Melissa Guerra and her 11-year-old daughter Allison chatted leisurely between a portable video game and homework as mile after mile slipped by en route from CID to their home in Elsah, Illinois, on an early spring afternoon.

Driving, Melissa focused on the road and, now and again, on Allison as she talked about her day. Allison alternated easily between the scenery — redbuds blooming, rock bluffs and Mississippi river rushing by — and her mom’s smiling, talking face. The two are veterans of daily road trips together, traveling more than an hour a day each way for nine years so Allison could attend CID.

“It used to be worse,” Melissa said. “In the beginning, we drove 80 miles one way. Since we moved four years ago, it’s only 40 miles.” Allison is one of this year’s school graduates, so her hours in the car with Mom will soon be history. Next year, she will take the bus to attend 5th grade at West Elementary in nearby Jerseyville. She has played on local soccer teams since she was five, so she already knows some kids there. She said she is a little sad to leave teachers and friends at CID and a little nervous about her new school, but will be happy to make new friends too.

When Allison’s deafness was diagnosed at 13 months, Melissa did not imagine this moment. In fact, she was so upset she couldn’t drive home from the hospital. But soon she and her husband Greg began to look for help. They came to CID five months later.

At first, the going was slow. The family worked hard and every day Allison worked hard at CID to learn speech and language. When she turned three, she received a cochlear implant, but it took several more years for Melissa and Greg to notice progress. “I remember it was Honors Day and Allison kept getting all of these awards,” Melissa said. “It was like, almost overnight, she had improved three grade levels across the board.”

Allison has not looked back. Recently, after she spoke before the local Optimist Club, the Toastmasters invited her to talk. She plays soccer three evenings a week, recently scoring four goals in five games. She said she wants to try out for the Miss Junior Jersey contest and, when she grows up, she wants to be a doctor. Melissa credits the CID teachers for much of Allison’s success. “They have done nothing but good for her,” she said.

At home, Allison plays soccer with her dog Gus, scores cinnamon pie from her grandparents next door and makes her parents laugh. She turns her processor off when her brother Danny “yells” at her and “pretends” she is deaf for the fun of it. “Allison has made us more sensitive to others’ issues,” Melissa said. “I think we all have benefited, including Danny, who is one of the nicest kids at his school.”

“CID has given us all a wealth of experiences. We have a different outlook on life and it’s a positive one.”

We have redesigned our web site. Visit us at www.cid.wustl.edu.
The strength and endurance of CID

CID was founded in 1914, at the onset of a century of technological and democratic progress, with the hope and promise of freedom for all. Our mission, to help people with hearing loss achieve personal freedom and independence, continues to gain the support of community leaders and professionals alike. We are especially grateful to those with the endurance to preserve Max Goldstein’s vision through good times as well as economic adversity. This dedication is crucial at a time when CID is doing more good than ever before.

As we reach the end of an exciting academic year, we have many reasons to thank those who have supported CID. We look back on dramatic and hard-won personal milestones as our teachers and audiologists continued to help hearing-impaired individuals of all ages connect with their families, make their own choices and function independently. Doubling as faculty in our professional education programs, these professionals also taught and inspired our students. These programs are demanding and these individuals have proven themselves worthy of the challenges ahead.

Over the course of the year, CID professionals made other kinds of important strides as well. Our scientists used sophisticated technology to continue to uncover knowledge that will one day lead to a cure for deafness. Our clinics conducted thousands of audiological procedures, provided the community with interpreters and continued to raise the skill level of interpreting professionals in this region.

Our teachers and audiologists hosted professionals from other states and countries at workshops on helping families of newly diagnosed infants and children with cochlear implants. The need for such expertise is especially strong in rural areas where few services are available.

Like many not-for-profit organizations, CID continues to face financial challenges. To help ease this year’s burden, we reduced the workforce, cut spending and increased program fees. We also sold the property at 909 South Taylor and moved the clinic to the new campus. We are currently working on an agreement for the sale of the property at 818 South Euclid.

