

SNAPSHOTS OF IMPACT



2011



Burton Blatt Institute
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

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BLATT

INSTITUTE

SNAPSHOTS OF IMPACT 2011

A publication of the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University

WRITER & EDITOR

Anthony Adornato '99

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Amy Janack McVey

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Kathleen Haley '92

PHOTOGRAPHY

John Dowling

TJ Hooker

Corey Reese

Steve Sartori

Please direct all correspondence to: Editor,
Snapshots of Impact, Burton Blatt Institute,
Syracuse University, 900 S. Crouse Avenue,
Crouse-Hinds Hall, Suite 300, Syracuse NY
13244-2130 or acadorna@syr.edu

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Produced by Syracuse University
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ADVANCING THE CIVIC, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) at Syracuse University reaches around the globe in its efforts to advance the civic, economic, and social participation of people with disabilities. Officially launched in 2005, BBI builds on the legacy of Burton Blatt, former dean of SU's School of Education and a pioneering disability rights scholar, to better the lives of people with disabilities. BBI engages in projects on civil and human rights, inclusive entrepreneurship, employment, and economic empowerment. With a staff of more than 60, BBI has offices in Syracuse, N.Y., Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Ga., New York, N.Y., and Tel Aviv, Israel.

INSIGHT

INNOVATION

IMPACT



DEAR FRIENDS,

Since I arrived on campus six years ago, at the gracious invitation of Chancellor Nancy Cantor, the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) at Syracuse University has produced results beyond expectations to advance the civic, economic, and social participation of people with disabilities. I have had the great fortune to work with a passionate staff that has expanded to a team of more than 60. Their expertise and leadership have been instrumental in expanding the scope and impact of BBI's work. In addition, BBI's success would not be possible without SU's longstanding commitment to inclusion and its pioneering work on disability issues.



As you will see from the inspirational stories in this inaugural issue of *Snapshots of Impact* magazine, BBI is making a measurable impact on the lives of those with diverse disabilities as well as their families and friends, whether it is through the creation of innovative programs that allow people with disabilities to achieve the American Dream or corporate culture research that shapes companies' hiring practices. In this magazine, you will meet individuals who have benefited from BBI's multi-faceted partnerships and collaborations. Through their eyes, you will explore a world where the possibilities for people with disabilities are limitless.

Reaching from campus to around the globe in an effort to better the lives of people with disabilities, BBI's impactful work seizes on Chancellor Cantor's notion of Scholarship in Action. On campus, BBI has built important relationships with faculty, students, and schools across the diverse disciplines of law, business, communications, public affairs, engineering, information science, visual arts, education, and human ecology. Around the world, BBI experts have created and translated new knowledge to produce solutions that enhance quality of life experience across age, gender, race, and type of disability.

An important part of our interdisciplinary approach is educating the next generation of leaders. SU law, graduate, and undergraduate students, serving as research assistants and interns, have been tremendous additions to BBI. More than 100 students have made meaningful contributions to BBI during the past five years. BBI has also hosted international postdoctoral fellows, three of whom have gone on to faculty positions.

Even though we have had great success during our early years, our work is just beginning. In honor of our namesake, Burton Blatt, it is our mandate to continue to create innovative solutions to the challenges faced by people with disabilities. As my colleagues and I work as members of and part of the disability community, the determination and perseverance of people with disabilities inspires us.

We invite you to join us on our journey. We invite you to make a more inclusive world where all people are valued. On behalf of all of us at BBI, thank you for your continued support.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Blanck".

PETER BLANCK
UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AND BBI CHAIRMAN

The Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) is internationally renowned for its remarkable work in furthering the rights of, and opportunities for, persons with disabilities. Building on the courageous legacy of the pioneering disability-rights scholar and late Dean of the School of Education at SU, for which the institute is named, BBI collaborates with local, national, and global partners to create both a more inclusive campus and more inclusive world. In doing so, BBI reaches across the disciplines to prepare the next generation of leaders, dismantling barriers, fostering mutual understanding, and maximizing the contribution that each one of us makes to tackling the world's most pressing problems.

As this annual magazine reveals, BBI has touched people's lives in amazing ways. In collaboration with the Whitman School of Management, it has empowered hundreds of budding entrepreneurs who have diverse disabilities to realize their dream of establishing a business, and it has launched the precedent-setting entrepreneurial support program in other communities. In partnerships with local agencies, it is advancing economic self-sufficiency and highlighting the critical needs of those with disabilities who live in abusive relationships. The nationally acclaimed Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans has helped countless veterans cultivate the tools needed to thrive as business leaders—an impact that surely will grow as greater numbers of returning troops seek to remake their lives in civilian society in the months and years ahead.

BBI's global impact continues to grow as well, as it hosted an international conference on disability economics this summer and BBI chair Peter Blanck accepted a key leadership role in an Israeli initiative to more effectively assimilate persons with intellectual disabilities into community life.



At the same time, BBI creates priceless opportunities for our students, enabling them to put scholarship into action to transform our communities and our world. This goes to the heart of what we do as a university and it underscores SU's longstanding strength: assuring access and opportunity for all, and not just because it is the right thing to do; but because it's essential to meet the vast, multifaceted challenges facing us today.

We are proud of all that BBI has accomplished—on campuses, in communities, and in corporate board rooms—as a leading advocate for those with disabilities. The life-changing results speak for themselves. As we carry that momentum forward, we invite you to join us in working to build the fully inclusive world that Burton Blatt envisioned—a world in which the knowledge, skills, expertise, and diverse experiences of all are welcomed, valued, and employed in service to the great issues of the day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Cantor".

NANCY CANTOR
CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

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STARTUP NY/ INCLUSIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP



*If it were not for the program,
OhGoodyGoody.com would not exist.
I had no business skills at the
time, and I had no idea how to
get skills.*

ENTREPRENEUR'S BUSINESS IDEA TAKES FLIGHT

Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship, a first-of-its kind program, has assisted more than 60 people with disabilities turn business ideas into reality. The program has been so successful that it's being used as a model in Manhattan and other areas.

Linda Erb's love of flying turned into a 20-year career as an international flight attendant with American Airlines. But, a September 2007 accident grounded Erb's career in the air, altering the course of her life. After slipping on an oil-covered floor in a terminal at Brussels, Belgium, airport, she faced debilitating injuries. Three bones were knocked out of place in Erb's neck, causing vision impairment, cognitive issues, and constant migraines.

"In an instant everything changed. I thought to myself, 'I will never be able to multi-task again or do what I love,'" says Erb, of Camillus, New York. "I battled debilitating pain while trying to figure out what I was going to do with the rest of my life. How was I going to become a productive part of society again? It took me a year of thinking to figure out what I was going to do."

Erb's chance encounter with a Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) staff member in 2008 would help put her life back on a positive path. And her career, as a business owner this time, has taken off again. "I attended the WISE (Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship) Symposium and during the social hour I took a break and sat down on a couch feeling exhausted. Me'Shae Brooks-Rolling [senior operations manager, Medicaid Infrastructure Grant] shared the couch with me and introduced herself. She asked what my business idea was, and during the conversation she made me aware of the Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship program."

