



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

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*Stephen Dager, Interim Director  
Autism Center  
Center on Human Development and Disability*

June 29, 2009

Dear Friends of the UW Autism Center,

A search committee was established a few months ago to recruit a new director of the UW Autism Center following the departure of its founding director, Dr. Geri Dawson. The committee's unanimous recommendation following an extensive search and interview process was to recruit Dr. Wendy Stone from Vanderbilt University. I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Stone has accepted our offer and is now in the process moving her clinical, training, and research activities to the University of Washington. She will also be the first person to hold the Susan and Richard Fade Endowed Chair, recently established for the Director of the UW Autism Center. Over the next few months Dr. Stone will be making frequent visits to Seattle in anticipation of her permanent move sometime next spring. During those visits she will be setting up her observational and ERP labs, meeting with UW Autism Center staff, and connecting with the autism community in general.

Throughout her distinguished career Dr. Stone has exhibited a strong blend of skills well-suited to direct the UW Autism Center. In particular, she is a highly regarded clinician, an outstanding teacher and mentor, and has been at the forefront of professional training for community providers for many years. Dr. Stone is also one of the leading researchers in the field, focusing on early identification and intervention, including sibling studies, and is currently the Principal Investigator for a number of NIH and other grants. The skills and experiences that Dr. Stone brings as the new Director of the UW Autism Center will substantially enhance and allow us to expand existing community programs.

The University of Washington UW Autism Center plays an important role on this campus and in the community for a disorder with a high prevalence and unusual complexity. Numerous model services exist at the UW Autism Center, professional training programs are at unprecedented levels, and community outreach and advocacy activities are extensive. Despite the economic downturn, the number of families seen by the UW Autism Center has increased by 25% this past year alone. Indeed, UW Autism Center clinical services have been expanded at both our Seattle and Tacoma sites and include parent training, short-term speech-language therapy, parent education courses, and summer camps for older children with autism spectrum disorders. We continue to pursue new opportunities to increase our clinical capacity and to expand comprehensive care services for the families we currently serve.

I know you will join me in welcoming Wendy Stone when she arrives. We look forward to working together to further expand and enhance our services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Dager", written over a horizontal line.

Stephen Dager, M.D.  
Interim Director, UW Autism Center  
Professor of Radiology