In early May, much-needed support came from the community at our fantastic Ultimate Picnic. The proceeds of this event are so important to the CID children and their families. From the bottom of our hearts, Ellen and I want to thank all of our friends who who contributed to a fun and wildly successful evening.

With our school, clinic, professional education and research programs now together on the same campus, we continue to explore ways to work with other organizations to stabilize CID and ensure that we continue to fulfill our mission. In the coming months, we will know more about the results of these efforts, including recent serious talks with nearby Washington University School of Medicine. With continued support from the academic and business communities, and from our many friends and family members, we will work to strengthen our mission and broaden our reach. —RGC

Congratulations, graduates!


2003 professional education graduates, l to r, front row: Margaret Basile from St. Louis, Angela Clabots from Tacoma, Washington, Julie Mullen from Columbia, Missouri, Casandra Merken from Borger, Texas, and Deborah Kupchik from Baldwin, New York. Second row: Ellie Rice from St. Louis, Becky Batiste from LaComb, Louisiana, Tanya Jones from Washington, Missouri, Tessa Gillfiaan from Towanda, Illinois, and Mandy Ortmann from Kirkwood, Missouri. Third row: Insook Lim from Tustin, California, Laura Fehrmann from Wichita, Kansas, and Jennifer Johnson from O’Fallon, Missouri. Rebecca Underwood from Marble Hill, Missouri, is not shown.

The CID Alumni Association is selling cookbooks to benefit the CID Children’s Fund. The price is $7 per book, plus $3 per book shipping and handling. Send your order to Merlie Williams, 9 Rio Vista Drive, Louisville, KY 40207-1510. Make checks payable to CIDAA. Thank you.
Missouri hearing screening law helps babies with mild to moderate hearing loss

Early intervention is crucial to ensuring that severely and profoundly deaf infants grow up learning speech and language. However, people may think less often about a larger group of newborns whose hearing loss falls in the mild to moderate range and who begin their lives with potential language deficits and learning problems due to their hearing loss. Before mandatory newborn hearing screening laws — now in effect in 37 U.S. states — children whose hearing loss was not discovered early.

“Babies with this kind of loss are likely to babble and appear normal hearing,” said Chris Clark, coordinator of CID’s Family Center.

Among the families the Family Center currently is helping are two that were discovered through mandatory screening laws with sons suffering from mild to moderate hearing loss. Christian Smith, who turned a year old in April, was identified through the Missouri law implemented on January 1, 2002. He was diagnosed at birth, confirmed at three months, fitted with hearing aids at six months and is doing great now with the help of early intervention specialists at CID, who visit the family weekly to provide therapy in a natural language environment.

Jack Morra, also a year old, was identified through New Jersey’s mandatory screening law, also implemented in January of last year. Jack’s parents moved to Illinois soon after the hearing loss was confirmed, and Jack currently is receiving services at CID. His father and mother — a pediatrician and speech therapist, respectively — bring him in for therapy every two weeks.

Through early intervention, including hearing aids, individual therapy, family counseling and special nursery classes, if necessary when they turn two, Christian and Jack should be able to develop language skills normally — something that is much more difficult for children whose hearing loss is not discovered early.

We are sad to report that Rabiya Shakil and her family passed away in October of 2002 when their single-engine Piper PA-32 airplane went down near Paron, Arkansas.

Rabiya attended CID as a residential student from 1998 to 2001. She was profoundly hearing-impaired and had a cochlear implant. Originally from Pakistan, her family lived in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. She was 11 years old and a student at her local elementary school.

CID middle school coordinator Barb Lanfer remembers Rabiya as a bright, energetic girl who enjoyed spending time with her friends and participating in classes. She was adored by her dorm mates, family members and friends. She died along with her father, Mohammad, who was flying the plane, mother Farida, sister Sabeen and brothers Osman and Hassan.

Our thoughts and sympathies are with Rabiya’s extended family and with everyone at CID who knew the Shakils.

