



## OAR Announces 2010 Research Grants

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Wendy McKinnon, Programs and Outreach Associate

(703)243-3466, [scholarship@researchautism.org](mailto:scholarship@researchautism.org)

ARLINGTON, VA– At its annual meeting on October 30, 2010, the Organization for Autism Research’s (OAR) Board of Directors approved seven new applied autism research studies for funding in 2011. This additional \$210,000 in research grants will bring the total of OAR awarded funds to \$2.25 million since OAR awarded its first grants in January, 2003. These research studies, which will be conducted by autism professionals from across the country, will examine timely issues that affect the autism community everyday.

The topics of this year’s new research, which will be completed in the next 12-18 months, include: work systems supporting adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum, telemedicine, emotion recognition skills, transportation skills, socially-based reinforcers, and center versus home-based programs.

“These were the seven most outstanding studies in terms of design, methodology and potential to produce meaningful outcomes,” explained Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D., Chairman of OAR’s Scientific Council. “In fact, the findings from these studies offer to provide practical tools and resources for use by parents, teachers, caregivers and medical professionals that would enhance current methods of diagnosis, education, treatment, and quality of life.”

Recipients of this year’s grants include:

**PI:** Anibal Gutierrez, Ph.D., BCBA-D

**Institution:** University of Miami, Center for Autism and Related Disabilities

**Project:** *Identifying Socially-Based Reinforcers for Young Children with ASD*

**PI:** Karen Hobden, Ph.D.

**Institution:** Wayne State University, Developmental Disabilities Institute

**Project:** *Improving Emotion Recognition Skills in Children with ASD: A Test of a New Intervention*

**PI:** Kara Hume, Ph.D.

**Institution:** University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Project:** *Increasing Independence and Task Completion in Adolescents and Adults with ASD using Independent Work Systems*

**PI:** Patrick Szary, Ph.D.

**Institution:** Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

**Project:** *Development of a Transportation Skills Assessment Tool (TSAT) for Individuals with Autistic Spectrum Disorder to Aid in Finding Safe and Accessible Community Transportation Services*

**PI:** Marcus Thomeer, Ph.D. and Christopher Lopata, Psy.D.  
**Institution:** Canisius College, Institute for Autism Research  
**Project:** *Randomized Clinical Trial of Mind Reading and In Vivo Rehearsal for Children with HFASDs*

**PI:** Laurie Vismara, Ph.D.  
**Institution:** University of California, Davis, M.I.N.D. Institute  
**Project:** *Expanding the Reach of Toddler Treatment in Autism*

**PI:** Connie Wong, Ph.D. and Samuel Odom, Ph.D.  
**Institution:** The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
**Project:** *Outcomes of a Community Center-Based Program for Toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)*

Each grant winner will receive up to \$30,000.

OAR selected these proposals from an initial group of 101 pre-proposals received in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) published last year. 38 proposals were carried through to the final review, where these seven studies prevailed as the most outstanding.

OAR will post the abstracts of these studies and the RFP for the 2011 Applied Research Competition at <http://www.researchautism.org/professionals/grants/index.asp> by the end of November. For more information on the studies or for information on OAR's research grants programs, contact Alyssa Kruszyna at 703-243-9717, [akruszyna@researchautism.org](mailto:akruszyna@researchautism.org).

**ABOUT OAR:** The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) is a national, nonprofit organization formed and led by relatives of children and adults with autism and Asperger Syndrome. OAR is dedicated to promoting research that can be applied to help families, educators, caregivers, and individuals with autism find much-needed answers to their immediate and urgent questions.

Since 2001, OAR has awarded more than \$2.2 million to fund 112 applied research studies and published six community-friendly resource guides in its *Life Journey through Autism* series. OAR introduced the Schwallie Family Scholarship Program offering college and vocational school scholarships to individuals with autism spectrum disorders in 2007, and in 2009 and 2010 produced Operation Autism, [www.operationautismonline.org](http://www.operationautismonline.org), a web-based resource for military families touched by autism, and a companion resource guide, *Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families*.

For more information about OAR, please visit [www.researchautism.org](http://www.researchautism.org).