

VCU Psychology Department

NEWSLETTER Winter 2012

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

DR. WENDY KLIEWER



Greetings from 806 W. Franklin Street!

As I write this, the spring semester has just gotten under way, and currently we are interviewing candidates for a faculty position in our health psychology doctoral program. We are excited to continue to build that doctoral program, as health research is a central focus here at VCU, and we believe we can house the premier health psychology doctoral program at an urban, public, research university. As you can see from several of the articles in this edition of the newsletter, we had a busy fall with a first-ever departmental reception honoring veterans; preparation for the launch of the only comprehensive center for ADHD research, education and service in the state of Virginia; and one of our largest departmental December graduations, with more than 1,200 graduates, family and friends attending. This year we began a new tradition of presenting all of our graduates with uniquely designed T-shirts. As you can read about in this newsletter, we have launched a T-shirt design contest that we hope will result in some fabulous T-shirt options for our 2012 graduates.

Beginning with this newsletter, we are introducing a new feature, "Ask the CPSD," where you can submit questions related to mental health and treatment issues. Be sure to give us your feedback on this and other features of the newsletter, as we constantly are working to address the needs of our readers.

Our students are at the core of what we do and we are pleased to highlight an outstanding undergraduate student in this issue in addition to Man Yee Ho, a Fulbright dissertation award recipient from Hong Kong who is spending the year in our department. During Alumni Month this April, we will have several events that you will hear about shortly. We hope that many alumni will be able to visit the campus – especially if you haven't been here in a while.

Best wishes for a great spring, and we hope to see you on campus sometime soon.

Wendy Kliewer

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DEPARTMENT NEWS AND UPDATES



Congratulations to Dace Svikis, Ph.D.,

newly announced recipient of an International Partnerships Major Initiatives Award for her research proposal, "Fostering Multidisciplinary Translational Research in the Study of Women with Substance Abuse and Intimate Partner Violence" to be conducted in partnership with [St. Petersburg State University](#) in St. Petersburg, Russia. The [Global Education Office](#) review panel noted the proposal's "...strong training and research components, the integration of research and education, the track record and previous collaboration of the investigators, the level of support and direct involvement from St. Petersburg State University."

Look for a feature article in a future edition of the newsletter about this exciting new research collaboration.

Kevin Allison, Ph.D., a professor in our department as well as in the [L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs](#), has joined President Michael Rao's leadership team as academic assistant. He will provide support to Rao on academic issues specific to the [Office of the President](#). Allison also serves as associate dean for community activities for the [College of Humanities and Sciences](#) as well as associate director for the [VCU Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development](#), which is housed in the department of psychology.



Tom Eissenberg, Ph.D., of the [biopsychology program](#), recently began a multiyear invited membership on the Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration. Eissenberg's primary area of research is the behavioral pharmacology of drugs of abuse, focusing primarily on nicotine/tobacco. His current work, funded by the National Institutes of Health, involves 1) developing laboratory methods to evaluate potential reduced exposure products for tobacco users, and 2) understanding the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and effects of waterpipe tobacco smoking.

The department bid farewell to longtime staffer **Annie Gordon** in November. We want to extend our thanks to Annie for her years of service and for helping us keep our fiscal operations running smoothly. We wish her well in her new position at Massey Cancer Center!



Wendy Kliever, Ph.D. (right), received special recognition recently from the National Scholarship Office and the Office of Research Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program in honor of her undergraduate mentorship of Nicole Constance (left), National Science Foundation Research Fellow for 2009.

DEPARTMENT NEWS AND UPDATES



Jody Davis, Ph.D., and graduate student, Anthony Coy, both of the [social psychology program](#), recently published research with collaborator Dr. Ben Le describing the relationship between individuals' commitment to the natural environment and their willingness to sacrifice for the environment (e.g., recycle, purchase energy-efficient products). Their research examined commitment to the environment, defined as psychological attachment and long-term orientation to the natural world. They theorize that commitment emerges from structural interdependence with the environment and leads to pro-environmental behaviors.

In December, a summary of their research was selected to be featured by the European Commission's environmental news service for policy makers. [View the research summary published by the European Commission news service.](#)



Undergraduate Research Event a Success

On Nov. 14, the [PSYUGRAD advising office](#) hosted its first research internship fair. The organizers' goal was to advertise the many research opportunities the department offers to their undergraduate majors. More than 75 students attended the event—a huge success that far exceeded expectations. Students reported afterwards that the event was very informative and helpful. The PSYUGRAD advising office aims to help undergraduate majors be knowledgeable about all the ways they can enhance their Bachelor of Science in psychology. Events like this one are a good start, and we hope to continue to build on this experience to better serve our students.

