

NDCPD

1990 - 1995

Through the years



In 1988, Dr. Stephen Ragan, Chair of Special Education, Dr. John Kincheloe, Dean of Education, and Dr. David Williams, Chair of Communication Disorders began working on establishing a University Affiliated Program (UAP) in North Dakota. The first proposal, submitted to the US Department of Health & Human Services, proposed a two-location partnership between Minot State University and the University of North Dakota. It was not approved for funding. Ultimately, MSU and UND each submitted their own independent proposal the following year. MSU was awarded the grant.



NDCD absorbed two state funded contracts from MSU's Special Education Department:

1. Minot Infant Development Program, Ms. Kathy Lee, Program Director
2. Community Staff Training Program, Dr. Demetrios Vassiliou, Program Director

On October 1, 1990, the North Dakota Center on Disabilities (NDCD) at MSU became part of a national network of University Affiliated Programs (UAPs). UAPs were established in the 1960's by President Kennedy in an effort to improve services to people with disabilities. NDCD was designated as a satellite UAP of the Utah Center for Persons with Disabilities. NDCD was housed on the 1st floor of Old Main with a budget of \$150,000.

NDCD was established to provide statewide interdisciplinary training, exemplary services, and research and dissemination in the area of developmental disabilities. The **Mission Statement** then: *"To enable persons with developmental disabilities by building capacity of an integrated service continuum through the conduct of training service demonstration, technical assistance, and dissemination activities."* The first staff at the Center were faculty from various MSU departments who are listed below:

- Dr. Stephen Ragan, Executive Director
- Dr. David Williams, Associate Director
- Dr. Audrey Lunday, Director of Clinical Services
- Dr. Brent A. Askvig, Director of Outreach & Development
- Dr. Ann Maria Rousey, Director of Research & Dissemination
- Dr. John Torgerson, Director of Training

Two additional employees were hired in 1991, Dr. Joseph Ferrara and Miss Susie Leintz. Dr. Ferrara, known as the "Father of Grant Writing" was nationally known for his grant-writing experience and thus, he served as the Center's Associate Director for Development. Miss Leintz was hired as the Center's first secretary.



NDCD's first federal grant was awarded to Dr. Ann Maria Rousey to study conditions of Native American's with disabilities. Besides the UAP Core funding, this grant was one of the biggest MSU had ever received at that time. This grant was quickly followed by other awards on topics like Aging and Vietnam Veterans' Client Assistance Services.

An **INTERDISCIPLINARY** was formed to lend expertise and direction to NDCD staff. This was a statewide council with members from various agencies including State Council on Developmental Disabilities, ND Dept of Human Services, ND Dept of Public Instruction, NDACF, NDSU and a consumer.

A **CONSUMER ADVISORY COUNCIL** was also formed during this time to solicit consumer input and guidance to NDCD staff. During this timeframe, there were three liaisons: Dr. Delar Singh, Ms. Kathryn Erickson and Ms. Gladys Mack.

1990-1995
53 Funded
Grants
& Contracts
\$4,483,089

In 1991, Dr. Ferrara initiated grant-writing efforts to develop a portfolio of federal proposals to grow NDCD. Staff began writing as teams, not individuals and started making bold need statements and requests for funds. Dr. Ferrara taught staff formatting tricks and how to think like the reviewers. He started a file system to make sure several staff could write on a proposal at the same time while avoiding simultaneous edits. Staff worked through the nights, on weekends and during the holidays to assure the Center would get funding to keep people employed.

Ferrara heads North Dakota Center for Disabilities

by Tom Dill

Not all positions in the Special Education Department are teaching jobs. The Minot State University special education department has added Joseph Ferrara to its staff in the non-academic capacity. Ferrara heads the North Dakota Center for Disabilities (NDCD), which provides services rather than education. Ferrara's primary job is providing services, doing research and helping other faculty members. He will teach one class, however. His objective is to get the NDCCD off the ground.

Ferrara received his bachelor's degree at the University of Wisconsin and earned his master's at Oshkosh, Wis. He then taught in the Special Education Department in Slinger, a Milwaukee suburb, where he also served as the director of special education. He then earned his Ph.D. from Aalto State in Logan, Utah.

Ferrara taught special education at the University of South Dakota for five years and in 1981 was presented the Special Educator Award by the governor of the state.

In 1982, he took a sabbatical leave to Utah State University to study computer and laser video disk applications. He remained at USU and became associate research professor. He later became chief scientist for artificial intelligence research and development.

At this point in his life, Ferrara decided it was time for a change and he wanted to get back to the Dakotas where "life is more casual."

"I also wanted to get back into working with the handicapped people, and this is a real unique opportunity to do the things I want to do," Ferrara said.

