

# partners

## FOR ADOLESCENTS WITH AUTISM

*Defiance College and Defiance City Schools are teaming together to help those with autism*

*By Debbie Richard, '02, '04, Assistant Director of Marketing*

Administrators of Defiance College and the Hench Autism Studies Program have developed a new partnership with Defiance City Schools, beginning with the 2009-10 school year. The Defiance City Schools will be the public school entity partnering with Defiance College to provide educational services to adolescent students with autism.

Laura Springer, director of special services for Defiance City Schools, will be supervising the classroom on the DC campus. Teaching in the classroom will be Erinn Thompson along with paraprofessional Bob Krutsch.

Defiance College has provided space for a public school classroom on the DC campus

for adolescents with autism for the past two years. During this time the College partnered with the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center.

The classroom will remain an option for adolescent students with autism within the six-county area of Northwest Ohio. Locating the classroom on a college campus provides numerous benefits to the public school students. Defiance College provides these students access to college facilities, including the Smart Fitness Center, dining hall, and library, as well as the opportunity to participate in various campus programs.

The Hench Autism Studies Program at Defiance College is designed to serve individuals and families facing challenges associated with autism with an emphasis both on academic preparation and direct service.

### MINOR IN AUTISM STUDIES

As part of the focus on academic preparation, Defiance College began offering a minor in autism studies in the fall semester of the 2009-10 academic year. The minor in autism studies, open to students in all majors, is designed to educate students about the unique needs of persons with autism and their families and is supported by the Hench Autism Studies Program.

### PARENT RESOURCES CENTER

Parents, friends and persons interested in programs serving children with autism are encouraged to attend the monthly autism meetings at Defiance College. Sponsored by the Hench Autism Studies Program, meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month in Schaufler Hall, room 106. The meetings host guest speakers as well as discuss items related to autism including school, emergency situations, healthcare options and many other topics.

Also available to the group and the public is the Hench Family Resource Center found in the Pilgrim Library on the DC campus. The resource center allows users to search the web on a computer with high speed internet access and a printer. In addition, the room is stocked with current materials pertaining to autism that can be checked out from the library

For more information about the monthly meetings, new minor, or partnership, please contact us by sending an email to [autism@defiance.edu](mailto:autism@defiance.edu). ♦



*Dr. Don Buerk, DC faculty member, chats with a family during last summer's autism camp.*