In loving memory

1926 school alumna Laura Jean Johnson of Georgetown, Texas, passed away in November of 2002 at age 89. Ms. Johnson held degrees from Texas Women’s University and North Texas State University. She worked for IBM for many years and spent several years volunteering at a girls’ camp.

1934 school alumna Claudia Miller O’Conor passed away in November of 2002 at the age of 84 in Gulfport, Mississippi. She lost her hearing at age six months and spent 10 years learning to talk at CID. She held a fine arts degree from the University of Mississippi and was employed with the military during World War II as a technical illustrator on top secret projects. She trained with nationally noted abstract artists, and earned numerous awards for her own work. She was an avid supporter of the children’s art program at CID. Her family has asked that donations be made in lieu of flowers.

Longtime CID board of managers member and St. Louis business entrepreneur Fred Wenzel passed away in December of 2002 in Sarasota, Florida, at age 86. Mr. Wenzel was named a Distinguished Eagle Scout for 25 years of exemplary service in business and public life. He once accompanied Sir Edmond Hillary in a climb to the base of Mount Everest.

1934 school alumnus Howard Schwartz of Kirkwood, Missouri, passed away in March at age 82. Mr. Schwartz was a retired research chemist who worked for Monsanto. His family asked that memorial contributions be made to CID’s Schwartz Scholarship Fund.

1925 school alumnus Vincent Herr, Jr. of Collinsville, Illinois, passed away in March at age 93. Mr. Herr held a degree in embalming and worked at Herr Funeral Home his entire life. His deafness was caused by a Model T Ford, which hit him when he was riding his bike at age 12.
Starlight filtered through high gymnasium windows to settle on 400 guests at the CID Ultimate Picnic on May 3. The theme, “Fly Me to the Moon,” called forth the big band song stylings of The Steve Schankman Orchestra with Tom Heitman, a performance by CID children, a sumptuous dinner, silent and oral auctions and tripping the light fantastic — New York cabaret-style. Thanks to many individuals and businesses in the community, the event set a CID record, raising $229,000 to benefit the school children and bringing the nine-year Ultimate Picnic total to $1,095,400. This year, the event honored the extraordinary commitment of Bob and Ellen Clark to the children and the mission of CID. Bob Clark, founder, chairman and CEO of Clayco Construction Company, is president of the CID board of managers and has served as volunteer executive director since May of 2002. Ellen Clark, a tireless volunteer who co-chaired the 1998 and 2001 Ultimate Picnic committees, spearheaded the auctions for this year’s event. She is hearing-impaired and learned to read lips at CID as a child.

Local entrepreneur had his start at CID

1993 CID graduate Scott Campbell always dreamed of owning his own business, but until recently he did not know if the dream would come true. Scott, 25, has been profoundly deaf in both ears since birth. Originally from Chicago, his family moved to Olivette, a St. Louis suburb, after Scott spent two years in the CID residential program. In all, he spent 11 years learning to talk at CID.

Scott attended Ladue High School and earned an associate of arts degree in business at Meramec Community College then attended the University of Missouri for a year before returning to Olivette.

“I was having the time of my life at Mizzou,” he said, sprouting a mischievous smile, “hanging out with hearing people on campus. I wanted to experience the big college social life and I did.”

But Scott missed his family and decided to come home. He had a history of working part-time jobs in the neighborhood and was interested in continuing to learn about small business. He got a job at a Mailboxes etc. store, packing and working with the customers. Before long, the owner noticed he had something special and took him under his wing.

Over time, Scott became store manager. He built a strong following among customers who recognized his enthusiasm and sense of responsibility for their packages. When, after five years, UPS purchased the Mailboxes etc. company last summer, he had the opportunity to buy the Olivette franchise.

“It was a difficult decision,” he said. “I had financial support from my family, so I had to weigh the risks very heavily. Finally, I decided to just do it. UPS is a strong brand name and it was a good time.”

