Dear Baylor CARE Friends and Families,

We are so happy to share with you the January newsletter. We hope you all had a wonderful winter break and are as excited as we are to start the spring semester therapy and programs.

In this newsletter, we share with you about our amazing partnership with Heart of Texas MHMR. We have had the privilege of working with this amazing organization and their talented staff for many years. We are so grateful for the opportunities they have provided our graduate student therapists and for the positive impact they have on the community.

As usual, it is an honor and pleasure to celebrate the accomplishments of our clients and therapists! Thank you all for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,
Tonya Davis
An ongoing and unique collaboration between Baylor University’s Applied Behavior Analysis graduate program, and the Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center, began to provide Behavior Support Services to children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities on September 1, 2010. At the time, there were limited resources in the Waco area for families with children with challenging behaviors. The collaboration originated as a way to provide quality Behavior Support services to these families and children, in a cost effective way. Additionally, Baylor students had the opportunity to receive hands-on training.

The program began with the goal of serving 10 children with two graduate students from the Applied Behavior Analysis program. There were bumps, as is expected in any new venture, but good communication between agencies served to smooth out those bumps. At the end of the first year, 20 children were served, twice the stated goal!

In September 2013, with the Behavior Support Program growing, the Heart of Texas MHMR was awarded funding to begin a Challenging Behaviors Program unit. Development of this program included the ability to serve younger children, a critical factor because this early intervention often makes the different when it comes to future success.

The Challenging Behaviors program continues to receive a steady stream of referrals, and as a result, a third graduate student was added in 2015. The current goal under the Challenging Behaviors Program is to provide assessments and Behavior Support to one hundred and eleven individuals with IDD and/or Autism in 2015 - 2016. We are more than halfway to that goal. We also anticipate qualifying for a grant to provide Focused Autism Training, which should increase the number of clinical hours the Baylor graduate students will provide.

The outcome of this 6-year collaboration is two-fold. First is the development of a small and growing network of low-cost behavior support services for families who struggle with the challenging behaviors of their family members with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is especially helpful for those families who have little income and lack insurance that might cover these services when provided by a clinician in a private practice. Second is the development of future behavior analysts who are highly motivated to provide the best services possible while they learn their craft.
Hi, my name is Desmond and I am in kindergarten at Parkdale Elementary. I have been coming to CARE for 2 years now. I love apples, my tablet, jumping on my trampoline, and watching my favorite show, Bubble Guppies!

Meet CARE Therapist, Kayla Ziolko! She is joining us from Arizona. Kayla received her B.A. in Psychology and B.S. in Criminal Justice from Northern Arizona University.

When looking at Baylor, she mentioned she loved the fact that they offered a program, such as CARE, so students would be able to gain experience working with children with developmental disabilities. “I have always believed that every child should have the same opportunity to live a fulfilling life regardless of any challenges they may encounter.”

Kayla mentions how her experience thus far at CARE has taught her so much and how exciting it is to see her client progress week to week. “There really is no better feeling than teaching a child how to communicate.”

Upon graduation, she hopes to become a BCBA and provide children with in-home or clinic setting therapy. “With my husband being in the military and having an understanding of the lifestyle the military comes with, I hope to provide therapy primarily to military families.”