

# Fall/Winter 2023 Newsletter

Greetings! Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2023 edition of the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association Newsletter.

I am extremely excited to tell you that the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association will be 10 years old in 2024, and we are planning an event to celebrate this magnificent milestone. Adding to my excitement is the fact that our membership has grown to 330. The names of our newest members are included in the **Membership Committee** section of this newsletter.

Some KKAA members told us about their thrilling vacation travels. Cruises to the British Isles, New England and Canada were among the highlights. Photos from a colleague's a trip to Iceland are in the **Member News** section, as well as an update on a member's journey to the Vatican, and recollections of the surprise reunion. I am sure that you will relish reading about these pleasurable experiences.

**KKAA is Almost Everywhere** is a way for us to *stay connected* with former coworkers who have left the state of Maryland. I find it exhilarating to read about what they have been up to post-KKI. As a side note, the writer of this column is relocating to Florida. Hopefully she will reconnect with members residing in Florida and share their updates.

Gayne Barlow-Kemper wrote about one of her fondest memories prior to retiring from her position as Director of Southeast Early Head Start Program. Be sure to read her article in the **I Remember When** portion of this newsletter. In addition, Chris Small authored the **Health Corner**. In it, he writes about how a well-planned vacation can become a nightmare.

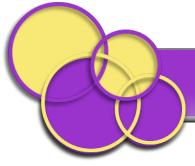
I sincerely hope that you enjoy this edition of the newsletter. Please continue to send us your updates, travels, memories, and suggestions. We truly want to hear from **YOU** so we can *stay connected*.

Until the next time, I hope your holiday season is filled with laughter, love, and cherished moments with loved ones. I wish you a very happy 2024!

Take care,

Roni





# **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**



### We are happy to welcome new members to the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association

Sapna Bansil was a member of the Occupational Therapy Department for nearly 10 years.

Anna Chassevent spent 5 years in the Neurogenetics Department.

For 34 years, *Susan Demetrides* worked in several programs: SHNIC, Spina Bifida and the Phelps Clinic.

*Richard Jones* spent 26 years in the Neurogenetics Department.

The Nursing Department was *Char Kollars*' work department for 28 years.

Lydia Manni was a member of the Special Education team for 24 years.

Julie O'Meara was a part of the Child and Family Support Program for 8 years.

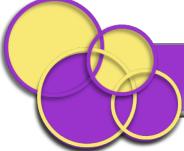
Michelle Sears worked in Employee Health for 16 years.

For 34 years, *Jody Luttrell* was a part of the Department of Nursing.

Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association now has 330 members!

Remember, if you know former KKI colleagues who have not joined the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association, please send us their contact information so we can extend an invitation to them to become a member.

The Alumni Email address is webmaster@kkalumni.org.



# **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**



KKAA will be **10 years old** in 2024 and we are planning an amazing celebration

Look for notices with additional information in the coming months.

### I REMEMBER WHEN

By: Gayne Barlow-Kemper

*I remember when...* I was the director of the Southeast Baltimore Early Head Start program (SEEHS) for 18 years. We were a federally funded program offering services to children ages 0-3 and their families. All the families in our program were at or below the federal poverty line, so we often had to help with the extras that children and families need. This happened especially during the holiday season, when SEEHS was intent on ensuring that all children we served received gifts, food, and holiday cheer.

What I remember the most about the holiday season was the telephone calls and emails I received from Roni Gross. She never forgot SEEHS, even during the busiest time of the year. Roni would contact us asking for information about families: names of the parents, number of children in the family, sizes, their likes and dislikes-anything that would let her know what the family wanted and needed to have a special KKI Christmas. Some of our families would attend the KKI Christmas Day festivities at the 707 Broadway building. We would sit in the lobby with them and dozens of other families from various KKI programs, waiting for their names to be called. I remember that our bus driver would be waiting outside to pile all the presents onto the bus and transport some extremely excited and happy children home.

The holidays, as celebrated at SEEHS, were nondenominational. We had many countries and cultures represented in our programs. What was so wonderful was to see how we were able to incorporate all these diverse cultures into the holiday celebrations. Our Somali Bantu families, who were all Muslim, had a wonderful time celebrating Santa Clause and receiving the myriad gifts. Coming from a background of intense poverty in Somalia, the gifts were amazing to them. But that is not all that Roni did. She also ensured that every child received a gift. So, again, our bus driver would go to Broadway, staff would choose a gift for each child, pack the bus, and return with all the presents. But that is still not the end of my memories...I recall that we quickly wrapped each gift, labelled them, and hid them in the "way back" room at the Center, awaiting Santa's arrival.