It wasn’t long before Scott knew he made the right decision. Reduced prices and UPS name recognition brought an immediate 30% boost in business — about 600 additional packages in the first month alone. But sending packages is only part of the business. The store also offers copying, collating and binding, faxing, certified and metered mail, packing materials, stamps, mailboxes, estate shipping and package pickup. Scott said it has been a big challenge to educate people about all of his products and services. “Communication is key,” he said.

Scott said his business plan requires him, most of all, to be responsive to customers’ needs and to “have fun.” He especially enjoys the challenge of unusual packing and shipping requests. Nothing is too big or too fragile. He has shipped expensive art, industrial equipment, furniture — even Ted Drewes ice cream.

“As a child, Scott was a little businessman,” recalled CID school counselor Pat Wasserman. “He was always going, always running here or there selling something.”
Opportunity knocking — for all to hear

CID’s mission is to serve people with hearing loss so they can communicate effectively and live to their fullest potential. This year, four graduate students have a special motivation to carry forth this mission: They all have hearing loss.

Krisjeana Ballard, a first-year audiology student with moderate to severe loss in both ears, was a patient in the clinic at the age of three. CID provided her with hearing aids and helped her mainstream classroom accommodate her. Now, Krisjeana is back learning what it takes to carry out the very mission that served her 19 years earlier.

“I was drawn to CID’s excellent reputation,” Krisjeana said. “The people here are professionals who truly care about the patients and students. I want to use the knowledge I learn to perform diagnostic and rehabilitative audiology. And I want to use my experience of having a hearing loss as a counseling tool to help other people understand hearing loss.”

Rebecca Zellmer, also a first-year audiology student but with mild to moderate loss diagnosed at age four, agrees with Krisjeana. “I not only want to be a good clinician, but also a role model,” Rebecca said. “I want to encourage parents that there is enormous potential hiding behind their children’s hearing loss.”

In May, two other hearing-impaired graduate students, Casandra Merken and Amanda Ortmann, took one step closer to reaching their fullest potential as they graduated from CID with master’s degrees in deaf education and audiology, respectively. Casandra’s hearing loss ranges from mild to moderate, Amanda’s from severe to profound.

“CID acknowledges the capabilities of all hearing-impaired individuals, whether they are school children, clinic patients, or in our case, students in the graduate program,” Amanda said.

“The faculty and staff do not view us as just hearing aid wearers or people with a disability. But, rather, they look at us and see future audiologists, educators and researchers. They work hard to meet our every need so that we can achieve all that we desire to be. …”

“I’m truly very grateful for everything CID has done for me. The best way I can repay my gratitude is to devote my career, based on the knowledge and values I have learned, to serving other people with hearing loss.”

Pastry chef Mike Jenniches was among professionals demonstrating career opportunities to students from CID and St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf at CID’s November career fair. Others in-cluded a St. Louis Symphony clarinetist, a city fireman, an emergency dispatcher and a truck driver who brought his semi-truck. The event, destined to be-come an annual activity, was organized to show children with hearing loss some of the varied careers open to them.

Thirteen-year-old Gary Cantor of Coral Springs, Florida is a regular kid who likes soccer, flag football and wakeboarding, among other activities. In January, he surprised his mom with a gesture that touched her heart. On the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah, Gary remembered that she attended CID when she was 2 ½ years old and attended from 1960 to 1964. A graduate of the University of Michigan, American University and the University of Miami School of Law, she is currently a practicing attorney. “I owe everything that I am to CID,” she said. “I would not speak as well as I do if I hadn’t gone there.”

Thank you, Gary. We can’t think of a more meaningful gift.

