

"60 MINUTES II" TO FEATURE CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION TECHNIQUES TAUGHT IN THE UNITED STATES ONLY THROUGH AQUINAS COLLEGE AND THE CONDUCTIVE LEARNING CENTER.

Grand Rapids, Mich. (December 12, 2003) – On Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2004, CBS's "60 Minutes II" 8 p.m. EST, WWMT TV-3) will feature a segment on Conductive Education, a complex educational system, which teaches children and adults with motor challenges to be more functional participants in society. Currently, Aquinas College is the only institution in North America offering a Physically and/or Otherwise Health Impaired (POHI) methodology teacher training program utilizing the conductive education method. Professionals from the [International Peto Institute](#) in Budapest, Hungary cooperatively deliver the curriculum with Aquinas faculty.

As part of the Aquinas program, students have the opportunity to travel to Hungary and study at the International Peto Institute. In addition, students spend many hours practicing the conductive education method with motor-challenged children at the [Conductive Learning Center](#) (CLC), 2428 Burton Street S.E., in Grand Rapids. While other child programs exist in the United States and Canada, the CLC operates the only program in North America that is directed and supervised by the Peto Institute.

The Conductive Learning Center was established by Aquinas College in 1998 in response to parent demand for a comprehensive, proven approach to learning and development for children with motor challenges. The Center, while partnering with the College, operates as a financially independent, private, not-for-profit school. The CLC program, which has helped over 100 children in the last five years, has been working to raise public awareness of the program.

The CLC offers Aquinas students pursuing a certificate in this highly specialized field the opportunity to apply their knowledge in a classroom environment.

"The application of learning directly to the child provides students an understanding of the conditions of the disability that book learning cannot provide," states Kathy Barker, director of Special Education Teacher Training at Aquinas. "Additionally, and equally critical, is that our students spend an immense amount of time with these children and their families and develop an awareness and appreciation of the opportunities and challenges these disabilities can present. Our students are developing into not only competent but compassionate advocates for those with motoric challenges."

A producer for CBS' "60 Minutes II" spoke with David Dvorak, executive director of the Conductive Learning Center, about the Aquinas teaching program and the CLC before the network crew traveled to the Peto Institute in Budapest last May. And while the CBS program will not specifically mention either the College or the Center, the network will provide a link to the two organizations on its Web site as a resource for people interested in learning more about the teaching program, as well as the Center for children with motor challenges.

"We're really looking forward to this report," says Dvorak. "With the incidence of cerebral palsy rising significantly over the last decade in the United States, it's

helpful for parents to know that there are programs out there that can help their kids live more successful and productive lives."

The CLC offers programs for children from infancy to adolescence. The goal of the program is to help children with cerebral palsy, spina bifida and other motor challenges to achieve optimal independence and cognitive function. The Aquinas College teacher preparation program for teaching these individuals requires eight semesters and results in both an elementary teacher certification and an endorsement in the special education area of POHI. The first group of American-trained conductor-teachers will graduate from Aquinas in May 2005.

For more information, please contact Dave Dvorak, Executive Director of the Conductive Learning Center, at (616) 632-2429.