An American flag flew over the Kabul, Afghanistan, airport this past Independence Day in honor of Dr. Steven Danish's extensive work with veterans.

Danish's Army colleague, Col. Thomas Morgan III, presented him with the flag and a certificate of thanks this fall.

For more information on Danish's work with veterans, click [HERE](#).



REFLECTIONS ON PHOTOGRAPHY, SCUBA DIVING AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

MAN YEE HO, VISITING FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR

Man Yee Ho is a visiting Fulbright Scholar from Hong Kong. She is working with [Everett Worthington, Ph.D.](#) for the year on research examining various aspects of interpersonal forgiveness.

Being an amateur photographer, I view the world differently, exploring it (both near and far) through my camera lens. I am also a psychologist, binding me to people and cultures.

When I started learning photography, I came across technical terms used by photographers, such as aperture, shutter speed and ISO: three settings that seem very important in photography because they control how much light can pass through the camera lens. Having these settings right does not, however, guarantee a breathtaking photograph because photography is both art and science.

Photographers, nevertheless, must learn to master the scientific part of the medium to express fully their thoughts and emotions. Does it sound like conducting psychological research?

I like taking my camera with me when I travel and particularly enjoy landscape photography because it helps me to appreciate the beauty of nature. Pictures of mountains, sea, sky and sunset and, yes, Hong Kong fill my photo albums. I was born and brought up in Hong Kong—an extremely busy metropolis, where most people have little time to enjoy the beauty of the earth because of busyness. Through my photographs, however, people can experience the natural beauty of Hong Kong as well as her surrounding high-rise buildings.

Apart from photography, I also like outdoor adventure activities. One of my favorite is scuba diving. I've been blessed to dive in some of the most exotic dive locations in the world, including Australia (Great Barrier Reef, Stradbroke Island), Indonesia (Manado), Malaysia (Sipadan), Maldives (Sun Island), Philippines (Puerto Galera) and Thailand (Koh Tao).

The pleasures of scuba diving are many: among them, the peace and quiet underwater when I can hear only the sound of



my own breathing and the acquired ability to calm myself and to breathe slowly because I don't want my dive tank to run out of air before I encounter giant sea creatures such as sharks, manta rays and big green turtles.

Sometimes I even share oxygen with my dive buddy when one of the other dive tanks runs out of air. Sharing oxygen with another diver underwater is a very special experience that reminds me how easily we take things for granted, even the oxygen we breathe every day, and as a result, I have become more grateful for what I have in my life.

As a social and cross-cultural psychologist and a photographer, I have come to understand how people see things differently through different lenses and how different cultural up-brings and practices can shape these lenses. When I live in other cultures, I learn to appreciate my own culture more and also to value the differences I see in the other cultures. The beauty of human nature is that we can

all share joy, love and friendships without boundaries (and can even share oxygen underwater without any verbal communication). For this reason, I'm fascinated by how positive psychology helps us understand the virtues and strengths of human beings.

My research interest lies at the intersection of forgiveness, personality and well-being, and culture. Specifically, my research here will focus on intergroup forgiveness in the political realm and how sensation could possibly affect interpersonal forgiveness.

I offer my thanks to the Psychology Department of Virginia Commonwealth University for hosting me during my research visit and enabling me to experience American culture. My special thanks go to [Everett Worthington, Ph.D.](#) and [Wendy Kliewer, Ph.D.](#) With their support and guidance, my research work here is going smoothly and effectively.

Readers: Please send your thoughts, requests, reflections and suggestions regarding this newsletter issue to our editor at jlelswick@vcu.edu.

Thanks for your input!

PSYCHOLOGY HONORS VETERANS DAY

Courtesy of VCU News Center

Psychology held a reception Nov. 7 to honor department members for their military service and support of military families.

The reception, held at the Robertson Alumni House, acknowledged two dozen faculty, staff and students who are either serving in the military now or who are veterans, are supporting a close family member with military experience, are planning a military career or are working to improve the lives of servicemen and women and their families.

“What we’re doing here tonight highlights what we’re trying to celebrate – not just today, not just this week but every day,” said Steven Danish, Ph.D., professor of psychology and master of ceremonies.

