



The ROR Rural Outreach Initiative

**Ron Bailey,
National Programs Director**

In the past year, ROR staff members drove hundreds of miles between clinics in South Dakota, talked to primary care nurses who travel to remote Alaskan villages, and learned of migrant families who seek all their primary care in Florida's county public health clinics. With a great deal of positive support, in December the ROR National Center formally announced the Reach Out and Read Rural Outreach Initiative. Recruiting new clinics for ROR programs and delivering training to primary care providers are the main activities of this exciting plan, which includes an intensive three-year fundraising effort to support start-up grants for at least 75 new ROR pediatric clinics and family medicine practices.

The groundwork for this initiative was carefully nurtured by ROR and by local provider agencies. The National Center joined outreach projects in Alaska and South Dakota in 2003 as part of an effort to increase literacy intervention by doctors and nurses where there were few clinic-based literacy programs and where many children live in poverty. Traveling to meet local providers and local literacy experts, ROR staff learned a great deal about the challenges presented by the great distances between rural providers.

And we were amazed by the resources and energy provided by staff from the states' DOE agencies, regional primary care networks, and public health nurses; all have stepped forward to help. During the same months of 2003, we saw active recruitment by grassroots collaborations of existing ROR sites emerge in both rural North Carolina and Nebraska. The Florida Department of Public Health has also become a new

From the Medical Director

Perri Klass, MD

The Reach Out and Read National Conference is moving west this year—we'll be holding our conference on April 30th in San Francisco, right before the Pediatric Academic Societies' meeting. We hope that people who would be coming for the PAS conference will find it possible to add on a day and combine both meetings into one trip, and an extremely educational and stimulating conference experience—we're excited to be an official pre-conference, and to take advantage of the wonderful PAS resources, including our own Literacy Special Interest Group, which Robert Needlman, MD, and I lead together every year at PAS, and which this year will happen on the morning of Sunday, May 2nd.

We have two particularly exciting plenary speakers this year, Professor Patricia Kuhl, and Professor Helen Neville, who in their talks will address brain development, language development, bilingual development, social and emotional development, and other essential issues in the ever-fascinating interplay of brain and environment, family, and child. And we are delighted that David Shannon, author/illustrator of many popular children's books, will address the conference and participate in a book signing just prior to our evening reception. And, of course, we will have workshops to

assist you in many different areas of literacy promotion, and to send you back with new ideas and new energy. The greatest energy boost, however, I think we have all come to know, is the boost we get

Reach Out and Read National Conference

April 30 – May 1, 2004
San Francisco, CA

For updated program information
and registration go to

www.reachoutandread.org
or call 617-638-4605

Calling All Advocates...

Matthew Veno, Director of External Affairs

Kelly Taranto, External Affairs Associate

Congress resumed its work on the appropriations bill in January and passed the Omnibus Appropriations bill on January 23rd. This bill included \$4 million for Reach Out and Read. While this is not the \$6 million we were seeking, this is still a great achievement, particularly given the tough economic times. Thank you for participating in our campaign last year—we could not have done this without your hard work! So please take a moment to congratulate yourself and celebrate...and get ready for our next campaign!

The really exciting news is that President Bush included ROR in his budget request for FY05 for \$10 million! The ball is now in the court of Congress, who will very soon begin the appropriations process. As a national program, we need now to raise our voices in support of this funding increase, and we can only do this with your help.

Our Timeline:

“Dear Appropriators” Letters: due April 1

Similar to the previous two years, we will be circulating another “dear appropriators” letter in the House and Senate. We will begin our letter campaign at the end of February—giving us 6 weeks to secure signatures. Last year we had 178 signers total: 53 Senators and 125 Representatives. We can definitely get more signatures this year! You will hear from us once the letter is ready for signature.

Site Visits: starting April 5th

There are several great opportunities this year to get legislators to visit your Reach Out and Read program. This year we are pushing for site visits to occur during every congressional recess, not just the August break as we’ve done in years past. Here is the recess calendar:

- April 5-16: Spring District Work Period
- May 24-31: Memorial Day District Work Period
- June 28-July 5: Independence Day District Work Period
- July 26-September 3: Summer District Work Period
- October 1: Target Adjournment

We urge you to invite your legislator(s) to visit your program to learn more about Reach Out and Read. Contact us at legislativeaction@reachoutandread.org if you are interested and we can work with you on all of the logistics to make your visit a success.

