

New Institute Will Expand Landmark's Capacities for Research

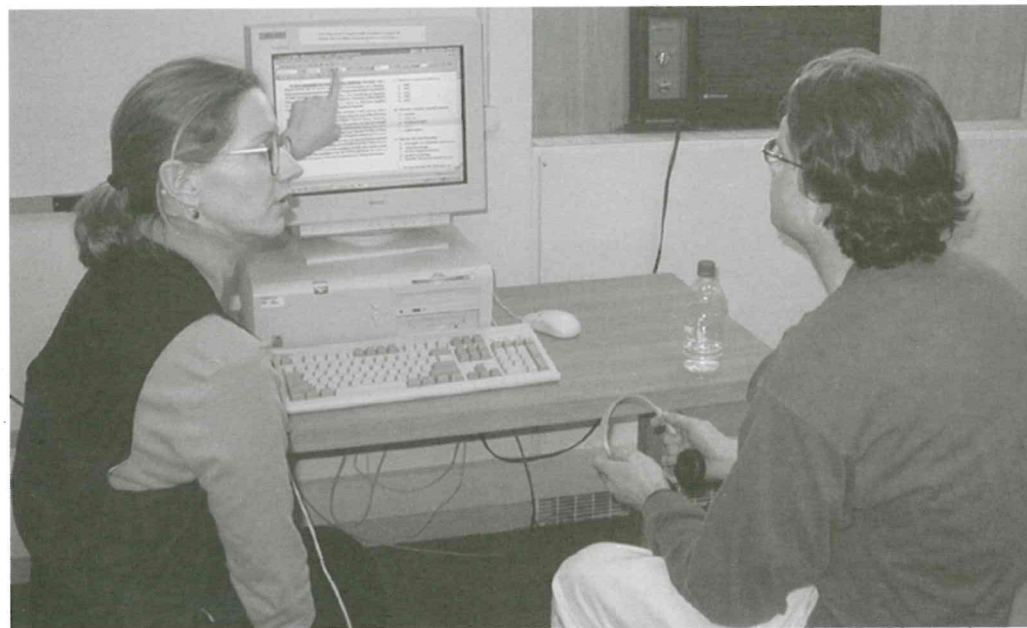
"Landmark faculty know more about successfully teaching young adults who learn differently than anyone. It's vital that we take a leading role in research on best practices for teaching this age group, and also in disseminating that research," said Lynne Shea, Director of Landmark's new National Institute for Learning Disabilities/ADHD Research and Training. "We also anticipate that the Institute will help us attract research partnerships with other national leaders in our field."

Enhancing Landmark's capacity to do cutting edge research is one focus of the Institute, which was launched this summer. Landmark's five-year, \$1.75 million federal Strengthening Institutions grant, received in fall 1999, has already allowed members of our faculty to engage in research, and has also brought well-known researchers to our campus as part of a speakers' series.

Results of Kurzweil research presented at IDA convention

During the first two years of the U.S. Department of Education Strengthening Institutions project, six Landmark faculty members worked on a number of exciting research projects to benefit the wider educational community. On October 25, the results of the first funded research, a two-year project on the usefulness of Kurzweil text-to-speech software for students with ADHD, were presented at the International Dyslexia Association convention. This collaborative project, working with a noted researcher on assistive technology, is precisely the kind of project the Institute hopes to promote.

"The Strengthening Institutions grant will allow us to continue funding research by our own talented faculty for the next several years," said Dr. Katz. "Through the National Institute we will also be able to augment our own research capacity by attracting nationally known researchers to work with our faculty." In Dr. Katz's book, published this fall, she and her co-authors reviewed the research on learning disabilities and ADHD. Most of it has been done on younger children, and almost all of it on boys. "Landmark can provide leadership in research applied to young adults of both genders," said Dr. Katz, "and by doing this much needed research we can effect the education of thousands of students beyond our campus."



Expanding educational services to schools, teachers

"Over the last ten years Landmark has provided training to nearly a thousand teachers who work with students who learn differently," said Lynne Shea. "In recent years we have worked closely with a number of schools and school systems to better prepare their teachers to succeed with students with learning disabilities and with those who may be struggling for other reasons. Through the National Institute we hope to create many more partnerships with schools and colleges." Lynne added that Landmark's federal Title VII grant has allowed us to share our best practices for students with learning disabilities and ADHD with faculty and administrators at 19 Vermont colleges and universities. The College is seeking additional federal funding to expand this Vermont project to the entire nation.

East Academic Building to house the Institute

"Ultimately we will house the National Institute for Learning Disabilities/ADHD Research and Training in the East Academic Building," said Dr. Katz. "It remains vital that we raise the needed funds to renovate that building so it can become the center for our research and teacher training efforts. This is an exciting time for Landmark. We're on the threshold of greatly expanding our reach nationally in terms of important research, and in sharing what we know about educating young adults who learn differently with other schools and colleges. Having a state-of-the-art facility as the home for these efforts would be wonderful."

Assistant Professor/Researcher Liza Burns and Luke Joyce '01 test the effectiveness of Kurzweil software for students with ADHD.