Now, three years after the meeting, Erb is the owner of OhGoodyGoody.com, an online retailer that sells gift certificates to such locally owned businesses as wineries, spas, and gift shops. "If it were not for the program, OhGoodyGoody.com would not exist. I had no business skills at the time, and I had no idea how to get skills."

What Erb did have was a unique business idea that she successfully turned into reality through the services provided by Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship. And, she isn't alone in achieving her dreams. From a dog grooming and day care service to a car repair garage, entrepreneurs with disabilities, including veterans, are making their mark in the Central New York business community, thanks to the innovative, first-of-its-kind program developed by BBI.

Since 2007, Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship—a partnership of BBI, SU's Whitman School of Management, and Onondaga County, New York—has assisted 204 individuals

with diverse disabilities in the creation of more than 60 new businesses. "We know people with disabilities can become successful small business owners given the opportunity, training, and resources," says Gary Shaheen G'86, BBI senior vice president.

Housed at the South Side Innovation Center in Syracuse, the program includes business plan development, benefits planning assistance, financing consultation, training programs, and other resources. For Erb, one of the most rewarding aspects was that Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship allowed her to collaborate with SU students. The program teaches and guides college students who work as business development consultants with the entrepreneurs. Students participate as part of Inclusive Entrepreneurship Consulting, a course jointly taught by the Whitman School and BBI that has enrolled more than 140 students.

Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship not only makes self-employment a viable option for people with disabilities, but it also has a positive impact on the local economy. When people with disabilities earn money as small business owners, they can reduce their reliance on public assistance, increase their standard of living and self-esteem, and contribute to the business and economic growth.

BBI managed the design and implementation of Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship on behalf of Onondaga County, which received a three-year, \$3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy to create the program. "The work accomplished by the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University reinforces our belief that, with the correct supports, all citizens can find their rightful place in our county's economic fabric," says County Executive Joanne M. Mahoney '87, L'90.

And now, budding entrepreneurs with disabilities outside of Central New York will reap the benefits of the program. BBI is working with community partners to launch programs in other locations, including Manhattan. "I was sent out into the business world very well equipped," says Erb.

For more information, visit bbi.syr.edu/startupny.

BB

UNITED WAY
PARTNERSHIP



“I finally feel like I’m on the way to having what everyone dreams of.”

ACHIEVING THE AMERICAN DREAM

As Jeremy Pratt blends the techniques of his favorite artists—Monet, Picasso, Van Gogh—to create his own masterpiece inside a Buffalo, New York, art gallery, he also envisions the day when he can walk into a home of his own. For Pratt, a self-employed artist with a learning disability, achieving the American Dream seemed unattainable just a few years ago.

"I've always had to work a bit harder than my friends without disabilities," says the 28-year-old. "But I finally feel like I'm on the way to having what everyone dreams of." Pratt's diligence in saving money is paying off; he plans to start house hunting as early as 2013.

Pratt and thousands of other individuals across New York are building financial security, thanks to an unprecedented statewide initiative spearheaded by the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) and the United Way of New York State. The BBI-United Way partnership, formed in 2009, led to a coordinated effort to support people with disabilities who dream of economic self-sufficiency but aren't certain about the necessary steps.

The intent was to avoid duplication of existing community initiatives already addressing poverty and asset accumulation and improve capacity to serve people with disabilities. As a result, a unique community-based collaboration has improved access by people with diverse disabilities to financial literacy and savings resources.

Pratt first learned about the accessible paths to prosperity during a meeting with his case manager, and it immediately piqued his interest. "We looked at other services and we found that this was the best fit," says his mother, Carol Pratt. "The pathways have enabled him to feel secure and confident, especially when it comes to tackling finances."

Thanks to the program, the stepping stones to his financial stability have been laid out in a concise, defined way. Pratt took financial education classes, opened a checking account, and is in the process of establishing credit. He's also saving monthly through an Individual Development Account administered by

Belmont Housing Resources of Western New York, which matches four dollars for every dollar saved.

"I can easily access money through my checking account. When I get a bill in the mail, I immediately send out a check, and I have the ability to pay for a haircut or go out to dinner," he says, as he describes his newfound financial freedom.

"The initiative takes people with disabilities well beyond reliance on public benefit programs, which are aimed at meeting basic level of needs rather than increasing assets," says Michael Morris, BBI executive director. "They are able to live more freely by reducing dependence on public benefits while taking part in asset-building programs."

Pratt and other participants are also reaping tax benefits that they may have not been aware of. Through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, trained preparers assist low-income residents, free of charge. The preparers helped Pratt claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which reduced his taxable income and increased his refund. With the money received from the EITC, he was able to add to his savings for a down payment on a house.

"Since the initiative was launched, we've seen a major increase in the number of people with disabilities seeking free tax preparation in the Buffalo area. We surpassed our goal by more than 100 percent," says Karyn Hausknecht, Pratt's housing programs manager. In addition to improving economic stability, the series of strategies helps to decrease stress, expand opportunities for community participation, and positively impact quality of life.

"Our collaboration with BBI has addressed systems change so that local coalitions and their partners are better prepared to address the specific needs of people with disabilities," says Mary Shaheen, United Way of New York State vice president. "We are now seeing the impact firsthand."

As is Pratt's mother: "For someone who worked ten times as hard to get a high school diploma, overcoming other obstacles that stand in his way means so much to Jeremy."

In 2009, BBI and the United Way of New York State, through the New York State Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, began working together on a set of strategies aimed at expanding the participation of persons with disabilities in asset development activities.

Six communities engaged with disability partners to create linkages for New Yorkers with disabilities to livable wages through increased access to work incentives planning, health care, and asset accumulation tools and strategies. The economic empowerment activities, also supported by the Office of Mental Health, are sustainable over time.

How New Yorkers with disabilities benefited from this partnership:

- >> 10,750 tax returns prepared
 - >> 353 bank accounts opened
 - >> 97 savings bonds purchased
 - >> 229 referrals to financial literacy education programs
-

REALATORS NY PROGRAM

“

I realized the program was a perfect fit for me. My life continues to improve. People today can't believe the situation I was in just a few years ago.

”



BOUNCING BACK FROM A LIFE OF DESPERATION

After a lifelong battle with alcohol addiction, Yvonne Lescault's life hit a low point in 2009: she temporarily lost custody of her young children and became unemployed. "At the time, I never dreamed my life would come to this. I had no money; I didn't know where I was going to get my next meal," she says. Today, Lescault has a new outlook. She credits the Real JOBS NY program with helping to rebuild her life.

"I finally have a job and my kids are living with me again," says Lescault, a Hudson Falls, New York, resident who now works as a McDonald's manager. "When I started the Real JOBS NY program, I didn't have any idea how to write a resume or use a computer."