Again, thanks for all your efforts in FY04—on to FY05!

Coalition Updates

As of February 1, 2004 two new state ROR coalitions have been added to the roster. We welcome:

Reach Out and Read Colorado:

Ann Logan, *Coalition Leader*
Steve Vogler, MD, *Medical Director*

Reach Out and Read Virginia:

Elli Sparks, *Coalition Leader*
Robin Foster, MD, *Medical Director*

Building on lessons learned during the November Coalition meeting in Washington, D.C., the **New York City** and **South Carolina** coalitions each recently held successful legislative breakfasts. In New York, 50 state legislators and their staff were present, and Assembly Member Adriano Espaillat was thanked for providing discretionary member item funding to the New York Presbyterian Hospital’s ROR program through the NY State Department of Health.

The well-attended **South Carolina** breakfast brought together a bi-partisan audience who found special appeal in the cost of the ROR intervention, particularly given the fiscally conservative atmosphere in the state. Many more legislators indicated interest in reading in their districts as well as helping ROR programs in a variety of ways.

Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco reads to children during a recent visit to ROR at LSU Medical Center in Shreveport.



Development Update

Apply Now for Target, Marshall Field's and Mervyn's Local Grants

Target, Marshall Field's and Mervyn's Local Grant Applications are now available for 2004. Giving guidelines are the same as last year, but each store has its own giving guidelines. Programs are encouraged to contact their LOCAL STORE MANAGER for more information or to pick up an application. Individual ROR programs were very successful with this initiative last year, raising a total of \$104,429!

Applications will be accepted from March 1 through May 31, 2004. More information is available on each web site: www.target.com, www.mervyns.com, or www.marshallfields.com. The National Center has grant templates available. Contact **Beth Krueger** (beth.krueger@reachoutandread.org) if you have questions or to request a template.

Wal-Mart Fundraising Opportunities

The Community Matching Grant Program allows local nonprofits to hold a fundraiser at a local Wal-Mart or SAM'S CLUB; Wal-Mart and SAM'S can then elect to match a portion of the funds raised, up to \$1,000! Events held off the premises of a Wal-Mart store or SAM'S CLUB are also eligible for funding, when a Wal-Mart or SAM'S CLUB associate is actively involved in the event. If your Reach Out and Read site is planning a fundraiser that you think could be held outside a store, contact the Community Involvement Coordinator at the location closest to you. Grant applications are available at your local store.

For more details you can visit their website at: <http://www.walmartfoundation.org>.

Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation to Support Four Cities

We are proud to announce that Reach Out and Read was chosen to receive a "Relationship Grant" from the **Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest**, through the generosity of the

Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation.

This grant will support book purchasing in

Boston, MA, Providence, RI, Hartford, CT, and New York City.

This is the first grant that has been awarded to support all four cities where Brown Rudnick Berlack Israels has offices. Brown Rudnick Berlack Israels will also be providing employee volunteers at ROR sites in each city. We are excited about this multifaceted partnership!



ROR Greeting Cards— A New Fundraising Opportunity

ROR has created a set of greeting cards for programs to use as a fundraiser. Each package contains 5 colorful cards with envelopes. Quantity discounts are available. For an order form contact beth.krueger@reachoutandread.org or phone her at 617-629-8042, x240.

Katee Doland, Miss Colorado, reads to children at the Westside Family Health Center in Denver, as part of an event celebrating the donation of 50,000 books to Reach Out and Read Colorado through Scholastic's ClassroomsCare initiative.



Al Wallis, Executive Director of the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation shares a story at a visit to the ROR program at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City.



Verizon Literacy Champion and former Dallas Cowboy Daryl Johnston visits a book fair at Parkland Southeast Dallas Health Center.

