Specialist in public schools and private practice.

Melanie started her career with a focus on early intervention, working with Child Find and Head Start in assessing and developing intervention programs and therapy for young children. After moving to Midland, Texas, she co-founded The Bynum School (originally known as Developmental Disabilities Center) in 1983, and had the opportunity to work directly under O. Ivar Lovaas, PhD, widely considered to be one of the fathers of applied behavior analysis.

Melanie began working in Houston, Texas in the late 1980’s and became a strong advocate for the rights of people with disabilities in her work in private practice and consultancy to school programs and public and private agencies. When her first “babies” grew into adulthood, Melanie redefined her work to include individualization, self-determination and independence for adults with developmental disabilities and autism spectrum disorders. She continues to work with families and individuals as they transition into adulthood and to address needs throughout the lifespan. Through BRITE Success, LLC Melanie continues to work with public school systems throughout the country developing appropriate educational plans for individuals with special needs and providing training to faculty, professionals, and families.

She has also published numerous papers, co-authored RRP-TI Rapid Response Program to Intervention (2007), and taught at the University of Texas, Austin. Over the last two years Melanie has been at the forefront of implementing i-technology for education in the areas of communication, assistive-technology, language, transition, and learning needs. Melanie is in great demand as a speaker, presenting at national conferences and other trainings across the country. Currently, she sits on the Advisory Board of AutisMate, an iPad app that improves communication and behavioral skills for individuals with autism.
International Award
Jos van Loon, PhD

Jos van Loon, PhD, is a member of the management team of Arduin, a service provider in the Netherlands, and is a guest professor, Department of Special Education, Ghent University (Belgium). Beginning in 1979 he worked for 15 years as an orthopedagogue (special educator) in an institution for people with intellectual disability. Here he, among other things, introduced Gentle Teaching in the Netherlands.

Since 1994 he has worked as both a manager and a researcher in Arduin, participating in the process of complete deinstitutionalization of the Vijvervreugd institution, and reforming it into a community-based organization based on the quality of life framework and within the supports paradigm. In this process he came in contact with Drs. Robert Schalock and James Thompson, with whom he continues to do research and apply best practices.

In 2005 he received a PhD in the pedagogical science at the University of Gent, Faculty of Psychology and Pedagogical Science. The title of his dissertation was Emancipation and Self-Determination of People with Intellectual Disability: Dismantling Institutional Care. Among other things, he works and publishes with Drs. Robert Schalock, Geert Van Hove, and Claudia Claes on supports (particularly the Supports Intensity Scale) and on quality of life. In 2008 this group developed a measurement tool for assessing quality of life from the perspectives of the individual and of others: the Personal Outcomes Scale (POS). The POS has been translated into Taiwanese, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, and German to date and, in addition, the group has recently developed and published the POS for Children.

Jos has also been instrumental in the formation of the International Consortium on Evidence-Based Practices, this group has recently developed and published a scale (The Organization Effectiveness and Efficiency Scale, OEES) that is used for strategic planning, program implementation, and organization evaluation. The OEES is based on evidence indicators and a balanced scorecard approach to performance management and quality improvement. The OEES has been translated into Complex Chinese, Dutch, Spanish, and English.

Jos often speaks on deinstitutionalization and quality of life and has co-organized several conferences in the Netherlands and Belgium. He also teaches and coaches young orthopedagogues and support workers, providing them with opportunities to promote the enhancement of quality of life for people with intellectual disability. Throughout his 35 year career in the field, he has been devoted to enhancing the quality of life, emancipation, empowerment, inclusion, equity, and self-determination of people with intellectual disability.
Ann Cutler, MD, is a developmental pediatrician who has worked in the Chicago community for almost three decades. For the past 20 years, Ann has been at the University of Illinois at Chicago Institute on Disability and Human Development where she serves as coordinator of the Zero Through Three Developmental Diagnostic Program and is active in clinical work, training, and advocacy. She also served as the director of the Illinois LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) until June 2012 and continues to work as a training director for the program. She is also the parent of 3 children, one of whom is on the autism spectrum.

