



## **OAR Funds Five New Autism Research Studies and Announces Opening of 2006 Applied Autism Competition**

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Arlington, VA - At its annual meeting on October 29, 2005, the Organization for Autism Research's (OAR) Board of Directors approved five new applied autism research studies for funding in 2005. The studies consisted of three two-year research projects and two one year studies. In addition, the Board approved the continuation for a second year for three of the winning studies from the 2004 Competition, based on the promising results from their first years of research. This additional \$330,000 in research grants will bring the total of OAR awarded funds to more than \$500,000 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 12-24 months, include: Demonstration of a Parent Mediated Generalization Program to Enhance Outcomes During EIBI, A Comparison of simultaneous prompt and constant prompt delay procedures on teaching skills to young children with autism, Development of a Measure for Assessing Change in Social Behavior in Children, A Multi-Method Assessment of Social Skills Core Deficits, The Effects of Precision Teaching with Frequency Building Procedures of Component Skills on the Acquisitions of Composite Skills in Adolescents and Adults.

"We received a number of promising research proposals in this year's competition," explained Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D. President and Chairman of OAR's Scientific Council. "resulting in our decision to fund or not to fund a particular study often being made based upon degrees of excellence rather than significant errors or omissions. While certainly not easy, these are the types of decisions you want to have to make when funding research."

Recipients of the 2005 grants include: Eric M. Butter, Ph.D. and James Mulick, Ph.D. from, the Columbus Children's Hospital Autism Center at the Ohio State University, Marlene Cohen, Ed.D., BCBA, from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Kevin Klatt, Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Kathleen Koenig, MSN from the Yale University Child Study Center, and Raymond G. Romanczyk, Ph.D., BCBA from Binghamton University, State University of New York. OAR selected these proposals from an initial group of 48 pre-proposals received in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued in March. 27 proposals were carried through to the final review, where these five studies were selected as the most outstanding. Each grant winner will receive up to \$30,000 a year.

The winning studies from the 2004 Competition that OAR will fund for a second year include: Emily Jones, Ph.D., BCBA and Kathleen M. Feeley, Ph.D., BCBA from Long Island University, Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D., from the University of Kansas, and Judy Reaven, Ph.D. and Susan

Hepburn, Ph.D., The University of Colorado. In each case, OAR awarded grants based on the progress they made in their first year of research, added depth and potential outcomes to be gained from a second year. The topics of these studies include: Joint Intervention for Children, Assessment of Characteristics of Students with Asperger Syndrome and the Evaluation of the Mind Reading Computer Software on the Emotion Recognition Ability, and Family-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Anxiety Symptoms in Children.

At the same time OAR announced its 2005 grants, OAR published the RFP for the 2006 Applied Research Grant Competition and is currently accepting pre-proposals. Pre-proposals are due April 7, 2006 and OAR is seeking to fund studies that will likely produce practical objective results that may aid parents, families, caregivers, and people with autism to make more fully informed choices that will lead to healthier and happier lives. OAR will again consider funding one or two year studies with a maximum grant award of \$30,000 per year. In addition, for the first time, OAR will invite one-year studies to be funded at \$45,000. For complete RFP information, visit <http://www.researchautism.org/rfp.asp>.

**About OAR:** The Organization for Autism Research was formed by parents and grandparents of children and adults with autism in December 2001. Recognizing that autism affects over 1.7 million individuals in the United States alone, these founding Board members wanted to create a research foundation that would focus on practical research for the generation of people living with autism today. OAR, born of this vision, seeks to use applied research to help with the challenges parents, families, individuals with autism, teachers and caregivers confront every day. With this mission always in mind, OAR stimulates and funds research that offers practical insight and outcomes related to autism treatment, education, and research, and also provides the autism community with resources and information programs based on this applied research. In its first four years, OAR has awarded 17 grants totaling more than \$500,000 for applied research studies, made \$27,000 in grants to graduate students conducting research related to autism and published three community-friendly resource guides in our *Life Journey through Autism* guide series: *A Parent's Guide to Research*, *An Educator's Guide to Autism* and *An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome*.