

The Building Block

An e-newsletter of the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities

McCarty Center is Incubator for Future Healthcare Professionals

There are incubators of all types. Some hatch eggs. Some help premature babies continue to develop. Some grow fledgling businesses. And some grow people. The J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities is the latter. We grow healthcare professionals.

The incubator at the McCarty Center seems to be the direct care specialist (DCS) position. Direct care specialists work one-on-one with the inpatients at the hospital. They are the eyes and ears of the hospital's clinical staff. People filling this role have a wide variety of backgrounds. Some have high school diplomas and college degrees. Others are balancing a full time job and college classes. All are trained for their specific role as a DCS at the McCarty Center.

Laura Hurley, of Carrollton, Texas, came to the University of Oklahoma where she earned a bachelor-of-science degree in biomedical science. She graduated in December 2006, and began working as a DCS in February 2007.

"I've always wanted to be in the medical field," explained Hurley. "I worked in a pharmacy for a while, but I hated it. There was no real patient interaction. I shadowed a physician assistant (PA) in the Dallas area where I'm from. I started shadowing in high school and continued through college. I really liked it."

Upon graduation from OU, Hurley applied to PA school, but was turned down because she didn't have any healthcare experience. She began working as a DCS at the McCarty Center in February 2007, as a way to get some experience.

In January of this year, Hurley went through a two day interviewing process for the PA program at the University of Florida. After her last interview, the University of Florida called to offer Hurley a seat in the PA class starting this summer. Hurley is one of 60 students who began PA school on June 30. She was one of one thousand applicants for this class.

"Working at the McCarty Center really helped get me into PA school," said Hurley. "I was told by the interviewers that most of the people applying to their PA program didn't have as much experience or exposure to different diagnoses as I had gotten at the McCarty Center."

For Hurley, the best part of her experience at the McCarty Center is working with the kids, seeing them smile and watching the progress the kids make from admission to discharge.

Kyle Cottrell, from Blanchard, Oklahoma, worked as a DCS for three and one-half years. He resigned from the McCarty Center so that he could do his clinical rotations as an occupational therapy assistant student at Oklahoma City Community College (OCCC). He did his pediatric clinical rotation here at the McCarty Center.

When Cottrell started at the McCarty Center, he was working on an associate degree in psychology at OCCC. "Before coming to work here I had never heard of occupational therapy (OT)," Cottrell said. "As a DCS, I would take patients to their OT appointments. I started sitting in on the sessions and began to learn about occupational therapy."

"The OT staff here is awesome," said Cottrell. "The OT's here treat the person, not just the diagnosis."

The biggest influence on Cottrell's decision to change majors and his life's direction was Maria Greenfield, the McCarty Center's director of occupational therapy. "Maria always made herself available to me to answer questions and give direction," said Cottrell. "One day I was complaining to Maria about how long it was going to take me to earn my masters degree in psychology. She suggested that I do something different. She suggested I think about OT school. After thinking about it for awhile, I applied to the certified occupational therapy assistant (COTA) program at OCCC and was accepted."



Kyle Cottrell (left) a certified occupational therapy assistant performs a range of motion exercise on J. D. McCarty Center patient Braiden Byrd from Pauls Valley. Cottrell is one of several former direct care specialists at the McCarty Center who have gone on to pursue clinical careers in healthcare. Cottrell Cottrell graduated in May and started back to work at the McCarty Center in June.

Continued on page 2

Incubating Future Healthcare Professionals

According to Greenfield, Cottrell's strong suit is his ability to interact with the kids and engage them in a way that meets their therapy needs.

"I think Kyle will make a good OT," explained Greenfield, "because he's creative. On a scale of one to ten for creativity, an OT needs to be a ten because you have to be a creative problem solver and be able to adapt and fabricate new ways doing things for your patient."

