

2015

Rudd Chair Annual Report 2015

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Rudd Family Foundation
Chair in Psychology

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

The Rudd Family Foundation Chair is located within the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst 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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From the Chair

Dear Friends,

This report showcases the work accomplished through the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass Amherst in 2015. Through the conduct of original, cutting-edge research, the development of community partnerships and programs, dissemination of information, and preparation of the next generation of adoption scholars, we are providing significant leadership in the global adoption research community.

Our seventh annual conference, “New Worlds of Adoption: Launching into Adulthood,” completed a developmental sequence in which we have explored adoptive family relationships through infancy, childhood, adolescence, and now adulthood. The videos and documents from these conferences continue to be available, 24/7, at no cost, on our Rudd Adoption YouTube channel.

This year also provided additional opportunities for international connections. I participated in an important workshop in Munich, Germany, in December, celebrating the launch of the first-ever adoption research center in Germany. The experience made it very clear how each country’s histories and cultural value systems shape their views of adoption, and how importing policy recommendations from one country to another requires thoughtful attention to issues of history, culture, law, and geopolitics. International connections were further strengthened at the Fifth International Conference on Adoption Research in Auckland, New Zealand.

Closer to home, our deepening community collaboration with the Treehouse Foundation and Re-envisioning Foster Care in America initiative has led us to a new milestone: collaborating on our conference for 2016. This conference, “New Worlds of Adoption and Foster Care: Thriving on the Frontline,” will underscore the intersecting research, practice, and personal perspectives that are so important to advancing the field. We hope many of you will join us on the UMass campus on May 13, 2016.

I invite you to review this report of our 2015 activities, and see for yourself the exciting ways in which our programs have developed. As always, we express our continuing thanks for their generosity to Andrew and Virginia Rudd, to Scott Chaplin, and to our growing number of individual donors and organizational funding partners who make our work possible every day.

With best wishes,

Harold D. Grotevant, PhD
 Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology
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Rudd Adoption Research Program

The Rudd Adoption Research Program is the primary vehicle through which the activities of the Rudd Chair are carried out. The program is located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences 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 policy-makers 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 play leadership roles in two exciting university-community collaborations: the Adoption Mentoring Partnership and Re-envisioning Foster Care in America. Program staff have also initiated several collaborations in the local community with adoptive parents at UMass, in the schools, with the public library, and more. The work of these community partnerships cuts across all program goals, as you will see in their descriptions that follow.

Reaching Our Goals

Advancing Knowledge about the Psychology of Adoption



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.

Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project



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:

birth mothers, 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 began in the mid-1980s in collaboration with Dr. Ruth G. McRoy, currently the Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professor in the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work. Dr. Grotevant and colleagues have

completed four waves of this longitudinal study: when the adopted children were school age, adolescents, emerging adults, and young adults. Collection of the fourth wave was completed in 2015.

One study published in 2015 examined microaggressions received by adopted adolescents in the course of their daily lives. Microaggressions are communications received by members of marginalized groups that are taken as slights, insults, or derogatory in nature. Microaggressions may be intentional or unintentional on the part of the sender, but the literature has shown that they can have negative effects on the recipients, regardless of the intentionality of the sender. This was the first study to examine adoption-related microaggressions that were not also linked to race or ethnicity (as in the case of transracial or transnational adoption). Based on interviews conducted with 153 adoptees in MTARP when they were adolescents, Karin Garber (doctoral student in clinical psychology) and Grotevant (2015) developed a typology of microaggressions that provides important foundational data for the field. Sixteen themes emerged from this analysis, including (a) Silence, (b) Overly Intrusive Questions, (c) Assumption of Bionormativity, (d) Recurring Confusion/Ignorance, (e) In-House Divisions, (f) Public “Outing,” (g) Using Adoption, (h) Questioning Authenticity, (i) Unacknowledged Identity Status, (j) Spokesperson for Adoption, (k) Adoptees as Nonnormative, (l) Sensitivity, (m) Negative Stereotypes

about Birth Parents, (n) Adoptees as Orphans, (o) Negative Societal Portrayal of Adoption, and (p) Other. Next steps in this research will be to look at issues of the intensity of the microaggressions and their impact on the receiver.

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, who was a research assistant professor of psychology until the fall of 2015 (and former postdoc with the Rudd Program from 2011–2012), has actively contributed to new knowledge about the psychology of adoption through the Contemporary Adoptive Families Study (CAFS), 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 preschool-age children (Wave 1). Wave 2 data collection was completed in the summer of 2014, with children in middle childhood (on average, 8 years of age). Data collection for Wave 2 of CAFS involved visits to participating families’ homes, during which children and parents were interviewed, completed a series of online questionnaires, and families participated in two videotaped interaction tasks. Children’s teachers also provided data for Wave 2. In addition to continuing to examine the impact of family structure over time, in this second wave of the study, adoption-related dynamics are being investigated as related to child, parent, and family outcomes. These adoption-related dynamics include children’s understanding of adoption, how families talk about adoption, contact with birth families, and transracial adoption dynamics.

One emerging direction since the last Rudd Program annual report surrounds birth family contact, with findings emerging as a result of conference presentations at the National Council of Family Relations (NCFR) in November 2015 and an undergraduate honors thesis project by Yelena Ravvina, begun in 2015. Several other aspects of Wave 2 highlighted in the last annual report have now been published or are submitted for publication. These include a publication in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* about experiences of microaggressions and feelings of difference among children adopted by same-sex parents, as well as two submitted graduate student research projects—the first about how lesbian and gay parents socialize their children around issues of family diversity and their own family structure, and the second about associations between coparenting and social support among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive couples, respectively.

The Contemporary Adoptive Families Study has received funding from the American Psychological Foundation’s Placek Grant (awarded to Rachel Farr), 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.



Reaching Our Goals

Providing Evidence-Based Knowledge to Inform Adoption Policy and Practice

The Rudd Adoption Research Program sponsored the seventh annual Rudd Adoption conference—“New Worlds of Adoption: Launching into Adulthood”—on April 17, 2015 on the UMass Amherst campus. The 225 participants enjoyed a full day of presentations all centered around supporting youth to successfully launch into adulthood. External conference cosponsors included the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. UMass Amherst cosponsors included the College of Education, College of Natural Sciences, Center for Research on Families, and Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences.

“The conference was well organized and provided a wealth of information as well as the opportunity to meet several practitioners.”

The keynote speaker was Dr. Ann Masten, Regents Professor and the Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development in the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota. A licensed psychologist, she completed her doctoral training at Minnesota in psychology with a clinical internship at UCLA. The title of her keynote address was, “Ordinary Magic on the Developmental Road to Resilience.” Through her talk, Dr. Masten discussed how young children overcome adversity to succeed in life. The presentation highlighted research on resilience in development with a

focus on transitions to adulthood and the adaptive systems that protect human development and promote recovery in the aftermath of adverse childhood experiences. Adoption was discussed, both in regard to risk and resilience. Recent advances in resilience science and its applications in practice were also highlighted.

“She put into clear words things I feel and think...Excellent food for thought, applicable to my work in many ways.”

Following the plenary session, a panel of adopted adults discussed the intersections of their personal and professional worlds. Panelists included: Astrid Dabbeni Castro, executive director and cofounder of Adoption Mosaic; Judith Eckerle, assistant professor of pediatrics in the Division of Global Pediatrics and director of the Adoption Medicine Program at the University of Minnesota; and Quade French, postdoctoral clinical fellow at the Counseling and Psychological Services of the University of California, Santa Cruz. Ann Masten facilitated the panel discussion, which allowed for the panelists’ life experiences to link with an academic understanding of resilience. Each of the panelists described how their sense of identity as an adopted person had an important impact on their personal lives but also shaped the trajectories of their professional careers, all of which involve service to the adoption community.

During lunch, participants networked with friends and colleagues while visiting 15 poster presentations that described current research and innovative programs. The Outstanding Poster Award was presented to a team of students from Montclair State University and their professor Dr. Amanda Baden. Students who contributed to the poster include Elliotte Harrington, Ebony White, Lauren Sullivan, Andrew Kitchen, Jonathan Mazza, and Nicole Christian. The title of their poster was “Counseling Adoptees: What They Want and What Works.” The research team found that adoptees sought therapy for a variety of reasons including issues related to depression, anxiety, adoption, and family. Their primary reasons for choosing their therapist were emphasis on adoption and area of specialty. Importantly, their results also suggested that the amount of adoption emphasis was positively associated with satisfaction with therapy, as well as the strength of the therapeutic alliance they were able to build with their therapist.



