

# The Disability Research Institute



College of Applied Life Studies  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



Summer, 2001

## ***DRI NEWS***

### **DISABILITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

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School of Management and  
Labor Relations

University of Chicago, National  
Opinion Research Center

## **April 26 Symposium: Partnership in a New Paradigm**



*Pictured (L-R): Tony Waldrop (Vice Chancellor for Research, UIUC), Richard Herman (UIUC Provost), Susan Grad (Acting Associate Commissioner and Deputy Associate Commissioner, SSA), Paul N. Van de Water (Assistant Deputy Commissioner, SSA), Tanya Gallagher (Scientific Director, DRI; Dean, College of Applied Life Studies, UIUC), Chrisann Schiro-Geist (Managing Director, DRI; Professor, UIUC)*

Leaders from the Social Security Administration (SSA) and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) joined together on April 26, 2001 to formally launch the Disability Research Institute (DRI). To celebrate the occasion, the DRI hosted an all-day Symposium and reception.

Symposium guests included members of the academic, non-profit, and government communities. The event symbolized a new paradigm of interdisciplinary research on disability policy issues.

Topics discussed at the Symposium included how government agencies and

researchers can facilitate the conduct of DRI research, the definition of disability, and the preliminary findings of the DRI's first year research projects.

Welcoming speaker Paula Laird of the SSA discussed the accomplishments of the Institute's first year, including setting up the infrastructure, implementing the first year agenda and planning the second year agenda. Managing Director, Chrisann Schiro-Geist, outlined the DRI's mission, and Scientific Director, Tanya Gallagher, described the administrative structure of the DRI and its relationships with affiliated institutions. ♦

## Symposium Speakers

**Monroe Berkowitz** - Professor of Economics, Emeritus, Rutgers University

**Scott Bilder** - Project Director and Data Analyst, Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research, Rutgers University

**Ruth Brannon** - Program Specialist, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

**John Burton** - Professor, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

**Fong Chan** - Professor, Dept. of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Tanya M. Gallagher** - Scientific Director, DRI and Dean, College of Applied Life Studies, UIUC

**David B. Gray** - Instructor and Research Professor, Program in Occupational Therapy, Washington Univ. School of Medicine

**Bruce Growick** - Associate Professor, Rehabilitation Services, Ohio State University

**Thomas Hale** - Economist, U.S. Department of Labor

**Allen Heinemann** - Professor, Dept. of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Northwestern University and Associate Director, Research, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

**H. Allan Hunt** - Assistant Executive Director, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

## Top SSA Officials Speak at Symposium



*Dr. Paul Van de Water*

Dr. Paul Van De Water, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Policy, made remarks on behalf of the SSA at the symposium reception and participated in a ceremonial ribbon-cutting to honor the launch of the DRI.

The SSA's Office of Policy comprises three main components: the Office of Retirement Policy (ORP), the Office of Disability and Income Assistance Policy (ODIAP), and the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics (ORES). ORES conducts research to study the effects of Social Security and SSI, and proposed changes in those programs, on individuals and the economy.

The Symposium was enhanced by the contributions of the Acting Associate Commissioner and Deputy Associate Commissioner, ORES, Susan Grad. In addition, Paula Laird, one of the SSA's DRI Project Officers, and Michael Marge, SSA Senior Disability Researcher, served as panelists and answered questions. Peter Wheeler, Senior Policy Advisor, who

was instrumental in the creation of the DRI, facilitated working group discussion.

The Disability Research Institute represents one of several initiatives by SSA's Office of Policy to strengthen the Agency's research capacity since SSA became independent in 1995. ♦

## Symposium Panel Discussions

The first session of the symposium covered major priorities and how disability researchers can facilitate the conduct of DRI research. The discussant panel included Sue Suter, David Gray, Fong Chan, and Allan Hunt. In his remarks, David Gray recommended studying people who are working and examining the factors that influence their work. Fong Chan discussed the limitations of traditional vocational rehabilitation due to the late timing of the intervention. The importance of utility, credibility and rigor in broader, interdisciplinary, policy-oriented research was emphasized by Allan Hunt in his remarks. Finally, the panelists spoke of the need to learn from and communicate with researchers in complementary fields.

The second panel discussed how government agencies can facilitate the conduct of DRI research. The panel included Michael Marge, Ruth Brannon, Donald Lollar, and Thomas Hale. Dr. Marge gave

an overview of the broad topics of an emerging research agenda for the Social Security Administration. Ms. Brannon spoke of the mission and philosophy of the NIDRR and its five core research areas: improved employment outcomes, health and function, technology for access and function, independent living and community integration, and associated areas. The challenge of measuring the employment rate and identifying people with disabilities and their employment status was covered by Thomas Hale. Confirming the Center for Disease Control's emerging emphasis on improving the health of and preventing secondary conditions for people with disabilities, Donald Lollar offered suggestions to encourage a climate of communication, collaboration and cooperation among researchers, government officials and policymakers.