Cottrell graduated in May and wanted to continue working with pediatrics. He's seen first hand what the therapy staff does at the McCarty Center, he likes it and he wanted to be a part of it. As it turned out, there was an opening on the OT staff and Cottrell returned to the McCarty Center as a therapist in June.

Jackson Laizure has been a DCS for seven years and he likes his job. "I realized that I was good at this job and I liked working with the kids," Laizure said.

"I wanted to go to the next level for myself and my family, so I applied to nursing school at OCCC and was accepted."

"I've always been good with kids," Laizure said, "and because of my experience here at the McCarty Center I would like to continue to work in pediatrics when I graduate. Before I started working here I didn't even know that the world of disabilities existed. It just feels natural to work with these kids."

"Since starting nursing school my fishing time has taken a big hit, but it will be worth it in the long run."

- Jackson Laizure -

The nursing staff at the McCarty Center has been very supportive of Laizure's decision to go to nursing school and have advised him during his studies. One of those advising nurses is Mary Elliott, RN. Besides being a McCarty Center nurse, Elliott is an adjunct instructor in the OCCC nursing program.

The hardest part about going to nursing school for Laizure is time management. He works 40 hours a week at the McCarty Center, puts in about 25 hours a week in school, 10 to 15 hours a week on photo assignments from the University of Oklahoma Sports Information Department and time with his wife Amy, a physical therapist at the McCarty Center, and his baby boy Huck. "Since starting to nursing school my fishing time has taken a big hit," said Laizure, "but it will be worth it in the long run."

Laizure graduates in December 2008 as a registered nurse (RN). His next step will be to work on his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Oklahoma or the University of Central Oklahoma.

Some other products of the McCarty Center's incubator who have pursued professional roles in healthcare include: Hillary Spears, RN school at East Central State University in Ada; Abbey Bonnel has become a licensed practical nurse LPN; Trevor Courouleau is an audiologist; Sarah Early is a PA at Children's Hospital in Oklahoma City; Deshia Garman is a licensed professional counselor working with sexually abused children in Norman; Sisters Darcy Cottrell and Lindsay Boyd are LPN's. Boyd works at Norman Regional Hospital. Cottrell works for Norman Pediatrics; Valerie Adair is an RN at the McCarty Center; Caitlin Wakely is in RN school at OCCC; and Shelley McGregor is a certified occupational therapist assistant working in Ardmore.

K of C Deliver for Camp ClapHans

Knights of Columbus Council 12108 of St. Marks Catholic Church in Norman made a contribution to the Camp ClapHans scholarship endowment fund from proceeds from their annual Tootsie Roll candy sale.

Vincent Kish, Grand Knight of Council 12108, and Bob Winstead, immediate past Grand Knight, presented Uwe von Schamann, the McCarty Center's director of development, with a check for \$1,762.50.

Camp ClapHans is a summer camp project of the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities in Norman. The Camp ClapHans scholarship endowment fund is being established to help provide partial and full scholarship opportunities for children who want to attend Camp ClapHans.

Camp ClapHans will be built in the southwest corner of the McCarty Center's 80-acre campus on the east side of Norman. Features of the camp will include: the Sammy Jack mess hall, volunteer cabins, camper cabins, an arts and crafts barn, swimming pool, ropes course, a lake and camp fire site. Ground breaking for camp ClapHans will be sometime this year.

The Building Block

The Building Block is published by the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities in Norman, Oklahoma, and is authorized by Curtis A. Peters, director and ceo. This publication is distributed via e-mail. If you would like your name removed from our mailing list, please send an e-mail to ggaston@jdmc.org. Write The Building Block on the subject line. Write Please Remove in the message box.

Director: Curtis A. Peters

Editor: Greg Gaston

Cerebral Palsy Commission:

John Knight
William R. Logan
Rob McCalla
Karen Rieger
Joe Sher

J. D. McCarty Center

for children with developmental disabilities

2002 East Robinson Street • Norman, Oklahoma 73071
405.307.2800 • 800.777.1272 • www.jdmc.org

Therapists Earn New Pediatric Treatment Certification

Three speech-language pathologists at the McCarty Center recently received their pediatric certification in VitalStim therapy.