Susan Livingston Smith and Jeanne Howard: 2015 Rudd Adoption Research Program Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in the Application of Adoption Research.

The Rudd Adoption Research Program was also very proud to present the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in the Application of Adoption Research to Jeanne Howard and Susan Livingston Smith. Howard began her academic career almost 40 years ago and has been conducting research on adoption issues for most of that time, much of it through a rich partnership with her friend and colleague Susan Smith. Her work has focused primarily on the postadoption needs of families who have adopted children and youth from foster care. Smith has been a leading researcher in the field of postadoption services for

“This is a very enriching experience, professionally and personally.”

the past 20 years. Throughout her career she has successfully translated research on adoption and foster care so that it can be widely used by social workers, psychologists and other professionals in their work with adopted children, adoptive parents, and birth parents. Smith and Howard were both awarded the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Adoption 2002 Excellence Award for applied scholarship and research and the 2006 Angel in Adoption Award.

The citation on their plaque read as follows: “This award is given in honor of your career in adoption education, research, and practice. Through a lifetime of achievement and effective collaboration, you have made lasting contributions to the public understanding of adoption, adoption-competent practice, and evidence-based policy. In keeping with the mission of the Rudd Adoption Research Program, we are pleased to honor your career of excellence in the application of adoption research.”

Fifteen breakout sessions were offered in the afternoon. For a complete description of each session, please go to our webpage at <https://www.umass.edu/ruddchair/adoption-conference/past-conferences/conference-2015/program>. Plans are well underway for our eighth annual conference, “New Worlds of Adoption and Foster Care: Thriving on the Frontline,” to be held at UMass Amherst on May 13, 2016. The Rudd Program is collaborating with the Treehouse Foundation and joining forces with the Boston College School of Social Work as we present this conference. Keynote speakers include Dr. Mary Dozier; Amy E. du Pont, chair of child development and professor of psychology at the University of Delaware; and Vicky Kelly, former director of the Delaware Department of Children, Youth, and Families, currently serving as consultant to the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The title of their keynote address will be, “Implementing Evidence-Based Practice with Mothers of Infants and Toddlers in the Child Welfare System.”

Presentations from the 2011–2015 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/>.

PowerPoint and poster presentations from the past conferences can be found at: http://scholarworks.umass.edu/rudd_conf/.

Reaching Our Goals

Building Capacity for Excellence in Adoption Research Adoption Research Lab Graduate Students



Krystal Cashen (BA, Psychology, Vassar College) is a second-year clinical psychology student at UMass Amherst working with Dr. Harold Grotevant. In her current research, she is examining differences in length of time spent completing the adoption process for lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive

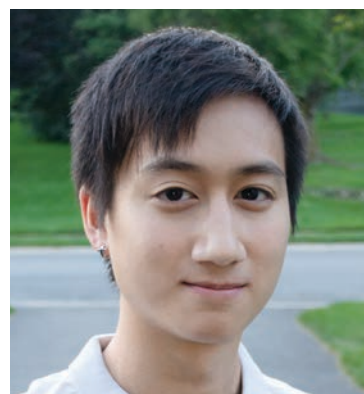
parents adopting through the domestic child welfare system using data from the Massachusetts Survey of Time and Costs Involved in Adoption. Krystal is also in the process of developing her master's thesis idea, which will look at close relationships in emerging adulthood. Her professional affiliations include serving as the Media Coordinator for the Couples Special Interest Group for the Association of Behavior and Cognitive Therapy. Within the clinical program, she is also serving on the Diversity Committee and the Admissions Committee.



Karin Garber (BA, Psychology, Scripps College; EdM, Psychological Counseling, Teachers College, Columbia University) is a fifth-year clinical psychology student working with Dr. Grotevant. She is currently completing her dissertation on intraracial and intraethnic

microaggressions. She has secured a predoctoral internship for the 2016–2017 academic year at the Counseling Center at the University of Hawaii Manoa, where she will receive advanced training in an array of clinical activities. Karin is finishing her fourth year as the Program Coordinator

for the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP), wherein she educates and supervises two cohorts of college-age adoptive mentors in their community “matches” with younger adoptees between the ages of 8–12 years. She recently coauthored a paper in *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* about mentors’ ethnic identity development in the context of AMP as part of a special issue on adoptees’ ethnic identity within family and social contexts (Garber, French & Grotevant, 2015). See “Community Partnerships” section on AMP for further details.



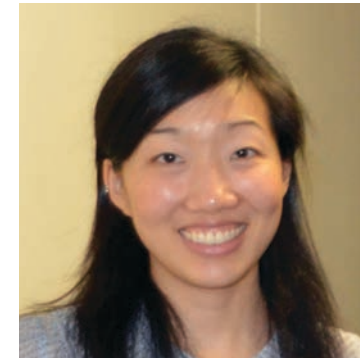
Albert Lo (BS, Psychology, University of Delaware) is a first-year clinical psychology student working with Dr. Hal Grotevant. Albert is currently working on his master's thesis, which will examine adoptive parenting cognitions and aspects of the parent-child bond across multiple

time-points. He is also involved in research examining how different trajectories of contact over time may predict the well-being of adopted individuals in adulthood. In addition, Albert is interested in topics surrounding foster care policies. Albert recently presented some of his previous work from the University of Delaware at the Rudd Adoption Conference and the Fifth International Conference on Adoption Research in Auckland, New Zealand.



Marykate Oakley (AB, Psychology, Princeton University; MA, Clinical Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University) is a fourth-year doctoral student in the clinical psychology program. Last spring, she successfully defended her master's

thesis, “Same-Sex Parent Socialization: Examining Gay and Lesbian Parenting Strategies using a Cultural Socialization Framework.” Supervising faculty included Professors Scherer, Grotevant, and Farr. It is currently under consideration for publication. She also coauthored two encyclopedia articles for the SAGE Encyclopedia of Psychology and Gender this past summer. Along with other Rudd lab members, she was coauthor on a journal article titled, “Microaggressions, Feelings of Difference, and Resilience among Adopted Children with Sexual Minority Parents,” which was published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (Farr, Crain, Oakley, Cashen & Garber, 2015). She recently joined Dr. Dixon-Gordon's research lab on cognitive and affective sciences. Clinically, she is on a practicum at the UMass Continuing Care Units, where she works with adolescents on the inpatient unit. She continues to collaborate with Dr. Farr and is in the process of putting together a manuscript for a special edition of the journal *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*.



Yesel Yoon (BA, Psychology, University of Maryland; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is a doctoral student in clinical psychology at UMass Amherst, working primarily with Dr. David Scherer and Dr. Harold Grotevant. Yesel is currently completing her predoctoral

internship at the University of Illinois at Chicago Counseling Center. Yesel's research identifies factors that contribute to psychological well-being and identity development in emerging adults. She is influenced by socio-ecological and developmental perspectives, and her research program is built around three areas: emerging adulthood, the influence of family systems, and psychological health. Her dissertation study titled, “The Role of Adoptive Identity in Career Development of College and Noncollege Individuals” examined how both college- and noncollege-enrolled adopted emerging adults develop their career identity over time. Yesel has presented at several conferences on research spanning from the role of family rituals during adolescence, family dinnertime routines in working-class dual-earner families, methodological issues in the measurement of psychological well-being in emerging adulthood, and multiple social identities such as career and adoption. Furthermore, Yesel is dedicated to increasing knowledge and sensitivity to diversity and multiculturalism in psychology. Yesel is one of the founding members of the Diversity Committee in the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology (SSCP), a division of the American Psychological Association. Yesel's professional affiliations also include the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood (SSEA). Yesel has taught an advanced undergraduate seminar for psychology majors devoted to advancing students' knowledge about topics related to diversity and multiculturalism in psychological research and practice. Yesel hopes to continue pursuing professional endeavors working in both a clinical and teaching capacity with emerging adults.

Communication and Dissemination

Publications and Presentations

PUBLICATIONS

Dolan, J. (2015). How white adoptive parents of Asian born youth talk about racism within the family. *The Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 24 (2), 81-92.

Farr, R. H. (in press). Factors associated with relationship dissolution and post-dissolution adjustment among lesbian adoptive couples (In S. Holley, Ed., special issue on contemporary lesbian relationships). *Journal of Lesbian Studies*.

Farr, R. H. (in press). Review of *Adoption by Lesbian and Gay Men*, edited by David M. Brodzinsky and Adam Pertman, *Journal of Family Theory and Review*.

