

# The Kennedy Willis Center News & Updates



Autumn 2019

## Brittany Goodrich appointed Kennedy Willis Center Director

The Kennedy Willis Center at Pathfinder Village has a rich history of supporting men and women with Down syndrome by promoting research, informing best practices of the disabilities field, providing educational opportunities, and supporting outreach and advocacy among families, care providers, educators, and others.

We are pleased to announce Brittany Goodrich of Sherburne is the newest Director of the Center. She first joined the Pathfinder Village community as a Medicaid Service Coordinator in 2014. In that role, she discovered her passion for supporting individuals with Down syndrome in leading richer lives. She became a strong advocate by assisting many individuals as they navigated the support and service options available through the state's Office for People with Developmental Disabilities programs.



Goodrich was promoted as the program manager for the Village's growing Adult Day Services in 2018. There, she contributed to the growth of the weekly Pathfinder Produce Market; she most recently helped launch the Mobile Market delivery service, which has created pre-vocational and paid employment opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities.

"I'm honored and grateful for this opportunity," said Goodrich. "The Kennedy Willis Center continues to be a leader in the field and serves as an important resource for many individuals and families, especially on the topics of aging and dementia. We have many activities planned for the upcoming year that I can't wait to share with our stakeholders."

Goodrich earned her degree from Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland. She resides with her husband, Jamie, and young son, Parker, and enjoys reading, crafting, and antiques.

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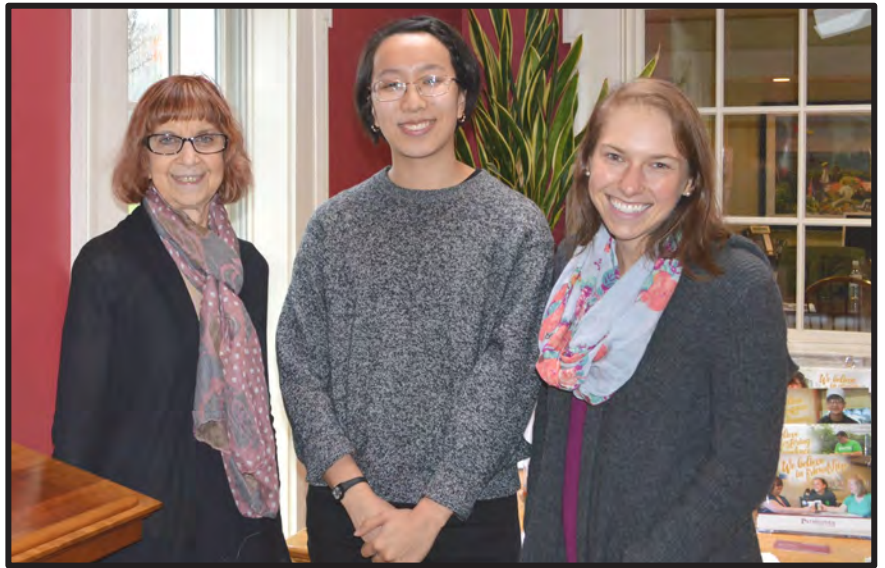
## Jefferson Doctoral Candidates to complete Capstone Projects through Center

The Kennedy Willis Center at Pathfinder Village is partnering with Jefferson University of Philadelphia to provide two therapy students with hands-on experiences to complete their capstone projects.

Occupational therapy doctoral candidates Jennifer Hsu of Philadelphia and Rebecca Langbein of Richboro, Penn., will work among Pathfinder students and residents in the fall and spring semesters to gain clinical practice and enhance their research skills as they promote individuals' health.

The students are supervised by Jefferson's Adel Herge, OT, OTR/L, FAOTA, an associate professor and the director of the university's Rehabilitation Sciences' OT program. Center Director Brittany Goodrich is the students' onsite mentor and liaison with direct care staff; she and other managers will promote opportunities for the students to observe, learn and collaborate in all Village settings.

To prepare for their internships, each candidate identified project objectives: Hsu, a third-year doctoral student, wants to gain a better understanding of occupational therapy's role in the care of aging intellectually disabled (I/DD) populations; to develop skills to be used in community-based programs; and to develop assessment criteria on communications, data collection and analysis. Langbein, also a third-year OTD student, plans to develop effective physical and social adaptations in care environments; to im-



### **Herge, Hsu and Langbein at the Center**

plement therapy skill sets in care settings as needed; and will test recent findings in the OT field, which then may be reviewed and contributed to academic literature.

