During April, Dr. Boman visited Rachel Reetzke in Guangzhou, China as she continues her work in the field of autism. Rachel is focusing on assessments in Chinese as well as multi-linguistics research. Although she will be returning to complete her Doctoral work in Texas, her heart will always take her back to China as she continues her research there.

Rachel currently works under Dr. Zou Xiaobing at the Department of Child Behavior and Development at the Third Affiliated Hospital which is part of Sun Yat-sen University. While there, we were able to join him as he diagnosed a number of children. Of course, Rachel served as our interpreter for these days as she is fluent in the Chinese language. Also, we visited the Guangzhou Rehabilitation and Research Center for Children with ASD, which is funded by China. Similar to KAP, the program uses the research-based strategies, and has a large sensory room. Rachel has made some wonderful connections in China, and hopefully we can continue our Chinese connections. Thank you Rachel for everything you have done and will continue to do for the field of autism. Everyone at KAP is proud of your accomplishments.

Swim Party

Splish! Splash! The bi-annual Prime Time swim party occurred on Friday March 23, 2012. Elementary to High School students were invited to bring their favorite bathing suits and flippers to KAP this evening. Students were then shuttled to Western Kentucky University’s Preston Center where an indoor pool was calling their names. Students splashed, bounced and played water basketball in the solar heated pool. When the pool closed at 7:30, no one was ready to leave. We can’t wait to visit the pool again soon! This proves to be one of the favorite activities for the KAP participants and families!
2012 Undergraduate Interns

For the spring semester of 2012, the Kelly Autism Program welcomed two undergraduate student interns from Western Kentucky University. Courtney Blair of Boonville Indiana, and Samantha Smith of Russell Springs Kentucky, who are pursuing degrees in psychology, hope to gain fulfilling experiences with individuals who have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Samantha devoted most of her time at KAP working during Prime Girl’s Day. Samantha assisting these participants with assorted school related tasks, such as homework assignments, study techniques, and organization skills.

While speaking with Courtney, she says her favorite part about volunteering at the Kelly Autism Program was gaining knowledge about the different aspects of ASD. Samantha appreciated and liked working with the younger individuals attending KAP. Her response was, “I enjoyed having the responsibility of educating others while having fun at the same time. It was a great privilege that made an impact on my life and hopefully theirs as well.”

Samantha helping a student with class work.

Girl’s Day

Cyndi Lauper’s 80s pop song, “Girls Just Want to Have Fun” became a reality Saturday March 31, 2012. Female Prime Time students met at PJ’s College of Cosmetology for primping and pampering. Our lovely ladies got their nails, makeup and hair done; princess style. Afterwards the group came back to KAP for Just Dance (a favored Wii game), pizza and sundaes. This activity is always a hit for the participants as they do not always have time alone with ‘the girls.’ Ultimately, this day was a hit for our fabulous female superstars!

Hockey Social

This semester the college participants ventured out to see the Evansville Icemen Hockey team. They made a stop in Owensboro for a quick bite to eat and then continued on the way. For some of the college participants, it was their first experience at a hockey game. Everyone really got into the game and enjoyed themselves. The Icemen won the game as well. All agreed that this needs to become a new KAP tradition!
Spring Prime Time!

Time has flown by fast and KAP is about to begin the 2012 summer camp. The winter and early spring semesters witnessed transition of lesson plan themes from “Globe-Trotting” to “Fun with Science”.

The beginning of spring semester coincided with Valentine’s Day. Participants celebrated this occasion of expressing appreciation for family and friends. They practiced expressing their emotions and giving their special person a hand crafted gift. Valentine’s Day sale items included Friendship Ring & Rosy Kisses which were a huge hit.

Participants enjoyed science experiments using daily household items, and working with tactile sensory stimulating items. Once spring officially set in, participants shifted their science labs to the beautiful WKU campus and tried out long awaited balloon rockets and hovercrafts.