Wendy Kliewer, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Psychology Department, recognized each of the honorees.

“Over the past several years, the Psychology Department has been increasingly involved in work with veterans, from the assessment and evaluation efforts of our Center for Psychological Services and Development to the graduate course on veterans issues taught by Dr. Steve Danish,” Kliewer said.

Each of the honorees was presented a token as a way to thank them for their service. The tokens were similar to the military practice of offering challenge coins to reward military personnel for excellence.

“Through these activities we have come to realize how many of our students, faculty, and staff are touched by issues that affect veterans,” Kliewer said. “We wanted to honor veterans and family members of veterans on this day of remembrance - to let them know that we appreciate the service they have provided to our country.”



Col. Thomas Morgan III (left); Virginia Department of Veterans Services Commissioner Paul Galanti; Psychology Professor Steven Danish, Ph.D., and Psychology professor and chair Wendy Kliewer, Ph.D., participated in the ceremony. Photos by Mike Porter, VCU Office of Communications and Public Relations.

Col. Thomas Morgan III of Chesterfield spoke during the reception. Last spring, members of VCU’s chapter of Psi Chi, the international honor society in psychology, collected food, toiletries and other supplies for Morgan’s Validation Transition Team, which was serving in Afghanistan at the time. (Additional details of that effort can be found [here](#).)

“The impact of what Psi Chi did on soldiers and their families was considerable,” Morgan said. “But I was not surprised at the effort because VCU supports its veterans.”

Morgan presented Psi Chi members with a U.S. flag that was flown in Kabul, Afghanistan.



Wendy Kliewer, Ph.D. (left), professor and chair of the Psychology Department, presented Heather Dela Cruz, a senior psychology major, with a token of appreciation. Upon graduation, Cruz will be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserves. Her father (right) is in the U.S. Navy as an active-duty senior chief with 24 years of service.

Visit www.psychology.vcu.edu/about/news/index.shtml#veterans for more information about those who were honored.

NEW REGULAR FEATURE: CPSD CORNER

Article by CPSD Director, Leticia Flores, Ph.D.

NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT

"Pardon our dust....." This December and January, the CPSD underwent some major renovations as well as a makeover. The upstairs labs on the north and south wings of the Lombardy



Stacey Maples, CPSD operations director

building will be getting some long-awaited structural and cosmetic improvements for the current research faculty and their students. The first floor of the building will be renovated to allow for separate entrances for Heather Jones,' Ph.D., new research lab and the classroom on the north end of the building. The classroom will also be expanded to allow for larger classes. Finally, all the therapy rooms in the CPSD proper will be outfitted with new, multipurpose furniture to provide better conditions for testing as well as therapy training and services. All of this work is intended to help with the current and future expansion and integration of research, pedagogical and clinical activities ongoing at the Lombardy building. All of the contracting and interior design has been directed by Stacey Maples (left), who has done a superb job of juggling all the moving parts in the process. Thanks, Stacey!



The CPSD is located at
612 N. Lombardy St.

WHETHER FOR INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES OR ORGANIZATIONS, THE TRAINED THERAPISTS AT CPSD PROVIDE A RANGE OF SERVICES—FROM COUNSELING TO CONSULTING— THAT HELP PEOPLE FOCUS ON THE LIVES THEY WANT.

NEED SOME ADVICE?

SEND THE CPSD YOUR ANONYMOUS QUESTION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH OR TREATMENT ISSUES BY CLICKING [HERE](#).

IN AN UPCOMING ISSUE, ONE OF THE CPSD'S EXPERTS OR EXPERTS-IN-TRAINING WILL SELECT A QUESTION, WRITE A RESPONSE AND PUBLISH IT FOR OUR READERS!



ALUMNI UPDATES

WHAT'S *YOUR* UPDATE? CLICK [HERE](#)

1950s

Dr. Charles Noblin (M.S. '57) After receiving his master's at VCU, he entered Louisiana State University where he received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology. He retired from academics in 2002 after 40+ years of full-time appointments at LSU, UNC Greensboro, Rutgers Medical School, VCU (as first director of doctoral training in clinical psychology), Virginia Tech (as department chair) and University of Southern Mississippi where he served as director of doctoral training in clinical psychology, director of the psychology clinic, chair of the psychology department and professor. His clinical and research interests have been in the areas of clinical and experimental psychology and the training of clinical psychologists for service in the public sector. Noblin still holds current psychology licensures in New Jersey, North Carolina, and Mississippi.