All this extra special and wonderful service came from deep in the heart of Roni Gross. She always made sure that we were a part of whatever the Institute had to offer. I will never forget her generosity and the love for the children that she demonstrated. For us, the extra work was well worth it because we got to see the excitement on the faces and in the eyes of the children, their siblings, and parents.

I cherish the time that I spent at Kennedy Krieger's SEEHS. Those memories are unforgettable and remain vivid in my mind and in my heart.

### **MEMBER NEWS**

I am always so happy when members share their news and stories. This is what makes our newsletter interesting. What's new? Have you visited with family and friends, traveled, or are enjoying other activities? We want to hear about it. SHARE your "news" with us in the next edition, by emailing Jean at smootjean@yahoo.com

Check out our latest Member News...

#### **BIG CHANGES FOR CHAR KOLLER**

Char (Nursing) retired on June 1st, sold the house June 12th, and moved to Delaware! Since the house isn't totally ready, they have everything in storage and have been living between Delaware and their daughter's home in Hershey, PA. She hopes to be in the new house by Christmas and are looking forward to being close to the beach and a canal that leads right to the bay!

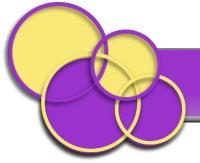
While waiting for the house to be finished, Char has been reading, playing Flip Five, Bingo and Hand & Foot and enjoying the beach. When they are in Hershey, they also help out with their 10-year-old granddaughter, Harper.

#### THE CHURCHES ARE KEEPING BUSY

Robin and Greg Church have traveled quite a bit this past year! They took a Viking Ocean cruise around the British Isles and over to Bergen, Norway and then a river cruise on the Rhine, including a biking trip to the windmills of Kinderdjike and an electric bike trip into The Black Forest. Of course, the trip included lots of beer, wine, and great food, along with walking tours of many villages along the way.

Robin continues to be very busy with the dogs competing in both agility and Nose Work and winning lots of ribbons and titles. Things will be slowing down quite a bit this fall as Robin got a total knee replacement on November 1<sup>st</sup>. She is hoping to be back running the dogs after the New Year.

Husband Greg has set a tentative date to retire in 2 years and is looking forward to that. Their next big travel plans are for Italy next spring when they take their two grandsons, Jake (age 11) and Will (age 13) to Venice and Rome for their spring school holiday.



# **MEMBER NEWS CONT.**

#### **DELORES MOORE VISITS THE VATICAN**

In our Spring/Summer 2022 issue, we told you that Delores Moore is part of a team requesting that six African

American Catholics be canonized. In October of this year, the team traveled to Rome for four days and met with the Dicastery for the Cause of Saints. They also had hopes of securing an audience with the Pope. However, due to scheduling conflicts, the group was unable to meet with the Pontiff. After conferring with officials at the Vatican, they were asked to provide additional information and documentation relative to their cause. According to Delores, "They applauded our efforts and said we were the first to present a case from the populace, and they thought



they would consider encouraging others to do the same. We ended on a happy note, took pictures, and had rosaries blessed by Father and the Cardinal of the Dicastery." Delores and others in the group plan to return to Rome in the future to complete their mission.

#### PATTY PORTER CRUISES

Patty and her husband Pete just returned from a 9-day cruise to New England and Canada. They went with 2 other couples and had a great time. They stopped in Boston, Portland, St. John, and Halifax. In St. John, they saw the Reversing Rapids where the St. John River meets the Bay of Fundy. Due to the extreme tides in that region, the direction that the water flows changes twice a day, making the rapids go in the opposite direction. The water is calm for 20 minutes twice a day between the change. Pete went on an excursion in Halifax to a cemetery where 209 people who died on the Titanic are buried. He came back with some interesting and heartbreaking stories that we hadn't heard before. We were blessed with great weather for the whole trip. It only rained at night or when we were at sea. We were hoping to see gorgeous fall foliage, but we were told the hurricanes that came through the area made for a bad season. Overall, it was a lot of fun!

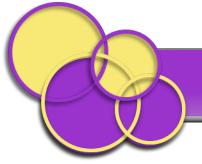
#### BERNADETTE IRWIN PART OF A NON-PROFIT

Bernadette Irwin is part of a non-profit, The Association for Successful Parenting, or TASP. Many of you will be familiar with the original PACT program called Parents and Children Together, whose name was later changed to Growing Together. Out of the connections made by that successful parenting program, The Association of Successful Parenting was established as a non-profit. Their Mission, as a leading nonprofit, is to successfully support families when the parent (s) have learning difficulties. They do this through Education and Training, Advocacy, Development and Sharing of Resources.