In addition to scientific experiments, participants created and tasted exotic cuisines from Greece, Russia, Australia and the good old United States. Continuing with Autism Awareness across campus collaborations, KAP received a $250 scholarship from the Confucius Institute for spring 2012 semester to promote Chinese culture in our community. Participants made traditional Chinese knots, which required extensive fine motor skills practice and patience. Their creations were sold by KAP Kreation during various sales events. Aramark Catering pledged to support KAP by organizing “$1 Jeans Day” and invited participants to Fresh Foods on WKU campus to sell various items made by KAP Kreation.

As we move forward to another fun filled session, KAP looks forward to the summer and fall semesters for another round of fun and frolic.

Hot Rods Game

The Kelly Autism Program celebrated its Autism Awareness Day at the Bowling Green Ballpark on April 22nd. The Bowling Green Hot Rods played against Quad City River Bandits and a portion of ticket’s sale was donated to KAP. The first pitch was thrown by Phillip Procter. The baseball game provided a fun day for participants and staff members to enjoy each other’s company. Sports enthusiasts from local communities enjoyed the game regardless of the cold and rainy weather conditions.

KAP’s College participants enjoyed this social event as a much needed break from preparation for their final exams and submissions. Axle, the Hot Rods mascot took turns dancing with younger participants which attracted a large crowd on many occasions.

High school participants planned and designed specific items to be sold at this event and set up a table to sell items made by KAP Kreation. Volunteers and staff helped manage the table by practicing sales presentations and customer service. This was a great opportunity for participants to practice communication and sales skills. The event was truly a success and we witnessed immense community support as always.

Participants enjoyed dancing with Axel
Director’s Corner
Marty Boman

As we come to the end of another academic year, I would like to step back and reflect on the KAP staff. This program is known throughout the state as well as the nation due to the commitment of every staff member to all participants. There is so much for each staff to learn as this autism information truly is a post-masters 15-credit certificate program, yet we ask our staff to step in and apply the 24 research-based strategies and executive function skills. With the number and diversity within this group, the staff truly functions as a family as they strive to develop the hidden talents of everyone in the program. We would not be successful without each and every one of the staff!

Even more exciting, we are seeing great work after staff graduate and leave KAP. I am so proud of everyone as they move to various positions involving autism. For example, Rachel Reetzke earned a Fulbright Scholarship to study in China; Amanda Gorski completed a semester position in Australia working with a young girl with autism; Akash Patel will begin his residency in Philadelphia in August; Hayley Brown and Anna Kobbe-man are completing their special education student teaching in Spain; Kristen Nelson was accepted at John Hopkins University in Psychology; Lindsay Skaggs is continuing her masters in Communication Disorders at U of L, and the list continues. May each of you return to WKU and KAP so we can witness everything that you will accomplish in the field of autism. We truly are proud of each and every one of you. Thanks for your

Canoe Trip

Kentucky is home to great outdoor activities. Once again, the Kinesiology & Recreations department and Outdoor Leadership Program (OLP) at WKU have continued the tradition of making it possible for KAP participants to enjoy these great outdoors. On a sunny and clear skied day of May 9th, KAP participants & OLP staff members got together at Romanza Johnson Park, located just outside of Alvaton, KY. KAP participants were each teamed up with one Canoeing instructor as they floated and paddled on Drakes Creek.

The teams ended their trip at Phil Moore Park after almost three hours of canoeing, stopping, swimming, laughing and singing through Warren County Blueway. All crew members enjoyed a well-deserved snack & drinks brought by one of the parents. The picture perfect natural surrounding assured that everyone enjoyed new friends as they took a “dip” after canoeing. Someone said, “If there’s a place, canoe there”. Once again, this was a wonderful event for the participants.

Scholarships and Charitable Giving

As always, we ask that everyone remember KAP and the benefits that are being brought to the community and families. KAP has an endowment fund or consider the program when completing your estate planning as well as other forms of giving. KAP grows through your effort of time, talent, and treasures. Contact Dr. Marty Boman at 270-745-8833.