The program assists people with diverse psychiatric disabilities, including depression, substance abuse, and anxiety, overcome barriers that stand in their way to employment. "Without the appropriate people to guide you along, finding a job seems like an impossible task for someone in my shoes," she notes. "I now realize how important having a stable job can be to the quality of your life."

To develop a pathway to sustainable employment, Real JOBS NY provides a unique support system for its participants, focusing on individually tailored plans to meet the specific needs of each client. Lescault is one of approximately 80 people who have been placed in jobs after enrolling in Real JOBS NY—a collaboration of the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI), Workforce Development Institute (WDI), and the New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services.

"This program targets the most underserved population of people with disabilities, which are those with psychiatric issues. People with mental illness have the highest unemployment of people with all disabilities," says Stephan Haimowitz, BBI research associate.

One of the clearest measures of the program's success comes in the recent employment figures. Among those enrolled in Real JOBS NY during the 2009-2010 period, 64 percent were employed at least three months after being placed in a job. The national average for similar programs is only nine percent.

The difference between Real JOBS NY and other workforce development programs is the one-on-one attention, individualized case management, and referrals to other services that help clients achieve employment goals. "My vocational counselor helped me with everything from computer skills to finding transportation," adds Lescault. "She even showed me the appropriate steps to get a high school diploma."

The location of the program also matters. Real JOBS NY, funded by the U.S. Rehabilitation Services Administration "Projects with Industry" grant, is based out of Schenectady County Community College and SUNY Adirondack. "The community college environment is highly appealing to people with psychiatric disabilities who are seeking employment assistance, because it is less stigmatizing to those who have tried and failed in a traditional mental health center," explains Stephen Traver, WDI director of vocational services.

Lescault, who was referred to the program through family court, admits she reluctantly sought out Real JOBS NY. She had a change of heart after her first meeting with Alice Huntington, a vocational counselor for the program. "During our initial conversation, I realized the program was a perfect fit for me," Lescault says. "My life continues to improve. I even bought my first car. People today can't believe the situation I was in just a few years ago."

One of the clearest measures of the program's success comes in the recent employment figures. Among those enrolled in Real JOBS NY during the 2009-2010 period, **64 percent** were employed at **least three months** after being placed in a job. The national average for similar programs is only nine percent.

PROJECT EMERGE



IMPROVING SERVICES FOR ABUSED WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Project EMERGE has been instrumental in the creation of practical solutions to the unique challenges faced by women with disabilities and Deaf women: they not only experience abuse at vastly disproportionate numbers, but they also encounter barriers to seeking assistance.

Project EMERGE—a Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) collaboration with Vera House, working to end domestic and sexual violence, and ARISE, creating a fair and just community in which everyone can fully participate—improves services for women with disabilities and Deaf individuals who may also be victims of domestic and/or sexual violence. The Project EMERGE team is working with other community partners, including the Syracuse Police Department, to create policy and best practices within their organizations.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

Members of Project EMERGE's Advisory Group share their story of how the program has provided an opportunity to grow as individuals and to make a difference.

My name is Cindy, and I am writing on behalf of Joan, Georgianne, Jaylenne, and myself. We are a group of women with disabilities and who are Deaf. We are also survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Together we make up the Project EMERGE Advisory Group. We began in this Advisory Group as strangers, but now consider one another family. Until this project, our experiences of trauma and having a disability or being Deaf carried so much negativity. Project EMERGE has allowed us to turn our troubling experiences into a positive for others in our community.

In the beginning, with so much raw emotion, it was difficult to discuss our experiences of abuse, many of which we tried to keep hidden. The Project EMERGE team wanted to know how our disability or our experience of being Deaf braided together with our abuse history. Before Project EMERGE, we either focused on the disability or the trauma but not how they were related.

We struggled, along with the staff, trying to figure out how we could accommodate all of our needs. We thought having people who were blind or Deaf in the same room would create confusion. Instead, it turned out to be a meaningful experience as we learned how to work with the interpreters and build a strong team. We found

safety in talking. We shared our challenges in accessing services for people with disabilities or the Deaf who are victims of abuse. We may have similar disabilities but our needs are different.

As a result of working with project staff and other advisory board members, there has been an increased awareness in the community about accommodations for women with disabilities or those who are Deaf and victims of abuse. We are so proud to have been a part of creating and revising valuable educational resources. For example, a series of fully accessible videos describe how to recognize and avoid abuse as well as where to find support. A new assessment tool also helped ARISE and Vera House staff members assess their ability to provide accessible services.

We are delighted that these resources may be used by other programs across the country. As much as we have done and offered to Project EMERGE, being a part of this group has done so much more for us. We experienced bad things, thinking it was our fault, but when you hear the experiences of others, you realize that you are not alone. We feel empowered. Being part of Project EMERGE has been a healing process for us—an opportunity to grow as individuals and to make a difference in our community.

AN UNSUNG HERO

In recognition of her work with Project EMERGE, OMOLARA FUNMIOLA

AKINPELU, BBI research associate, was a recipient of Syracuse University's 2011 Unsung Heroes Awards. "Her meaningful work in our community has made the hope of justice a reality for women with disabilities and Deaf women," says Tom McKeown, ARISE executive director.



A native of Nigeria, Akinpelu serves as Project EMERGE advocate at ARISE. In this role, Akinpelu works to identify specific gaps in service, barriers to safety and accessible support, and system inadequacies for this population of women. Her collaboration with ARISE and Vera House has led to a coordinated community response to fill a gap in service and promote awareness of women with disabilities and Deaf women.

In addition, Akinpelu has helped to develop a comprehensive curriculum to train staff at both ARISE and Vera House to improve service delivery to women with disabilities or those who are Deaf and victims of abuse. "Akinpelu's insight and compassion combined with her dedication to an important issue have meant so very much for our community," says Randi Bregman, Vera House executive director.



From SOLDIERS to BUSINESS OWNERS

Started in 2007 by the Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University, the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) helps post-9/11 veterans with disabilities launch their own businesses. The program has expanded to other universities across the country.

BBI is a collaborative EBV partner for creating disability-related curriculum and assisting participants in understanding and leveraging programs at the intersection of disability and entrepreneurship.

A Q&A with EBV founder **MIKE HAYNIE**

BARNES PROFESSOR OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP
AT THE WHITMAN SCHOOL

What motivated you to create the EBV program?

MH: Most simply, I'm a veteran and I wanted to leverage my role as an entrepreneurship professor to serve the veterans community. The path I saw to do that revolved around the large number of veterans with disabilities.

While reports differ, the number of American service-members sustaining combat injuries as a result of their



support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as of January 2011, ranges between 40,000 and 60,000. As a result of improvements in medical technology, as well as advances in war-fighting technology, the number of Americans surviving major combat injuries is unprecedented in U.S. history. However, for many of these individuals, the resulting disability may have profound and enduring implications for their vocational future.