Contacts

Address change. Courtney Ancel, development assistant courtneya@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0163
CID Deaf Services. Susan Power, program coordinator spower@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0058
CID Hearing Central. Brad Stach, Ph.D., director of audiology and clinical services bstach@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0151
Development. Robin Feder, M.S., C.F.R.E., director of development rfeder@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0223
Harold W. Siebens Hearing Research Center Richard Baird, Ph.D., director of research rbaird@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0251
Professional Education. William Clark, Ph.D., director of professional education wclark@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0251
School. JoEllen Epstein, M.A.Ed., principal jepstein@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0132
sound effects. Kim Readmond, communications coordinator kreadmond@cid.wustl.edu 314.977.0243
Simons moves on, leaves legacy at CID

After years of helping deaf and hard of hearing people in the St. Louis region, Fay Simons has taken up permanent residence in New York to be closer to her grandchildren. Simons was a psychotherapist at CID Deaf Services, which she founded 20 years ago, and a member of the CID board of managers. She said she has not retired, but rather will find ways to help people with hearing loss in her new community.

In fall of 1983, Simons founded Deaf Services, the first social service agency in the metropolitan area to specifically address the needs of people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Services included interpreting, counseling, advocacy, telephone relay, in-service training to companies and hospitals and information referrals.

After pursuing a career as a mathematician, Simons entered graduate school in 1980. Two years later, she earned her master’s degree in social work from St. Louis University and started Deaf Services with one interpreter out of her home. The agency soon grew into an office space in Clayton.

In 2000, Simons affiliated Deaf Services with CID, creating a partnership that continues to benefit people in the region with all degrees of hearing loss.

Simons is responsible for a number of other benefits to the community over the years. She secured grants to provide free counseling to the deaf, but even without grants, she turned no one away based on inability to pay.

In the late 1980s, she secured a grant to bring deaf actress Phyllis Frelich to St. Louis. Frelich gave seminars for the deaf community, for interpreters and to educate the public about life as a deaf person.

In the early 1990s, Simons and her husband, Carl, produced a one-act play called “Home Signs.” Written by a local writer and performed at Sheldon Concert Hall, the play gave stories of deaf people at different stages in life.

After visiting CID in 1998, the Simons pledged $2 million to the campaign for a new campus. The pledge helped build CID’s research department, where scientists conduct studies to find cures for deafness. The Harold W. Siebens Hearing Research Center, dedicated in February 2001, now houses the Fay and Carl Simons Center for Biology of Hearing and Deafness.

Born to deaf parents, Simons was raised by an uncle and aunt, who also was hearing-impaired. Simons said her upbringing is at the core of her empathy for deaf and hard of hearing people and their families.

COC Trivia Night raises nearly $10,000

Middle school coordinator Barb Lanfer, Jelynn Louis of St. Louis, Allison Guerra of Elsah, Illinois, and CID school principal JoEllen Epstein

In February, the CID Corporate Outreach Committee hosted its first annual trivia night and silent auction, raising nearly $10,000 for children in the school. Accompanied by executive director Bob Clark, CID students, l to r, Joanna Majcherczyk of Bensonville, Illinois, Ashley Yount of Weston, Missouri, Caleb Thompson of Austin, Texas, Mari Soliz of Tyler, Texas, and Khalil Smith of North Lauderdale, Florida, shared their stories with attendees.

Corporate Outreach Committee members, l to r, Steve Williamson of Midwest Systems, Eric Stisser of the St. Louis Rams and Tim Barringhaus of U.S. Bank were among the trivia night organizers. The evening featured 10 rounds of general trivia from the 1980s to the present day and included attendance prizes, a silent auction and a 50/50 drawing.

1971 alumnus David Ritchey of St. Louis spoke to the Trivia Night crowd about his successes as an oral deaf adult. Ritchey is the director of marketing for The Bar Plan Mutual Insurance Company and vice president of the CID Alumni Association. He holds a degree in graphic arts management with a minor in business.
Quail eggs show mixed results in microgravity

In November of 2002, 36 Japanese quail eggs came back to earth with the U.S. space shuttle Endeavour after a 14-day journey in a special laboratory module. The experiment was designed by David Dickman, Ph.D. of CID and Anna Lysakowski, Ph.D. of the University of Illinois–Chicago to investigate how gravity affects the developing vestibular system in the inner ear.