Farr, R. H. (in press). Openness in adoption / Relationships with families of origin / Coparenting / Transracial adoption/ Unknown donors. In A. E. Goldberg (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Farr, R. H., Crain, E. E., Oakley, M. K., Cashen, K. K., & Garber, K. J. (2015). Microaggressions, feelings of difference, and resilience among adopted children with sexual minority parents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1007/s10964-015-0353-6

Farr, R. H., Flood, M. E., & Grotevant, H. D. (in press). The role of siblings in adoption outcomes and experiences from adolescence to emerging adulthood. *Journal of Family Psychology*.

Farr, R. H., & Goldberg, A. E. (2015). Contact between birth and adoptive families during the first year post-placement: Perspectives of lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parents. *Adoption Quarterly*, 18, 1-24. doi:10.1080/10926755.2014.895466

Garber, K.J., French, Q.Y.S., & Grotevant, H.D. (2015). Participation in the Adoption Mentoring Partnership: Mentors' experiences of ethnic identity. In E. E., Pinderhughes & R. Rosnati (Eds.), Special issue: *Adoptees' ethnic identity within family and social contexts*. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, Number 150, 77-89.

Garber, K.J., & Grotevant, H.D. (2015). "YOU were adopted?!": Microaggressions toward adolescent adopted individuals in same-race families. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 43(3), 435-462. doi: 10.1177/0011000014566471

Grant-Marsney, H., Grotevant, H.D., & Sayer, A. (2015). Links between adolescents' closeness to adoptive parents and attachment style in young adulthood. *Family Relations*, 64, 221-232.

Patterson, C. J., & **Farr, R. H.** (in press). Children of lesbian and gay parents: Reflections on the research-policy interface. In H. R. Schaffer & K. Durkin (Eds.), *Blackwell Handbook of Developmental Psychology in Action*. London: Blackwell.

Patterson, C. J., **Farr, R. H.**, & Hastings, P. D. (2015). Socialization in the context of family diversity. In J. E. Grusec & P. D. Hastings (Eds.), *Handbook of Socialization* (2nd ed., pp. 202-227). New York: Guilford Press.

Rosnati, R., Pinderhughes, E. E., Baden, A. L., **Grotevant, H. D.**, Lee, R. M & Mohanty, J. (2015). New trends and directions in ethnic identity among internationally transracially adopted persons: Summary of special issue. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*. In E. E., Pinderhughes & R. Rosnati (Eds.), *Adoptees' ethnic identity within family and social contexts*. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, Number 150, 91-96.

PRESENTATIONS

Cashen, K. K., & Grotevant, H.D. (2015, April). *Length of time during the adoption process for lesbian and gay compared to heterosexual parents*. Poster presented at New Worlds of Adoption: Launching into Adulthood. Amherst, MA.

Cashen, K. K., Grotevant, H. D., & Farr, R. H. (October 2015). *Differences in relational competence by relationship type and gender in emerging adulthood*. Poster presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood (SSEA). Miami, Florida.

Farr, R. H. (March 2015). *Longitudinal outcomes for children, parents, and couples in adoptive families with lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parents*. Poster presented at the Biennial Meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), selected as part of special poster session "Focusing on the Strategic Plan: Diversity Section." Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Farr, R. H. (November 2015). Chair, "Risk and Resilience: Child and Parent Outcomes in Diverse Adoptive Families." Symposium presented at the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Farr, R. H., Crain, E. E., Oakley, M. K., & Cashen, K. K. (August 2015). *Microaggressions and behavioral adjustment among children adopted by same-sex parents*. Paper presented as part of the "Lesbian and Gay Parent Families: Minority Stress, Gender Issues, and Children's Well-Being" Symposium at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association. Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Farr, R. H., & Moriarty, S. B. (November 2015). *Birth family contact among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive parent families with school-age children*. Paper presented as part of the "Risk and Resilience: Child and Parent Outcomes in Diverse Adoptive Families" Symposium at the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Garber, K.J. (Chair) (2015, April). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership: Mentors speak out about getting to college and what they've learned as mentors*. Panel presented at New Worlds of Adoption Conference: Launching into Adulthood, Amherst, MA.

Garber, K.J. (Chair) (2015, April). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership: Experiences with adoptive identity and mentorship*. Panel presented at the College of Natural Sciences Advisory Council, Amherst, MA.

Garber, K.J., French, Q.Y., & Grotevant, H.D. (2015, May). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership: Program effects on mentors' ethnic and adoptive identity*. Poster presented at the 22nd Annual Society for Research on Identity Formation, Bellingham, Washington.

Grotevant, H.D. (2015, March). *Navigating open adoption from placement to young adulthood*. Robin B. Allen Memorial Address, Barker Adoption Foundation Conference: The Commitment of a Lifetime: The Adoption Journey. Rockville, MD.

Grotevant, H.D. (2015, March). *Adoptive identity: What difference can open adoption make?* Barker Adoption Foundation Conference: The Commitment of a Lifetime: The Adoption Journey. Rockville, MD.

Grotevant, H.D. (2015, October). Discussant for E. Crocetti (Chair), *Identity formation and self-development in emerging adulthood: New insights from longitudinal studies*. Symposium to be presented at the conference of the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood, Miami.

Grotevant, H.D. (2015, December). *New worlds of adoption: Navigating contact between adoptive and birth families from placement into adulthood*. Presentation at "What Do Children Need? New Perspectives for the German Adoption System with Regard to Stepchildren and Children in Foster Care." In the 2nd Workshop of the German Research Center on Adoption, Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Munich, Germany.

Grotevant, H.D. (2015, December). *The Minnesota / Texas Adoption Research Project: Innovative methods and measures*. Presentation for the Research Center on Adoption (Expertise- und Forschungszentrum Adoption – EFZA), Munich, Germany.

McDermott, J. M., Egweatu, A., Fiegenheimer, C., Farr, R. H., Dolan, J. H., Ramsey, P., & Grotevant, H. D. (April 2015). *Beyond foster care: Exploring continued child needs and advocacy priorities*. Poster presented at the New Worlds Adoption Conference of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Ravvina, Y., & Farr, R. H. (April 2015). *Birth family contact among sexually diverse adoptive families: Types of contact and perceptions of open adoptions*. Poster presented at the New Worlds Adoption Conference of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. University of Massachusetts Amherst. Amherst, Massachusetts.

Sumontha, J., **Farr, R. H.**, & Patterson, C. J. (November 2015). *Coparenting and social support among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive parents*. Paper presented as part of the "Risk and Resilience: Child and Parent Outcomes in Diverse Adoptive Families" Symposium at the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Yoon, Y., & Grotevant, H.D. (2015, October). *Emerging adulthood and adoption: Adoptive identity, career achievement, and psychological functioning*. Paper to be presented at the conference of the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood, Miami.

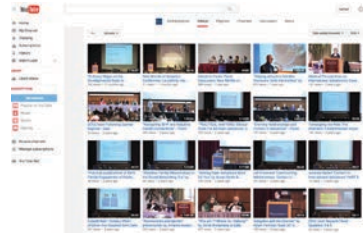
Yoon, Y., Scherer, D., & Grotevant, H.D. (2015, May). *The intersection of adoptive identity and career exploration in adopted adolescents*. Paper presented at the conference of the Society for Research on Identity Formation, Bellingham, WA.

Names in bold are Rudd-affiliated faculty, graduate students, or undergraduate students.

Communication and Dissemination

Electronic and Social Media

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. Videos are available on demand, 24/7, 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 Adoption Research 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 Psychological and Brain Sciences 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/>

ResearchGate

Dr. Grotevant and other members of the Rudd lab are members of ResearchGate, a website that disseminates scholarly articles to members of the academic community and beyond.

<http://researchgate.net>



Community Partnerships

Adoption Mentoring Partnership



“[My daughter] really looks forward to seeing [her mentor] more and more. She even puts it before making other fun plans, which I think is an indicator of how important this connection is for her.” —Adoptive Parent

Adoption Mentoring Partnership Staff and Mentors L–R standing: Quade French, Karin Garber, Mary McInnes, Tim Dillon, Michael Abbate, and Jocelyn Nelson; L–R seated: Liz Markee-Behrend, Elena Faltas, Samantha Calabrese, Melissa Gately, and Ana Gremli.

The Adoption Mentoring Partnership was established in 2010 to 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 role model. 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 and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County. With the support of Adoption Journeys (which provides postadoption services) and the Amherst Regional School District, the program’s goal is to provide adopted children with adopted mentors who can help to normalize the experience of being adopted and help mentees better negotiate complex issues such as adoption, race, and ethnicity.

