In the early 1950s in Colorado, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States initiated a program to help children with speech and language disorders. The results obtained from this program led to the establishment of RiteCare® clinics to provide diagnostic evaluation and treatment of speech and language disorders, as well as learning disabilities. Today, there are 178 RiteCare® clinics, centers, and special programs operating or planned throughout the United States. Each facility is staffed by speech-language pathologists or other trained personnel. Through the support of Scottish Rite members, tens of thousands of youngsters across the United States have been helped significantly. Facilitating the good work of dedicated clinicians and parents, the Scottish Rite has achieved dramatic successes. Children who might have remained educationally behind for a lifetime can now talk, read, and lead productive lives.
The RiteCare® Clinic at the University of Kansas Medical Center has been very busy over the past year! Our pediatric clinical faculty provided speech-language therapy to 19 children with a variety of communication disorders. Additionally, we completed 63 pediatric speech-language assessments. The Scottish Rite generously supported 310 hours of assessment/therapy at a total cost of $21,870.00 (that’s almost 8 full work weeks in a calendar year!). In addition to individual evaluation/treatment sessions, the Scottish Rite funded a summer kindergarten readiness camp where children received intensive, direct instruction on language and literacy skills that are necessary for school success. Scottish Rite funds also help support specialty clinics such as the KUMC Cleft and Craniofacial Clinics, including a unique prevention/research activity. In collaboration with our medical director of the Craniofacial Clinic, Dr. Brian Andrews, we are monitoring the development of young infants with craniofacial anomalies to identify developmental delays at an early age so that treatment can begin as soon as possible. Without the continuing support of your membership, our ability to provide these services would be hindered.

In addition to the generosity of the Kansas Scottish Rite Foundation, the Northeast Kansas Valley Scottish Rite provided $1000.00 scholarships for two of our speech-language pathology graduate students who plan to practice with children who have communication disorders. As you know, the cost of higher education continues to rise every year, so these two students were very grateful for the support to continue their studies.

Thank you for all that you do to support the RiteCare® Clinics of Kansas. We are appreciative of your generosity and look forward to our continued partnership!

Emily Turley Story:

Of the service provided, Emily Turley’s parents shared: The funding that we are receiving for our daughter has ensured that she is able to get the best therapy possible. We had spent a full year doing speech therapy elsewhere until our insurance said they were no longer going to pay for services. At this time Emily was 4 years old, couldn’t say a single word, only communicated by pointing, and she didn’t even make many sounds. We started researching other hospitals. This is when we went to KU and met Peggy Waggoner, for an evaluation for Emily. The first day saw our daughter engage more with Peggy and her student more than we had seen in the entire previous year. Peggy helped us get set up with the grant to ensure Emily was able to get the best therapy possible. We can’t thank the Scottish Rite and KU medical Center enough for assisting us in getting Emily the help she needs. Emily tries communicating with words now with all of us and with friends at school. Although she still can’t communicate verbally effectively, she seems like she is right on the verge of talking. They facilitated Emily’s training and use of an iPad to communicate, which opened up a whole new world of communication for her. It has helped bring her from a developmental level of an 18 month old to a fairly typical 5 year old. Emily is excelling now in Preschool and her teachers feel, even with her continued speech delay, that Emily will be successful in Kindergarten. My entire family thanks you for providing Emily with the funding to get the best help possible.

Thank you!

Ricky Turley
The Herndon Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic on the campus of Fort Hays State University was designated as a RiteCare® Clinic by the Kansas Scottish Rite Foundation in 2008. This partnership benefits the youngest citizens of western Kansas by making services affordable to children with communication disorders. Dr. Amy Finch, current Chair of the Department of Communication Disorders joined Ft. Hays State University in 1994. Dr. Finch earned a B.S. in Speech and Hearing Science and an M.S. in Speech Pathology at Colorado State University. She went on to the University of Kansas and completed a Ph.D. in Speech Language Pathology in 1981. Following the completion of her Ph.D., Amy held positions at the University of Wyoming and Queen's University in Kingston Ontario. Dr. Finch found her way to FHSU in 1994 at which time she began her teaching, research, and service career as a faculty member. In 2005 she was named Chair of the Department. On any given day at the Herndon Clinic, Dr. Finch is working alongside students and parents to improve the lives of young Kansans. Her passion, dedication and advocacy in helping children with complex communication needs are amazing. She is in the clinic, the classroom, or the community interacting with children, parents, students, and teachers—all with one goal in mind—improve the communication for our most vulnerable citizens—those with severe disabilities who cannot speak for themselves. As Amy completes her tenure at Ft Hays State University, she leaves a legacy of excellence as a clinician, instructor, clinic supervisor, mentor, and leader. She is retiring this year and will be greatly missed.