Noblin's primary avocational interest is in antique art glass and, in particular, French and Czechoslovakian. In fact, for the past five years he has served as a research and identification specialist in the



Richard T. Robertson Alumni House

field of antiques. His other avocational interests include music of the big band era, Dixieland jazz, Southern gospel music, Southern literature, LSU football and VCU basketball. He resides 2 ½ miles from downtown Blacksburg and the Virginia Tech campus with his wife, Alice, and his rescued Affenpinscher dog named Fancy.

1970s

Dr. Leslie Montgomery (M.S. '71) retired from private practice after 37 years and now works part time as a psychological consultant to Disability Determination Services. She is also the national exam coordinator for the clinical division of the American Board of Professional Psychology.

Diane Sandler Marcus (B.S. '73) went to work in human resources after leaving VCU. After marrying Randy in 1981 and starting a family in 1989, she left her career to become a stay-at-home mom.

In 2007, Randy passed away leaving her a young widow with two teenage daughters. After learning to accept life without a husband and helping her daughters do the same, she took a volunteer training program offered by the hospice organization in her area that helped her through her grief journey. Today, she volunteers as a facilitator for a spousal loss group of men and women who are learning to cope just as she had to do. She reports that working in this capacity allows her the opportunity to give back in a way that yields rewards far beyond the workplace. Marcus is now in a relationship with Dave, another wonderful man she met in her bereavement group who also lost his spouse in 2007.

Diane Woodcock (B.S. '74) won the 2010 Vernice Quebodeaux International Poetry Prize for Women for her first



full-length poetry collection (just released by Little Red Tree Publishing). Her three chapter books include "In the Shade of the Sidra Tree," a nominee for the Library of Virginia Poetry Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award (Finishing Line Press), "Mandala" (Foothills Publishing) and "Travels of a Gwai Lo"—the title poem of which was nominated for a Pushcart Prize by Toadlily Press.

In 2011, she received the Distinguished Achievements in Research Award from Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, and her poem, "Dugong," won first place in the Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Poetry Contest, held in conjunction with Qatar's second annual Marine Festival. In 2009, she received first, second and third prizes from Artists Embassy International and an International Publication Award from Atlanta Review.

Recipient of the 2007 Creekwalker Poetry Prize, she has had poems published in Best New Poets 2008 (selected by Mark Strand), Nimrod, Crab Orchard Review, Portland Review and other journals and anthologies. In May 2010, her poetry was exhibited with Li Chevalier's paintings at the Today Art Museum in Beijing, China. She is a Ph.D. candidate in creative writing and poetry at Lancaster University and has been teaching at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar since 2004 when she

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received her M.F.A. in creative writing from VCU. Before living in Qatar, she lived and worked in Tibet, Macau and Thailand.

Dr. Greg Duncan (Ph.D. '79) has retired from the Navy Reserves after 35 years. He is currently a clinical professor at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

1980s

Sandra Harper (B.S. '80) received her M.A. in 1982 in clinical community psychology at Texas Southern University of Houston, Texas. She has worked at a private psychiatric hospital in Houston and an outpatient psychiatric clinic in Brooklyn, NY. For the past 18 years she has worked in various divisions of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene—Bureaus of School and Adolescent Health, HIV Program Services, and STD Control, as well as the department's AIDS Hotline, and Call Center.

Tracy Seward Munoz (B.S. '80) has continued to live in Norfolk since graduating from VCU. She enrolled at ODU soon thereafter and graduated in 1982 with her M.S. in community health education. She obtained a job as a health educator with the Norfolk Area Health



Bird House,
820 W. Franklin St.

Education Center. She married Carlos Munoz in 1983 and had five wonderful children together, ranging in age now from 15 to 26 (four boys and one girl). In 1985, she started working for the American Cancer Society as a health educator and was with them for 21 years. She left the ACS for a promotion to wellness coordinator with Norfolk Public Schools in 2006 where she was responsible for developing and implementing a new employee wellness program that has been growing and flourishing successfully for the past five years.

Dr. Mary Wells (B.S. '80) completed her Ph.D. at The George Washington University in clinical psychology in 1990 and worked at VCU Health System for 2 ½ years with a pain clinic. After, she was in private practice until 2000 when she joined the staff at Sheltering Arms in the medical psychology department. She has served as director there since 2008.

