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UNH Names Moran Director of Child Study and Development Center

By Sharon Keeler
UNH News Bureau

March 1, 2001

DURHAM, N.H. -- Mary Jane Moran, assistant professor of family studies, has been named director of the University of New Hampshire's Child Study and Development Center (CSDC).

Moran, of Dover, who was interim director of the center since last June, has a long history with the university and the CSDC. She began her tenure as an instructor at the center in 1982, and from 1988 to 1996 served as the assistant director of the center.

In 1996, Moran became associate director of the CSDC, a position she held until 2000. During that time, she also earned a Ph.D. in education from UNH, and was awarded the American Education Research Association Early Education and Child Development Outstanding Dissertation Award in 2000.

"We are extremely pleased to have Mary Jane as director of the Child Study and Development Center," says Kristine Baber, chairperson of the Department of Family Studies. "Mary Jane is an exceptional educator and an outstanding researcher. Her extensive knowledge, experience and skills will keep the center at the forefront in providing quality care and education for children, and excellence in teacher training."

Moran's work over this time has been recognized several times by the university community. In 1998, she was awarded the Rand-Stearns Professorship from the UNH Department of Family Studies and the T.O. Marshal Scholar Award from the UNH Department of Education. In 1999, she was honored with the UNH School of Health and Human Services Teaching Excellence Award.
Moran says her goal as director of the CSDC is to further promote and develop the research mission initiated by her and the former director, Kathleen McCartney.

"We already have an excellent program for young children, and an established, strong teacher development program," says Moran. "We are now moving into a new phase of emphasis that will link our programs and teachers with research initiatives."

Moran is working to implement a summer institute in partnership with Tufts University to help educate teachers as classroom researchers. The goal is to have an annual institute that will rotate between the two universities and focus on issues at the forefront of early childhood education.

Literacy and science education are also the focus of several research projects at the CSDC. Moran is working with the Boston Educational Development Center on developing an early childhood science curriculum. Partnerships have been formed with the UNH Department of Plant Biology and Professor Paul Fisher and his students, who are working with early childhood education teachers to "grow a greener generation."

"Developing partnerships with faculty in other departments is one of my goals," says Moran. "The others include developing partnerships for promoting best practices with public schools and communities outside of the seacoast area. A new initiative with the Claremont public schools to improve kindergarten teacher based on state standards is an example."

Moran also envisions developing an international exchange program for early childhood teachers over the next three to five years.

[Back to UNH News Bureau]