VitalStim therapy is a non-invasive, painless therapy that uses electrical stimulation to stimulate the muscles responsible for swallowing while a certified therapist helps patients re-educate the muscles with special exercises.

The small, carefully calibrated current is delivered by specially designed electrodes, which are placed on the neck. This stimulates motor nerves in the throat while that patient practices swallowing exercises that cause the swallowing muscles to contract. With repeated therapy, muscles are re-educated and the quality of the swallowing function improves.

The Food and Drug Administration has approved VitalStim's technology for the treatment of dysphagia.

"This certification gives us another tool in our treatment tool box to treat kids with dysphagia," said Reni Hanley, director of communication disorders at the McCarty Center. "Kids with cerebral palsy, autism, down syndrome, cleft palate, prader willi syndrome, charge syndrome and premature infants can have swallowing issues that can be treated with VitalStim therapy. Anything effecting the brain may effect swallowing," she added.

"This treatment tool can improve a patient's quality of life; reduce the number of hospital visits due to aspiration; increase the variety of foods and liquids a patient can have; and decrease choking episodes," said Hanley.

VitalStim therapy requires a doctor's order for treatment. Treatment sessions are typically two to three times per week and last about an hour. Patients will generally start seeing results within 10 sessions.

While used on children and adults, the placement of the electrodes on children is different. "Children are a developing target," explained Hanley. "As they grow, the placement for the electrodes on the neck change, so we need to be sure we have the optimum placement to get the best results."

McCarty Center speech-language pathologists receiving their pediatric certification in VitalStim therapy are Reni Hanley, Chrissy Hancock and Kathy Morton.

(Below) McCarty Center speech-language pathologist Chrissy Hancock works with patient Ethan Catlett on his swallowing with the help of the VitalStim therapy unit. Placement of the electrodes on the cheek, instead of the throat, is to improve saliva control and lip closure while eating.



"I'm Not A Hero"

- Christa Boren, LPN-

The morning started out in a routine fashion for Christa Boren, infection control/employee health nurse here at the McCarty Center. Boren was on her way to work, driving south on Porter from her home in the Tecumseh Ridge subdivision. Her plan was to get into work a little early to catch up on a few things before her daily schedule began. You know what they say about "the best laid plans"...sometimes they don't work out. In Boren's case, she had to make a stop to save a life.

"As I was driving down Porter, just north of Rock Creek Road, I noticed a man kind of slump to the ground in the grass just off the street curb," explained Boren.

"As I got closer I noticed that a woman had stopped and gotten out of her car. When I passed them I saw that the man was lying motionless. I immediately stopped to see if I could help.

When Boren arrived by the man's side the woman was on her cell phone calling 911. At the same time another man stopped to offer assistance. Boren determined that the man, dressed in shorts, t-shirt and running shoes, was not breathing and did not have a pulse. Boren sent someone to the 7-11 convenience store at the corner of Porter and Rock Creek Road to see if they had an automatic external defibrillator (AED) while she began CPR compressions. The man who stopped to help assisted Boren by giving the victim two breathes for each of Boren's 30 chest compressions until EMS arrived on the scene.

"When EMS arrived they asked me if I needed to be relieved," Boren said. "I told them no, that I was ok. I guess my adrenaline had really kicked in by that time and I wasn't tired." Boren continued CPR while the EMS team connected an AED and shocked the patient's heart back into rhythm.

It didn't take long for the story of Boren's morning commute to work to filter through the McCarty Center with many of her fellow employees calling her a hero. It's a title that Boren isn't comfortable with. "I'm not a hero," she said, "I just did what any trained medical professional would do."

While Christa Boren may not think of herself as a hero, she is a hero to at least one family in Norman.