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, regular match support, and clinical supervision. The matches spend three to five hours together each week of the school year for a minimum of three semesters. During their weekly visits, matches spend quality time together doing fun activities in the community, sharing with one another about their lives, and discussing adoption when it arises naturally during their time together. In addition to individual monthly supervision with a BBBS case manager, the adopted mentors also meet biweekly 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.

“I’m so much more interested in adoption than I ever was before . . . in my entire life, I have never talked, thought, learned, or formed opinions this much about adoption. . . . Without AMP, I wouldn’t have realized that I want to work with adopted children and adolescents in postadoption services as a counselor.” —Mentor

By the end of 2015, AMP had engaged a total of 32 mentor-mentee pairs. Currently, AMP involves 10 matched pairs: five returning from prior years and five new matches. A real sign of program success is that matches have continued far beyond the required three semesters of participation. Many mentors have stated that the mentor group meetings continue to remain the only place they feel comfortable talking about their experiences with adoption, allowing AMP to support and enrich the lives of the mentors as well as the mentees.

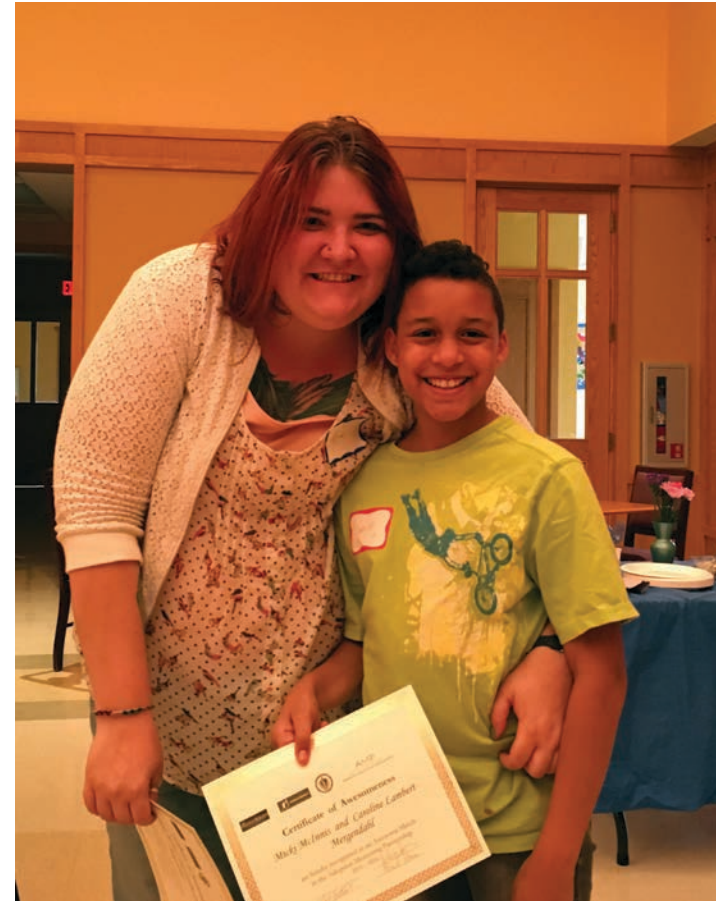
A strong research component has been built into AMP since its beginning. Current mentors are being interviewed and completing questionnaires about their experiences and attitudes throughout the year; a comparison group of adopted college students who are not mentors is also completing similar measures. The first round of data for former mentors is being collected in an effort to understand

“It’s all positive for me! This has been one of the highlights of my life. . . . I think it’s really important for [my mentee] to have a Big who is also adopted. I wish I had a mentor when I was that age because I always felt kind of different, and it would have been nice to have another adopted person in my life growing up. Plus, we have a great time together!” —Mentor

“One time me and my sister and both of our mentors were hanging out together and then we noticed it’s so weird that all four of us are adopted. Well, it’s actually kind of normal, but that doesn’t ever really happen usually. I was like, whoa! And we all laughed.” —Mentee

the long-term impact AMP has had on their lives. Families and mentees also participate in interviews and surveys to determine the social, emotional, and academic impacts of being matched in the program.

A recent publication (Garber, French, & Grotevant, 2015) focused on the experiences of mentors who were adopted internationally and transracially as they participated in AMP. Thematic analysis was used to analyze two interviews from each of 12 mentors (eight females, four males; average age was 20.4 years; birth countries from Asia or Latin America). Four overarching domains emerged: personal ethnic identity exploration, communication with family members about adoption and ethnicity, social exchanges outside the family, and participants seeking new personal meaning and understanding of ethnicity while participating in AMP. All mentors acknowledged some degree of ambivalence around ethnic identity, yet reported overwhelmingly positive feelings



“Seeing [my mentee] is a highlight every week for me. We get together and just have fun and relax. We’re really comfortable with each other by now and I think we’ve figured each other out.” —Mentor

about participating in AMP. Some mentors acknowledged feeling unable to identify fully with any specific ethnicity, struggling to find a social niche where they felt they belonged. They noted their efforts to push through hesitancy communicating with family members about ethnicity, race, and adoption, and not feeling “ready” to visit their birth countries or reunite with birth relatives. Yet, while some degree of ambivalence about their personal situation was present throughout the interviews, all mentors reported overwhelmingly positive feedback on their experiences in AMP and little to no negative impact. A mentor summarized her experience as follows: “If it wasn’t for this program I don’t think I would know much about adoption or about myself or what I want to do with my future. It was an incredible learning experience and I am sad to be leaving. The only negative is that there aren’t more of these programs. I really think they could be beneficial to us almost-grown-ups but also to the younger generation.”

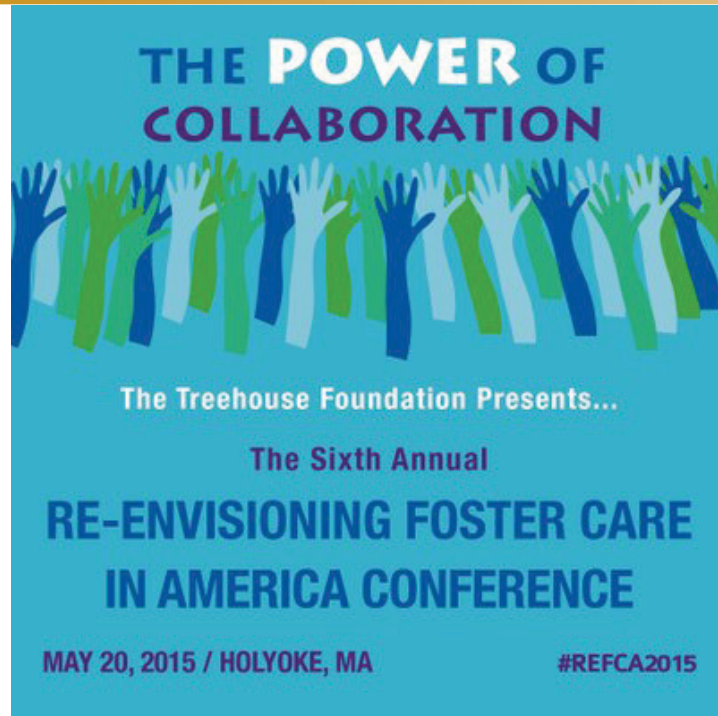
In light of the continued community interest and success of the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, efforts are being undertaken to fully document and research aspects of program development. With solid evaluation research undergirding the program, next steps will be to make the program available for replication at other sites across the U.S. Discussions are underway with some adoption agencies about how our AMP model might be adapted to their needs and the resources available in their localities. As a direct result of the program’s strengths and collaborative partners, AMP is uniquely positioned to expand as an effective preventive intervention in the lives of adopted children and adopted emerging adults.

Funding for AMP has come from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, the Frank Stanley 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 available online, as follows:

French, Q. Y. S., Grotevant, H. D., & Dolan, J. H. (2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership*. Amherst, MA: Rudd Adoption Research Program, UMass Amherst available at: http://www.umass.edu/ruddchair/sites/default/files/adoption_mentoring_partnership_01-23-2013.pdf.

Community Partnerships

Re-envisioning Foster Care in America



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 in order to ensure their health and well-being so that they can lead productive lives.