Beyond physical wounds, the nature of how this war is being fought (IEDs, an often unknown/unseen enemy, civilian causalities, etc.) directly contributes to the exceedingly high rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) experienced by returning service members. If one were to combine the rates of physical and psychological "injury" represented by the population of those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001, data would suggest that 30 percent of those individuals will transition from military to civilian life with a meaningful physical or psychological disability.

Some experts argue that this estimate is exceedingly conservative. Regardless, assuming a 30 percent rate of disability—in light of the fact that more than two million Americans have deployed to combat theaters since 2001—this estimate suggests that more than 650,000 Americans will transition from military to civilian life with an enduring and service-connected disability. Notably, many of these veterans are young adults, in their early to mid-20s. The Associated Press recently described this circumstance as an impending “social and economic tsunami that will overwhelm the resources of this country for generations.”

For the veteran with a disability, it is often the case that the traditional means through which to “climb the economic ladder” are closed as a result of their disability, as well as policy and attitudinal barriers to their employment.

The circumstances described above—when considered together—setup a perfect storm in terms of the economic challenges veterans, their families, and our society will face for decades to come. This challenge represents the foundation for the creation and launch of the EBV program. Put simply, the program is designed to leverage what higher education does well—train, teach, and inspire—to put our veterans on a meaningful path toward business creation and ownership, in the face of their disability.

What are the unique issues veterans with disabilities face in regards to employment?

MH: There are several.

The first is simply related to the challenges of translating the skills and knowledge learned in the military to a civilian vocation. What knowledge and skills does a tank driver have that could be relevant to a civilian employer? The answer is many; advanced knowledge in electrical systems, radar systems, among others. However, the veteran typically doesn't see those relationships—nor does the employer.

There are also policy and attitudinal barriers to employment for veterans. There is a stigma associated with PTSD, and often you hear from employers: “What can I do with a combat Marine in my business?”

Finally, many of our veterans with disabilities continue to receive treatment for physical and psychological disabilities, and as such require flexible work schedules. Many employers cannot—or are unwilling—to accommodate such requirements.

>> *Inc.* magazine named the EBV program as one of the “10 Best-In-Class” college-based entrepreneurship courses and programs in the nation.





Why do you think there is a natural fit between being an entrepreneur and being a soldier?

MH: I think the knowledge and skills learned through military service translate almost directly to business ownership.

For example, service members understand how to innovate and accomplish a mission in a resource constrained environment. They also assume a single-minded focus on that mission and are rarely daunted by a challenge. Finally, military veterans also understand the value of networks and networking, and extend those skills to business ownership. I think these factors contribute to the Small Business Administration's finding that the success rate of veteran-owned businesses is almost twice the national average.

Discuss EBV's collaboration with BBI.

MH: BBI has been a fantastic partner. When EBV was launched, we realized the need to develop a tailored curriculum that acknowledged the unique challenges and opportunities related to 1) being a veteran and a business owner, and 2) being a person with disabilities and a business owner. BBI was uniquely positioned to assist us with incorporating disability-related information and training into our program—and has been an integral partner from the beginning.

Importantly, BBI's role has been more than simply curriculum development. The BBI team participates in the EBV programs across the country, teaching specially designed modules of training focused on such topics as benefits counseling, accessing supportive resources, and peer support networking. Finally, the BBI team also plays an important role in the post-residency support offered to the veterans. In this role, BBI has worked to help network our veterans to organizations and individuals in a position to help our veterans realize their entrepreneurial goals.

What unique talents does the BBI team bring to the program?

MH: The most obvious and important is the intimate knowledge of disability. One attribute that defines EBV participants is the fact that each is a person with disabilities. While I have strong knowledge of entrepreneurship, when we founded the program our team

in the Whitman School had no real expertise in disability issues. BBI brought this knowledge to the table, and leveraged it in the design of the program.

The other strength of BBI is the commitment of its people. University Professor Peter Blanck, chairman; James Schmeling, chief operating officer and managing director; Gary Shaheen G'86, senior vice president; and the rest of the BBI team are true professionals that get what we are trying to accomplish, and are committed to the success of the EBV program—and in turn the success of our veterans.

The results of EBV have been profound. To what do you attribute the success of the program?

MH: I see two important elements of what we do that I attribute to our success. First, we recognized from the beginning the importance of developing a program that was uniquely tailored to the needs and challenges of the veterans we serve. In other words, we could not simply offer a generic small business training program and expect results. Instead we had to acknowledge the issues and challenges inherent in being a veteran with a disability, and incorporate those challenges into the EBV design.

“BBI has been a fantastic partner. The BBI team is committed to the success of the EBV program—and in turn the success of our veterans.”

Second, the many, many people from across the country who have become involved with the program—from our faculty, speakers, mentors—all have a passion for serving our veterans. This makes all the difference. Because they care personally, they are willing to commit the time and energy needed to truly make a difference for our veterans.

For more information, visit the EBV web site at [www.whitman.syr.edu/ebv](http://whitman.syr.edu/ebv).



BLANCK NOTED AS AUTHORITY IN NEW ADA RULES

THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC) extensively cited the research of University Professor Peter Blanck, BBI chairman, in its final rules and regulations for the employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The goal of the new regulations is to support Americans with disabilities, including veterans, to be equally included in the workplace, and to consider the interests of employees with disabilities and businesses.

Blanck's work influenced the EEOC's adoption of a number of its rules. The EEOC noted Blanck as a co-author of the influential 2006 study "Workplace Accommodations: Evidence-Based Outcomes," and his comments regarding the EEOC's estimates for the costs to employers of workplace accommodations. Blanck notes that "studies also show measurable benefits to businesses that provide accommodation to people with disabilities, and net costs of accommodations often are minimal." For almost 20 years, Blanck and his colleagues have examined the employment of persons with disabilities and corporate cultures, producing a body of empirical studies.



From Left to Right: Stephanie Herring, University Professor and BBI Chairman Peter Blanck, Nicole Loring, Rachel Patterson, Patrick Vanderpool, Desire Derrick, BBI Director of Legal Research and Writing William Myhill, Jeffrey Davenport, Law and Policy Research Associate Kelly Bunch, and Brandon Sawyer

BBI RESEARCH ASSISTANTS, **INTERNS RECOGNIZED**

BBI CONGRATULATES SEVEN RESEARCH ASSISTANTS AND INTERNS who graduated in May 2011. SU law, graduate, and undergraduate students have been tremendous additions to BBI; more than 100 have made meaningful contributions to BBI during the past five years.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON **DISABILITY ECONOMICS**

DURING AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN JUNE, HOSTED ON SU'S CAMPUS BY BBI AND THE University Of Tokyo Graduate School Of Economics, leading researchers from Japan and the United States examined how economic forces affect the lives of people with disabilities

The University of Tokyo's Research on Economy and Disability (READ) project leadership team traveled to BBI's Syracuse headquarters for the two-day conference, which addressed how economic policy models and practice may improve opportunities for persons with disabilities to engage in everyday life. "This was a great opportunity to share international approaches for addressing economic barriers facing millions of people with disabilities worldwide, and to stimulate interdisciplinary and cross-cultural dialogue," says Peter Blanck, University Professor and BBI chairman.

