



OSWEGO
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

September 1, 2005

Dear Michael Ameigh,

Re: Challenge Grant Report

Students Leila Ertel, Lauren Richmond and I are very grateful for your support of our collaborative project to study the development of reaching in young infants. During the academic year of 2004 and 2005, Ms. Ertel and Ms. Richmond worked 3 hours each week with me on research. Ms. Ertel also worked the summer of 2004 (at the very start of this project).

Goals report: From summer 2004 to the end of Spring 2005, we studied 8 babies (with most babies coming at 3 and 5 months of age). Babies 3 to 8 were studied during the academic year 2004-2005. We had hoped to reach 10 babies, but did not achieve this due to especially low recruitment success in the Spring. Coding schemes for the attention data were developed and used for the Quest 2005 presentation. Both students fully participated in Quest – collecting data, assisting with the data analysis, writing of the poster, preparing the poster, and presentation of the results. Given the timing of the Challenge Grant funding (March 30, 2005) and that both students were seniors, we were unable to locate a regional conference in time for these students to present their work.

Use of funds: Students had committed a great amount of time to this work both before and after the award and therefore clearly earned the stipend granted in this award. The camera was purchased and is working beautifully. Unfortunately, students were unable to take advantage of the travel funds. Therefore, we underutilized the funds requested, but are nevertheless very grateful for the funds and acknowledgement we received.

Dissemination of results: The data collection phase is still incomplete. In order to have a sample large enough to make some simple statistical inferences, we must continue collecting data. As you can imagine, inviting already busy parents to campus and trying to cajole sometimes fussy infants into happier states makes data collection with human infants a slow process. Preliminary results were presented at Quest. The next goals for this project are: complete the pilot sample, analyze the data, prepare a grant for external funding.

The students and I thank you again for this award. It enabled us to move the project forward and acknowledged the valuable contributions undergraduate students make to faculty research.

Respectfully submitted,

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Working as a student research assistant has given me numerous responsibilities and roles when concerning the exploration being performed during the Infant Reach study. There have been on-going training sessions with other undergraduate students in order for them to help further the research. There has also been the responsibility of collecting data from the infant participants, data reduction, and in the end, analyzing the data. This is all done while working with the faculty associate (i.e. Dr. Leigh Bacher). I have also been encouraged to design my own research question that will help develop an understanding and further the progress of the current research.

Eventually, the two student research assistants will be co-presenters at local, regional, and/or state conferences (including Quest, SUNY Oswego). This will consist of the preparation of conference material while mitigating the analysis so that students, faculty, and other researchers may be able to understand the results while using the information to formulate hypotheses, eventually leading to replication of the study. It is a valuable experience for the student, offering him/her an opportunity to meet faculty members while providing basic skills for future study.

During the Fall Semester of 2004, the student researchers helped to collect the data from the infant participants. It was important to maintain a strict set of standards when presenting the participants with their research task. This work ethic and experience has been useful for myself because it has introduced me to the world of psychology outside of the classroom. I have gained real-world experience and application while also learning to work with popular and intricate computer programs and am continually challenged by new ideas and research opportunities that present themselves almost every day.

By Lauren Richmond