

# Devereux

CENTER FOR RESILIENT CHILDREN

## A Celebration of Resilience

*Villanova, PA*

*May 31, 2013*



[www.CenterForResilientChildren.org](http://www.CenterForResilientChildren.org)



## Agenda

- 9:30am-10:00am: Welcome to the Celebration of Resilience**  
Dr. Marilyn Benoit, Devereux's Chief Clinical Officer
- 10:00am-10:30am: The Faces of Resilience**  
Cleo Rodriguez, Jr. Executive Director, National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association
- 10:30am-11:00am: Resilience as a Key to Effective Service Delivery**  
George Sheldon, Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
- 11:00am-11:15am: Break**
- 11:15am-11:45am: Promoting Resilience in Preschoolers: The Devereux Approach**  
Paul LeBuffe, Director, Devereux Center for Resilient Children
- 11:45am-12:30pm: Networking & Recognition Luncheon**
- 12:30pm-2:45pm: Resilience Dialog Panel and Call to Action**

### Panel Participants

- George Sheldon, Acting Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Cleo Rodriguez, Jr., Executive Director, National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association
- Grace Whitney, Ph.D., MPA, IMH-E (IV), Director, Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office
- Thomas J. Lottman, Deputy Executive Director, Children, Inc.
- Mary Mackrain, M.Ed., IMH-E®(IV) Early Childhood Consultant, Michigan Department of Community Health

**Moderator:** Linda K. Likins, National Director, Devereux Early Childhood Initiative

- 2:45pm-3:00pm: Closing Remarks**

*A special Thank You to David Kisor and Growing Sound for bringing the gift of music to the celebration!*

## Featured Speakers



### **George Sheldon, Acting Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services**

George Sheldon is the Acting Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to joining ACF, George Sheldon served as the Secretary of the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

At the Administration for Children and Families, George has championed the cause of early childhood development among low-income families, worked to expand the use of trauma informed care and practices in the foster care system, pushed for better prescribing and monitoring practices within the foster care system for the use of psychotropic medications, and led HHS's efforts in the fight against human trafficking, focusing on the enhancement of survivor services.

As Secretary of the Florida Department of Children and Families, George co-chaired the state's Task Force on Human Trafficking along with the head of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. George currently co-chairs the Federal Victim Services Strategic Planning Committee. During his time in Florida, George oversaw the state's child welfare programs, fostering a 36 percent reduction in children in out-of-home care, and integrating mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services throughout the Department. While at DCF, the agency achieved the highest rate of adoptions among foster children each of the three years of his tenure. Moreover, as DCF Secretary he led the effort reduce that state's food stamp error rate from among the highest in the nation to the lowest for three consecutive years.

In early 2010, George worked closely with federal partners at HHS and ACF in the aftermath of Haiti's catastrophic earthquake. Together, Florida and ACF met the needs of more than 27,000 American citizens, 700 medical evacuees, and 600 Haitian children moving through the adoption process with American families.



### **Dr. Marilyn Benoit, Chief Clinical Officer and Senior Vice President of Clinical & Professionals Affairs, Devereux**

Dr. Marilyn Benoit is a child & adolescent psychiatrist who is the Chief Clinical Officer and Senior Vice President of Clinical & Professional Affairs of Devereux, the largest not-for-profit behavioral healthcare organization in the country. Devereux serves individuals with behavioral/mental health challenges, and with intellectual disabilities. Devereux has specialized programs to meet the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders, substance use disorders, and co-morbid conditions. Devereux serves the foster care population across a continuum of care, including therapeutic foster care, outpatient services, and residential care.

