



## **North Carolina Hosts National Conference on Early Identification and Management of Hearing Loss**

Over 400 attendees from across the US gathered in Raleigh, NC, October 26-28, for “EHDI: Partnering for Progress.” EHDI, an acronym for early hearing detection and intervention, refers to the broad spectrum of systems and services needed to enable newborn hearing screening, diagnosis, and treatment for congenital and early onset hearing loss. Developed in cooperation with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) at Utah State University with support from the US Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the meeting combined three conferences: The University of North Carolina’s fifth “Biennial Pediatric Audiology Symposium,” the sixth annual “Investing in Family Support Conference,” sponsored by NCHAM, and the fourth annual “Southeastern EHDI Conference,” sponsored by eight southeastern public health programs. Those in attendance included professionals and parent leaders from across the US and nearly 100 graduate students from 14 states and the District of Columbia. Many of the student participants were LEND trainees who received travel grants from AUCD; others had funding from their universities or other sources. According to planning committee member, Dr. Jack Roush, UNC - Chapel Hill, “combining the conferences enhanced all three meetings while providing valuable opportunities for interdisciplinary interaction and networking.” Six plenary sessions featured

nationally recognized experts in audiology, early intervention, public policy, medicine, and research, on a variety of issues vital to the EHDI process.

Concurrent presentations on specialized topics allowed each conference to retain its individual identity. The meeting was the first of its kind in North Carolina to bring together the full spectrum of EHDI stakeholders and organizations in a single venue. NCHAM director Karl White noted: “The synergy and excitement created by bringing together audiologists, EHDI program staff, graduate students and families was very valuable. Participants left the meeting with great ideas, as well as new partners to help in implementing those ideas!”



LEND trainees from universities across the US traveled to North Carolina, October 26-28, 2011, to participate in *EHDI: Partnering for Progress*