Ann has participated in a number of advocacy efforts in Illinois. From 1996–2002 she served as an agency—and, later, as a parent—representative on the Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention. On that council, She served as co-chair of the Children At-Risk Committee and chair of the Parent Committee. Subsequently, She was a co-principal investigator of the Unmet Needs Project, an advocacy and research initiative that focused on the needs of children in Illinois with and at risk for disabilities. The data obtained from this project has been extensively used to advocate improved mental health services in this state. This project’s documentation of developmental screening practices in Illinois served as a catalyst for the funding of the Screening Tools and Education for Providers (STEPPs) programs that were developed by Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) to assist pediatricians with developmental screening. Ann was the chair for the ICAAP committee that developed the STEPPs 2: Early Autism Detection and Referral curriculum. That training program has received national recognition and she was honored for this work by being named a Fellow in the News by the AAP in 2005.

In addition to her work with children with disabilities, Ann has a strong interest in promoting the social-emotional development of all children, especially children living in poverty. She has served on numerous advisory and advocacy committees in Illinois regarding mental health issues.
Vectors of Autism: A Documentary About Laura Nagle is a film about being an adult with autism. Laura is a 57-year old woman who has much to say about autism and the influence autism has had on her life. Using her life experiences, Laura explains the struggles faced by those who think and experience the world differently and suggests how a shift in our perspectives toward individual strengths might better support those on the autism spectrum.

John Schaffer, the film director, explains that “The challenge with the movie was trying to figure out how to put Laura’s remarkable words into a form that could tell an engaging story. We also didn’t want to make a movie about Laura Nagle, but a movie about autism with Laura Nagle.”

Susan Marks, a professor of Educational Specialties at Northern Arizona University, produced the movie and was intimately involved in shaping the movie’s content and message. As she states in the movie, “Autism doesn’t have to be a set of deficiencies, but a set of differences.”

Laura is a witty, intelligent, committed autism advocate. She may have been built out of reworked parts, as she jokes in the movie, but her gift of gab is a well-tuned engine. “My problem is not talking” she says, “My problem is NOT talking.” Laura shows the viewers some of her achievements, like the clock base she designed in a public square, but also allows the camera to see some of her not-so-proud moments. She doesn’t do this to elicit pity, but to show some of the needs of people on the spectrum.

“I’m good at reading, I’m really good at understanding things like aerodynamics,” Laura says, “but I’m not good at life.”

Vectors of Autism has a clear message on an important perspective on autism: neurodiversity. Rather than focusing on acceptance, neurodiversity embraces the idea that neurological differences and different ways of thinking should be embraced. The neurodiversity movement seeks to promote a society in which everyone’s talents and unique gifts are appreciated and supported. This universal message goes beyond being a message for autism; it is one of hope for everyone.
Paul Yoder, PhD, is a professor of special education at Vanderbilt University. He uses state of the art methodological, statistical, and measurement approaches to study social and organismic influences on individual differences in communication and language development of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Among his accomplishments are a book on observational measurement and demonstrations of the value of sequential analysis and Generalizability theory for intellectual and developmental disability research. Recently, he has turned to event-related potentials to measure one of the potentially important pre-treatment child variables that may help us make personalized treatment selections.

Paul was among the first to demonstrate that questions following the child’s conversational topic facilitate their conversational participation. His work showed that directives continuing the child’s attentional focus facilitated engagement and predicted language development, and did not inhibit it, as previously thought and indicated that a treatment including communication prompts that continued a child’s topic of engagement, communication, and conversation (Milieu Teaching) was superior in facilitating early language development compared to treatments that responded only to children’s communication acts (Broad Target Recasts). Recently, Paul replicated Milieu Teaching is better than Broad Target Recasts for children with intellectual disability in the first stage of spoken language development, providing one of the only empirically-based principles for individualizing treatment according to children’s pre-treatment characteristics.

While children with Down syndrome showed some of the lowest treatment benefits in this study, He determined that among this group, those children who made many nonverbal requests and had very responsive parents had the fastest language growth. Out of this research, Prelinguistic Milieu Teaching (PMT) was born, and further modified to improve the efficacy of PMT for children with Down syndrome. Paul has said that his research combines his love of the scientific method, his desire to be a positive force in the lives of children with communication disabilities, and his love of learning. His work is widely published in the US and in Europe.
Barbara Roos was a beauty queen who pursued a journalism degree at Oklahoma University; her titles included Rattlesnake Queen and 1st Runner-up Miss Oklahoma. A marriage to Donald Brennan in 1958 resulted in a family of five children.