Programs Update

We welcome **Barbara K. Ducharme, MBA, EdM** to the ROR National Center staff as our new National Programs Project Manager. Barbara brings experience in both health care quality assurance and continuing medical education. An experienced non-profit manager, her primary responsibilities at ROR will be program evaluation and quality improvement focused on addressing concerns of coalition leaders, multi-site coordinators and ROR site coordinators. You can reach her at barbara.ducharme@reachoutandread.org

Reach Out and Read Best Practices

Barbara Ducharme, National Programs Project Manager

Using the ROR Site Observation Scale to Enhance Program Performance

Whether you are a ROR site coordinator, multi-site coordinator, medical director or coalition leader, you can probably use the updated *Reach Out and Read Site Observation Scale* to improve your program's performance. The new Site Observation Scale lets you rate and comment on your program's compliance with the three components of the ROR model: books, provider (PCP) interaction with children and their parents, and volunteers. You can use the Site Observation Scale results to identify areas where you'd like to focus your program improvement efforts. This is an excellent focus for a short meeting with participating providers, especially when it has been a while since their original ROR training.

Coordinators of programs in coalitions can contact their coalition leadership for ideas and technical assistance for improving compliance with the ROR model. Other programs can contact the ROR National Center for such assistance. A workshop at the ROR Annual Conference will focus on using the Site Observation Scale for program improvement. We hope to see you there!

This winter we are introducing a new on-line capability for ROR programs. Using your program's site ID and National Center-assigned password, you can complete and submit a Site Observation Scale online. Go to www.reachoutandread.org, click on "Programs" and choose

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Dr. Hao Cao in the newly redesigned waiting room at the USC Family Practice Center at California Hospital Medical Center in Los Angeles. The USC program is one of ten new ROR programs started with support from Target® Stores.



ROR Expands in Alaska

Ron Bailey

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development was recently awarded a grant from the US Department of Education for the "Alaska Community Preschool Project." Thanks to the tireless work of Paul Sugar, state Education Specialist for Head Start and Preschool Projects, \$89,000 of this award is designated for contracts to start new ROR programs. Funds will cover the cost of provider training, books and literacy materials for parents.

Paul has had two years of experience actively promoting ROR with Alaska's local health providers, in particular with Alaska Public Health nursing professionals, before beginning to work on this ambitious federal grant. He recently hosted a ROR training delivered to Alaska providers by Antonia Zazueta, M.D., the Chair of the Board of California Reach Out and Read. Both Paul and Perri Klass, M.D., who also trained nurses in Anchorage last year, commented on the amazing distances Public Health nurses travel to deliver care, and now ROR, to rural Alaska tribal communities.

Paul noted that the emphasis in the grant proposal which secured funding for ROR was focused on collaboration in the community and especially on "new strategies for parent involvement within local school districts." The Alaska DOE expects to contract with at least one urban, one rural and one "remote" regional group in the first year of this

grant. Funding for this project is anticipated to continue for the next two years.

Expanded ROR Website Now Interactive!

On January 29th, the National Center Programs staff proudly launched a new and greatly expanded interactive section of the ROR website. Using a unique password to access Program Administration features, sites now have the ability to complete and submit required semi-annual Progress Reports online.

This new interactive format is in response to many requests from ROR Coordinators over the past two years. Other features include the ability to view and print previously submitted reports. Coordinators can also save a Progress Reports in draft form while gathering additional information before submitting it.

Equally important, each ROR Coordinator or Medical Director can now update site, address and contact details at any time during the year. (Did you know that there is a contact or address change for almost every ROR site every six months?!) Two ROR quality assessment tools, the ROR Site Observation Scale, and the Annual Physician Survey, can also be completed and submitted on-line in this Program Administration section.

Although we will gladly continue to accept paper progress reports from coordinators without web access, we encourage all other sites to submit reports online.