Bernadette said she "could go on and on" about the work that they do. KKI employees may be familiar with the work of Maureen Van Stone and Mirian **Ofonedu of MD's UCEDD.** TASP has worked with them providing training and consultation on working with parents with intellectual disabilities.

Also, Chelsea Tighe, who served as the Director of KKI's Family Support Services Program from 2010-2016, is the Executive Director of TASP.

TASP is seeking interested and knowledgeable individuals to serve on their Board of Directors. Bernadette would love to talk to you if you are interested. Check out their website: <a href="www.achancetoparent.net">www.achancetoparent.net</a> and email them at <a href="mailto:info@achancetoparent.net">info@achancetoparent.net</a>.



# MEMBER NEWS CONT.

#### LYNN WOODS, A TRIP TO ICELAND

Lynn Woods' trip to Iceland started out in Chicago where she was visiting her best friend. They departed for Iceland from the windy city with a group of eighteen people. The ten-day trip was arranged by a travel company whose owner traveled with them. It took five hours to get to Iceland from Chicago.

The weather started out cold and rainy but improved over the next day or so. It remained windy and the temperature was in the 50s. Lynn said the highlights of her trip were the Northern Lights, the clean fresh air and water and the varied terrains.









#### ALMA DURM HAS A SURPRISE REUNION

Early this summer, Alma was going to meet Cherry Jean Pierre and her husband Leonard for breakfast. Cherry and Alma were part of the first classes with the LEAP program under the direction of Marilyn Cataldo. The LEAP program started in 1997, when Alma was a teacher in the only classroom that was on the first floor of Fairmount. Because of its success, in the second year LEAP grew to take up most of the second floor at the Fairmount location. Well, not only were Cherry and her husband there, but they surprised her with a table full of people that had been part of the program.



#### Photos:

*Left photo*: From top to bottom are Alma, Cherry, Leonard (Cherry's husband), Derrick (student), Martha (Mani's mother), Mani (student, from the first LEAP class!), and Aaron Lewis (LEAP staff, currently Director of Residential Programs at Linwood), *Center photo*: Derrick, Martha and Mani *Right photo*: Alma and Cherry



Derrick, one who to always enjoys celebrations, got everyone's phone numbers and said he would call to wish each of us a happy birthday. True to his word, I received several calls with songs on my birthday!



# Where in the World???

### KKAA Is Almost Everywhere

By Jacqueline Cross-Daniels

The fun I receive from writing this column is hearing about our former colleagues who continue to carry on the work they cultivated at Kennedy Krieger Institute (KKI). One of these individuals is SungWoo Kahng, Ph.D., BCBA-D. He is currently a Professor, Chair of the Department of Applied Psychology and Director of Academic Programs in Autism and ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

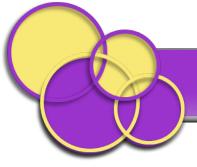
From 1990 to 2014, SungWoo took on many roles while employed at Kennedy Krieger. He was a Clinical Specialist, Senior Behavior Analyst for the Neurobehavioral Unit. In addition, he assumed the roles of Case Manager for the Pediatric Feeding Disorders Unit, as well as Director of Training.

Since joining the Rutgers team, his professional focus has been to start two Masters' Programs and a Doctoral Program in ABA. SungWoo's research has slightly shifted to concentrate on supporting adults with autism. But wait, he is not alone in his professional journey. His wife, Lisa Toole, also a KKI/NBU alumnus, leads a team of behavior analysts at Eden Autism Services that support adults with autism. Despite all their success, their most coveted achievement is their son, Grayson, who was about 5 years old when the family left Baltimore. He is now a junior in high school and a competitive tennis player with his sights set on selecting a college and obtaining a driver's license.



To peruse one of SungWoo's recent publications, click https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jaba.977

If you live outside of the Maryland area or plan to relocate, please drop us a line at webmaster@kkalumni.org. We would like to feature you in an upcoming column.



# **HEALTH CORNER**

Preparing for Health Emergencies During Travel By Chris Small (Information Systems)

#### Vacation checklist

- Socks Check
- Extra shirts Check
- Flight & Hotel reservations Check
- Plan for an emergency surgery on the last day of vacation.....????

I took a brief family vacation to Williamsburg, VA in June. We arrived on Wednesday and spent the day doing all the fun things Williamsburg has to offer. On Thursday, I started having abdominal pains but chalked that up to the typical vacation dietary indulgences (Mmmm! Duck Donuts!). By Thursday evening the pain was constant and I felt something wasn't quite right, so I went to an urgent care facility. They assured me that I was fine and to follow up with my Primary at home. Well, by Friday afternoon it turned out that I was admitted to the hospital for an emergency appendectomy!