Norman Conquest Riders Conquer the Heat and the Hills

Five Hundred and eighty-one cyclist conquered the heat and the hills that have become the trademark of the annual Norman Conquest Bicycle Tour sponsored by the Bicycle League of Norman (BLN). The July 19 event was a charity event in support of the Camp ClapHans summer camp scholarship endowment fund. Camp ClapHans is a project of the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities in Norman.

According to Uwe von Schamann, director of development for the McCarty Center, the Norman Conquest netted \$4,200 for the Camp ClapHans scholarship endowment fund. "We are very pleased with this first year results," von Schamann said. "This is the first year that the BLN has run this event as a fundraiser and they did a nice job. We believe that this event has a lot of growth potential as a bicycle tour and fundraiser."

"It was a great event," said Dave Ferguson, president of the BLN. "It turned out better than I ever expected. We want to thank the riders for supporting this event. And we really want to say a special thank you to our event sponsors and volunteers. It takes about 60 volunteers to make this event run smoothly. Without either group we'd never be able to pull this event off."

The BLN Norman Conquest committee for this 13th annual event was composed of Dave Ferguson, BLN president, Ken Kehoe, BLN vice president, Rick Gutierrez, Norman Conquest director, Corri Ide, Norman Conquest sponsorship director, and Michelle Carr, Norman Conquest director of facilities and volunteers.

The Norman Conquest Bicycle Tour offers riders four routes of varying degrees of difficulty from which to choose. There is the flat 10-mile family ride through the city of Norman. Next is the 26-mile route with a few hills. The next route is the hilly 46-mile tour. And for those who really like a challenge, there is the very hilly 66-mile route. It is on this route that the BLN offers four hill sprints that lead to the King of the Mountain honors for the rider that can score the most points in these sprints.

The BLN has set the date for the 14th annual Norman Conquest. It is scheduled for Saturday, July 18, 2009, at the J. D. McCarty Center.

The Norman Conquest will again benefit Camp ClapHans. this overnight camp will be built in the southwest corner of the McCarty Center's 80-acre campus. The main portion of the camp will be situated on the western end of a 20-acre lake. Camp ClapHans, which will have a Native American flavor to it, is named after former University of Oklahoma and NFL football player Sammy Jack Claphan. Claphan, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation from Stillwell, Oklahoma, was special educa-



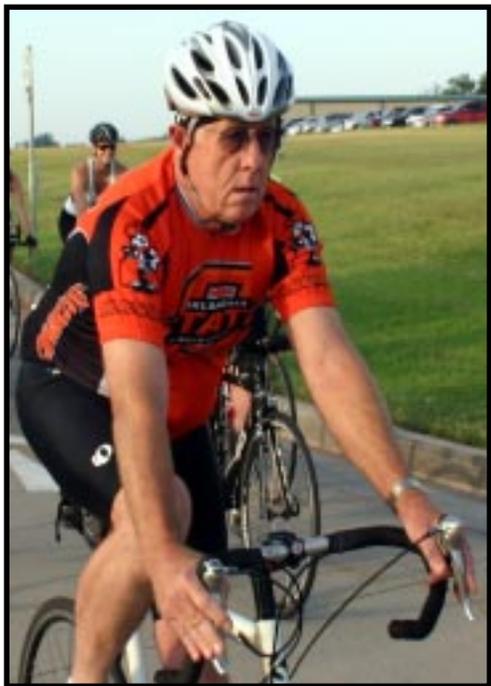
One of the interesting sights of the Norman Conquest was the variety of riding jerseys like this one that were sported by teams and individual riders. Go to page 5 to see a collection of jerseys present at the 13th annual Norman Conquest.

tion teacher after he retired from professional football and loved the special needs children he taught.

Claphan died unexpectedly in 2001 at the age of 45.

For more information about the Norman Bicycle League and the Norman Conquest Bicycle Tour visit www.bicycleleague.com.