Blanck has traveled to Japan several times to lecture and consult with leading Japanese academics, NGOs for persons with disabilities, and government officials who are developing a new Japanese disability anti-discrimination law similar to the Americans with Disabilities Act, which also is to further the goals of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Building on prior efforts of BBI after Hurricane Katrina in the United States, as well as crises in Israel, the conference also addressed the economic and personal impact of the recent Japanese earthquake and tsunami, with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups such as the disabled, the elderly, and children in times of disaster and crisis. BBI's longstanding work in the area of disaster mitigation for people with disabilities is particularly timely, given the devastating natural disaster in Japan.



SU ALUMNI AND BBI HOST ATLANTA FUNDRAISER



Model and reality TV star Cynthia Bailey greets Ms. Wheelchair Georgia, Kathleen Rice, during a VIP reception (left). Talent show contestants gather with celebrity judges and BBI staff (right).

HOW DO YOU DEFINE BEAUTY? CREATORS OF THE DOCUMENTARY *DEFINING Beauty: Ms. Wheelchair America* teamed up with BBI's Atlanta office to explore that question during Taste of Beauty Weekend. A portion of the money raised supports the initiatives of BBI's Atlanta office, including career coaching, job shadowing, and summer internships for people with disabilities.

"The Taste of Beauty weekend, which included a talent showcase featuring youth with disabilities and a VIP screening of the documentary, was a great opportunity for us to showcase the importance of inclusion and originality," says Manuela Ikenze G'01, executive producer of *Defining Beauty: Ms. Wheelchair America*. The documentary's production crew also includes Molly Kasch, Alexis Ostrander, and Meagan Keane. The thought-provoking documentary, narrated

by Golden Globe winner Katey Sagal, chronicles the lives of five women with disabilities on their journey to the 2010 Ms. Wheelchair America pageant.

Celebrity judges for the weekend talent show—former *American Idol* contestant Anoop Desai, award-winning songwriter Cassius D. Kalb, and Miss Georgia USA Kaylin Reque—shared their personal stories about family members and friends who have disabilities. In addition, Ms. Wheelchair Georgia 2010, Kathleen Rice, was on hand to co-moderate the talent showcase.

BBI's Shelley Kaplan, one of the event organizers, noted the impact of the Atlanta community's involvement in the event. "When it comes to career exploration, youth with disabilities are not given ample opportunities due to lack of accessibility, unfounded fears, and stereotypes that result in limited networking experiences. Money raised from Taste of Beauty supports efforts in Atlanta to change that, specifically through BBI's disability career coaching and mentoring programs."

By collaborating with Atlanta businesses, BBI matches students with appropriate mentors in choice careers and partners with businesses to help them find outstanding new talent while also considering diversity and inclusion in their hiring practices.

BRIAN MCLANE '69 RECEIVES SU'S HIGHEST ALUMNI HONOR

BRIAN MCLANE, BBI SENIOR ADVISOR, was one of four distinguished alumni to be presented with a prestigious Arents Award during the 2010 Orange Central celebrations. McLane received the George Arents Award for Excellence in Social Activism and Disability Rights. Named for George Arents, a successful manufacturer who served on the SU Board of Trustees from 1930 until his death in 1960, Arents Awards are Syracuse University's highest alumni honor. SU also established a fellowship and scholarship in McLane's honor.

McLane works with BBI Chairman Peter Blanck to provide strategic direction that will enable the institute to meet the unique needs of persons with disabilities. Born with cerebral palsy, McLane learned at an early age not to accept limits on his abilities. He was the first wheelchair-bound student to graduate from his high school and went on to graduate from the Newhouse School with a degree in broadcast journalism. Under his leadership, a six-member service fraternity with a poor campus image turned into a leading advocacy organization for making SU and other campuses nationwide more accessible to people with disabilities.



Brian McLane '69 (center), pictured with Chancellor Nancy Cantor and other award recipients, honored for his social activism.



BBI Faculty Fellow Rebecca Bader shares her personal connection with rheumatoid arthritis and discusses her research about the disease.

RESEARCH EMPHASIZES IMPROVING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

INSPIRED BY HER AUNT'S 41-YEAR BATTLE WITH RHEUMATOID arthritis (RA), BBI Fellow Rebecca Bader's research focuses on improving the lives of those with the disease. Bader, assistant professor of biomedical and chemical engineering in SU's L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science, was awarded her first National Science Foundation grant to research a drug delivery system that will minimize the negative effects of taking anti-rheumatic medications over a long time period.

During a public seminar hosted by BBI, she provided expert insight into how a combination of old information and new technology can be used to increase the quality of life of those with RA. "My aunt is a daily reminder that no matter how bad things get, I am doing the research that I do for people like her who really need the help," said Bader. "Hopefully, someday people with RA can forever continue to do the daily activities that most of us take for granted, and hopefully I can help make that happen."

Bader's seminar was part of the ongoing opportunities for researchers affiliated with BBI to present on research relative to their area of expertise with impact for people with disabilities. Other presenters have included Michael Waterstone, professor of law and associate dean for Research and Academic Centers, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles; Shirley Avrami, head of Research and Information Center, The Knesset, Israel; and Jun Nakagawa, professor in the Department of Social Policy and School of Social Welfare, Hokusei Gakuen University, Japan.

BLANCK NAMED CO-CHAIR OF DISABILITY RIGHTS PANEL

THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL'S MINISTRY OF WELFARE AND SOCIAL Services appointed University Professor Peter Blanck, BBI chairman, to co-chair a disability rights expert panel on community living for persons with intellectual disabilities. Blanck's co-chair is leading Israeli academic Professor Arie Rimmerman, the Richard Crossman Chair for Social Welfare and Planning in the School of Social Work, Social Welfare and Health Studies at the University of Haifa in Israel.

Blanck and Rimmerman are examining ways to further the transition of Israelis with intellectual disabilities from institutional to community living. "My hope is that this group of international leaders in community living for people with disabilities will stimulate discussion and suggest ways to foster independent and equal community living for Israelis with intellectual disabilities," notes Blanck.

The three other internationally recognized members of the panel include Professor Gerard Quinn, of the National University of Ireland at the Galway School of Law and director of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy; Joel Levy, formerly CEO of the YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities; and Professor Meindert Haveman, of the University of Dortmund in Germany, who is in the Department of Rehabilitation and Education for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities.

"Our goal is to further the important dialogue on the deinstitutionalization of Israelis with intellectual disabilities," says Rimmerman.



Panel members (left to right) include Gerard Quinn, Joel Levy, Peter Blanck, and Meindert Haveman.



Syracuse-area students with disabilities, with the guidance of SU graduate students, perform their own musical masterpiece during a concert for the "SUMMER @ SUBCAT" music program.

