



# Massachusetts Coalition Newsletter

Reach Out and Read Massachusetts Coalition ■ 29 Mystic Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02145 ■ TEL: 617.629.8042 x234

Fall 2006

A Coalition of 151 ROR Sites and Satellites

## Reflections from the Road

From the mystic to the dress designer, we all really do know nothing's ever, truly new. We recycle, retool, and recombine both new and old ideas, and they do take on new shape and form, but today's "news" is often fleeting and usually soon forgotten, being more now than new. Perhaps this is why there's such wisdom in paying better attention to the now moment. So, if the Tao of news is to get to know it for what it is, maybe the Tao of good news is that if we focus on it, we can better appreciate it, maybe even extend its life a little.

So, let's do that. Let's take a collective breath in, linger over what's newsworthy at ROR-MA, and pause to appreciate the people and things, the processes and efforts that are showing up this moment for ROR programs across the Commonwealth. And while yes, "all is good", I hope you'll particularly savor what it means that our State Legislature, in an enormous show of support for what you all do in furtherance of emergent literacy development, doubled appropriations to ROR-MA this year. This means future

## NEW ROR SITES: Welcome!

We are pleased to note the addition of the following practices to the Massachusetts coalition of ROR programs. This represents approximately 4,700 additional children receiving books and more parents hearing advice about the impact reading aloud has on their child's language development.

**Merrimack Valley Child and Adolescent Health, Haverhill**  
**Bass River Pediatric Associates, S. Yarmouth**  
**Cape Ann Pediatrics, Gloucester**

"now" moments will be used for expansion into cities and towns – urban, rural, and those in under and low performing school districts – where ROR programs don't currently exist, but should and could. And then our mantra can become: "thank you, thank you, thank you".

– Gretchen Hunsberger  
ROR-MA Programs Administrator

## New Faces at ROR-MA

Welcome to Ellen Rice as Mass. Programs Assistant. Ellen, who joined ROR-MA this fall, works full time in the Somerville office assisting the Mass. Programs Director. Ellen's already diving into the myriad tasks and projects inherent in office support while simultaneously making herself available to ROR program coordinators. Eventually, Ellen hopes to create state-wide interest in donating used children's books to ROR programs across the Commonwealth. Ellen is a 2005 graduate of Denison University in Ohio and comes to us after participation in the



L: Ellen Rice, MA Programs Assistant; R: Lee MacKinnon, Western MA Regional Coordinator.

Claretian Volunteer Program in Chicago where she developed a grant funded school library for inner city children. You can reach Ellen at 617-629-8042 x255.

Welcome, also, to Lee MacKinnon, Ed. M. Lee joined ROR-MA on November 1 as its first Western Mass. Regional Coordinator.

This part time position was specifically created to respond to the need for more support for existing ROR programs in the western hemisphere of the state and to introduce ROR to pediatricians and family physicians in Franklin, Hampden, Berkshire, and Hampshire counties. Lee's a family support specialist who brought ROR to the Hilltown Community Health Centers (HCHC) in Worthington and Huntington many years ago. She remains on as HCHC's ROR Coordinator and Director of Family Education and Support. Lee is married with two children and lives in Northampton.

Lee can be reached at 413-244-2713 or via email at [lee.mackinnon@reachoutandread.org](mailto:lee.mackinnon@reachoutandread.org). Expect to hear from her soon!

## Congratulations ...

to Brockton Neighborhood Community Health Center and Boston Children's Hospital on their recent Target Grant awards!! Each program received \$2,000! (For programs interested in pursuing similar opportunities, check out our proposal template at [MyROR.org](http://MyROR.org) under **Fundraising Resources**.)

## ROR PHYSICIAN PROFILE:

### A new private practice

Situated in the nexus between Chinatown and the South End, just where Tremont St. takes an errant and confusing turn, are the new offices of Porter Pediatrics. No other private pediatric offices exist in this neck of the urban woods; most at-risk inner city children receive their health care at an array of nearby community health centers and clinics. Yet, Lynn Porter, MD, a dynamic pediatrician oozing with commitment and positive energy, long wanted to serve this community of families; so, she set out to find space within the community to do so. This past February, Porter Pediatrics opened its doors.

Along with two RNs and a receptionist who speaks Mandarin and Cantonese (and assists with translation), Dr. Porter provides routine pediatric care to patients ranging the economic spectrum, but most are low income families. Open six days a week, Porter Pediatrics serves a patient population that's approximately 30% African American, 30% Caucasian, 25% Chinese, and 5% Hispanic. And the patients keep coming.