Dr. Shawn Burn (B.S. '82) is a psychology professor at Cal Poly State University-San Luis Obispo. He is the author of three books and numerous research articles. His areas of expertise include the psychology of environmental behavior, group dynamics and gender. He teaches social psychology, applied social psychology, group dynamics and cross-cultural women's and gender studies. Burn is married with a son and three stepchildren.

Rosemary Schubmehl Marcus (B.S. '82) received her M.S. in occupational therapy from VCU in 1984. She has lived in upstate New York since 1985 working as a school-based occupational therapist and living with her husband Steve who is the elementary school principal in their "village" of Clinton. They have two daughters, Juliana, 25, and Madison, 22. Juliana has a master's degree in applied behavioral analysis and just returned to Boston after living in Abu Dhabi for three years. Throughout this time she has been working with children with autism for the New England Center for Children.

**WE WANT TO HEAR
FROM YOU, TOO !**

Click [HERE](#) and give us
your update to feature
in our next newsletter.

Madison graduated from Binghamton University in May 2011 and is currently attending Cordoza Law School in New York City. "It was great having them both home for Thanksgiving."

Dr. James McDonough (Ph.D. '84) is in his 20th year at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services in Richmond and has served as director of its Criminal Justice Research Center since 1995. The research center conducts research on all parts of the criminal justice system in Virginia—law enforcement, prosecution, corrections, victims' programs and others as directed by the governor, General Assembly and secretary of public safety.

McDonough reports that the experience he gained and the statistics/research methods skills he developed in the biopsychology program were excellent preparation for conducting and later supervising research programs. He recalls Joe Porter being "merciless" when critiquing his use of statistics and grammar in writing research papers and grant applications but can now report that the hard work has paid off.

McDonough is in his 20th year of marriage to **Elizabeth Carter**, also a VCU psychology Ph.D. graduate ('86), who now holds a similar position as a research director with the Virginia Department of Health Professions in Richmond. They

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have two children, ages 16 and 14, and live in Prince George, Va.

Kim Smith (B.S. '88) is working full time as a mental health case manager with Henrico County. She works with adults with chronic, long-term mental illness.

1990s

Todd L'Herrou (B.S. '90) is the executive director of a youth sports organization and in November celebrated his 21st wedding anniversary to his wife, Sharon, whom he met through psychology classes at VCU. Although he does not currently work in the field, his younger son is taking AP Psychology in high school this year, and Todd is having fun running some group study sessions for him and his classmates.

Cynthia Ruziak Blankenship (B.S. '91) is an educator with the Math Science Innovation Center in Richmond. She is married with two children.

Janice Malone Lewellen (B.S. '91) is currently widowed, retired and living in Colorado.

Dr. Mary Fenerty Schumann (Ph.D. '91) enjoys a combination of roles as a psychologist in practice, teaching and research. She has a small private practice in Vienna, Va. and has been learning more about using mindfulness techniques in psychotherapy. She teaches as adjunct faculty for the Department of Psychology, the School of Recreation, Health and Tourism (teaching sports psychology) and the Department of Counseling and Development at George Mason University.

Schumann recently joined the Army STARRS research project as a clinical interviewer for the Henry Jackson Foundation. They are conducting a validation study of the All Army Survey using the SCID. The project is one of several looking at risk and resiliency factors related to suicidality. Mary reports she is getting a brush-up on her diagnostic skills from their trainer, Michael First, from Columbia.

In family news, she and Rob recently sent their first daughter off to college at Yale. Their second daughter is a junior in high school and is looking at colleges. They are both adjusting to the beginnings of an empty nest, but they are excited about this new phase in their lives at the same time.



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Six doctoral program alumni from the '90s found time recently to catch up over lunch at the American Psychological Association's annual convention for 2011 in Washington, D.C. *(See updates within)*

Emily Carter Dunton (left, back row), Kristin Perrone-McGovern, Richard Lee

Cheri Marmarosh (left, front row), Wanda Collins, Steve Sandage

Dr. Richard Lee (Ph.D. '96) is an associate professor in the department of psychology at the University of Minnesota. He is the current president of the Asian American Psychological Association and serves as associate editor of the APA

Division 45 journal, "Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology."