NEW MUSIC COURSE HITS A HIGH NOTE

A NEW AND UNIQUE COURSE OFFERED THIS SUMMER GAVE SU STUDENTS THE opportunity to teach Syracuse high school students with disabilities about the art of music production and recording engineering in a professional recording studio.

"Studio Recording/The Inclusive Recording Studio: SUMMER @SUBCAT" is a new undergraduate and graduate course being offered to SU students studying music education, music industry, and other related disciplines. The course culminated in a two-week experience in August in which the SU students taught and mentored high school music technology students with disabilities at the new Subcat Studios, an accessible, appropriately adapted, state-of-the-art facility located in the new 219 South West Street cultural complex in Syracuse.

In anticipation of the two-week experience, the SU students made modifications to the studio to assist in this process, such as the adaptation of audio workstation software for voice activation and modifying studio hardware for accessibility.

"SUMMER @SUBCAT" is sponsored by BBI, University College, and the Rose, Jules R. and Stanford S. Setnor School of Music in the College of Visual and Performing Arts as part of the Music Technology Access Project, a collaborative effort to bring music education technology and instruction to students with disabilities. "This course is completely unique, and the amalgam of music, recording technology, and disability studies is cutting edge," says BBI Fellow James Abbott, music technology administrator and instructor in the Setnor School who co-taught the course.

BBI MEETS WITH TOP WHITE HOUSE STAFF

BASED ON A DISCUSSION AT THE WHITE House, BBI has been asked to provide further ideas on how to increase support for entrepreneurs with disabilities as part of the Startup America initiative. In March, BBI Executive Director Michael Morris, Senior Vice President Gary Shaheen G'86, and BBI Board of Advisors member John Robinson '90 met at the White House with Special Assistant to the President for Disability Policy Kareem Dale, Senior Policy Advisor Doug Rand, and two senior staff from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The group discussed options for replication of BBI's Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship program (page 6) and greater involvement of individuals with disabilities in the new Startup America initiative.



ALUMNI COUPLE DONATES \$100,000

ROBERT '66 AND CAROL '70 TANNENHAUSER HAVE announced a commitment of \$100,000 to BBI, one of the institute's most generous private donations to date.

"This marvelous gift will ensure that BBI continues to build on the legacy of its namesake, Burton Blatt, by enhancing direct impact for people with disabilities," said University Professor Peter Blanck, BBI chairman. "Bob and Carol's fantastic commitment is an investment

in the future of BBI. Their generosity will have an immediate impact on people's lives."

"Our gift reflects our passion and enthusiasm for BBI's work to advance the lives of people with disabilities."

The Tannenhauser's contribution will advance BBI's programs in outreach and entrepreneurship activities for people with disabilities. "I have witnessed the profound impact BBI has had locally and across the world,"

said Robert Tannenhauser, a member of BBI's Board of Advisors. "Our gift reflects our passion and enthusiasm for BBI's work to advance the lives of people with disabilities."

"BBI builds on SU's longstanding achievements in the struggle for an inclusive society for all," said Carol Tannenhauser. "We are thrilled to support this mission."

Robert Tannenhauser, chief executive officer of The Ruxton Capital Group LLC, is the founder of BoeFly, LLC (www.boefly.com), a premier online marketplace connecting lenders with business borrowers, secondary market loan buyers, and professional service providers. He also serves as board chairman of the Children's Health Fund, founded by singer-songwriter Paul Simon and Dr. Irwin Redlener. He received a B.A. from Syracuse University, J.D. from Brooklyn Law School, and an L.L.M. (Taxation) from the New York University School of Law.

Carol Tannenhauser, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications alumna, is an accomplished author and journalist. She also volunteers at The Doe Fund in New York City, which implements programs to break the cycles of homelessness, addiction, and criminal recidivism.

EXAMINING VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT

THANKS TO A \$483,000 GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS Affairs (VA), BBI IS conducting substantial research to improve the hiring and retention of veterans by businesses nationwide. In partnership with veteran-owned business Corporate Gray, the research team will report on findings from a survey of at least 100 employers nationwide that analyzes current policies, practices, and program experiences with hiring and retaining veterans. The study is examining employers' understanding of the mental health and related needs of veterans and the services that would support maintaining productivity in the face of these needs.

BBI and Corporate Gray also are investigating more intensive case studies, with large employers, that analyzes the health and mental health, as well as the use of health and mental health services, of veteran employees. In addition, BBI and Corporate Gray are examining current materials supporting employees and will develop new materials and resources based on identified gaps and needs. The materials will be used by businesses to support the hiring and retention of veterans.

BBI is a nationally recognized expert in the study of corporate culture and business practices that advance the recruiting, hiring, accommodating, retaining, and advancing of workers with disabilities, including veterans. The

project with Corporate Gray marks BBI's fifth grant or contract related directly to veterans and veterans with disabilities, and the first which combines BBI's expertise in diversity, disability, corporate culture, and employment practices with a focus on employment of veterans.

Michael Morris, BBI executive director, notes the importance of this new partnership. "Corporate

Gray's extensive contacts into the veteran employer community are critical to the success of this research. They provide an entry point to many small and large employers who have demonstrated commitment to hiring," says Morris. "BBI brings to the table our extensive portfolio of research on employment with large and small employers, and the methods to understand clearly what works and why in any setting."





Onondaga County Executive Joanne Mahoney chats with BBI Chairman Peter Blanck and Della Brown, a Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship participant.

COUNTY EXECUTIVE, ENTREPRENEURS CATCH UP OVER LUNCH

DURING A LUNCHEON IN DOWNTOWN SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA County Executive Joanne M. Mahoney '89, L'90 met with entrepreneurs with disabilities who have launched local businesses through the Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship program (page 6). The discussion was held at Tacolicious, an eatery owned by Della Brown, a participant of the program.

Mahoney says the program is a perfect example of Syracuse University's notion of Scholarship in Action—reaching beyond the campus to create a positive impact in the community. Entrepreneurs with disabilities spoke about their rewarding experiences in the Start-Up NY/Inclusive Entrepreneurship program, housed at the South Side Innovation Center.

HONORING A PASSIONATE MENTOR

IN RECOGNITION OF HER PASSION AND DEDICATION AS A mentor, BBI's Marcia Scherer '70 (page 25) received the Sam McFarland Memorial Mentor Award from the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America. The award acknowledges Scherer for having influenced, counseled, and nurtured others in the field of assistive technology.

"Marcia presents with a marvelous mix of scholarship, publication, mentorship, advising, and friendship that has touched many of us, as well as immeasurable numbers of persons with disabilities through her life's work," according to friends and colleagues who nominated her. "With a warm, willing smile and a quick mind, Dr. Scherer has helped students at all levels of education and in many fields affiliated with rehabilitation."

Scherer, who has more than 20 years of distinguished activities as a researcher and educator, serves as co-principal investigator for the Center on Effective Rehabilitation Technology at BBI.