Dr. Porter in her new Boston practice.

And as they do, they leave with a book. Having previously practiced ROR for seven years at New England Medical Center as associate chief of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Dr. Porter didn't dream of opening her practice without using Reach Out and Read. "Literally, for some of my patients, the only book they're going to ever own, is the one I give them. They are so grateful."

Finishing touches are yet to come. There's still no used book rack in the waiting room, yet Dr. Porter's little patients sometimes listen to stories as they wait. Jenny Huang,



Jenny Huang, a volunteer at Porter Pediatrics, reads aloud to the patients, and also teaches them origami

a teen volunteer who began this summer, not only reads aloud to them, she also teaches them origami! Brightly folded frogs and square chains are her specialty. A junior in high school, Jenny's favorite subjects are Mandarin, History, and Science.

If ROR sustainability funds and the ten free books from Scholastic don't fully cover the costs of her ROR books, and should she be unable to find community donors to ROR at Porter Pediatrics, Dr.

### Attention ROR Medical Providers!

Do you know families who love ROR or who've especially benefitted from ROR? If so, please email ROR Director of Communications: [nancy.berman@reachoutandread.org](mailto:nancy.berman@reachoutandread.org). She would like to present some faces of ROR and highlight their individual stories. In this way, grantors and legislators better understand the impact of putting books into the hands of those who need them. Please contact Nancy!

Porter will cover the costs herself. "It's totally worth it. ROR saves time in the exam room," she says. "Even though this is a new practice, I'm extraordinarily busy, as the practice is growing. Thus, I can get three developmental milestones just by looking at the kid interacting with the book. You can

get the fine motor...gosh, you can get everything!" she exclaims with a broad smile. "And, if the child is engaged with the book, it means I can talk with the mother without distraction."

Although ROR makes practicing easier, Dr. Porter's commitment to ROR is generated by a deeper awareness. "I want to promote literacy development in these kids. On the whole, people aren't doing enough to get them into college. I'll work with the families as best I can to make that happen. If they go to college, I've done my job."

Dr. Porter lives in Natick with her husband and three daughters.

*If you know a private practice pediatrician or family practice physician who might like to bring ROR to his/her patients, please send an email to [gretchen.hunsberger@reachoutandread.org](mailto:gretchen.hunsberger@reachoutandread.org)*

### Newsflash!

Reach Out and Read-Massachusetts is thrilled to announce that our funding through the Department of Early Education and Care has increased to \$1M this year. The legislature worked hard to help us ensure that we would be able to expand the program to an additional 50,000 children during the next two years. We have targeted those children living in under and low performing school districts. We also look forward to piloting ROR's Spanish Speaking Families Initiative in the coming months as well as implementing an improved infrastructure to increase support of existing and new programs.

## What Else is New? ... MyROR!

Simply put, **myror.org** is your personal portal to all things ROR. Looking for great deals on books? Want to view past progress reports (or submit one)? Need to update ROR National on doctors and nurses who've recently been trained? Have a new ROR Coordinator or Medical Consultant? What are legislative site visits? To familiarize yourself with myROR and to gain access: type in your ROR site ID# and (case sensitive) password. For assistance, call Ellen Rice at 617-629-8042x255 or email her at [ellen.rice@reachoutandread.org](mailto:ellen.rice@reachoutandread.org).

**THE "BOOKS" TAB:** There you'll find engaging, age appropriate books for your ROR program at generously reduced prices. Here's a small sampling\*:

- Classic titles such as Harry the Dirty Dog and Harold and the Purple Crayon at the Harper Collins special offer
- Byeway Books offering a favorite bilingual (Spanish) board book, I Love My Family, priced at under a dollar
- Until 1/31/07, bi-lingual Scholastic offerings (Spanish/English) include favorites such as Smile! (\$1.49) and Fiesta! (\$1.19) ... and others ... at terrific prices, if ordered by the carton. (Scholastic plans to continue such Bulk Book Offers to ROR Programs, which can be purchased with prepaid Scholastic account funds; so, be sure to regularly visit [myROR.org](http://myROR.org)!)

