

# Head Start Graduate Student Research Program: 2004 Research Scholars

\* 2004-2005    \*\* 2004-2006

## **J'Lene George\***

### *Project Title:*

An Investigation of Gender and Ethnic Differences in Approaches to Learning's Domain General Role in Head Start Children's School Readiness

### *Grantee:*

J'Lene George

### *Project Funding Years:*

2004-2005

### *University Affiliation:*

University of Miami  
Department of Psychology

### *Project Abstract:*

The University of Miami will investigate individual differences in approaches to learning (ATL) and how these differences affect outcomes in other domains of school readiness. The study has two main objectives: (a) to investigate the relationships between ATL, ethnicity, gender, and other domains of school readiness, and (b) to develop and test a path model showing how ATL affects achievement in other domains that is sensitive to issues of gender and culture. Participants from the first data assessment year, 2002-2003, will include 15,413 Florida Head Start children who attend centers that use the Galileo School Readiness Assessment System. A similar sample will be used in the 2003-2004 academic year. Three domains of the Galileo data will be used in the study: ATL, language and literacy, and early math. Structural equation modeling will be used to explain how ATL functions with gender and culture. It is hypothesized that ATL will be predictive of achievement in other domains of school readiness, and that gender and ethnicity will not affect the total score in ATL, but instead the pattern of strengths and weaknesses in ATL.

*Sample:*

N=15,413 Florida Head Start children for year 2002-2003; similar sample for 2003-2004.

*Measures:*

Galileo School Readiness Assessment System

**DeAnn Jones \*\***

*Project Title:*

A Possible Biological Marker of Risk and Reactivity in Parents and Children

*Grantee:*

DeAnn Jones

*Project Funding Years:*

2004-2006

*University Affiliation:*

Utah State University

Department of Family, Consumer, and Human Development

*Project Abstract:*

Utah State University will investigate a potential biological marker, the ability to taste propylthiouracil (PROP), in relation to risk factors such as stress reactivity in mothers and poor emotion regulation in children. PROP is a harmless chemical that, genetically, some people can taste and others cannot. Participants include approximately 137 mother-child pairs who participated in the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation project, and 122 mother-child pairs from a middle income comparison group. All mother-child pairs were previously assessed during infancy. Data collection will include PROP tasting, observation of a challenging puzzle task, standardized testing, self-report measures, and previously videotaped interactions. Measures will include the general Labeled Magnitude Scale, to rate taste perception of PROP, the Differentiation of Self Inventory, to measure emotional and stress reactivity, and observational ratings of maternal sensitivity and support and child emotion regulation. Analyses will be conducted to determine characteristics of mothers and children who have the biological marker compared to those who do not. The primary aim of the research is to work towards the development of an intervention that addresses biological risk factors and promotes good parenting.

*Sample:*

N=137 follow up mother-child pairs who were part of the EHSRE project and 122 middle-income mother-child pairs