The audience responded to the panelists with lively discussion both during the sessions and in the break-out sessions that followed. ♦

## The future of the DRI

During lunch, the Symposium participants were asked to develop comments and recommendations to present to the group-at-large. What follows are some of their suggestions and comments on research areas, practice areas and activities. DRI staff and researchers appreciate the guidance offered by the symposium guests. Interested readers may call the DRI for a transcript of the proceedings.

### Some suggested issues to be addressed included:

- The role of assistive technology in the workplace, including research into the full cost of the technology
- Corporate "best practices" in hiring and keeping persons with disabilities working
- Types of disabilities that affect older workers and discovery of the point in time the disabilities begin and begin to affect work-related activities
- Research methodologies: the size, accuracy and availability of datasets; quantitative vs. qualitative measures
- New occupational titles
- How disability fits into the normal span of life; the need for longitudinal research
- Mental health issues
- Success factors for people with disabilities who overcome employment barriers
- The demographics of the SSI, SSDI populations



*Peter Wheeler and Monroe Berkowitz at the reception*

### In defining the role of the DRI, the group suggested:

- Provide access to data for other research groups across the nation, with guidance in terms of the dissemination and application of the information.
- Facilitate dialogue among research centers and develop mechanisms to share the different research questions that are being addressed.
- Educate the nation about the services of Social Security and address myths of disability.
- Involve employers, educators, medical professionals and rehabilitation specialists in the analysis and application of the research findings.



*Douglas Kruse and Virginia Reno at the reception*

### Symposium Speakers

**Mary Grace Kovar** - Research Vice President, Epidemiology and Public Health, National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago

**Douglas Kruse** - Professor, Human Resources Management, Rutgers University

**Paula Laird** - Project Officer, DRI

**Donald Lollar** - Chief of Disability and Health Branch, Center for Disease Control and Prevention

**Michael Marge** - Senior Disability Researcher, U.S. Social Security Administration; Research Professor, SUNY Upstate Medical University

**Fred Menz** - Professor and Director, Research and Training Center, University of Wisconsin, Stout

**Chrisann Schiro-Geist** - Managing Director, DRI and Professor, Community Health, UIUC

**Stephanie So** - Assistant Professor, Departments of Community Health and Economics, UIUC

**Sue Suter** - President, Suter and Company

**Patricia Taylor** - Clinical Research Scientist, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and Professor, Northwestern University Medical School

**Peter Wheeler** - Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Social Security Administration

**Edward Yelin** - Professor of Medicine & Health Policy, University of California, San Francisco

# Profiles of Year 1 Researchers

*The nine researchers featured on the following pages are responsible for the research projects of the DRI's first year. Information about their research projects and preliminary results can be found on the DRI web site.*



**Monroe Berkowitz, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Economics, Rutgers University**

Dr. Berkowitz has served as a consultant to the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization and to various disability benefit programs in the United States and abroad. He was formerly the research director of Rehabilitation International. He is the author of books and articles dealing with the costs of spinal cord injury, the total costs of disability at the firm and the national level and the costs and benefits of rehabilitation programs.

**Research Project Title: Designing an Early Intervention Experiment and Demonstration Approach for the Social Security Administration**



**John F. Burton, Jr., Ph.D., Professor, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University**

Dr. Burton studies workers' compensation and occupational safety and health law, as well as other types of social insurance programs. He served as Dean of Rutgers' School of Management and Labor Relations from 1994-2000 and Director, Institute of Management and Labor Relations, 1991-94. He has edited and co-authored several books including *Employment Law: Cases and Materials*, and has published in *The Review of Economics and Statistics* and *The Yale Law Journal*. He served as the editor of the Industrial Relations Research Association and will serve as National IRRA President in 2002.

**Research Project Title: Designing an Early Intervention Experiment and Demonstration Approach for the Social Security Administration**



**Allen Heinemann, Ph.D., Director, Rehabilitation Services Evaluation Unit, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago**

Since 1985, Dr. Heinemann has worked at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago where he directs the Rehabilitation Services Evaluation Unit, a rehabilitation-focused health services research unit. He is also associate director of Research at RIC and professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Northwestern University Medical School. His research interests focus on health services research, psychosocial aspects of rehabilitation including substance abuse, and measurement issues in rehabilitation. He is the author of more than 80 articles in peer-reviewed publications and is the editor of *Substance Abuse and Physical Disability* published by Haworth Press. He is a fellow of the American Psychological Association (Division 22) and a Diplomate in Rehabilitation Psychology (ABPP). He is the recipient of the Division 22 (Rehabilitation Psychology – of the American Psychological Association) Roger Barker Distinguished Career Award.