With many of us taking more time to travel both locally and around the globe, it is important to plan for the unexpected. I certainly never thought that I would have emergency surgery on the last day of my vacation!

Traveling is an exciting and enriching experience, but it's important to be prepared for potential health emergencies that may arise during your journey.

#### **Research Destination-Specific Health Risks**

Before setting off on your journey, research the health requirements associated with your destination, like vaccinations or immunizations.

#### **Obtain Adequate Travel Health Insurance**

Consider investing in comprehensive travel health insurance. Always carry a copy of your insurance card.

#### **Carry Important Health Documents**

Keep copies of important health documents with you, including a list of emergency contacts, pre-existing medical conditions, allergies and current medications.

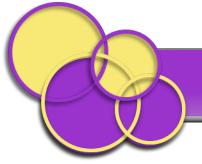
### **Practice Food and Water Safety**

Food and waterborne illnesses are common health concerns during travel. Be cautious of consuming street food or tap water in certain areas.

#### **Take Precautions Against Mosquito-Borne Diseases**

If you're traveling to regions where mosquito-borne diseases are prevalent, use mosquito repellents containing DEET, wear long-sleeved clothing and pants and consider staying in accommodations with air conditioning or bed nets.

We always hope for smooth and trouble-free travels. Being prepared for health emergencies will ensure your well-being on the road.



# **KENNEDY KRIEGER NEWS**

**Kennedy Krieger** is proud to announce that Dr. Bushra Rizwan, a child and adolescent psychiatrist in the Psychiatric Mental Health Program, and Dr. Stacy Suskauer, Vice President of Pediatric Rehabilitation, have been selected by their peers as Top Doctors in the annual <u>Baltimore magazine</u> Top Docs recognition.

We congratulate them on this recognition!

#### MARYLAND GOVERNOR & LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR VISIT KKI

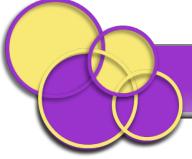


A little more than a month ago, Maryland's governor, Wes Moore, and lieutenant governor, Aruna Miller, along with Maryland's secretaries of health and disabilities, visited Kennedy Krieger to tour our inpatient hospital. It was the first visit to the Institute for Gov. Moore and Lt. Gov. Miller.

Seeing our patients and staff members through their eyes was very special for me. Each of our visitors had heard about Kennedy Krieger Institute and our extraordinary and unique approach to care and education, but witnessing what we do every day, firsthand, brought tears to their eyes.

# KKAA Website History Page

Do you have anything interesting to contribute to the KK Alumni History Page? Take a photo and send it to us, or we will try to come to you to photograph the item. We would love to continue to build this page and hope to hear from you!



# **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Jennifer Accardo
- Lena Abrams \*
- Margaret Adams
- Maureen Adams
- Britten Agostino
- Rebecca Albury
- Alvonia Allen
- Michael Allen
- Barbara Allgood-Hill
- Marie Andachter
- Connie Anderson
- Mary Anderson
- Jennifer Ashley
- Eileen Atkins
- Jean Augustyniak
- Joy Auslander
- Hanna Ballard
- Kelly Bandzwolek
- Sapna Bansil
- Gayne Barlow-Kemper
- Stephine Barrow\*
- Linda Baynes
- Jane Beasley \*
- Dawn Beckner
- Jessica Becraft
- Michael Bender
- Dori Bethoulle
- Nancy Bjork
- Kenneth Bleile
- Traci Blow
- Rosalee Blyther
- Melissa Boling
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- Estelle Bouchard
- Bernice Bowen
- Thelma Bowler
- Leah Boyd
- Kathy Brady
- Melanie Branagan
- Abena Brown-Elhillal
- Brenda Bryant
- Kim Buckheit
- Irena Bukelis
- Linda Bull

- Sarah Calhoun
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- Catherine Capel
- Angela Carbonell-Mulligan
- Bethany Carr
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- Elizabeth Commins
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- Andrew Corroran
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- •Briana Czerwinski
- Charlene Davis
- Charretta Davis
- Sandria Ann Day
- Susan Demetrides
- Cary Delavigne
- Martha
- Denckla (Bridge)
- Eddie Denning
- Wanda Dewitt
- Heidi Diliberto
- Jessica Ditto
- Alma Durm
- Daryl Dutrow
- Rebecca Ebberts

