



The Frostig Center Focus

*Exceptional Children,
Exceptional Education*

Issue 6, January 2017

WHAT'S NEW

Speaker Series

Experts from Disability Rights California will advise families on how to access government resources for transition age youth. The event will be held Jan. 31 at 3:30 p.m.

National Audience

Frostig's Dr. Roberta Goldberg and Jennifer Quirina-White, LCSW, will travel to Baltimore in February to present the Success Attributes at the annual conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of America.

Lights, Camera

CBS News visited The Frostig Center to interview Dr. Chris Schnieders and former Frostig student Khemet Williams about ADHD in adults. The segment is scheduled to air in January.

STEPPING BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE From Executive Director Dean Conklin

The mother of a Frostig School student recently told me that Frostig was the answer to her family's prayers. Other parents have shared that their children are happy in school for the first time in their lives.

Their stories inspire The Frostig Center Board of Directors and our staff to help as many children and teens as possible. Since July 2013, school enrollment has grown 36% to 122 students.

The larger student body has energized Frostig, but also pushed us to the limits of our physical capacity. To serve the growing number of children and families who are turning to Frostig, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously in June to build a new Learning Center that will relieve crowding and make room for more than 40 additional students.



For the past 18 months, our board and management team have worked closely with staff, the City of Pasadena, and others to develop a plan that is innovative and compatible with Frostig's mission and culture.

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THE SPOTLIGHT It's a Family Affair for Frostig Alumnus



Two decades have passed since Brent Pepper attended Frostig as an elementary school student, and he's still grateful for the teachers who bent the rules so he could work in the student store.

Brent was an enterprising 3rd grader who was desperate to be part of the store, which was restricted to high school students. Much like today's student store, the business consisted of a cart stocked with snacks that students would roll through the hallways.

"I talked my way on to the student store," said Brent, who went on to major in business at Woodbury University. What impressed him then, and still today, was the willingness of Frostig teachers to listen to him and support his interests.

When Brent returned to Frostig last year as the parent of a first grader, he was happy to discover that the things he valued most about his Frostig education are alive and well today.

"The environment that I knew is still here. There is still innovation in the classroom," the father of two said. "At Frostig, just

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Study May Advance Understanding of LDs, Social Anxiety

By Elaine Schmidt, UCLA Newsroom

Picture a little boy imitating his father shaving in the mirror or a little girl wobbling proudly in her mother's high heels.

From infancy, we learn by watching other people, then use those memories to help us predict outcomes and make decisions in the future. Now a UCLA-Caltech study has pinpointed the individual neurons in the brain that support observational learning.

Published Sept. 6 in *Nature Communications*, the findings could provide scientists with a better understanding of how the brain goes awry in conditions like learning disorders and social anxiety disorder.

"Observational learning is the cornerstone for our ability to change behavior," said senior author Dr. Itzhak Fried, a professor of neurosurgery and psychiatry at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. "It's human nature to want to learn from other people's mistakes rather than commit your own."

The Frostig Focus will share articles on new research that contributes to better understanding of learning differences. We welcome your feedback.



Prior to the study, Fried implanted electrodes deep inside the brains of people with epilepsy being treated at UCLA — a standard medical procedure used to identify the origins of epileptic seizures prior to surgery. The researchers used the electrodes to record the activity of individual neurons in the brains of 10 people playing a card game.

Players were instructed to draw a card from one of two decks. One deck included 70 percent of the winning cards, while the other deck contained only 30 percent of the winning cards. Each person took turns choosing cards on his or her own and then watched two other players draw cards from the same decks. By learning from the results of their own and the other players' choices, the participants quickly zeroed in on the deck containing better cards.

The research team was surprised to discover that individual neurons

deep in the frontal lobe reacted as the patient considered whether they or their opponents would pick a winning card. Called the anterior cingulate cortex, the region plays an important role in high-level functions like decision making, reward anticipation, social interaction and emotion.

The findings suggest that individual nerve cells in the person's brain used the details gleaned by observing the other players to calculate which deck to choose a card from next.

"The anterior cingulate cortex acts as the central executive of human decision-making, yet we know little about the neuronal machinery at this level," said Fried.

According to the authors, the findings will help scientists better understand the organization of neurons in the anterior cingulate cortex and exactly what they do.

The researchers propose that active stimulation of the neurons in the anterior cingulate cortex could influence human behavior and have possible benefits for people struggling with learning disabilities or difficulty reading social cues.