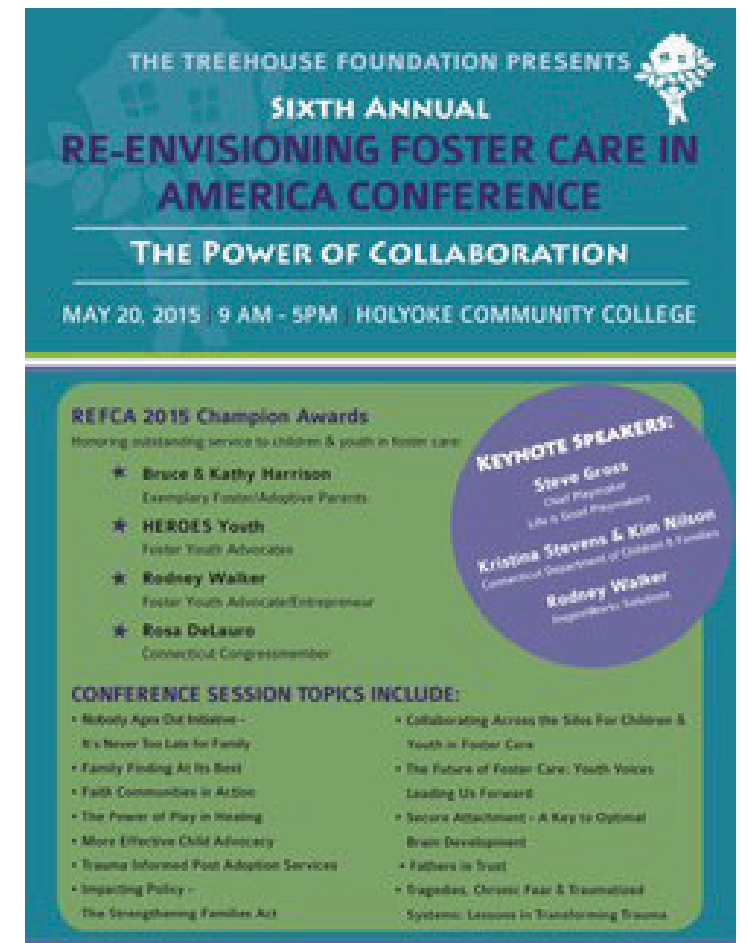
The Rudd Adoption Research Program (Hal Grotevant, Jen Dolan) was one of the original conveners of this initiative, along with the Treehouse Foundation (Judy Cockerton, Kerry Homstead), and Friends of Children (Jane Lyons). The initiative has now expanded considerably to include other community stakeholders,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

The Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin County regions of western Massachusetts serve as an incubator for this national model. REFCA envisions a collaborative, multisector, 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.

Rudd Program Manager Jen Dolan played key roles in 2015 REFCA convenings. At the request of the Treehouse Community leaders, the Rudd program designed and conducted a research project aimed at understanding this innovative, complex community and how it functions. Dolan interviewed Treehouse staff, elders, adoptive parents, and children in order to understand their shared and distinctive viewpoints, what they viewed as working well in the intergenerational community, and what they noted as challenges for the future. In June, she presented the findings of this process evaluation to members of the Treehouse community. Hannah Karpman from the Smith School for Social Work also presented research findings on the community. Both reports were well received and stimulated lively discussion. Dolan and Hal Grotevant published the results of their evaluation in *Child Welfare*, the flagship journal of the Child Welfare League of America. The research is helping to guide decision-making in the community and will provide important information for others across the country who are seeking to replicate the program.

Dolan also participated in ongoing meetings of a committee that was charged with looking at the long-term evaluation needs of the Treehouse community. In addition, she continued to play an active role on the REFCA Design Team, the working group charged with creating the road map for making Re-envisioning Foster Care in America a reality. The Rudd Program was once again a partner in the sixth annual Re-envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) conference, which attracted over 300 leaders to Holyoke Community College on May 20, 2015. The REFCA conference has grown in attendance each year and is an important way in which the Rudd program can support this important initiative.

For further information about the REFCA initiative, visit <http://refca.net>.



Community Partnerships

Community Engagement

In addition to community engagement through formal channels such as the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP) and Re-envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) initiatives, the Rudd Program has also initiated informal adoption-related activities on campus. Jen Dolan has been coordinating a monthly roundtable “bring your own lunch” discussion for UMass adoptive parents. The informal discussions focus on a wide range of topics and are consistently well attended. Parents who attend have children adopted internationally and through the child welfare system. Most of the parents have children in their teens, but there is a range in age from 6 to 26 years.

Dolan has also spearheaded development of the UMass Student Adoption Advisory Board (USAAB). Many students express an interest in participating in the Adoption Mentoring Program (AMP), and yet most do not complete the application because of the significant time commitment required for participation in the program. Our research on AMP has revealed that the mentors have found a great deal of value in meeting together as a cohort. It provides students with a place in which they can talk about adoption and how that identity plays a role in their lives. Dolan brought together those students who initially wanted to be involved in the mentoring program but ultimately declined the opportunity. Six students met with Dolan throughout the fall semester and created the UMass Student Adoption Advisory Board. The students decided on the organization’s name and developed the following mission statement:

“The mission of the UMass Student Adoption Advisory Board (USAAB) is to advise professionals and nonprofessionals in the field of adoption about how to best support those who are adopted and their families. In addition, the group will engage in adoption-related advocacy by raising awareness on campus about the lived experiences of those who are adopted.”

Students have met and plans are well under way for the spring semester.



L-R: Zoe Rowe, Emma Sander, Ashley Boudreau, Jen Dolan, and Peter McGinn.

International Connections

International Perspectives

German Research Center on Adoption: Research and Policy Consultations

In December, 2015, Dr. Grotevant was invited to present a keynote address at a workshop organized by the newly established German Research Center on Adoption. The Center, located at the German Youth Institute in Munich, was funded by the federal government in order to develop recommendations designed to improve the German adoption system. The research team was charged with reviewing international data about adoption laws and making recommendations to update German policies on adoption, foster care, and stepparent adoption. They were particularly interested in Grotevant’s work on contact between adoptive and birth family members, and what the research had revealed regarding how contact might be in children’s best interests. The day after the conference was filled with intense research consultations, as the team, led by Dr. Ina Bovenschen, was in the process of selecting methods and measures that would be used in their new research.



Hal Grotevant meets with Ina Bovenschen (left) and her research team at the German Youth Institute, Munich.

Clinical psychology graduate student Albert Lo presenting his research at ICAR5.

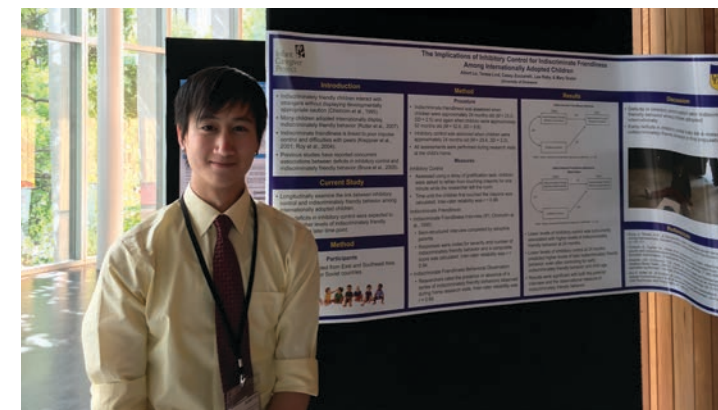


07 - 11 JANUARY

Views from the Fifth International Conference on Adoption Research

To understand adoption fully means that we must be acquainted with its historical, cultural, legal, ethnic, and geopolitical contexts. There’s no better way to get insight into these perspectives than to attend an international conference where one can talk with and learn from adoption researchers from all over the world. The Fifth International Conference on Adoption Research (Auckland, New Zealand, January 7–11, 2016) was attended by about 200 delegates and provided just such an intimate opportunity.

Despite the long distance, the Rudd Program was well represented by Hal Grotevant, Albert Lo, and Rachel Farr. Karin Garber was unable to attend, but her paper was presented by her coauthor. Many of our close colleagues and some of our Advisory Board members were also in attendance.



To underscore the importance of culture, the entire conference was imbued with traditions from the indigenous peoples of New Zealand, the Maori. In such a communal culture, conference delegates do not arrive and participate as individuals. They are welcomed from their respective communities into an existing community. The entire enterprise is one of mutual learning and challenge.

A special Maori ceremony welcomed the delegates and began the conference. Before the *manuhiri* (delegates) walked into the auditorium, a woman from the host tribe gave a call of *karanga* (welcome) during which delegates advanced slowly down the aisles into their seats. This call was followed by a chant and greetings. As the originator of the first ICAR conference (Minneapolis, 1999), Dr. Grotevant was invited to be the *rangatira* (elder statesman/chieftain), expressing thanks to our hosts and setting the stage for a successful conference.