- Jennifer Ernest
- Katie Ernest
- Angela Fadely
- Peter Fanning

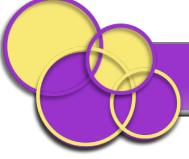
Carolyn Ferguson-

- West
- Marge Fessler
- Priscilla Flores
- Haley Ford
- Margaret Forte'
- Marsha Freed
- Arlene Friedman
- Suzanne Funk
- Chantel Gaines
- Jackie Galluzzo-
- Sumner
- Laura Gertz
- Shannon Gettier
- Yvonne Glass
- Sharon Glennen
- Andrea Goffus
- Melissa

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- Gary Goldstein
- Paula Gonce
- Melissa Gonzalez
- Estelle Goode
- Nancy Gracie
- Cindy Graham
- Gail Graham
- April Greer
- Willie Greer
- Angela Grier
- Toni Griffin
- Cathy Groschan
- Roni Gross
- Crystal Guengerich
- Bobbi Guizzotti-Boney
- Kate Gutshall
- Melanie Haik
- Kelly Hardesty
- Taisha HarringtonRochelle Harrison
- Felicia Harris-Smith

- Susan Harryman
- Chelsea Haverly
- Patricia Headley
- Rebecca Heggemeyer
- Geraldine Heggins
- Suzanne Heisler
- Nancy Hewell
- Carole Hickman
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- Doris Hill
- Joan Hines \*
- Cindy Hoffman
- Neil Hoffman
- Ruth Hoffman
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- Stacey Kowalski
- Jackie Krick
- Kara Kristaponis
- David Kuhn



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- Kimberly Leffler
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- Elizabeth Moore
- James Morrell
- Karen Murphy-Keddell

- Mary Nasuta
- Patricia Neal
- Colleen O'Brien-

#### Enders

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- Folasade Onasanya
- Edore Onigu-
- Otite, MD
- Kathleen

### Oppenheimer

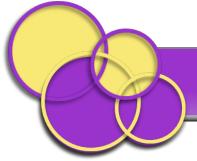
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- Mary Rawlings
- Janice Reaves-

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- Nichole Reimers
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- Lori Revitz
- Sharon Riccitelli
- Jody Roblyer
- Concetta Roby

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- Rachel Salamone
- Michael Schlund
- Lynne Schroeder
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- Gabe Shleifer
- Heidi Shoemaker
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- Emily Shumate
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- Annie Stuchell
- Kunise StrohAnnie Sutton
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- ThompsonDeb Tolley
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- Lauren White
- Peggy White
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- Howard
- Arthur WilkeDarlene Williams
- Jasmyn Williams
- Alvin Winn
- Carmen Wise
- Elizabeth Wohler
- Lynn Woods
- Tanya West Wynn
- Stephanie Venable
- Pamula Yerby-
- Hammack
   Carrie Yost
- Marc Young
- Andrew
   Zimmerman



### **COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

If you know of someone who may be interested in joining the Alumni Association, they can call or email us, but they can also complete a contact form on the KKAA website. Speaking of the website, we are always working on updating it. Check it out to view past issues of our newsletter, membership list and other interesting information. Our website address is kkalumni.org

If you enjoy our newsletter, know that it is your input, suggestions and ideas that make it successful. Keep in touch. Don't think that you have to write an article. You can contact me at the KKAA email address (webmaster@kkalumni.org) or at smootjean@yahoo.com. **Remember, you don't have to write anything.** We can talk by phone or communicate by email and I will take care of the rest.

#### **IMPORTANT**

Every time we send an email or USPS mail, we get a number of returns. If you haven't been receiving our communications, we don't have your current home or email address. Please keep us up to date with your current information.

The Alumni Email address is webmaster@kkalumni.org.

We don't want to lose our ability to stay in touch with you.

Let's stay connected!

#### **HOW YOU CAN STAY IN TOUCH**

Join our Facebook group, Kennedy Krieger Alumni
Check out our Website kkalumni.org
We keep it simple; we have one main Email address...
email the Alumni at <a href="webmaster@kkalumni.org">webmaster@kkalumni.org</a>
President Roni Gross at <a href="webmaster@kkalumni.org">webmaster@kkalumni.org</a>
Vice President Jean Smoot at <a href="webmaster@kkalumni.org">webmaster@kkalumni.org</a>
Membership Committee at <a href="webmaster@kkalumni.org">webmaster@kkalumni.org</a>

To reach us by phone: 410-215-8972 KKAA Newsletter <a href="mailto:smootjean@yahoo.com">smootjean@yahoo.com</a>

Be sure to keep us up to date with any changes in your email address, your mailing address or phone number.