On the shuttle, half of the quail eggs were exposed to microgravity (0G) and half were spun on a centrifuge to maintain a constant 1G force, or normal gravity. At the same time, a centrifuge on the ground performed a similar experiment at 2G.

Some preliminary data indicate that the vestibular hair cells that sense the body’s position and motion do not require gravity to develop properly, implying that sensory cell development may be largely genetically programmed. On the other hand, the nerve cells carrying signals from the sensory cells to the brain did not develop properly in space, suggesting that gravity may help guide their growth.

Gravity also affected the development of the tiny stones in the inner ear called otoconia, involved in governing muscle coordination and balance. These stones grew larger in the absence of gravity. However, their numbers and organizational map were not affected, suggesting that these factors are determined by genetics.

Dickman and Lysakowski are hoping to resume planning of a second shuttle experiment that would involve hatching the eggs and observing the birds to assess how gravity affects their ability to fly and stabilize vision.

The investigation has been suspended pending reinstatement of the U.S. space shuttle program.

Scientists avoid ototoxic hair cell damage in chicks

Antibiotics can save lives, but some of the world’s commonly used antibiotics are also known to cause hearing loss.

Led by Mark Warhol, Ph.D., researchers in the Sensory Regeneration Laboratory at CID’s Fay and Carl Simons Center for Biology of Hearing and Deafness are studying cellular mechanisms that regulate the survival and regeneration of sensory hair cells in the inner ears of birds. The group has focused on the effects of ototoxic antibiotics.

Studies in this laboratory have shown that birds’ vestibular hair cells undergo a cycle of programmed cell death due to antibiotics called aminoglycosides. The scientists have identified an enzyme called caspase-3, activated during this process. Some results of their recent studies indicate that caspase inhibitors can promote the survival of vestibular hair cells in chicks following treatment with ototoxic antibiotics.

They also found that treatment with another molecule, CEP-11004, promoted hair cell survival in the presence of aminoglycosides.

These studies and others could eventually help scientists prevent human hearing loss due to ototoxic drugs.

Dallos gives Silverman talk

Peter Dallos, Ph.D., John Evans Professor of Neuroscience at Northwestern University, delivered the 2002 S. Richard Silverman Lecture in Hearing and Deafness in December.

In his talk, “Cochlear Amplification by Outer Hair Cells: Molecular Mechanisms,” he described the electromotile process of outer hair cells responsible for human sound sensitivity and frequency selectivity. He outlined the properties of a novel motor protein, prestin, that powers electromotility in the outer hair cells.

Dallos is one of the world’s leading experts on the mammalian cochlea. His influential work has included showing the effects of the loss of outer hair cells on the behavior audiogram and cochlear nerve fiber tuning curves.
Kid stuff

Eight-year-old Mari Soliz of Tyler, Texas, and her family recently took a trip to Disney World courtesy of the Sunshine Foundation. Since 1976, this organization has granted over 28,700 dreams to children with special challenges.

Seven-year-old Khaliel Smith of North Lauderdale, Florida, was among seven residential students who enjoyed a party room at a recent St. Louis Blues hockey game. The tickets were a gift from an anonymous CID alumnus.

At this year’s CID literacy fair, students participated in story-related activities and were introduced to new books about friendship. In conjunction with the event, the Cats-Paw Puppet Troupe presented Aesop’s “The Lion and the Mouse” and its own “Sparkles the Snowman.” Brittany Brunetta of Glen Carbon, Illinois, and Akash Sookun of St. Louis posed with puppets and puppeteers, Ed and Martha Radginski.

Twenty-six employees from Nike’s St. Louis headquarters visited CID in January to participate in activities with primary/middle school students. Each student was assigned a “Nike buddy” for the day. The pairs spent time together in the classrooms before proceeding to the gym for games. Nike donated all of the materials for the scooter, hula-hoop, sack and potato relays.