\* **Don't forget to note whether an offer allows use of pre-paid Scholastic account funds or must be purchased with other funds (such as from fundraising).**

**YOU'LL FIND MORE** than just great book offers at [myror.org](http://myror.org):

- Find your **Prepaid Account Balance** (updated weekly)
- Update **site contact information**
- **Submit Training Data** for your ROR providers
- Learn about hosting **legislative visits**
- Get **fundraising and media information**
- **Tips and tools** to make your program the best it can be
- Download **Excel order forms** for both the ROR Catalog and the ROR Spanish & Bilingual Catalog
- Submit your semi-annual **ROR Progress Report**
- Download **ROR logos**
- Read individual chapters or the entire **ROR Program Manual**
- Access your **funding history**

## Cape Cod Outreach Event...

In keeping with the mandate from the State Legislature to reach more Bay State children, ROR-MA invited all the pediatricians and family physicians who provide primary pediatric care on Cape Cod to learn how they can bring ROR to their practices. Dr. Marilyn Augustyn, BMC behavioral and developmental pediatrician and Assoc. Prof. of Pediatrics at BU, was the evening's guest speaker. Her presentation on incorporating ROR into the pre-kindergarten visit illustrated for those in attendance the benefits of incorporating books into their development screen. Held at Ardeo Grille at King's Way, in Yarmouthport, attendance was high, interest was keen, and one practice is already on board!

Warm thanks go to Dr. Augustyn for her talk and to family physician David McBride, MD (Dir. of BU Health Services), for his comments to family physicians that evening. And very special thanks are due to Joely Edwards, MD, who grew up on the Cape and returned there to practice. She is now Dir. of Pediatric and Adolescent Services at Outer Cape Health Center in Wellfleet. Because of Dr. Edwards' vision, guidance, and assistance, the night of November 17th was a complete success!



Above: Dr. Marilyn Augustyn speaks to a packed house at the ROR-MA Cape Cod Outreach Event in Yarmouthport in November. Left: Cape Cod health providers (L to R) Evelyn Roester, PA; Victor Cillis, MD; Joely Edwards, MD; Paul Marz, MD).



We hope to witness the growth of ROR programs not only throughout the Cape, but also in western Massachusetts and other rural areas, in under- or low-performing school districts, and among private practices in urban areas. If you know a practice that might be interested in ROR, email [gretchen.hunsberger@reachoutandread.org](mailto:gretchen.hunsberger@reachoutandread.org).

## ROR-MA News

### Many hands make small work...

FOX TV Zip Trips ... Kudos to everyone at Fox TV for its on air, community-based book drives to benefit ROR programs across the Commonwealth! This summer, from Amesbury to Petersham, Arlington to Provincetown, the Fox TV Boston Morning News Team traveled throughout Massachusetts on Friday mornings, bringing along their request for books for ROR. The response was positively uplifting! Encouraged by a little healthy competition between communities, more than 5,000 books were donated by Fox viewers and distributed to community health center-based ROR programs. Thanks to the Morning News Team, including Kim Carrigan, Gene Lavanchy, Doug VB Goudie, Anquette Jamison, SkyFox reporter, Doug Meehan, producer Dot Joyce, and Director of Marketing and Community Affairs, Maggie Hennessey-Nees for getting books into little hands that need them.

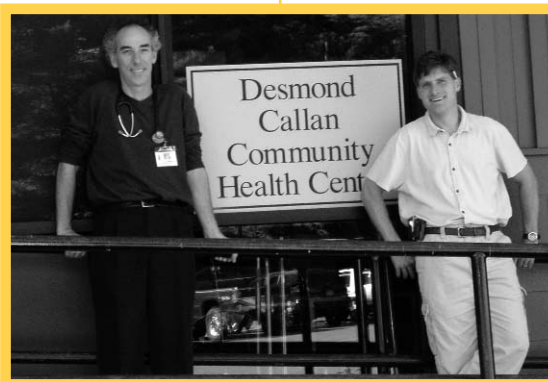


Gene Lavanchy and kids during a Fox TV Zip Trip in Mansfield.

### Thank You Charlesbridge Press and WBUR

"As a WBUR listener, you most certainly enjoy the wonders of reading a good book. Now when you support WBUR, you'll help a child have that same experience." That was the message delivered during the WBUR Fall Fund Drive. And once again, listeners responded.

This year, for every \$75 WBUR raised, Charlesbridge Press provided a new book to ROR. As a result, Charlesbridge, whose Busy Board Books and Iza Trapani Nursery Rhymes are ROR Catalog favorites, generously donated a variety of more than 12,000 books to ROR-MA programs. We are grateful to Charlesbridge Press for its continued support of Reach Out and Read Massachusetts.