**Research Project Title: Research Approaches to Validation of SSA's Medical Listings**

# Profiles of Year 1 Researchers



## Mary Grace Kovar, Dr. P.H., Research Vice President for Epidemiology and Public Health at the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at University of Chicago

Before joining NORC, Dr. Kovar was Special Assistant for Data Policy and Analysis at the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) where she was involved with the development and analysis of many of the nation's major health surveys. She has published 125 articles in peer-reviewed journals and served as a consultant to international bodies such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as to many national organizations such as the Institute of Medicine and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She has served as a member of the editorial board of the American Journal of Public Health and the Journals of Gerontology. She is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association, the American College of Epidemiology, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Public Health Association. She has a particular interest in the effective use of data in formulating public health policy.

**Research Project Title: Research Approaches to Validation of SSA's Medical Listings**



## Douglas Kruse, Ph.D., Professor, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

Dr. Kruse conducts econometric studies on disability, profit sharing, employee ownership, pensions, and wage differentials. Among his books are *Profit Sharing: Does It Make A Difference?* which won Princeton's Richard A. Lester prize for Outstanding Book in Industrial Relations and Labor Economics, and *The New Owners* (with Rutgers colleague Joseph Blasi). His articles have appeared in journals such as *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, *Economic Journal*, *Monthly Labor Review*, *Brookings Review*, and *Industrial Relations*. He is a Research Associate with the National Bureau of Economic Research (Cambridge, MA) and was appointed to the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. He serves on the editorial board of *Industrial Relations* and the board of the Profit Sharing Research Foundation, and has conducted several studies for the U.S. Department of Labor.

**Research Project Title: New Work Arrangements and Disability Income**



## David Mechanic, Ph.D., René Dubos University Professor of Behavioral Sciences and Director of the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research at Rutgers University

Dr. Mechanic moved to Rutgers University in 1979. He was Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (1980-1984), and established the Rutgers Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research (1985). He directs the NIMH Center at Rutgers for Research on the Organization and Financing of Care for the Severely Mentally Ill and serves as the Director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's National Health Policy Investigator's Program. He has served on numerous panels of The National Academy of Sciences, federal agencies and non-profit organizations. He has written or edited 24 books and approximately 400 research articles, chapters and other publications in medical sociology, health policy, health services research, and the social and behavioral sciences.

**Research Project Title: Barriers to Employment Among Persons with Mental Impairments**

# Profiles of Year 1 Researchers



## **Lisa Schur, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Rutgers University**

Dr. Schur focuses on disability issues in employment and labor law, particularly the Americans with Disabilities Act and its relationship to other laws and social policies. She also studies alternative work arrangements such as contingent work, and the connections between workplace experiences and political participation among people with disabilities. Her work has appeared in the *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Labor Law Journal*, *Political Research Quarterly* and *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*.

**Research Project Title: New Work Arrangements and Disability Income**



## **Stephanie So, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

Dr. So is an economist and has been at the University of Illinois since 1996. She holds a joint appointment in the Departments of Community Health and Economics, and is affiliated with the Institute for Government and Public Affairs. Dr. So's current research for the Disability Research Institute is focused on household and family responses to work related disability, and on policy that affects disability benefits and health insurance. Other ongoing research topics are concentrated in technology adaptation in medical markets. Her teaching involves health care finance, project evaluation and statistics.

**Research Project Title: Disability Benefits as Household Income and Labor Supply Decisions of Household Members**



## **Edward Yelin, Ph.D., Professor of Medicine and Health Policy at the University of California, San Francisco**

Dr. Yelin serves on the faculty of the Institute for Health Policy Studies and the Institute for Health and Aging at UCSF. Since 1993 he has directed the Education, Epidemiology and Health Services Research Component of the UCSF Multipurpose Arthritis Center. His research concerns the social and economic consequences of chronic disease and disability, with an emphasis on employment issues. He is the Principal Investigator of the California Work and Health Survey.