Dr. Cheri Marmarosh (Ph.D. '96) is associate professor of psychology at the George Washington University and is in private practice in D.C. She is an active member of Division 49 (Group and Group Psychotherapy) and a Fellow of Division 29 (Psychotherapy) of the APA where she is involved in advanced training and supervision. Marmarosh is also a faculty member at the Institute of Contemporary Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis and serves on the steering committee for the couples psychotherapy program in the Washington Center for Psychoanalysis. She lives in Fairfax with her husband, daughter, Audrey, and stepdaughter, Hanna.

Dr. Steve Sandage

(Ph.D. '97) is a professor at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minn. He is in clinical practice with Arden Woods Psychological Services and shares an office with wife, Danielle.

Dr. Wanda Bryant Collins (Ph.D. '98) is director of the Counseling Center at American University in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Emily Carter Dunton (Ph.D. '98) has transitioned into private practice after working at the University of Delaware's Counseling Center and at American University's Counseling Center. She enjoys splitting time between an office in Washington and an office in Alexandria. While her focus is

primarily clinical, she does still enjoy guest-lecturing occasionally at local universities. One perk of the D.C. office, she reports, is that she shares it with her longtime VCU buddy, Cheri Marmarosh!

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As for family, she and her husband, Stephen, say they are blessed with two wonderful and active little boys, Harrison, 7, and Samuel, 4.

2000s

Jermaine D. Berry (B.S. '00) is in the Army living, teaching and learning.

M. David Allen (B.S. '01) works for the MITRE Corporation in McLean, Va., and has two young children at home.

Jaime Swingley (B.S. '01) received a master's in Education from Regent University in 2004 and has been a fourth-grade teacher in Hanover County for four years. She also serves as director of new faces at Modelogic Wilhelmina in

Richmond.

Alison Spillane (B.S. '06) married in June 2008 and completed her M.S.W. in May 2010. Her career concentration is in international social work, refugee services and nonprofit management

Andrea Wilson (B.S. '07) is a marketing coordinator for MEP Engineering Design Firm in Richmond. She also has a certificate in professional meeting and event planning from the University of Virginia.

Dr. Karen Mitchell (Ph.D. '09) completed her internship in health psychology at the Cleveland Department of Veterans Affairs in 2009. While on internship, she married **Brian Smith**, Ph.D., another VCU alum ('01). Two weeks after graduating, she moved to Boston and began in

her current positions as a clinical research psychologist in the Women's Health Sciences Division at VA Boston Healthcare System and as assistant professor of psychiatry at Boston University. Her research focuses on eating disorders, obesity, PTSD and psychiatric genetics.

2010s

Megan Marie Blumenthal (B.S. '10) is a project coordinator at the Department of Social and Behavioral Health at VCU.

Dawn Lee (B.S. '10) is working on her Master's of Social Work at VCU. She is happy to still be a part of the VCU family and looks forward to collaborating with the psychology department again in the near future.



Heather Jones, Ph.D.

NEW! CENTER FOR ADHD

The Center for ADHD Research, Education, and Service was established at VCU this fall by two new clinical psychology faculty members who will serve as co-directors, Heather Jones, Ph.D. and Joshua Langberg, Ph.D. The mission of the Center for ADHD is to improve the lives of families of children with

ADHD in the

community through scholarship, educational activities and the provision of evidence-based clinical services. This specialty clinic officially launched in January through the Center for Psychological Services and Development, which offers a number of evidence-based services for families, including comprehensive assessments, behavioral parent training and classroom interventions. The focus of treatment is dependent on the families' needs, but often includes strategies to improve child compliance, the quality of the parent-child relationship and aspects of school functioning, such as organization or homework problems. All services offered through the CPSD are implemented under supervision by counseling and clinical psychology graduate students in training. Jones and Langberg serve as supervisors of the ADHD assessment and treatment services.



In addition to offering clinical services, faculty and students in the Center for ADHD are also actively involved in research. These research studies often provide a unique opportunity for families in the community to receive assessments and/or treatment at no cost. This semester, Jones is conducting a study comparing parenting thoughts

and behaviors of African-American mothers of children with and without ADHD in order to advance understanding about within-group differences in parenting. Langberg is running a number of school-based research studies focused on seeking

ways to improve the academic performance of youth with ADHD. Consistent with VCU's mission to better serve the community, Jones, Langberg and the students working with the Center for ADHD regularly conduct educational in-services for community groups, schools, and other organizations about the recognition and treatment of attention and behavior problems in children and adolescents. For more information on the Center for ADHD's clinical or research services, please visit www.adhd.vcu.edu/.



