

UTMB NEWS

Communications Office
The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
301 University Boulevard ■ Galveston, Texas 77555-0802

In Texas 1-800-228-1841
(409) 772-2618

RELEASE: May 5, 1995
CONTACT: Becky Walsdorf
Leslie Watts

DR. KATE MOODY NAMED TO HEAD DYSLEXIA PROGRAM AT UTMB

In a fortuitous match-up, the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, has hired Dr. Kate Moody to develop a new program regarding dyslexia and learning difficulties. But this new initiative, launched from the Office of the President, is only one part of the conceptual framework of "Open Gates" -- UTMB's the advanced teaching and teleconferencing center.

"It is our good fortune," says Dr. Thomas N. James, "to find in one person a rare combination of expertise -- a reading specialist with years of experience in communications businesses and a substantial publishing record."

As special assistant to the president and adjunct assistant professor in the Department of Neurology, Moody's new appointment reflects a new era in education and technology at the Medical Branch; to be operated in conjunction with Open Gates, the dyslexia program will be developed through a multiphase approach.

Immediately prior to coming to UTMB, Moody was co-director of a summer Institute on Media Literacy and Education at New York University. At Hunter College, City University of New York, she taught courses in technology and education. Her educational background includes bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; a second master's degree from the Department of Communications, Computing and Technology of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York; and a doctorate in education from the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education, also at Columbia University.

"In addition to coordinating services already in place at UTMB (counseling and referrals, and concepts in public education) we will be creating a new team that includes members from a number of UTMB areas -- developmental pediatrics, neurology, neuropsychology, otolaryngology, ophthalmology and psychiatry and behavioral sciences -- to achieve a better understanding of the dyslexia diagnosis and of all the different ways in which people learn," said Moody. The UTMB

-over-

PAGE 2..."DR. MOODY"

response system will be interdisciplinary to provide the necessary linkages for a comprehensive program in education. The program will encompass health care professionals, teachers and parents and the off-campus community as well, bringing them together to help them learn about the nature of these often unrecognized learning differences.

Research of various kinds will be an integral part of the ongoing program. Moody feels that UTMB is uniquely situated for such a dyslexia program not only because of its many resources already in place, within the faculty, but also its ability to serve numerous people from a wide geographic area, and the new technological collaborations being made possible by Open Gates.

Moody is quick to point out, however, that Open Gates itself is a project of far greater scope. "The facility, which is described as an advanced teaching and telecommunications center, will be engaged not only in telemedicine -- which is the actual practice of medicine at a distance -- but also to teach medicine and other subjects across the miles. The facility's ambitious program will incorporate the entire concept of learning differences through a diversity of applications including interactive teleconferencing, the production of new teaching systems, and new curricula and will sponsor scholarly exchanges which are national and global in scope."

Moody was among the first education professionals to recognize the teaching potential offered by television and similar audiovisual communications technology back in the 1970s. "The timing was just right," said Moody, describing her move into telecommunications from a background as a reading teacher and language development specialist. "It was precisely during the same time that *Sesame Street* was being developed during the late 1960s that my curiosity was growing about how children learn language."

Moody's book *Growing Up on Television* asked serious questions about the cumulative effects of children's habitual television viewing and its possible impacts on reading, imagination, social relationships, aggressive behaviors and physiological responses. First published in 1980, the book has since been released in paperback and translated into Japanese.

Moody was co-editor of the book *Television Awareness Training* and a major contributor to The New York Times Encyclopedia of Television. Moody also has written for professional and popular

PAGE 3..."DR. MOODY"

publications, such as medical journals and the *New York Times*, with articles on topics such as "Growing Up To Be Violent: A Longitudinal Study of the Development of Aggression." "Turning Children Into Television Critics," "Cable TV -- Who's Minding the Children," "Audio Tapes and Books: Perfect Partners" and "Coming to Terms With Technology."

In the early 1980s, Moody served as director of corporate development for NICKELODEON, the cable channel for children, and saw it become the first national service of its kind delivered by satellite.

Moody has gained national recognition as an authority on media and the culture at large. Her presentations have ranged from a discussion of "Health Implications of Advertising to the Very Young" for the American Academy of Pediatrics to interviews on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, the *Voice of America* with Arlene Francis, and *The Larry King Show*.

Moody was born in Chicago where her father was a newspaperman, grew up in Michigan and has spent a great deal of her adult life in New York. Now, she is thoroughly enjoying getting to know Galveston. "I have truly useful and exciting work to do at UTMB," she says, "the island itself is charming."

###

The only state-owned multicategorical hospital in Texas, the University of Texas Medical Branch's John Sealy Hospital is designed to treat any and all patients and varieties of illness. Home of the state's first medical school, founded in 1891, UTMB today consists of four schools, two institutes, seven hospitals and 144 hospital and outpatient clinics. Occupying 86 acres on the eastern end of Galveston Island, UTMB currently enrolls more than 2,800 students, employs 9,750 faculty and staff members, has awarded more than 19,000 degrees in the health science professions, and lists physical assets in excess of \$1 billion.