**Research Project Title: Employment Outcomes for Persons with Disabilities in a Mature Economic Environment**

### **Disability Research Institute Executive Committee**

#### **Monroe Berkowitz**

*Professor Emeritus, Economics, Rutgers University*

#### **Tanya M. Gallagher**

*Dean, College of Applied Life Studies, UIUC*

#### **Bradley N. Hedrick**

*Director, Div. of Rehabilitation-Education Services, UIUC*

#### **Allen W. Heinemann**

*Professor, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Northwestern Univ.*

#### **Mary Grace Kovar**

*Research V.P. of Epidemiology & Public Health, Univ. of Chicago*

#### **Thomas I. Prudhomme**

*Sr. Assoc. Dir., Nat'l Center for Supercomputing Applications, UIUC*

#### **Chrisann Schiro-Geist**

*Professor, Community Health, UIUC*

### **Disability Research Institute Technical Advisory Panel**

#### **Lex Frieden**

*Sr. V.P., The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research*

#### **William G. Johnson**

*Professor, Dept. of Health Admin. and Policy, Arizona State Univ.*

#### **Mitchell P. LaPlante**

*Director, Disability Statistics Center, Univ. of Calif., San Francisco*

#### **Virginia P. Reno**

*Dir. of Research, National Academy of Social Insurance*

#### **Denise G. Tate**

*Assoc. Professor, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Dept., Univ. of Michigan*

#### **Margaret Turk**

*Professor, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, SUNY Upstate Medical University*

## DRI Offers Public Service Research Course

DRI is developing a Web-based research course to meet the needs of a diverse population of research consumers, including the public-at-large, and more specifically, persons with disabilities. The course will focus on basic principles of quantitative as well as qualitative research. Scientific terminology will be explained and concepts of qualitative inquiry will be explored. Readers will learn how to understand research studies and other literature.

The course will help to make the Disability Research Institute's research work truly accessible to all consumers. In addition, the course may give some readers the background they need to begin carrying out research of their own on data which is maintained by the Disability Research Institute.

Look for more information about the Public Service Research Course on the DRI Web site during summer of 2001. ♦

## See Web Site for Latest DRI News

Click on <http://www.als.uiuc.edu/dri> for the latest about DRI. The site features information about DRI research projects, our staff and affiliate partners, as well as recommended web links related to disability research and a calendar featuring future events and conferences. ♦

## Focus Papers in Preparation

DRI is preparing focus papers on a number of topics relevant to disability policy. They will be made available both in hard copy and on the DRI web site ([www.als.uiuc.edu/dri](http://www.als.uiuc.edu/dri)) after peer reviews.

The following University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign faculty were asked to write papers: Reginald Alston (Community Health); Craig Olson (Labor and Industrial Relations); Adrienne Perlman (Speech and Hearing Science); Steven Petruzzello (Kinesiology); Elizabeth Powers (Institute of Government and Public Affairs); Robert Rich (Law); and Helena Worthen (Labor and Industrial Relations). ♦

## Join the discussion online

### *International listserv launched*

Everyone interested in disability research and policy is invited to become a member of the DRI electronic discussion list, or listserv. By joining this online community, you will have an opportunity to communicate with colleagues around the world on disability research issues.

This newsletter is also distributed through the listserv; by joining now you ensure prompt electronic delivery of the latest edition of this free newsletter.

To subscribe, go to our web site at

<http://www.als.uiuc.edu/dri/newsletter/listserv.htm> ♦



*Guests at the DRI reception on April 26, 2001*

## **RESEARCH FACULTY OF THE DISABILITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

### **Northwestern University, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago**

*Rita K. Bode*

Research Asst., Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

*Christine Chen*

Research Asst., Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

*Allen W. Heinemann* (Fellow)

Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

*Camille O'Reilly*

Project Coordinator of Rehabilitation Services Evaluation Unit

*Patricia Taylor*

Research Asst., Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

### **Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey**

*Monroe Berkowitz* (Fellow)

Professor Emeritus, Economics

*John F. Burton* (Fellow)

Professor, School of Management & Labor Relations

*Heather J. Cammisa* (Fellow)

Research Associate, School of Management & Labor Relations

*Stephen Crystal* (Fellow)

Research Professor, School of Social Work

*Douglas Kruse* (Fellow)

Professor, Human Resources Management Department

*Donna D. McAlpine* (Fellow)

Research Assoc., Institute for Health, Health Care Policy & Aging Research

*David Mechanic* (Fellow)

Director, Institute for Health, Health Care Policy & Aging Research

*Lisa Schur* (Fellow)

Asst. Professor, School of Management & Labor Relations

*Jamie Walkup* (Fellow)

Associate Professor, Psychology

*Lynn A. Warner* (Fellow)

Assistant Professor, School of Social Work

### **University of California at San Francisco, Dept. of Medicine, Division of Rheumatology**

*Laura Trupin* (Fellow)

Data Manager

*Edward Yelin* (Fellow)

Professor of Medicine and Health Policy

### **University of Chicago, National Opinion Research Center**

*Patricia Cloud*

Research Librarian, Director of the Sheatsley Library

*Mary Grace Kovar* (Fellow)

Research Vice President of Epidemiology and Public Health

### **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Dept. of Community Health**

*Chrisann Schiro-Geist*

Professor

*Stephanie So* (Fellow)

Assistant Professor



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