

# KU director elected to office in American Association on Mental Retardation

---

Posted: 7 August 2003

By: Karen Henry

KU News

LAWRENCE -- Ann P. Turnbull, co-director of the Beach Center on Disability and special education professor at the University of Kansas, assumed the national presidency of the American Association on Mental Retardation on May 23 at the organization's 127th annual meeting in Chicago.

The AAMR is the oldest and largest interdisciplinary professional organization in the United States concerned with mental retardation and related disabilities.

"It's a privilege to work for improved policies and programs on behalf of individuals with mental retardation and their families," Turnbull said. "KU is an ideal context given the critical mass of disability-related resources."

Turnbull and her husband, H. Rutherford "Rud" Turnbull III, who co-directs the Beach Center, are the only husband and wife to both be elected to the AAMR presidency in the organization's 100-year history. Rud Turnbull served from 1985 to 1986.

The Turnbulls were among 36 individuals honored in 1999 by a national consortium that included AAMR and six other organizations for changing the course of history for people with mental retardation in the 20th century.

Ann Turnbull, the mother of an adult son with multiple disabilities, was one of the pioneers in researching family quality of life, family-centered services and positive behavior support.

She has been the principal investigator on more than 20 federally funded research grants and has written 12 books, including three leading textbooks in the field of special education. She also has written more than 175 articles, chapters and monographs. She is a leader in the national and international family support movement.

The Beach Center on Disability is one of 12 affiliated centers of the Life Span Institute at the University of Kansas that strive to improve the quality of life for people of all ages with or without disabilities through research, training, technical assistance, consultation and direct services.