Dr. Benoit is a Past President of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (2001-2003). She has been on the faculties of the medical schools of Howard University and George Washington University, and is a Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Georgetown University Medical Center. She was Director of Outpatient Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where she also served as Vice Chairman and Interim Chairman. She served as the Medical & Executive Director of the Hurt Home Devereux Children's Center in Washington, DC from its start-up in 1993 to 1998. Dr. Benoit has treated individuals across the range of Autism Spectrum Disorders and coordinated parent groups during her career of more than thirty years. She is a past member of the Board of Trustees of the Child Welfare League of America, President & Chair of the Alliance for Childhood (1998-2011), and a past member of the Board of Trustees of Devereux (2004-2011). She serves on the Advisory Board of the University of Pennsylvania's Field Center for Children's Social Policy, Columbia University's TeenScreen program, and other non-profit organizations concerned with children's issues. She is a nationally known advocate for children, and as her presidential initiative for the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) she founded, in collaboration with the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), a national coalition of stakeholders involved with children in out-of-home placement. In her current role at Devereux, Dr. Benoit provides oversight, and drives quality initiatives in clinical and programmatic interventions. Dr. Benoit has lectured internationally, and has published widely on several issues pertinent to children's behavioral health. Dr. Benoit holds a graduate degree in Health Services, Management & Policy from The George Washington University school of Public Health.



**Cleo Rodriguez, Jr., Executive Director, National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association**

Cleo Rodriguez, Jr. is currently the Executive Director of the National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association in Washington, DC. In his role, he serves as the voice for 36,000 of Head Start's most vulnerable children and their families. Prior to his move to DC, Cleo served Executive Director Raising Austin, a non-profit organization dedicated to the serving the neediest infants and toddlers in the Austin, Texas area.

Cleo is sought throughout the country to speak on the social development of children, caring of the caregiver, impact of immigration on families and children and migrant/seasonal farm worker children. Cleo has also worked closely with the Devereux Early Childhood Initiative, providing training on topics such as the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment, Challenging

Behaviors, Children's Social Emotional Health and FLIP IT.

Additionally Cleo has served as a national consultant for SpecialQuest Birth-Five which provides cross-systems training on best practices for including children with disabilities and their families into Early Childhood Programs.

Cleo is proud to work on behalf of migrant and seasonal farm worker families. Cleo's parents were both migrant farmers who worked tirelessly in the cotton fields across the state of Texas and other Southern states.

Cleo earned a BS in Family and Child Studies from Texas State University, where he was recently nominated as a Distinguished Alumni. Cleo is a single father of a daughter who is a sophomore in college and a son who is junior in high school.



**Paul LeBuffe, Director, Devereux Center for Resilient Children**

Paul LeBuffe, M.A., is the Director of the Devereux Center for Resilient Children in Villanova, PA. He is a graduate of St. Mary's College of Maryland and received his Master's degree in experimental psychology from Bryn Mawr College. Paul is an author of many widely-used assessments of behaviors related to children's social and emotional strengths and needs including the *Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants (DECA-I)*, *Toddlers (DECA-T) Preschoolers (DECA-P2)*, and most recently, *the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)*. These assessments have been adopted by more than 5,000 school districts, Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, early care and education centers and early childhood mental health consultation programs. More than 3 million children have been assessed with these tools and the results used by professional and parents to promote their social and emotional competence, foster their resilience and build the skills these children will need for school and life success.

Since the mid 1990s, Paul's career has focused on the measurement and promotion of resilience in children and the adults who care for them. In addition to the assessments mentioned above, he has authored numerous research articles and chapters on resilience and related topics. Paul has presented to varied audiences including psychologists, teachers, administrators and parents throughout the United States and Canada on promoting resilience in children, youth and adults. Paul is also very active in the suicide prevention field. He lives in Downingtown, PA with his wife, Penny, a special education teacher.