ROR providers Wm. Levine, PA and Steve Martin, MD outside the brand new Desmond Callan Comm. Health Ctr., in Orange, upon its long awaited opening in August.

## Spotlight on VOLUNTEERS

### A singular initiative by a singular teen...

Last fall, 17 year old Emily Laird, from the western Massachusetts town of Whately, read about Reach Out and Read in Seventeen magazine. Immediately inspired, she called ROR National to volunteer.

A student at Williston Northampton School in Easthampton, Emily was put in touch with the Hilltown Community Health Center's nearby ROR programs in Huntington and Worthington. Emily then started networking! She contacted friends, relatives, and acquaintances to ask for their help. The culmination of her effort was a donation of \$700 to HCHC-ROR for the purchase of new books, plus a donation of gently used books for use in the waiting rooms, for sick child visits and for siblings. Spurred by her success, Emily then raised another \$700 in matching foundation funds to support Reading is Fundamental.



Emily's an avid reader, so she's particularly happy to now be selecting and ordering books for HCHC to distribute, many of which were her own childhood favorites! She paid it forward so young patients in Huntington and Worthington could enjoy their own beautiful, new books, too. Emily's hope? That they, too, develop a lifelong love of reading!

### Recess rules! ...

With their individual and then school wide efforts to collect books for ROR at Children's Hospital in Boston, Zoe Gates and Jessica Ferronetti, both ten year old students at West Elementary school in Andover, proved you can never be too young to get a good idea. As soon as these fourth graders learned about ROR they hatched a plan and collected 300 gently used and new books during April vacation. That success spurred a second, school-wide book drive before school let out for the summer. "They put up flyers and got the word out. Pretty amazing," recalls Taylor Silver, ROR Coordinator at Children's. The secret to their success? Recess!

One day Zoe and Jessica gathered together all the fourth graders on the playground, explained ROR and their idea, and then split the kids into two groups to pump them up. Their recess finesse ultimately resulted in almost 1,000 books being collected. Thank you to all the kids at West, but especially to the class go-getters, Zoe and Jessica, who will continue their efforts again this year for yet another donation to Children's Hospital!

## Save the Date!

The next **ROR National Conference** will be held in **Toronto, Canada, May 4-5, 2007.**

At that time, passports will be required to travel to Canada. To find out where to get your passport picture taken and how to download an application, visit [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

## LEGISLATIVE VISITS...

Please consider hosting a representative. ROR's continued funding depends on your legislators knowing the impact you and your ROR programs are having on their constituents' lives. Please contact [abbie.bloom@reachoutandread.org](mailto:abbie.bloom@reachoutandread.org) at ROR National. She makes the process simple and will even make the contacts for you!



Congressman John Tierney visited the ROR Program at North Shore Community Health in Salem in August. Rep. Tierney is a long-standing supporter of ROR on Capitol Hill. Pictured above (L to R): Matt Veno, ROR National (gov't affairs consultant); Andrea Perez, D.O., NSCH Medical Director; Congressman John Tierney; Gretchen Hunsberger, ROR-MA Programs Director; Robert Q. Hendershott, EdD, CEO; Gloria Riley, COO; Calvin Young, NSCH Member Board of Directors.



In August, faithful ROR supporter, Congressman Michael Capuano, read to children at Boston Medical Center, ROR's flagship program.



State Senator Jarrett Barrios and Chelsea City Councilor Marilyn Vega-Torres read to children during a September visit to MGH-Chelsea's ROR Program.

## ROR's Impact in MA

- 151 ROR clinical locations
- 121,356 children participate annually
- 206,934 new books distributed annually



**Massachusetts**

**Reach Out and Read**  
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PLEASE PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE

## Reading with Senator Kennedy

Sen. Ted Kennedy (and wife Victoria) read to children at the Cambridge Health Alliance/Somerville Pediatrics' ROR Program in October. Photos from this visit ran in all the Boston newspapers!

Sen. Kennedy, a long-time advocate of ROR, was ROR's initial champion on Capitol Hill and continues to co-sponsor ROR's appropriations request in the Senate – which is responsible for funding ROR programs throughout the nation. ROR-MA is thrilled with Sen. Kennedy's continued support and appreciates his on-going leadership.

