A partnership between

Get Involved

Thank you for your interest in the Alexander De Jong Center for Special Education. We hope you will be inspired to support this unique partnership between Trinity Christian College and Elim Christian Services as we make a significant impact on the lives of students with special needs and the talented individuals who educate them. There are multiple ways you can contribute to the Center: volunteering your time, making a monetary donation, or perhaps even funding a scholarship.

Contact the Center

For more information, please contact the Center’s director, Patti Powell at: 708.239.4843 or patti.powell@trnty.edu or visit www.trnty.edu/cse/.

All cover and background artwork is from Mrs. Kathryn Aggen’s art class at Elim Christian School. Photos are from the Summer Institute of Discovery 2006.

Monthly Events

February
• Student Council for Exceptional Children (SCEC) Board Meeting
• SCEC Fundraising Event
• Annual Trinity/Elim Christian High School Hawaiian Dance

March
• Disability Awareness Week at Trinity Christian College

April
• Council for Exceptional Children National Conference
• Annual “Reaching Beyond Potential” Celebration Dinner
• SCEC Special Education Alumni Panel

May
• Governing Board of the Center for Special Education biannual meeting

June, July, August
• Summer Institute of Discovery at Elim Christian Services

September
• Governing Board of the Center for Special Education biannual meeting

October
• Student Council for Exceptional Children (SCEC) Board Meeting
• Campus Compact Dinner and Visioning Summit (2006)
• SCEC Fall Fest with the Elim Intermediate Pod

November
• Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children National Conference
• SCEC Fundraising Event
• Elim/Timothy Christian/Illiana Christian/Chicago Christian High School Dance sponsored by the Center for Special Education
• Autism Awareness Night at Trinity Christian College

December
• SCEC Primary Pod Christmas Party

SPECIAL EVENT SEPTEMBER 2007
“Through the Roof” conference featuring Joni Eareckson Tada
Who are we?

Patti Powell, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Education
Director of the Alexander De Jong Center for Special Education

Patti Powell graduated from Calvin College with degrees in music education and elementary education. She received a master’s degree in hearing impairments from the University of Arizona and taught at Arizona’s State School for the Deaf and Blind for five years. She came to Palos Heights in 1985 and taught music at Elim Christian School for 14 years before becoming a professor at Trinity Christian College in 1999. She completed her doctorate in curriculum and instruction at the University of Illinois-Chicago in 2004. Powell and her husband, Rick, have three children. They live within walking distance of Trinity Christian College and attend Parkview Christian Church in Orland Park, Illinois.

A Shared Heritage

Elim Christian Services and Trinity Christian College are two unique Christian educational institutions whose mission statements reflect our shared heritage and Reformed faith:

“Elim Christian Services is a ministry which enables individuals with special needs to achieve their highest God-given potential.”

“Trinity Christian College is a community of Christian scholarship committed to shaping lives and transforming culture.”

We recognize a common mission to offer the highest quality instruction to prepare students for their future lives, callings, and careers. We seek to develop the fullest potential in each student’s personal life in the context of his or her relationship to God, and all of creation. As institutions with close theological, philosophical, and geographical ties, Trinity and Elim are uniquely positioned to join resources in partnership to advance the educational benefits for all of our students. We have an exceptional opportunity to increase the value of each institution’s resources by purposefully linking together in a more powerful and significant way.

Our Goals

1. Recruitment: Discovery and Preparation — to address the shortage of well equipped faculty specializing in special education, the Center will help recruit and educate students who are called to this vocation.

Programs and Activities include:
- Academic proficiency and applied excellence opportunities
- Summer Institute of Discovery at Elim Christian Services

2. Professional Development — to encourage retention of current Elim teachers, the Center will provide deliberate and focused professional development programs.

Programs and Activities include:
- Annual “Reaching Beyond Potential” Celebration Dinner
- Development of a professional lending library of special education resources
- Expanded learning opportunities for Elim teachers and staff
- Scholarships for special education majors at Trinity
- High school recruitment activities

3. Research — to augment the tools available for current and future special education teachers, the Center will initiate efforts to support new research, investigate the validity of existing or emerging research, and encourage the implementation of these new ideas into the classroom.

Programs and Activities include:
- Conference attendance to share research projects and implementation strategies and to learn current trends and strategies in special education
- Supporting Elim teachers and Trinity students in defining areas in critical need of new research

What’s in a name?

As a young girl, I vividly remember visiting the 2nd Highland Christian Reformed Church with my grandparents. My grandfather, Herman Porter, was an elder there and the ever joyful and awe inspiring Dr. Alex De Jong was the pastor.

Many years later I was thrilled to be reacquainted with “Dr. Alex” while he was serving as the chaplain at Elim Christian Services. He was always available to the students for advice, counsel, and friendship; for that they loved and admired him. I saw many of these students come to know and love Jesus during Dr. Alex’s years at Elim and his influence is still felt there today. Such is also the case with Trinity Christian College, where Dr. De Jong served faithfully as the school’s president for its first two years and remained a beloved and valuable member of the Trinity community for decades.

Dr. De Jong’s passionate involvement with both organizations makes him a role model to each of us, as well as a perfect namesake for the Center. The Center was renamed to honor Dr. De Jong in 2005.

Patti Powell, Ph.D.