Joshua Langberg, Ph.D.



T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

CALLING ALL DESIGN-ORIENTED PSYCHOLOGY MAJORS

Psychology invites you to submit an original design to be printed on our first departmental T-shirt. The winning design will be printed on the shirt alongside the name of the designer (think bragging rights!).

A portion of the proceeds from shirt sales will go toward building undergraduate scholarship opportunities in our department.

T-shirt sales are planned for early spring. Please contact Katharine Stoddard at vardemankf@vcu.edu for more information or to submit your design.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

ASHVIN SOOD

Article by Dorothy Fillmore and Katharine Stoddard



Ashvin Sood, senior psychology major, has always been fascinated by the field of mental health. Ashvin comes from a family of psychiatrists, which has given him the opportunity to really understand how the brain works and how our environment as well as our genes shape our behaviors. Also, coming from the collectivist culture of India, Ashvin believes that he is beginning to understand how his cultural views impact his views on mental health. Ashvin has learned that mental illness in India is stigmatized with a sense of shame and guilt. He wants to change this. Therefore his decisions to study psychology and accept a seat in the guaranteed medical school program at VCU were easy to make.

As a psychology student, he has been particularly drawn to the subfields of developmental psychology and biopsychology. These interests seem to stem from several positive experiences in related coursework. For instance, he got an in-depth look at how anti-psychotics alter and maintain behavior when he participated in our 494 research internship course with [Joe Porter, Ph.D.](#), director of [biopsychology](#). Ashvin also reports a rich experience under the instruction of [Barbara Myers, Ph.D.](#), director of [developmental psychology](#), when he learned about humans' adaptations to their environments and cultures over the lifespan in her course on lifespan development.

This semester, he has enrolled in [Semester at Sea](#), an effort in furthering his understanding of his own and other cultures. In this program he will be traveling to countries such as India, China, Ghana and Japan to study different perspectives on mental health. He hopes the semester abroad will give him a more global view on how mental health is perceived in various cultures and what he can do on an individual level to break the stigma that bars people from receiving mental health assistance.

Three years from now, he hopes to be in medical school learning the proper techniques to heal someone from physical and mental health ailments. Like his parents before him, Ashvin plans to attend VCU School of Medicine to become a psychiatrist. His goal upon completion of his degree will be to travel the world to help those living in societies where mental health services are especially stigmatized.

"VCU is giving me the opportunity to begin my journey to help others through psychiatry. I am grateful for the help the department of psychology has given me and I look forward to the future classes that I am going to take."

CONGRATULATIONS, DECEMBER 2011 GRADUATES!

Doctor of Philosophy

Ruth C. Brown
Lindsey M. Dorflinger
Andrea Konig
Skye M. Margolies

Master of Science

Cassidy C. Arnold
David Guion
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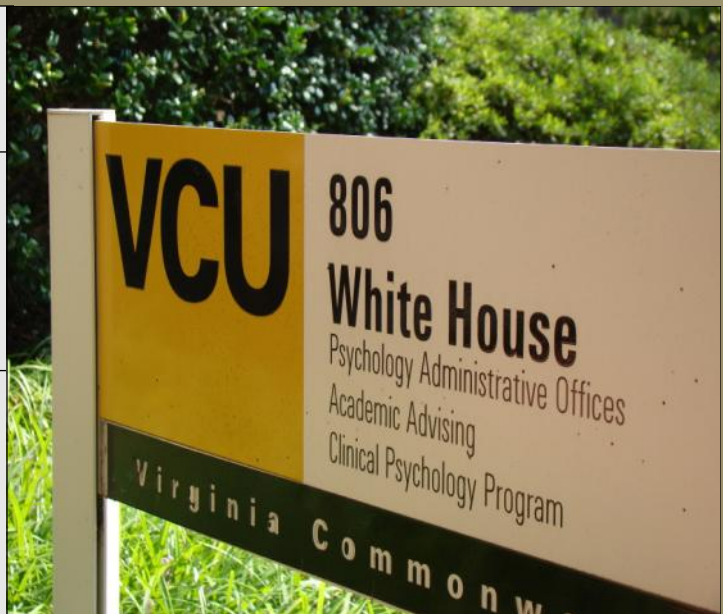
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Thanks to Melanie Irvin (B.S. '96/MC) in
Development and Alumni Relations
for her editing assistance!



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