The Maori cultural traditions continued throughout the conference, adding a very meaningful element. The conference organizers created a *mauri*, the symbol of ICAR, which carried the spirit of the conference and the work from past to the present and into the future. The inscription on the *mauri*, both in Maori and English, stated, "With your basket of knowledge and my basket of knowledge, the people will be well cared for." The organizers of ICAR6 (Montreal, 2018) will be the custodians of the *mauri* until their conference, at which point they will pass it on to Dr. Rosa Rosnati, who will be organizing ICAR7 in Milan, 2020.



Maori meeting house at Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Drs. Grotevant and McRoy shared the keynote address, describing recent findings from their 30-year longitudinal study of adoptive kinship networks. An important theme of this talk was how technology has become quickly and almost seamlessly integrated into the ways in which adoptive and birth family members connect with one another across time. In addition, Grotevant presented an additional paper and served as discussant on two symposia. Several new connections made at the conference will result in new international visitors to the Rudd Program in Amherst.



The inscription on the ICAR mauri which will be passed on each successive ICAR conference.

Rudd Program Personnel



Faculty:

Harold D. Grotevant
Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology
Kirby Deater-Deckard
Professor of Developmental Psychology
Rachel H. Farr
Research Assistant Professor of Psychology
Jennifer M. McDermott
Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology
Patricia G. Ramsey
Professor of Psychology and Education,
Mount Holyoke College
David Scherer
Professor of Clinical Psychology

Staff:

Jen H. Dolan, Program Manager
Lisa Fiorenza, Data Manager/Analyst
Sophia Love, Events Coordinator
(with the Treehouse Foundation)
Angela Russo, Assistant Director of Communication and
Events and Events Coordinator
(with the Center for Research on Families)
Carla Williamson-Britt, Events Coordinator
(with the Center for Research on Families)

Graduate Students:

Krystal Cashen, Clinical Psychology
Karin Garber, Clinical Psychology;
Adoption Mentoring Partnership Research Coordinator
Albert Lo, Clinical Psychology
Marykate Oakley, Clinical Psychology
Yesel Yoon, Clinical Psychology

Undergraduate Students:

Rebecca (Becca) Fox
Michelle Guedes
Danielle Hart
Shoshana Moriarty
Elsa Neal
Taylor Ollivierre
Mary O'Sullivan
Carrie Radigan
Yelena Ravvina (honors thesis)
Maria Rinaldi
Laura Thurlow
Katherine Wheeler

Adoption Mentoring Partnership Mentors:

Monica Carusi
Andrew Drinkwater
Juliana Friedman
Camille Gladieux
Joseph Gomolson
Ana Gremli
Ariana Grob
Sarah Ivy
Brandon Kinsey
Mary "Micki" McInnis
Alexander Puchrik
Anna Tian Stewart
Phoebe Taffel
Julia Zabusky

Rudd Program Personnel

Staff Profiles

Jen H. Dolan, EdD

Rudd Adoption Research Program, Program Manager



Jen is responsible for oversight of the Rudd Program community partnerships and the annual conference; in addition, she works with Dr. Grotevant to provide leadership for all aspects of the Rudd Program. For the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, she coordinates all

programmatic activities and has a strong role in conducting the research, interviewing mentors, a comparison group of university students, and the parents of the mentees. Questions center on the mentors' experiences in the program, their sense of identity as an adopted person, and support they had or might need. In addition, she has administered follow-up surveys to former mentors who have graduated and moved from the area. Questions center on what the mentors are currently doing, how much contact they still have with their mentee, and the role AMP has had on their lives. In addition, Jen continues to serve as a key member of the Re-envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) Design Team, whose charge is to create a road map and implementation plan for innovative activities in western Massachusetts and beyond. Significant activities in 2015 included the annual REFCA conference about how to best support youth who are in foster care, and presenting to the Treehouse Community about the results of the research project that focused on the day-to-day living experience for those who work and live at Treehouse. An article about the research entitled, "The Treehouse Community: An Innovative Intergenerational Model for Supporting Youth Who Have Experienced Foster Care" was published in *Child Welfare*, the flagship journal of the Child Welfare League of America.

Lisa Fiorenzo

Rudd Adoption Research Program, Data Manager/Analyst

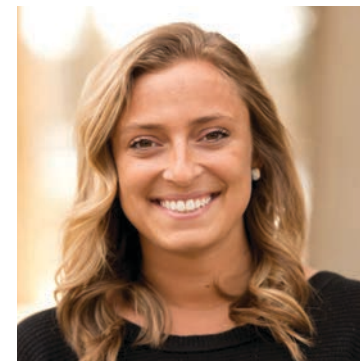


Lisa joined the Rudd Adoption Research Program in August of 2014 as its Data Manager/Analyst and has since contributed her expertise in data organization and analysis to a number of ongoing projects. She has assisted with data analysis on the longitudinal

Minnesota/Texas Adoption Research Project (MTARP), most recently helping Dr. Grotevant prepare key findings for his keynote address at the Fifth International Conference on Adoption Research in Auckland, New Zealand, relating to frequency of, and satisfaction with, birth family contact among young adult adoptees. Additionally, she has helped to organize data from the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, a unique mentoring program that connects adopted UMass undergraduates with adopted youth in the Amherst area, in collaboration with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County. Currently, Lisa is focusing on analyzing the fourth, most recent, wave of MTARP data, while also implementing novel techniques for assessing group-based changes in outcomes over all waves of data. She also serves as a methodology consultant with the Center for Research on Families at UMass Amherst and has incorporated some of her statistical training (e.g., hierarchical linear modeling, survival analysis) into the data analytic plan for the Rudd Adoption Research Program.

Sophia Love

Events Coordinator



Sophia graduated as a Commonwealth Honors College student from the UMass Amherst Isenberg School of Management with a dual degree in hospitality and tourism management and management. While a full-time student, Sophia served as the events coordinator at the Center

for Research on Families at UMass Amherst, where she planned many events, lectures, conferences, seminars and workshops from inception to completion. Sophia contributed to event coordination with faculty lectures, annual research award dinners, methodology workshops, and the Rudd Adoption Research Annual Conference: New Worlds of Adoption. She is currently the conference coordinator, assisting with collaboration between Rudd and Re-envisioning Foster Care in America to plan the 2016 Conference, "New Worlds of Adoption and Foster Care: Thriving on the Frontline."

Angela Russo

Assistant Director of Communication and Events
and Events Coordinator



Angela joined the Center for Research on Families and the Rudd team in December, 2015, following the departure of Carla Williamson-Britt. She has over a decade of experience in marketing, communications, and event planning in the fields of higher education, publishing, architecture,

and technology. As the Rudd events coordinator, a position shared with the Center for Research on Families, Angela will be overseeing all aspects of planning the annual "New Worlds of Adoption" conference, and also assisting the Rudd Program in the creation of its annual report. Angela is thrilled to be a part of the Rudd Adoption Research Program and assisting in their efforts to promote research findings and influence public policy surrounding adoption and foster care.

Carla Williamson-Britt

Events Coordinator



Carla was the events coordinator for the "New Worlds of Adoption" conference, holding a position shared with the Center for Research on Families until she and her husband moved to Seattle in summer 2015. She oversaw all aspects of the conference,

including planning, marketing, and graphic design. She also contributed to the Rudd Program social media presence and annual report. Carla came to us from Australia, where she studied graphic design and marketing. A natural planner and ultimate list-maker, Carla balanced her love of all things design with events. Her practical thinking and logistical and management skills have been critical to the planning and execution of our annual conference. The Rudd program recognized Carla with a trophy during the annual conference, identifying her as Events Coordinator Extraordinaire. We are pleased to announce that she will also soon be a New Mom Extraordinaire.



Jen Dolan and Hal Grotevant present Carla Williamson-Britt with the "Events Coordinator Extraordinaire" Award.

Rudd Program Personnel

Faculty Affiliates

Kirby Deater-Deckard, PhD

Professor of Developmental Psychology, UMass Amherst
Director, Developmental Science Initiative



We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Kirby Deater-Deckard to our faculty in January, 2016. Kirby is a developmental psychologist who studies child and adolescent cognitive and social-emotional development, and the role of parenting and peer environments on

developmental outcomes. As part of this research, he and his colleagues study adoptive and foster families. He conducted the Northeast-Northwest Collaborative Adoption Projects—at the time, the largest psychological survey of parents of internationally adopted youth in the United States. More recently, his work on adoption and fostering is focusing on international variations in family structures and youth outcomes in lower- and middle-income countries.