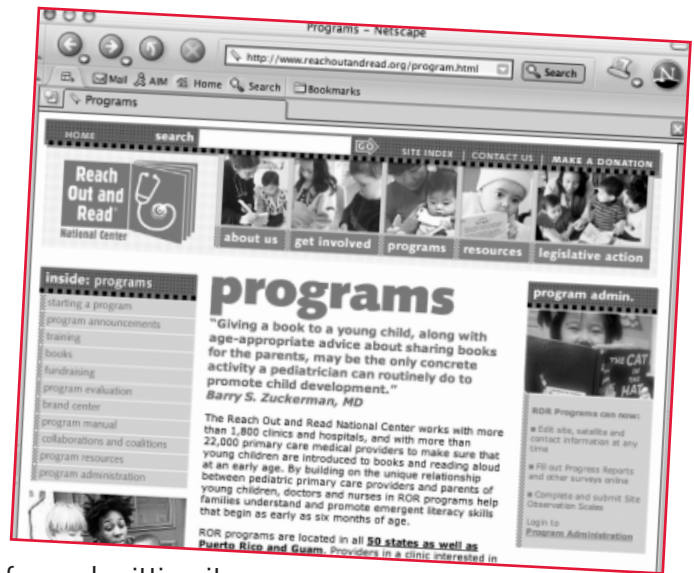
Did You Know?

Your **Amazon.com** purchases can benefit Reach Out and Read.

When you are shopping on-line, use the Amazon link on the ROR National Center homepage: **www.reachoutandread.org** and we will get credit for your purchases. (Note: you will not see further reference to ROR as you proceed through Amazon.)

Special thanks to VERIZON for support of this major upgrade of the ROR website. And kudos to Emily Gallagher, ROR National Information Manager, for managing this large project in collaboration with our website developer, **what!design**.

To manage your site's details and reports online: Go to www.reachoutandread.org, click on Programs and then choose Program Administration. You will then be able to log in using your program's Site ID and password. (If you need a reminder about your program's Site ID # or password, please contact us at **617-629-8042, x231**.)



California Coalition Launches Library Partnership

Lyn Palme, Contra Costa County ROR

Reach Out and Read California has successfully launched an important partnership that will increase the number of ROR programs in the state. In October, California ROR and the California State Library teamed up to support 14 new ROR clinics with grants of about \$6,000 each. Funds from the California State Library were awarded to public libraries that partner with local clinics which have applied to the National Center to start a ROR program.

Suzanne Flint, Director of Reach Out and Read California, facilitated the opportunity for the State Library and ROR to form a partnership. For Dr. Kevin Starr, California's State Librarian, the partnership will, "forge an alliance among clinics, libraries, and literacy programs that will be beneficial for all three and the children of California."

The grants provide community libraries across California with a new way to connect with families who need literacy services the most but who may not seek out literacy help on their own or even visit a library. For the medical community, this new connection will help doctors and nurses direct their families to the wealth of adult and family literacy resources available in the larger community. Dr. Ann Harvey of the Contra Costa Health Center, one of the grant recipients, states, "ROR will greatly enhance our ability to promote optimal development, positive parent-child interactions, and early pre-literacy." As many of the grant recipients noted at a recent training, this new partnership with the State Library will enhance and strengthen the tremendous benefits that ROR programs provide to the children of California.



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partner in promoting ROR and identifying rural county health departments which deliver primary care.

At this time, the National Center expects the main focus of the Rural Outreach Initiative to be in ten states where there are a limited number of ROR programs, but where several local ROR provider champions are in place to model ROR. Each of these states has a large percentage of families living at 200% or below of the federal poverty level.

A two year grant from the Hasbro Children's Foundation will allow us to continue expanding literacy

REACH OUT AND READ BEST PRACTICES
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"Program Administration," and follow the instructions from there. Upon submitting the report, you will be able to view it immediately; you will not be able to edit it, however.

We designed the Scale in a format that can be submitted electronically to the National Center if you wish. We will collect and analyze ROR Site Observation Scale information from programs around the country and publish aggregate scores so you can see how your program compares with the national average. These first results will be available online in spring 2004. Watch the Program Announcements section of the website for updates.

If you have questions or feedback related to the ROR Site Observation Scale, please email them to **reports@reachoutandread.org** or call **Barbara Ducharme** at **617-629-8042, x243**.

intervention in Alaska and the Dakotas, with new expansion efforts this year in Minnesota, rural Florida, and Virginia.

In the following year we expect to intensify ROR rural outreach through the activities of this initiative in Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi and Nebraska.

FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR
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from one another—from spending time together, from hearing what other programs are doing, and from reminding each other of why we do this, how we can do it well, and why it matters. Hoping to see you there!