For the full story, visit <http://bit.ly/2e2sAAP>

The Frostig Collection

Artist **Mike Stilkey** uses the covers of discarded books as canvases for his whimsical paintings. He created a series of unique book sculptures for The Frostig Collection.

The sale of his and all other pieces in the collection support Frostig School's social skills program. View the artwork at www.thefrostigcollection.org.



20 1/2 x 11 1/2 x 8 inches

SUPPORT THE ANNUAL FUND

DONATE ONLINE

www.frostig.org

FROSTIG ACCEPTS ALL CREDIT CARDS, CASH, AND CHECKS, AS WELL AS GIFTS OF STOCK

Envisioning the Future

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We are excited to share the highlights:

- The Learning Center will be approximately 6,500 square feet. It will be located on property that is adjacent to our current play yard.
- Four new classrooms will accommodate up to 12 students each. The rooms are designed to meet the unique needs of students with learning differences.
- A large meeting room will provide space for our Consultation and Education Department to present workshops for visiting teachers. It will also relieve pressure on Gates Hall, which is in near constant use.
- A student-run café will anchor the first floor.
- A new parking lot will be added behind the Learning Center.

The Frostig Center is grateful to The Sharon D. Lund Foundation for providing a lead gift of \$1.5 million. The Lund foundation's generosity and wise counsel throughout the planning process have made this project possible.



We are now embarking on a three-year campaign to raise another \$3 million for the Learning Center.

We still have much work to do to bring our plans to life. We welcome your thoughts and hope we can count on your support as we move forward.

Everything we have today at The Frostig Center is the result of visionary friends and leaders who built with future generations in mind. The new Learning Center is our chance to pay it forward and step boldly into the future.



IRA Charitable Rollover



If you are 70½ or older, consider making a tax-free gift to The Frostig Center from your IRA.

The IRA Charitable Rollover is a great option if you are required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA and you don't need the income.

Amounts transferred to Frostig will not be included in your taxable income and will count toward your required minimum distribution for the year.

For the greatest tax benefit, consider this possibility before taking your required minimum distribution. To learn more, contact Development Director Yuki Jimbo at yuki@frostig.org.

YOU ARE INVITED TO
Frostig School: We Build Hope
A BENEFIT DINNER & AUCTION

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2017
Altadena Country Club
6:00PM-10:00PM

TO PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS
CONTACT JASMINE BERGANZA
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Frostig Center is dedicated to helping children with learning disabilities reach their full potential through an integrated approach of research, professional development and consultation, and the Frostig School.



Follow our Facebook page to keep up with the latest news at Frostig. See what our students and faculty are doing and learn about the latest developments in the field of learning differences.

Alumni Corner

Win a \$25 gift card!



We want to connect with everyone who attended Frostig School so we can share the latest news and invite you to alumni events.

Share your contact information with Jasmine Berganza at jasmine@frostig.org and you will be entered in a June drawing for the gift card.

Frostig Beyond Transition Services

Do you need help adjusting to life after high school?

Frostig Beyond may be the answer. The program offers tutoring, job shadowing, help navigating college campuses and many more services.

To learn more, visit our website or contact Transitions Director Jennifer Quirina-White at Jennifer@frostig.org.

The Spotlight

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because something hasn't been done doesn't mean it can't be done."

Because of his own experience with a learning disability, Brent was quick to see that his son was struggling with similar challenges. When Aaden fell behind in kindergarten, teachers at his school suggested he repeat the grade. For Brent and his wife, Cassandra, that wasn't good enough.

"I grew up with learning differences," Brent said. "If you've gone down this road, you know there's a better way."

For the Peppers, Frostig was the better way. They love the small class size and the close attention Aaden receives from his teacher. They are pleased with his

academic progress and delighted to see him having fun in school. Every morning Aaden proudly helps his teacher raise the flag in front of the school.

Brent is confident his son will learn strategies to overcome his learning challenges, just as he learned to manage his dyscalculia. Brent arrived at Frostig in 1992 as a third grader, and began transitioning to Walden School in 5th grade, then to Southwestern Academy in San Marino for middle and high school.

After graduating from Woodbury, Brent joined the family business, Peter Pepper Products, which designs and manufactures contemporary office accessories. As head of Internet development, Brent oversees the company website and manages relationships with online retailers like Amazon and Wayfair.