We would like for you to meet Tye who is a 15-year-old adolescent who has cerebral palsy and cortical vision impairments. Tye attends the Herndon Clinic once a week during the school year and twice a week during the summer. His parents drive to the clinic from Osborne, which is 73 miles from Hays. Tye has been receiving services since he was 6 years of age and has made tremendous changes in how he communicates. Although Tye has some single words and short phrases that are understandable to familiar listeners, his spoken language is limited due to his cerebral palsy. Therefore, he has been using a Mercury communication device, which is a computer-like device that produces speech so he can communicate with others. He is doing well with his device and uses it along with his verbal responses to interact with his parents, teachers, and other children in his classroom. Because of Tye's use of technology in a variety of settings, he was nominated and awarded a Kansas Infinitec Coalition Award as outstanding student technology achievement for 2010.

His current graduate clinician, MaRyan, says “Working with Tye has been very beneficial to me. I have learned a lot about technology as I was one of several clinicians who helped to create Tye’s PODD communication book so that it met his needs. Tye is very special and I have loved every minute of working with him!” In addition, Tye’s parents, Bo and Carla Wilcoxson want to thank the Scottish Rite Foundation for providing the RiteCare® scholarship for him to attend the Herndon Clinic. Without the scholarship support Tye would not be where he is today. Tye is a great example of one of the many children who are benefiting from the support of the RiteCare® clinics in Kansas.
Dr. Wegner is a Clinical Professor and Director of the Schiefelbusch Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic at the University of Kansas. She directs the Pardee Augmentative and Alternative Communication Resource and Research Laboratory on the Lawrence campus of KU. Dr. Wegner’s area of research and clinical interest is improved quality of life through improved communication for individuals with complex communication needs. She has directed numerous personnel preparation projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs including the Communication and Autism Project; the Communication, Autism, and Technology Project; and the Augmentative Communication in the Schools Projects. She has authored numerous articles and book chapters on augmentative and alternative communication. Dr. Wegner is a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and served on the ASHA Ad Hoc Committee on Autism Spectrum Disorders that developed the ASHA policy documents for practice with people with ASD.

We are so appreciative of the support we have received from the Topeka Valley Scottish Rite and the Kansas Scottish Rite Foundation. We are excited about the new outreach program, named the Schiefelbusch Clinic at Topeka Scottish Rite, which began on November 14, 2012. This clinic is possible because of the generous support of the Topeka Valley Scottish Rite Members, the Kansas Scottish Rite Foundation, and the Sound Beginnings program.

Angie Reeder, an audiologist for the Schiefelbusch Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic and clinical assistant professor, serves as the audiologist for the new Topeka outreach program. “This clinic is designed specifically for follow-up to universal newborn screenings,” Reeder said. The Schiefelbusch Clinic at Topeka Scottish Rite has an audiology clinic the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.

The new Topeka clinic has received support from the Topeka Valley Scottish Rite, the Kansas Scottish Rite Foundation and Sound Beginnings, a statewide newborn hearing screening program.

The three tests conducted at the Schiefelbusch Clinic at Topeka Scottish Rite include Auditory Brainstem Response, which measures the hearing nerve’s response to sounds; otoacoustic emission, which determines the cochlear status; and tympanogram, which is used to evaluate the function of the middle ear. Babies have to be asleep for the ABR testing. The ABR uses the changes in electrical activity along the auditory nerve to estimate hearing thresholds, Reeder said. Electrodes are placed on the baby’s forehead and ears, and a small probe is placed in the ear to deliver the sound. Reeder watches a computer screen as waveforms appear. The baby doesn’t have to be asleep for the otoacoustic emission test or the tympanogram test. Testing can take anywhere from 45 minutes to two hours, depending on when the baby falls asleep.

“We are starting with an audiology outreach clinic but anticipate the expansion of the Schiefelbusch Clinic at Topeka Scottish Rite to speech and language services,” Jane Wegner, director of the Schiefelbusch Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, wrote in the Topeka Scottish Rite Bulletin. “We hope to provide speech, language and reading assessments, as well as parent education programs in the future.” Reeder said she thinks the program will grow rapidly. “This fits nicely with the Schiefelbusch Clinic,” she said. “I love it. I get to bring what I love to do to the community.”
Evelyn Hendren Cassat Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic at Wichita State University