Rachel H. Farr, PhD

Research Assistant Professor of Psychology, UMass Amherst



Rachel H. Farr, PhD, joined the Rudd Program in February 2011 as a postdoctoral research scholar and was promoted to research assistant professor in 2012. Although she began a new position as an assistant professor in developmental psychology at the University of

Kentucky in fall 2015, she continues her adoption research with colleagues in the Rudd Program. Using the MTARP data set, Rachel has been involved with several research projects related to openness arrangements among birth and adoptive families, particularly as adoptees enter adulthood and as related to their personal relationships (i.e., with their adoptive parents and siblings). 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 (UVA) launched a large study of over 100 adoptive families from across the United States, headed by lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parenting couples, all of whom had completed domestic infant adoptions (the Contemporary Adoptive Families Study, or CAFS). CAFS examines the ways in which parental sexual orientation impacts child outcomes, parenting, and family dynamics in adoptive families with young children. With funding from the American Psychological Foundation’s Placek Award, a second wave of this study, now that the children were school-age, was completed during 2013–2014 while Rachel worked

in the Rudd Program. Rachel traveled across the country to visit participating families, and she has worked with a team of graduate and undergraduate students at UMass Amherst and UVA to collect, manage, and analyze the data. She helped advise the master’s thesis research of Marykate (MK) Oakley, who sought to explore how lesbian and gay parents socialize their children about having same-sex parents and how this socialization is relevant to children’s well-being. MK successfully defended her thesis and earned her master’s degree, as well as submitted a manuscript based on her thesis in 2015. Rachel also advised approximately 10 undergraduate research assistants during the 2015 spring semester in the Rudd Adoption Research Program, including oversight of an honors thesis research project by undergraduate Yelena Ravvina using CAFS Wave 2 data about birth family contact among adoptive families diverse in parental sexual orientation.

Jennifer M. McDermott, PhD

Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology, UMass Amherst



Dr. McDermott’s 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 began in spring 2013 with the launch of the Massachusetts Survey of Kinship, Foster, and Adoptive Parents (MSKFAP). This survey explores experiences of Massachusetts families with the aim of informing local providers as to what services are most valued and what services are most needed among kinship, foster, and adoptive families. Another goal of this survey is to lay the preliminary 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.

Patricia G. Ramsey, PhD

Professor of Psychology and Education, Mount Holyoke College



For the first three decades of her career, Dr. Patricia Ramsey (Patty) studied young children's peer relationships and their early attitude development. Along with her students, she conducted numerous studies on children's friendships and their evolving ideas about race

and social class. She has written numerous articles and chapters on this work and several books translating that research into classroom practice, including *Making Friends in School: Promoting Peer Relationships in Early Childhood and Teaching and Learning in a Diverse World: Multicultural Education for Young Children*, now in its fourth edition.

Patty has two sons adopted from Chile. As they approached adolescence and began to struggle with the identity and emotional issues related to adoption, she wanted to learn more about the experiences of transracial adoptees. She and her students have conducted a number of studies on different aspects of transracial adoptees' identity formation and how it relates to their desire to search for birth families, feelings of belonging or alienation with respect to their adoptive and birth cultural communities, overall mental health, and experiences with discrimination. A number of these studies have been presented at the Rudd Conference, International Conference on Adoption Research, and the Society for Research on Identity Formation. Almost all of the participants who volunteered for these studies were college students or recent graduates, and Patty realized that the samples did not include the experiences of many adoptees, particularly those who had struggled in school and had not gone to college.

Fortuitously, Patty's transition to adoption research coincided with Hal Grotevant's arrival at UMass and the start of the Rudd Center. She has become an enthusiastic Rudd Faculty Affiliate and has benefited greatly from the expertise and support of the scholars who are part of the Rudd program. She also has built connections between the Rudd Center and Mount Holyoke in a number of ways, including inviting

Hal to speak at Mount Holyoke and serving as an outside member on the dissertation committees of two students working under Hal's supervision. At Mount Holyoke, Patty teaches an advanced lab class, Psychological Perspectives on Adoption and, over the years, has invited several members of the Rudd Program to speak to her class. Two of her Mount Holyoke students have been summer interns in the Rudd Program, and several of them have presented their research at the annual conference. In addition, several of the graduate students in the UMass clinical psychology program have undertaken practicum experiences at the Mount Holyoke College Counseling Center.

David Scherer, PhD

Professor of Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst



David Scherer is a licensed psychologist and professor of psychological and brain sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He earned his PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Virginia in 1989 and has been on the faculty at UMass Amherst since 2005.

Dr. Scherer is a family systems theorist and therapist. His research and clinical work have concentrated primarily on adolescents and their families. His work focuses on how adolescents develop autonomy in the family context and innovative models of psychotherapy for troubled and substance-abusing adolescents. He has published extensively on how adolescents and parents make important medical and research participation decisions in the *American Journal of Bioethics*, *Pediatrics*, *Journal of Pediatrics*, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, and *American Psychologist*. He currently serves on the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Psychologists. Dr. Scherer serves as primary faculty advisor for two graduate students affiliated with the Rudd Program: Marykate Oakley and Yesel Yoon. He also serves as a member of the Rudd Program Advisory Board.

Advisory Board

Amanda L. Baden, PhD is associate professor in the Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership at Montclair State University, New Jersey. She was the recipient of the John D. Black Award in 2014 from the American Psychological Association and Division 17 (Counseling Psychology) for the Outstanding Practice of Counseling Psychology. She is a senior research fellow of the Donaldson Adoption Institute, a member of the State Board of Psychology for New York State, on the editorial board for *Adoption Quarterly* and the *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, and cochairs the Biennial Adoption Initiative Conferences in New York City held at St. John's and Montclair State Universities. Her research and clinical practice are focused on adoption triad members, transracial/international adoption issues, racial and cultural identity, and multicultural counseling competence. Baden coedited the *Handbook of Adoption: Implications for Researchers, Practitioners, and Families* (Sage, 2007) and has a clinical practice in Manhattan.



Dana E. Johnson, MD, PhD is a professor of pediatrics and member of the Divisions of Neonatology and Global Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota where he cofounded 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. He has authored numerous scholarly works including coediting *Adoption Medicine* published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. He has received the Distinguished Service Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award from Joint Council for International Children's Services, the Friend of Children Award from the North American Council on Adoptable Children, and the Harry Holt Award from Holt International. In addition to serving on the Board of Directors of the National Council for Adoption and the Editorial Board of *Adoptive Families*, he serves on the Board of Directors of Half The Sky Foundation and SPOON Foundation and on the Advisory Boards of the Rudd Adoption Research Program and Both Ends Burning. Dr. Johnson has an adopted son from India, two birth daughters, and three stepdaughters.



Femmie Juffer, PhD is professor of adoption and foster care 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, sensitive parenting and attachment-based interventions, and children's recovery after adversity. Juffer received the Casimir Award in 2005 for excellence in teaching in the faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Leiden University. For her efforts to translate science into practice, she was awarded a royal decoration of Officer in the Order of Orange-Nassau (2010). In 2015 she received the Leiden University Public Services Award for her work. She is a member of the editorial board of *Adoption Quarterly* and *Mobiel*, a Dutch journal on foster care. She coedited *Promoting Positive Parenting: An Attachment-Based Intervention* (Erlbaum, 2008) and codirects the Leiden Adoption Meta-Analysis Project and the Leiden Longitudinal Adoption Study. She hosted the Third International Conference on Adoption Research in 2010.



Ruth G. McRoy, PhD In 2009, Ruth G. McRoy became the first holder of the Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professorship at Boston College Graduate School of Social Work. Prior to joining the Boston College faculty, McRoy was a member of the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work faculty for 25 years and held the Ruby Lee Piester Centennial Professorship. A practitioner, academician, researcher, trainer, and lecturer in the field for over 30 years, her work has focused on such topics as open adoptions, birth mothers, kinship care, adoptive family recruitment, minority recruitment, racial identity development, transracial adoptions, older child adoptions, family preservation, adolescent pregnancy, and postadoption services. Since the 1980s she and Harold Grotevant have conducted longitudinal research on outcomes of openness in adoption for birth mothers, adoptive parents, and adopted children. She and her team at the University of Texas at Austin currently serve as evaluators for AdoptUSKids, a service of the U.S. Children's Bureau. McRoy has published over 100 journal articles and book chapters and ten books, including *Transracial and Inracial Adoptees: The Adolescent Years* (with L. Zurcher), *Special Needs Adoptions: Practice Issues*, and *Openness in Adoption: Exploring Family Connections* (with H. Grotevant). In 2010 McRoy 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. She also received the 2013 U.S. Children's Bureau's Adoption Excellence Award and the 2014 North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) Child Advocate of the Year Award. McRoy recently completed her term as a member of the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Board and as Board Member and President of the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) Board.