Joey, their third child, was born with hydrocephalus in 1962. Barbara went into delivery with anticipation of giving birth to twins; what she got instead was a beautiful boy with an immense head due to the water on his brain. At that time, Barbara and Don were advised to institutionalize Joey; nurses cautioned Barbara against holding her son for fear she would bond with him but Barbara who demanded to see her son, held him, cuddled him, and brought him home to raise.

Joey had a great belly laugh, loved applesauce and a Bozo the Clown doll, and became quite adept at climbing. Blind by age three, he never learned to walk or talk. His life was the impetus of Barbara’s lifetime commitment to people with developmental disabilities.

With no service system for her child with disabilities, Barbara found other mothers in the same position and started a school. Initially a summer program, Barbara enlisted teenagers willing to volunteer time, a church with a free basement, and eventually state and federal funding.

Joey’s life ended just days before his 8th birthday, but his story didn’t end there—his life took Barbara on a journey that enhanced her life and the lives of countless others. Barbara had been the manager of a sheltered workshop, and in 1988 she and Don bought and reimagined the business as Stride, Inc., as a for-profit, inclusive employer that manufactures and sells office products. Three months after they purchased the business, Don died and Barbara found herself carrying on their dream alone.

Today Stride sells office products nationwide. Half of Stride’s employees are adults with disabilities, and countless others have left Stride to work in the community. Barbara’s life is a lesson in determination and an example that you can run a successful for-profit business with a mission to employ people with special needs.
Full Community Inclusion Award
Tangram

As a community benefit organization in central Indiana, Tangram is dedicated to creating extraordinary lives for those living with disability.

The name Tangram comes from *tan gram*, the ancient Chinese puzzle of seven geometric pieces that can be arranged to form over 10,000 distinct figures. We believe that life’s possibilities are endless for individuals with disabilities and work to create sustainable solutions for inclusion within our community. Founded in 1985, Tangram has grown over the years to serve over 200 individuals across central Indiana by offering residential support services, behavioral health services, community access services, supported employment services, and life coaching services.

Our staff members, Board of Directors, and partners are passionate about empowering people with disabilities—closing the gap between those with and without disabilities by recognizing that all individuals and their families have the right to determine their futures.

As an employment-first agency, Tangram ensures all those seeking employment have access to the tools they need to find and obtain their desired jobs.

Recently, Tangram developed a corporate development team that will work with companies to hire qualified individuals with disabilities, including veterans. This model is focused on addressing the key challenges that businesses face today and will also help improve the unemployment rate for people with disabilities.

Tangram recognizes that the key to inclusion is a strong community. We work to create lasting and mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, organizations, and individuals who share our vision for people with disabilities. These partnerships lead to employment, volunteer activities, friendships, and active community involvement for those with disabilities. Tangram looks forward to continuing our work of reshaping perceptions and creating an inclusive community.

Connie Dillman
President/CEO
Grace Francis, MA is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas (KU). She is also a research assistant at the Beach Center on Disability, currently working with the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center. Her work with SWIFT focuses on family-school-community partnerships.

Prior to beginning the doctoral program at KU, Grace worked as a special educator in St. Louis, Missouri. She worked with individuals with significant disabilities and their families in multiple capacities, including advocate, support broker, therapist, consultant, and respite care provider. Working with families as they navigated the worlds of family homes, schools, and communities (and the service systems among and in between) exposed her to a serious disconnect between these entities. As a student at KU she has had the privilege of creating and disseminating knowledge aimed at mitigating this disconnect.

As a doctoral student Grace has explored participant-directed supports and services, competitive employment, and community housing. Further, she also gained experience as an educational advocate, preservice practicum supervisor, and graduate instructor. These experiences have influenced the way she teaches preservice educators how to educate all students, as well as how she collaborates with professionals, families, and self-advocates to overcome obstacles associated with broken and disjointed service systems. She hopes to engage in participatory action research to support systems change.

After graduation, Grace plans on working to influence meaningful systems change by merging grassroots efforts with the efforts of large higher education institutions and professional/family/self-advocacy organizations. She also hopes to continue to teach preservice teachers and be a reliable ally for self-advocates and their families.
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The history of the AAIDD is long and distinguished. Our tradition, professional standing, and leadership in the area of intellectual and Developmental disabilities are exemplified in the persons of our Presidents. Our former Presidents are:

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1980–1981  H. Carl Haywood, PhD
1981–1982  Frank A. Borreca, EdD
1982–1983  A. Gail O'Connor, PhD
1983–1984  Herbert J. Grossman, MD
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