

123 Rutgers Street
Rochester, NY 14607
November 30, 2004

A. D. Hightower
Chair, Children's Institute Search Committee
274 North Goodman Street, Suite D103
Rochester, NY 14607

Dear Dr. Hightower,

Thank you for responding to my e-mail last week about the position at Children's Institute. Please accept this letter of application for the position of Research Assistant Professor. I am currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development at the University of Rochester. I will receive my Ph.D. in Teaching and Curriculum from the Warner School in May, 2005. I believe my expertise in child development and early childhood education, my proficiency with mixed methods evaluation and research, and my teaching and professional development experiences make me an excellent fit to work within your early education prevention and intervention programs.

As Assistant Project Manager of a grant to support family day care educational settings, I partnered with the Family Child Care Satellite Network of Greater Rochester to provide professional development for family day care providers, many serving inner city families. I organized the evaluation of this project, monitoring changes in providers' beliefs and educational practices. I also coordinated with Lauri Brugger at Children's Institute to facilitate assessment through the Rochester Early Childhood Assessment Partnership (RECAP) at these family day care locations. As a research assistant I have worked with school administrators from the Rochester City School District and other public and private preschool programs as part of a large-scale effort to introduce the ScienceStart! curriculum in preschool classrooms.

As a Visiting Assistant Professor this year I am teaching a range of courses to fill a faculty vacancy, including Literacy Learning and Masters Research Methods. I am also providing writing consultations to students through the Writing Support Services program at the Warner School. As I finish writing my dissertation, I am preparing to publish my research in scholarly education and child development journals.

In my dissertation research, which was supported by a Spencer Dissertation Fellowship, I use a mixed methods design to examine the effects of a preschool curriculum, ScienceStart!, on classroom language in urban preschools. This curriculum was developed by Professor Lucia French at the Warner School and has been field tested in Rochester preschools for the past six years. Results of analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) yielded significant effects of the ScienceStart! curriculum on children's production of scientific vocabulary, controlling for children's age. In my qualitative analysis of classroom discourse I draw on a Vygotskian

sociocultural framework, arguing that sequences of explanatory talk serve as a tool for socialization, orienting students to cultural ways of understanding social and scientific domains of knowledge.

I believe my experience working with local early childhood educational settings and my background in quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis would make me an asset to your ongoing research and evaluation projects, including the Primary Project, the Pre-K Primary Project, the Rochester Early Enhancement Project (REEP), the Rochester Early Literacy Project (RELP), and the Early Education Professional Development Project (EEDP). It is my aim to continue to work as an agent of positive change for young children, educators, and families. I am confident that I can accomplish this goal at Children's Institute. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

XXX