ENSURING INFORMATION ACCESS TO K-12 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

While their students were on summer vacation, 105 public school librarians, general educators, and special educators from across New York State spent time in a "summer school" at Syracuse University.

For three weeks, teams of educators attended innovative workshops through Project ENABLE, which assists them to meet the library and information needs of K-12 students with disabilities. Project ENABLE is a collaborative endeavor of the Center for Digital Literacy at the School of Information Studies (iSchool) and the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) at Syracuse University.

BBI Director of Legal Research and Writing William Myhill and iSchool Assistant Professor Renee Franklin Hill taught the in-depth training workshops focused on awareness, inclusive program development, and accessible technology selection. Myhill and Franklin Hill assisted participants in the development of inclusive lesson plans and learning materials for their respective libraries and schools.

"It was exciting to collaborate with this talented group of education professionals toward ensuring students with disabilities fully access and benefit from the information age," says Myhill, who previously served as a special education teacher working with children having diverse special needs.

The iSchool recorded the instructional segments, and they will be part of a freely accessible website that provides online self-paced, interactive training that simulates the workshop content and activities.

"Co-teaching the workshops gave me an opportunity to put into practice the very topics I research and I'm excited about that," says Franklin Hill, who has worked as a middle school special educator and school librarian.

Project ENABLE, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), was created in response to the findings of an IMLS-sponsored research study conducted from 2006-2009 by a team of researchers at SU's Center for Digital Literacy. Consistently across all three phases of the research, school librarians rated their services to students with disabilities lowest on all surveys and no librarian reported providing separate instruction to students with individualized education programs.



BBI APPOINTMENTS >

ANTHONY ADORNATO '99

Director of communications



Anthony Adornato, a Central New York native with more than a decade experience in the public relations and broadcast

journalism fields, joined BBI as director of communications. In this role, Adornato is responsible for the creation and implementation of multiple communications activities for BBI. Through his communications expertise, BBI is exploring new ways of engaging constituencies while meeting its strategic objectives.

Adornato comes to BBI from Colgate University, where he served as manager of media communications from 2007-2010. During his tenure, he was successful at elevating the university's presence through placement in regional and national media outlets. In addition to managing the school's media relations outreach, Adornato served as spokesperson, planned major campus events, and coordinated new media projects, among other duties. Before making the transition to public relations, he was an anchor and reporter for six years at WSTM-TV, the NBC affiliate in Syracuse.

Adornato earned a B.S. degree in broadcast journalism from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and is currently pursuing a graduate degree in media management through an executive program at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism.

KELLY BUNCH L'09, J.D.

Research associate



A graduate of SU College of Law, Kelly Bunch joined BBI as a research associate. Bunch earned her law degree with a certificate in disability law and policy and another concentration in communications law and policy. At the College of Law, she was selected as a Disability Law and Policy Program Fellow, and worked as a student attorney in the Disability Rights Clinic. She also served as the lead articles editor of Impunity Watch, a human rights journal at the College.

Bunch earned a joint degree from Carnegie Mellon University in history and policy as well as psychology. After college, she was selected as a Humanity in Action Fellow. Bunch studied current human rights and minority rights issues within the context of the Holocaust in Berlin, Germany, with a focus on human rights and Holocaust education.

Prior to joining BBI, Bunch worked as a disability law and policy consultant at BlueLaw International, LLP. She has strong interests in international disability rights and development and in the intersection between communications law and disability rights in education, public accommodations and services, and employment. She works on a variety of research projects, and manages the team of BBI research assistants.

JANICE HERZOG

Director of external relations



As director of external relations, Janice Herzog serves as a liaison to the BBI Board of Advisors. Herzog works closely with the board to

facilitate effective and timely communications, manage board operations and engagement, and follow up on board initiatives. Before joining BBI, Herzog worked for more than 20 years at Syracuse University College of Law. During that time, she was a member of the dean's senior staff and served as assistant dean for administration and external relations as well as director of external relations. In addition to working closely with the College of Law's board and executive committee, she has extensive experience in law school administrative operations and human resources management operations.

She also worked in collaboration with the Office of Advancement in the areas of prospect management and engagement, donor and alumni relations, and fundraising. She has been a panel facilitator as well as speaker for the American Bar Association and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) on topics related to board management and transformation and the board member's role in fundraising

RAYMOND "CHIP" KENNEY, M.S.

Project director—Southeast TACE Region IV

Raymond "Chip" Kenney was named director of the Southeast Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Center, a project of BBI. Kenney has more than 30 years of experience working in the fields of rehabilitation

and disability studies relative to academics, disability rights, and managing service delivery programs for persons with disabilities.

Prior to joining the BBI team, he worked in variety of roles for the Georgia State University Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program. As director of the program, he chaired a committee to develop national standards for leadership and management certificate programs and was responsible for the overall management of the federally funded program.

L. ELAINE SUTTON MBIONWU, C.C.P.H.

Assistant director/director of training and technical assistance—
DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center



L. Elaine Sutton Mbionwu joined the DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center this year. Prior to BBI, Sutton Mbionwu served in the

capacity of program manager/volunteer administrator with the Single Parent Alliance and Resource Center in which she was tasked with the responsibility of organizational capacity building and resource development through the provision of training, technical assistance, and program development. She also coordinated and directed the delivery of extensive and substantive direct/indirect services to single parent families.

A special interest area of Sutton Mbionwu's involves family reunification of individuals impacted by the collateral consequences of incarceration. She has served as a grant reviewer for numerous federal agencies and as an independent consultant providing consultative

services to numerous community groups concentrating on the emerging field of reentry, which encompassed the provision of training and technical assistance to state and federal agencies as well as community and faith-based organizations on building collaborative partnerships and networks to address the reintegration needs of the formerly incarcerated.

KATHERINE MCDONALD, PH.D.

BBI faculty fellow and assistant professor of public health



Katherine McDonald assumed a dual appointment as assistant professor of public health in the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics and as a BBI faculty fellow. Through the dual appointment, McDonald will contribute to strengthening students' understanding of disability and working to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

McDonald comes to SU and BBI from Portland State University (Oregon), where she served as an assistant professor of psychology. McDonald's work, research, and service center on using ecological theory and action research to understand and promote the community integration of individuals with disabilities. Her current research examines the inclusion of persons with intellectual disability in research, participation in online communities and its relationship to autistic adults' social connectedness and well-being, health disparities among and health care experiences of autistic adults, and community participation among persons with disabilities.

McDonald received her B.S. degree with distinction in human

development and family studies with a minor in French from Cornell University and her Ph.D. in community and prevention research psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

MARcia SCHERER '70, PH.D.

Project director



Marcia Scherer currently serves as project director and co-principal investigator for the Center on Effective Rehabilitation Technology (CERT)

at BBI. The goal of CERT is to identify, document, and analyze models of rehabilitation and assistive technology service delivery shown to be effective in promoting successful employment outcomes. Scherer has more than 20 years of distinguished activities as a researcher, educator, evaluator, and developer of new tools and methods to improve awareness of, access to, and favorable outcomes from assistive technology.