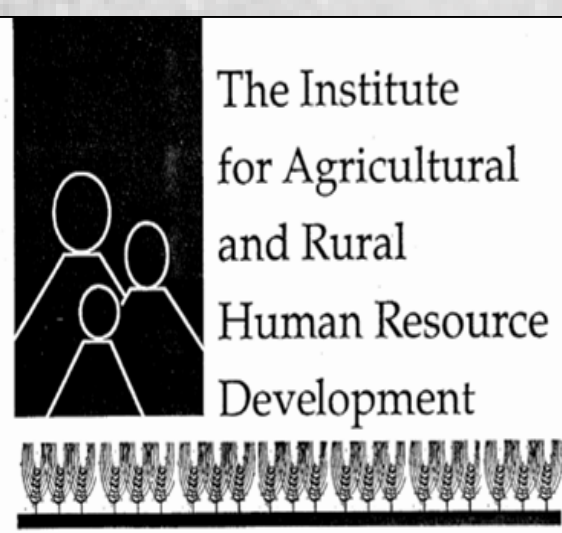
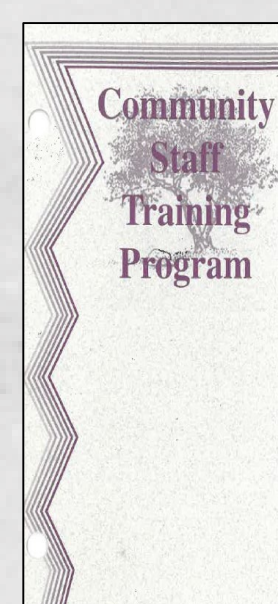
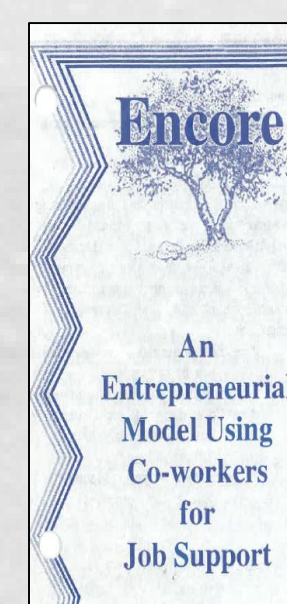
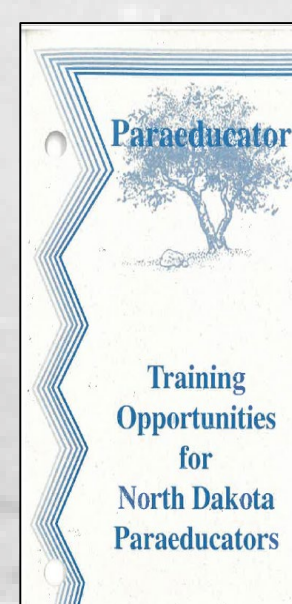
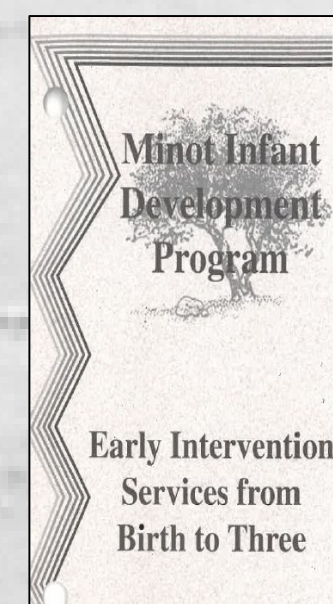
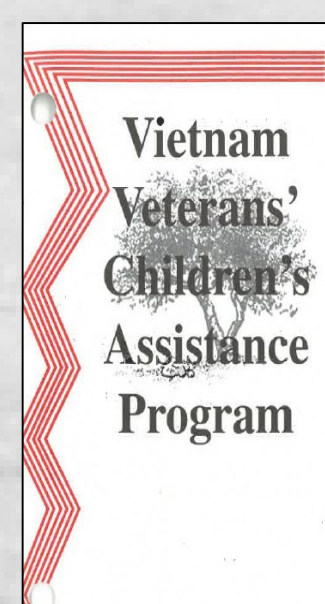
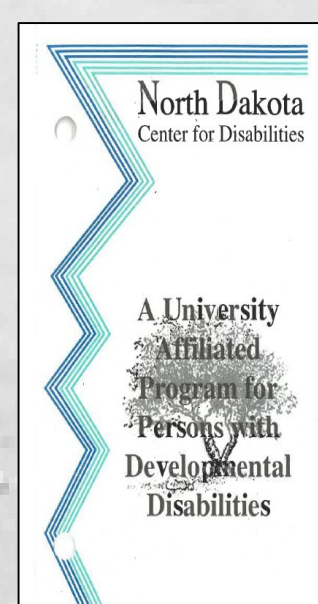
The NDCCD mission is to enable persons with developmental disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. The program will focus on infants, Native Americans, adults and the elderly. "The center opens doors for North Dakota to access many programs and services not available prior to its establishment," Ferrara said.

He and his wife Anne live in Minot with their children, Mark, 15, "N" and Lisa, 7 plus their cat, Susan (cat). Ferrara is a ham radio operator, a hobby he started when he was in junior high. Recently he and his family have taken up skiing.

During this period, NDCD had 2 site visits directed by the Center's funding agency, AIDD. The first was in 1993 with Dr. Richard Offner (MT UAP) who praised NDCD staff for their granting writing abilities and their technical assistance outreach efforts. The second site visit was in 1996 with Bob Calderon (____) and Leola Brooks (____) who complimented NDCD staff on the wealth of information provided for the site visit.

In 1993, the Center's status went from a satellite UAP to full UAP status. This was an important step for two reasons. First, NDCD became full members of the UAP network and the only ND agency eligible for future UAP funding. Second, the core center funding increased from \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year.

Once the Center went to full UAP status, an official logo was developed using a tree with an embellished border. It was designed by Dr. Ragan's daughter, Kacie. The tree branches were meant to signify future Center outreach. This logo was extended to projects as they were funded.



As NDCD grew, space became an issue. Drs. Ragan and Kincheloe began working on a plan to remodel the recently vacated MSU Memorial Library. The University obtained federal funds for renovations and developed the Institute for Agricultural & Rural Human Resource Development (IARHRD) Center supported by Senator Quentin Burdick. The IARHRD Center was intended to house rural human service programs including several academic departments.

In 1995, the Center moved from the first floor of Old Main to the second floor of the newly remodeled old Memorial Library which was renamed Memorial Hall.