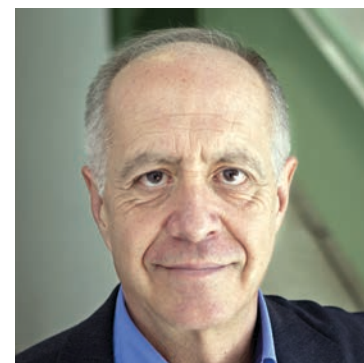
Cynthia Monahan, PsyD served as the founding director of the Cutchins Children's Clinic in Northampton, Massachusetts, for 28 years. The mission of the clinic has been to match the best trained and most experienced clinicians with the children and families most in need. Dr. Monahan is the author of *Children and Trauma: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Heal* (Jossey Bass, 1993). Dr. Monahan 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. Monahan has a long history of building multidisciplinary teams of law enforcement, community family bar advocates, and probate court to address the needs of abuse victims and children of divorce in western Massachusetts and is currently the child mental health consultant for the Northwest District Attorney's office. Dr. Monahan has a full-time private practice in Easthampton, Massachusetts, where she consults frequently with children and families whose lives have been touched by domestic and international adoption.



Elsbeth Neil, PhD is a registered social worker and professor of social work and director of research at the School of Social Work, University of East Anglia, Norwich, England. She has several years of practice experience in social care and social work settings with a range of service user groups. She has been undertaking research in the field of adoption since 1996 and has conducted a longitudinal study focusing on postadoption contact, following through to late adolescence a group of adopted children and their birth relatives and adopted parents. She has also completed two studies funded by the UK government: the "Helping Birth Families" study which examined support services for birth relatives of children adopted from care, and the "Supporting Contact" study which looked at how adoption agencies support face-to-face contact arrangements between adoptive children and their birth relatives. Professor Neil currently has three projects underway: 1) a study, using administrative data, to trace the pathways that children follow from setting to setting while in foster care; 2) a project in collaboration with practitioners to produce resources for social work practice in the field of post-adoption contact; and 3) a study examining the UK government's subsidy of the interagency adoption fee. Beth has numerous publications related to her research, the most recent of which is the report of her longitudinal study: (Neil, Beek, & Ward, 2015 *Contact after Adoption: A Longitudinal Study of Postadoption Contact Arrangements*. London: CoramBAAF.) In 2006 she organized and chaired the Second International Conference on Adoption Research, held at UEA.



Melinda Novak, PhD is professor and former chair of the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. 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, 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, PhD is professor of developmental psychology at the University of Seville, Spain. He has conducted research on both domestic and international adoptions in Spain, especially focusing on issues of recovery after early adversity and parent-child relationships. He has published numerous books and articles on foster care and adoption, including *Psychological Issues in Adoption: Research and Practice*, coedited with David Brodzinsky (Praeger, 2005). He has developed protocols for the assessment of adoption suitability and has coauthored a preadoption training program for prospective adopters, as well as books for both prospective and adoptive parents. In Spain and other countries, 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 hosted the successful Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research in Bilbao, Spain in 2013.



Maureen Perry-Jenkins, PhD

Maureen Perry-Jenkins is professor of psychology and director of the Center for Research on Families at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research focuses on the ways in which socio-cultural factors such as race, gender, and social class shape the mental health and family relationships of employed parents and their children. Her current research involves a ten-year longitudinal study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health that examines the transition to parenthood and transition back to paid employment for working-class, low-wage couples and for African American, Latino, and European American single mothers. The project examines how risk and resilience factors across these multiple life transitions affect new parents' well-being, relationship quality, and the socio-emotional well-being of their children. She is the author of numerous articles and chapters published in *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Journal of Family Psychology*, and *Family Relations*. She was a recipient of the University of Massachusetts Distinguished Outreach Research Award for her efforts to apply her research to policy as well as the Outstanding Teacher Award in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Professor Perry-Jenkins was recently designated a fellow of the National Council on Family Relations and completed a term on its board of directors. During 2015–16, she is a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Stanford University.



Sally Powers, EdD

Sally Powers is professor of psychology and neuroscience at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and associate dean for research and faculty in the College of Natural Sciences. Dr. Powers's 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, PhD

David Scherer is a licensed psychologist and professor of psychological and brain sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He earned his PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Virginia in 1989 and has been on the faculty at UMass Amherst since 2005. Dr. Scherer is a family systems theorist and therapist. His research and clinical work have concentrated primarily on adolescents and their families. His work focuses on how adolescents develop autonomy in the family context and innovative models of psychotherapy for troubled and substance-abusing adolescents. He has published extensively on how adolescents and parents make important medical and research participation decisions in the *American Journal of Bioethics*, *Pediatrics*, *Journal of Pediatrics*, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, and *American Psychologist*. He currently serves on the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Psychologists.

Rudd Program Partners and Collaborators



University of Massachusetts Amherst

Center for Research on Families
College of Education
College of Natural Sciences
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Commonwealth Honors College
Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences
Office of Engaged Learning
Office of Family Resources
Ombuds Office
Psychological Services Center

Community Associates

Adoption Journeys
Amherst Regional Public Schools
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County
Boston College Graduate School of Social Work
Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, University of
Massachusetts Boston
Clark University Department of Psychology
Donaldson Adoption Institute
Jones Library, Amherst, MA
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families
Mount Holyoke College
Re-envisioning Foster Care in America Initiative
Treehouse Community at Easthampton Meadow
Treehouse Foundation



Service to the Profession and the University

During 2015, Dr. Grotevant provided service to a number of professional, community, governmental, and university organizations.

Professional, Community, and Governmental Organizations

St. John's University Adoption Initiative, Advisory Board
 Society for Research on Identity Development,
 Student Award Selection Committee
 Treehouse Foundation, National Advisory Board
 Governor's Task Force on Adoption,
 Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 North American Council on Adoptable Children,
 Board of Directors
 Center for Adoption Support and Education,
 Advisory Board for Development of Adoption
 Competent Mental Health Professional Credential
 Fifth International Conference on Adoption Research
 (ICAR5), Auckland, New Zealand,
 Organizing Committee

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

University Service:

Department Chair, Department of Psychological and
 Brain Sciences
 Executive Committee, Department of Psychological
 and Brain Sciences
 Organizer, "Making UMass Work for You" series,
 Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences
 University Information Technology Infrastructure
 Committee
 Advisory Board and Steering Committee,
 Center for Research on Families, UMass Amherst
 Leadership Team, College of Natural Sciences
 Life Sciences Advisory Committee,
 College of Natural Sciences



Transformative Generosity

Andrew and Virginia Rudd established the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology with a generous gift in 2005. A pledge drive for funds matching their subsequent donation was successfully completed in 2014, leading to the establishment of the Rudd Family Endowed Fund for Outreach to Adoptive Parents. Their vision and their support have made it possible for the adoption program to become well established in the adoption research world, in the community, and at UMass.



The program has also benefited from the support of another major donor, Scott D. Chaplin. Chaplin (Class of 1989), whose life has been touched by adoption, has pledged \$50,000 to help finance adoption research. "Giving is an affirmation of how great UMass Amherst was for me," Chaplin said. "The adoption research is interesting and unique, and UMass is really making a name for itself in this area."

Gifts made to the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology and the Rudd Family Endowed Fund for Outreach to Adoptive Parents support the priorities of the Rudd Adoption Research Program reflected in this report. Donations will build the endowment in order to support programs such as adoption research, the annual conference, the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, Re-envisioning Foster Care in America, adoption research training, graduate student and postdoctoral scholar stipends, and visiting scholars. For further information about this unique opportunity, please contact Chelsea Gwyther, executive director of development, College of Natural Sciences. She may be contacted at (413) 577-6422 or at cgwyther@umass.edu.

Rudd
ADOPTION RESEARCH
P R O G R A M

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For information about supporting the Rudd Adoption Research Program, please contact Chelsea Gwyther, executive director of development, College of Natural Sciences. She may be contacted at (413) 577-6422 or cgwyther@umass.edu.