An alumna of the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, she earned a Ph.D. in counseling, family and work life studies (counseling psychology) from the University of Rochester and a MPH from the University of Rochester Medical Center. She also has a M.S. in rehabilitation counseling from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She has authored or co-authored nine books including the forthcoming *Assistive Technologies and Other Supports for People with Brain Injuries from Genetics, Injury, or Aging*.

As founder and director of the Institute for Matching Person and Technology Inc., Scherer has established partnerships with rehabilitation and technology

experts in the United States and internationally. Scherer is also a professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Rochester School of Medicine.

PAMELA WILLIAMSON

Project director—
DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center



Pamela Williamson was appointed project director of the DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center, a project of BBI. The Southeast ADA Center is one

of 10 regional information centers on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that serves the eight southeastern states. Williamson previously served for 11 years as director of training and technical assistance at the center. In this role, she coordinated the project's core services of training and technical assistance, managed the technical assistance and training teams, developed training materials, participated in the curriculum development of four online courses, and served as a mentor to project affiliates.

Prior to her position with the Southeast ADA Center, Williamson worked as the Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights coordinator and advocate for the Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities in South Carolina. She has also served as a special education teacher for children in an inclusive pre-school program. Williamson has close family members with significant disabilities and has worked professionally with people with disabilities for more than 25 years.

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Faculty Associate, Center on Digital Literacy,
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Research, Technical Assistance, Training, and Outreach

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Co-Principal Investigator and Project
Director, Asset Accumulation and Economic
Self-Sufficiency Project

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Asset Accumulation Project and Economic
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Miranda Kennedy, M.P.P.

Research Project Coordinator

Omolara Funmilola Akinpelu, Ph.D.

Post-Doctoral Fellow

Yiyan Wu, M.A.

Research Assistant

Disability and Business Technical**Assistance Center (DBTAC): Southeast****ADA Center****Atlanta office**

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Project Director

L. Elaine Sutton Mbionwu, C.C.H.P.

Assistant Director/Director, Training and
Technical Assistance

Shelley A. Kaplan, M.S., C.C.C.

Senior Advisor

Mary Morder, B.A.

Help Desk Specialist and Alternate Formats
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Sally Z. Weiss, B.A.

Director of Materials Development and
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Amparo "Amy" Oliveras

Administrative Assistant/Multicultural
Outreach Coordinator

Cheri Hofmann

Distance Learning Coordinator/Information
Specialist

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(Southeast TACE)**

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Project Director

Jill Houghton

Deputy Director

Shelley A. Kaplan, M.S., C.C.C.

Co-Principal Investigator

Steffany Stevens, Ph.D. candidate

Administrative Specialist

Web Development/Instructional Design

Marsha Schwanke, M.S., C.T.R.S.

Celestia Ohrzada, Ph.D. Candidate

Administration

Me'Shae Brooks-Rolling G'90, M.P.A.,
C.S.E.P.

Senior Operations Manager, Medicaid
Infrastructure Grant

Diana Foote '91, B.S.

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Interns/Work Study

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(B.A. Political Science / B.S. Public Relations candidate 2011)

Nicole Loring
(B.A. Political Science candidate 2011)

Since its inception six years ago, the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) has experienced rapid growth and resulting impact as a problem solver and knowledge creator worldwide. This rapid growth necessitates an even stronger and more engaged partnership with BBI's key stakeholders in terms of strategically shaping and supporting BBI's vision to advance civic, economic, and social participation of people with disabilities.

One of BBI's most influential and insightful groups of stakeholders is its Board of Advisors, led by co-chairs Joshua H. Heintz, Esq. L'69 and Laurence Silverman, Esq. BBI's Board consists of sixteen members—each brings a unique perspective from their own life's experiences and a passion and commitment for enhancing the lives of people with disabilities and their families. BBI looks to its distinguished Board members for ideas and strategic thinking on how the Board and BBI may create a stronger, more engaged presence as well as assist in identifying opportunities for other key stakeholders to become involved in BBI's impactful work.



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Syracuse, NY

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Director, Radiant Abilities, LLC
Syracuse, NY

HOWARD D. OLINSKY, ESQ. L'85
Partner, Olinsky Shurtliff Disability Law
Syracuse, NY

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Founder, OurAbility.com
Glenmont, NY

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Director, Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy and Ethics, University of Southern California
Los Angeles, CA

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Partner, Greene & Reid, PLLC
Syracuse, NY

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New York, NY

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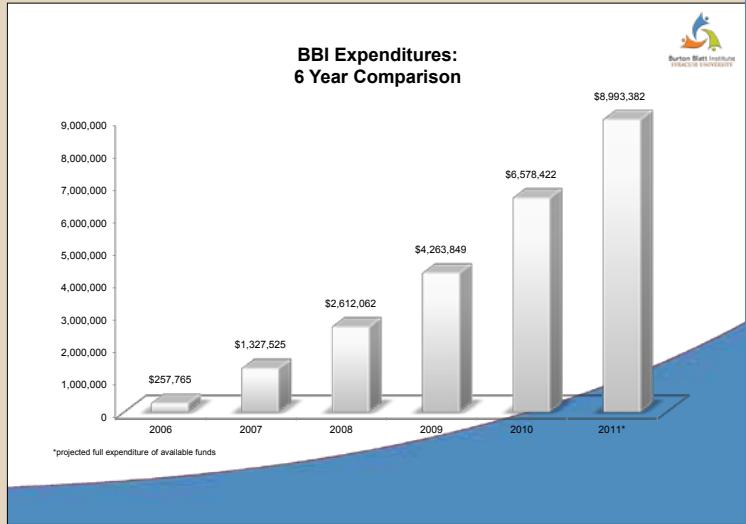
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 We extend our sincere apologies for omissions. Please forward any
 corrections to the attention of Janice Herzog, director of external relations,
 315-443-3898, jmherzog@syr.edu.



The chart represents the funding expended by the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) to accomplish the impacts reviewed in this publication. In BBI's first year it spent about \$257,000, increased five-fold in its second year, and doubled in the third year of operation. The funding further increased by more than 60 percent in BBI's fourth and fifth years, and finally increased more than 70 percent in the most recent year, to a projected total expenditure of \$8.9 million in fiscal year 2011.

This growth is primarily from government grants and contracts at a federal, state, and local level. It has allowed broad engagement by BBI staff, SU faculty, and other collaborators in areas of importance related to employment, entrepreneurship, economic empowerment, and community inclusion for people across the full spectrum of disability. BBI's focus for the coming years is diversification into private and philanthropic support to allow BBI to set the agenda for its work based on stakeholder needs in the home, workplace, and community.

Please contact Janice Herzog, Michael Morris, or Peter Blanck at 315-443-2863 to discuss your interests in supporting BBI.



Burton Blatt Institute
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

900 S. Crouse Avenue
Crouse-Hinds Hall, Suite 300
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