**Date Set
for
14th Annual
Norman Conquest
Bicycle Tour
Saturday
July 18, 2009**



OMCA Tee It Up for 23rd Time

The Oklahoma Municipal Contractors Association (OMCA) hosted their 23rd annual charity golf tournament on Monday, September 8, at the Twin Hills Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City to benefit the McCarty Center.

Thirty-two teams consisting of 128 golfers participated in this 23rd annual event.

“While not all of our invoices are in,” said Rick Moore, OMCA executive director, “we estimate that we’ll make about \$40,000 for the McCarty Center from this year’s event.

According to Curt Peters, director and CEO of the McCarty Center, the proceeds will go to the McCarty Center’s Camp ClapHans summer camp project. “The money will be divided between the camp’s scholarship endowment fund and the construction fund for phase two of the camp,” said Peters.

Camp ClapHans, named in memory of Sammy Jack Claphan, will be built in the southwest corner of the McCarty Center’s 80-acre campus on the east side of Norman. Groundbreaking for the camp will be held Thursday, October 16, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. with an anticipated opening in the summer 2010.

The Oklahoma Municipal Contractors Association is the Oklahoma state trade organization that represents contractors who work on local, state and federal municipal projects.



Uwe von Schamann, director of development for the J. D. McCarty Center, shows Cleveland County Clerk Tammy Howard (left) and Deputy Clerk Brook Workmon (center) the general site plans for Camp ClapHans. Camp ClapHans is a summer camp project of the McCarty Center. Howard’s office recently hosted a charity-bowling event to raise money for the Camp ClapHans summer camp scholarship endowment fund.

Camp ClapHans Gets Boost from Cleveland County Clerk’s Office

The Camp ClapHans summer camp scholarship endowment fund received \$2,200 boost from the Cleveland County Clerk’s Office last week as it hosted its first annual Gutter Madness Charity Bowling Event at the Sooner Bowling Center in Norman.

Camp ClapHans is a summer camp project of the McCarty Center. Groundbreaking for the camp will take place October 16, 2008.

“Our office will be conducting the Gutter Madness Bowling Event each year to support a charity,” said Tammy Howard, Cleveland County Clerk. “We decided we wanted to develop a long term relationship with a single charity. My deputy clerk, Brook Workmon, suggested that we consider the McCarty Center as that partner. Brook has had first hand experience with the McCarty Center. Her son, who has cerebral palsy, has been both an inpatient and an outpatient there for the last six years. She couldn’t say enough nice things about them so we decided that was the worthy cause we were looking for to help out and support.”

We are pleased and excited to welcome the county clerk’s office as one of our volunteer groups supporting the McCarty Center and its projects,” said Uwe von Schamann, director of development for the McCarty Center. “It’s groups like this, that take us on as their charity, that help us get to our goals faster. We really appreciate their efforts.”

Camp ClapHans will be Oklahoma’s first camp that is specifically designed and built for children with special needs. The camp will be built in the southwest corner of the McCarty Center’s 80-acre campus and is targeted to be open for campers in the summer of 2010.

The scholarship endowment fund is being established to help parents offset the cost of sending their children to Camp ClapHans.

For more information about the Camp ClapHans summer camp scholarship endowment fund contact Uwe von Schamann at 405.307.2804 or uschamann@jdmc.org.

Donation Card

Thank you for your support of the programs, services and capital building needs of the J. D. McCarty Center. Please fill out this card, cut it out and mail it along with your check to Uwe von Schamann, Director of Development, J. D McCarty Center, 2002 East Robinson Street, Norman, Oklahoma 73070.

Make your check payable to: J. D. McCarty Center Foundation

Please apply my donation to:

(Check your choice)

Donor’s Name: _____

Summer Camp Scholarship Fund

Address: _____

Summer Camp Building Fund

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

Lake Restoration Project

E-mail Address: _____

Hippotherapy/Therapeutic Riding Facility

Day Time Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____