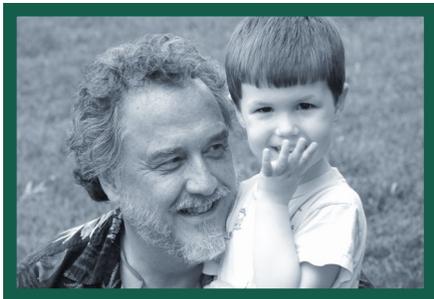
**Linda Likins, National Director, Devereux Early Childhood Initiative**

Linda Likins has been a zealot regarding the need for high quality services for children and families throughout her entire career. Following her undergraduate and graduate studies at Western Kentucky University, Linda began her career as a teacher. After teaching in the classroom, Linda moved on to direct a large multi-county Head Start Program in Western Kentucky and later built on her grassroots experience to become the Director of Governmental Affairs for the National Head Start Association. In this position, and later as Director of Policy for the National Center for Family Literacy, Linda focused on raising awareness and promoting collaboration for high quality programs serving young children and their families. She has provided consultation services for the Office of Head Start, the U.S. Department of Education, Proliteracy Worldwide as well as being active on many state and national boards including PBS Ready to Learn, National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and Region IV Head Start. She has provided keynote addresses and presentations across the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico on a variety of children's issues. Linda joined Devereux in 1997 as the Founding Director of the Devereux Early Childhood Initiative. Under Linda's leadership, DECI developed nationally known assessment and planning programs that are widely used across the country to promote young children's healthy social and emotional development.



**Grace Whitney, Ph.D., MPA, IMH-E (IV), Director, Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office**

Grace Whitney has served as director of Connecticut's Head Start State Collaboration Office since it was established in 1996, connecting the federal-to-locally funded Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Connecticut with state systems that support young children and their families and sharing the lessons learned from Head Start, our nation's 45-year-old child development laboratory, with state and community leaders. Last year in Connecticut, Head Start served over 8,000 children ages birth to five and pregnant women. She's held several faculty appointments and still occasionally teaches courses in developmental psychology, statistics, and public policy. She's worked in administrative and clinical positions in early childhood, community mental health and human services and for several summers served on aide teams in Romanian orphanages. Dr. Whitney's degrees are in child and human development, family studies, and public administration. She's published on varied topics related to her work.



**Tom Lottman, Deputy Executive Director, Children, Inc.**

Thomas J. Lottman is the Deputy Executive Director of Children, Inc. overseeing the Research to Practice initiative. Tom is also the Director of the Devereux Regional Center and Research Director for Growing Sound, a subsidiary which develops research-based children's music to promote social and emotional well-being. Children, Inc. is the largest non-profit provider of early education programs and after-school programs in the State of Kentucky with over 3,000 children enrolled daily. Children, Inc. has a history of innovation and advocacy at local state and national levels.

Tom has been the Deputy Executive Director of CI for the past seventeen years. Prior to that, he was with the University Affiliated Cincinnati Center for Developmental Disorders at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and he has been a full-time faculty member at Loyola University in Chicago and at the University of Waterloo in Canada. He also directed a Children's Mental Health Center in Canada.

His special interests include emotional development in young children and training in the implications of the developmental brain research. For the past six years he has chaired an annual conference on early brain development that brings in the leading practitioners and researchers from across the nation.

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**Mary Mackrain, M.Ed., IMH-E® (IV), State Consultant, Michigan Department of Community Health**

Mary Mackrain is a state consultant for the Michigan Department of Community Health and a national infant and early childhood mental health consultant for the Devereux Center for Resilient Children. Mary engages in the development of research informed, promising practice resources and develops approaches and policies that foster positive early childhood mental health outcomes for young children and families. Additionally, Mary has extensive experience with early childhood mental health consultation across diverse settings. Mary currently serves as a Technical Assistant Specialist with Education Development Center (EDC), where she supports grantee related cross-agency and systems work to meet the unmet mental health needs of children and families, birth to age eight. Mary is the co-author of the DECA for Infants and Toddlers, *Building Your Bounce: Simple Strategies for a Resilient*

*You, Promoting Resilience in Preschoolers: A Strategy Guide for Early Childhood Professionals, and Promoting Resilience For Now and Forever: A Family Guide for Promoting the Social and Emotional Health of Preschool Children.*

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The Devereux Center for Resilient Children's mission is to promote social and emotional development, foster resilience and build skills for school and life success in children birth through school-age, as well as to promote the resilience of the adults who care for them.