A total of 560 hours of onsite and remote work for capstone projects is required to complete Jefferson's credential.

Founded in the 19th century, Jefferson Medical College and the Philadelphia Textile School were founded to promote experiential learning. In 2017, the two schools merged as Jefferson University, which has developed into one of the nation's fastest growing academic institutions centered in the principles of reimaged higher education, innovation, healthcare and global initiatives.

In addition to the benefits realized through the students' capstone projects, Pathfinder Village will also gain access to individualized services through **Jefferson Elder Care**, a training program and consultation service through the university. These assessments on the impacts of dementia for individuals with intellectual disabilities will enhance aging care practices at Pathfinder, will improve direct support relationships of older adults and their caregivers, and will ensure that care outcomes remain aligned with individuals' changing abilities and interests.

Further collaborations with Jefferson will support convening an Aging Committee at the Village, expanding aging-specific training for all new Village staff, and guide the roll-out of a new specialized Direct Support Professional workforce track, the DSP 3.0. Support for each project will be completed through in-person observation, teleconference strategic planning and professional skills training in Jefferson's **Skills<sub>2</sub>Care**<sup>®</sup> curriculum to offer individualized solutions and person-centered care approaches for those we support at Pathfinder Village.



# VDT® Technology enhances Aging Training at Pathfinder Village

## *Pathfinder takes lead in dementia care training in New York State*

The Kennedy Willis Center is pleased to bring the **Second Wind Dream's Virtual Dementia Tour®** to Pathfinder Village. This powerful experience promotes a greater understanding of dementia among caregivers and family members of those with the disease. Pathfinder Village is one of the few agencies in New York State to offer this training.

Since the mid-1990s, Pathfinder Village has worked with professional researchers to study the risks and causes of Alzheimer's dementia, especially as it impacts individuals with Down syndrome. Early assessment studies conducted through the Center by the late Arthur J. Dalton, PhD, and other researchers from the Institute for Basic Research have guided our current knowledge. More recently, Pathfinder and the Center have partnered with the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities & Dementia Practices, a study group of the American Association of Developmental Medicine & Dentistry, to refine training programs offering compassionate, appropriate supports through individuals' aging processes.

"All of our past aging trainings here have been informative and influenced our direct care practices, but the **Virtual Dementia Tour® (VDT®)** has allowed our staff to experience the difficulties someone with dementia faces each day," said Michelle Banks, a recently trained facilitator for the VDT® program.

The evidence-based VDT® training uses patented sensory-altering tools and instructions rooted in research conducted by founder P.K. Beville, MS, who has worked in geriatrics since 1983. Participants complete basic tasks in a special setting wearing the sensory equipment; they are debriefed after the tour to understand the insights they gained. The goal of the experience is to encourage empathy and accommodation toward those with dementia.

"I have a new perspective on what people with de-

mentia experience constantly, from feeling lost and confused, to an inability to filter out noises and distractions," said Pathfinder's Program Office Manager Monica Clark. "And knowing more about Alzheimer's memory loss—it is understandable when a person you know may not recognize you, as their memories are now from earlier times."

Alzheimer's disease is a neurodegenerative disease that affects over 5.7 million Americans, and is marked by short- and long-term memory loss, confusion, behavioral changes, diminished social and self-care skills, and other symptoms. According to the National Institute on Aging, about half of those with Down syndrome will develop dementia as they age: "People with Down syndrome are born with an extra copy of chromosome 21, which carries the APP gene... Too much APP protein leads to a buildup of protein clumps called beta-amyloid plaques in the brain. By age 40, almost all people with Down syndrome have these plaques, along with other protein deposits (tau tangles), which cause problems with how brain cells function and increase the risk of de-



***Aging in style at Pathfinder Village***

## In the Next Issue:

Meet our Board Members  
Healthcare Initiatives at Pathfinder Village

~ *Save The Date* ~

**40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
AT PATHFINDER VILLAGE  
OCTOBER 9 & 10, 2020**

## Pathfinder Village Events Calendar

**Call 607-965-8377  
for information**

**Feb. 5, 2020:** Pathfinder Village  
Board of Directors Meeting.

**March 16:** Otsego Academy-Colgate  
University Leadership Week

**March 21:** World Down Syndrome Day

**April 1:** KWC Board Meeting.

**April 2:** World Autism Awareness Day

**May 30:** Splash Path 5K & Fun Walk  
at Pathfinder Village. *Register online!*

**June 5:** Otsego Academy Graduation

**June 6:** Residents' Formal at PV

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