Kathy Coufal, PhD, is professor and department chair of Communication Sciences and Disorders at WSU. She is an ASHA Fellow and a Board Recognized Specialist in Child Language. Her area of emphasis is in early language development and disorders. Dr. Coufal has worked in RiteCare® Clinics in other states and appreciates the organization and implementation of RiteCare® Clinics in Kansas. Since 2001, The Wichita State University Evelyn Hendren Cassat Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic has partnered with Kansas Scottish Rite as a RiteCare® Clinic to provide diagnostic evaluation and treatment for children with speech-language disorders. Funding is provided by Wichita Valley Scottish Rite for many of the children who receive services at the clinic. We thank them for their continued support in assisting us in providing much needed services to children and families. Being a RiteCare® Clinic is an honor and we try our best to make a difference in the lives of children. Comprehensive evaluations are available for individuals of all ages in the areas of speech sound production and intelligibility (how well speech is understood), speech fluency (e.g., stuttering), expressive and receptive language, and literacy including reading, writing, and spelling. Speech-language treatment is available for preschoolers, school-aged children, adolescents, and adults in individual or small group settings. Young children under six years of age receive family-centered therapy. School-Aged children can receive comprehensive individual or group treatment sessions in consultation with the child’s school as needed. Adolescents and Adults can receive treatment designed to meet their individual needs to facilitate improved speech-language skills at home, school, work, and social settings. The WSU Evelyn Hendren Cassat Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic provides: an integrated preschool program serving children who are typically developing and children with specific speech-language needs; a literacy-based play-group for young children and their parents; and language assessment and treatment for clients already diagnosed with or suspected to have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Phonology Clinic serves young children with highly unintelligible speech. The Speech Sound Clinic serves older children and adults who have difficulty with speech sounds or who want to say individual sounds more clearly. Aphasia Therapy is available for persons needing speech-language treatment following a stroke. Fluency Therapy for stuttering or cluttering is provided to clients of all ages. The Audiology Program provides complete hearing evaluation and amplification (hearing aid) services for all ages. This includes hearing testing, hearing aid evaluation, and hearing aid fitting and orientation. The clinic dispenses the latest hearing assistive technology for use with or without hearing aids.

“The passion and determination shown to all three of our children through therapies for speech/language delays and autism have been the life-saving resource of our family”

Jess Lindsey
The Scottish Rite members can be very proud of the services they made possible during 2012. There were 180 clients who received 2252 hours of RiteCare® supported treatment or evaluations in Kansas last year. FHSU Herndon Clinic granted RiteCare® support to 27 clients for a total of 260 hours of treatment or evaluation. KUMC Clinic awarded RiteCare® scholarships to 82 clients for a total of 310.5 hours of treatment and evaluations with the majority of the funds going toward evaluations. WSU Evelyn Hendren Cassat Clinic funded 1,355 hours of treatment for 47 clients with all of the funds going toward treatment. KU Schiefelbusch Clinic supported 24 clients with RiteCare® funding for a total of 326.5 hours of treatment including one evaluation.

Clinic Outreach Programs

It is important to know that in addition to ‘on-site’ services each clinic sponsors Outreach programs that expand their services to reach even more clients. A few examples follow.

KU graduate students and supervisors provide speech-language services to the Oskaloosa Schools. Their Language Acquisition Preschool is made up of children developing normally, children with communication challenges and children learning English. The Schiefelbusch Clinic in Topeka is an audiology outreach clinic providing infant hearing evaluations. Plans are in place to expand the Topeka clinic to include speech-language-literacy assessments and parent education.

In coordination with St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School, WSU graduate students and faculty provide screenings, evaluations and treatment to children from preschool to 12th grade. With the residents of the Kansas Masonic Home in Wichita, students serve as conversation partners and collaborate about swallowing difficulties and other quality of life issues. The WSU-Community Partners: Autism Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Team provides screening, assessment and referral services to families through a Interprofessional Education Model.

The KUMC clinic students and faculty participate in a multi-disciplinary task force to conduct Autistic and learning difficulty diagnostic clinics for children age birth to 3 at Fort Leavenworth twice a year. The team provides an immediate diagnosis allowing children to get into therapy programs quickly. This is very important for the transient families moving in and out of Fort Leavenworth. The Armed Forces Consistory help to fund this program.

FHSU students and faculty sponsor an annual Run/Walk to Help Children Talk to build community awareness of the clinic’s efforts and their RiteCare® status. RiteCare® funding is used to help sponsor the speakers for FHSU summer courses. Each year there are approximately 100 participants including practicing professionals who take away current research and techniques to apply to their own practice benefitting clients in all areas of Kansas.
It is the mission of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, to improve its members and enhance the communities in which they live by teaching and emulating the principles of Brotherly Love, Tolerance, Charity, and Truth while actively embracing high social, moral, and spiritual values including fellowship, compassion, and dedication to God, family and country.

Scottish Rite Foundation & Valleys of the Kansas Orient Working Together to Support RiteCare®

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