

THE SELF MONITOR

The Official Alumni Newsletter of the Psychology Department of the State University of New York at New Paltz

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Welcome to the third annual newsletter dedicated to the alumni of the Psychology Department at the State University of New York at New Paltz. Fostering success among our students is pretty much goal #1 for the Psychology Faculty – and this newsletter has become a great mechanism for showcasing all your successes.

The Self Monitor provides a forum for highlighting work of our various alumni as well as an opportunity to share information about departmental news so as to keep folks in the loop.

The Psychology Department has a **Facebook** presence now, so if you are on Facebook, please

find and join the groups “SUNY New Paltz Psych Alumni” and the “Psychology Community at SUNY New Paltz.” We currently have over 120 members between these two groups and they continue to grow.

I just finished my first year as department chair and am glad to report that the academic year was very exciting, fun, and productive. Our department sponsored several major events - including hosting several important guest speakers, our annual barbecue, and our annual kickball game – along with three major conferences on our campus! Many of our students co-presented work at scholarly conferences in locations near and far (from Boston to San Diego). And our enrollments in our undergraduate programs and graduate programs are up – making us, by some criteria, the department serving the most students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (currently tied with English).

The success of our department corresponds precisely to the success of our alumni. So please don't be shy in reaching out and staying in touch. Want to be featured in a future newsletter? Let us know.

Glenn Geher (geherg@newpaltz.edu).
Chair, Psychology Department
www.newpaltz.edu/psychology

2010 Alumni Weekend – October 15-17. Glenn Geher will lead the alumni hikers into the gunks on the 16th. Don't miss it!
<http://www.newpaltz.edu/alumni/reunion/>

IDMH (Institute for Disaster Mental Health)

By Karla Vermeulen, coordinator of IDMH

It's been the busiest year ever for the Institute for Disaster Mental Health (IDMH). In addition to Director James Halpern, Ph.D., and Graduate Assistant Rachael Bisceglie, the staff now includes two New Paltz psychology graduate alumni. IDMH Coordinator Karla Vermeulen received her MA in General Psychology here in 2005, and just completed her Ph.D. at Fordham in April. Research Assistant Meredith Johnson received her MS from the New Paltz Mental Health Counseling program in December 2009, and is now working part-time at the Institute, helping with event planning and oversight, research, and a number of other projects. Both Karla and Meredith were IDMH Graduate Assistants while they were working on their master degrees, and following that tradition, the plotting has already begun for ways to keep Rachael on the team after she completes her MS in the School Counseling program next year.

IDMH is also producing alumni: There have now been 48 students who have graduated with the undergraduate Minor in Disaster Studies, plus a record number of 47 are currently enrolled in the minor, which includes a semester of fieldwork at the American Red Cross, Emergency Management Offices, and other disaster response organizations. A number of the graduates have gone on to disaster-related positions with the American Red Cross or serving in AmeriCorps. Any alumni who completed the minor are encouraged to let IDMH know what you're up to: idmh@newpaltz.edu.

The Institute hosted a number of events this year. In a slight change from the usual annual conference format, in March IDMH held a two-day professional training in Cognitive Processing Therapy, considered one of the most effective treatments for posttraumatic stress disorder. The training was presented by the therapy's creator, Patricia Resick, Ph.D. In addition to about 400 people who attended in person, the training was also successfully webcast to 26 remote locations around New York State and beyond, so in all close to 1,000 mental health practitioners are now qualified to deliver this badly needed treatment for veterans and survivors of disasters and other traumatic experiences.

Another highlight was a visit in March from Lieutenant Jack Cambria, Commanding Officer of the New York City Police Department Hostage Negotiation Team. Lt. Cambria spoke with students in the Disaster Psychology and Practicum classes in the afternoon, then in the evening he addressed several hundred members of the

Jane Lehman wins presidential employee of the year award for New Paltz Classified Staff!

Anyone who knows Jane knows that this award is highly deserved. Since joining our department in 2008, Jane has quickly developed a reputation as one of the campus' most capable, helpful, and supportive employees. As department secretary, she makes 100% sure that everything is done right! Take a minute to congratulate Jane on this well-deserved honor when you get a chance (lehmanj@newpaltz.edu)



Jane Lehman – Presidential Award Winner

campus and local communities, discussing the challenges of using negotiation to avoid violence in highly tense situations: "We try to find alternative methods so that we can preserve life, ours included, by using talking techniques as opposed to tactical techniques." His stories of days-long negotiations with armed criminals had the audience rapt.

Next up for IDMH: planning for the 2011 conference, which will center on the approaching tenth anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001.



Lt. Jack Cambria speaks on the topic of hostage negotiations

Christina Norman Wins Panman Award

Christina Norman, 24, a graduating senior, is the 2010 recipient of the Dr. Richard Panman award. The award honors Dr. Richard Panman and his contributions to the psychology community as well as the New Paltz community, and his lasting impact on his friends and family. Each year, since 2000, the award has recognized between one to three outstanding students.

Christina was a psychology major with a concentration in industrial organizational psychology and a business minor. In her immediate future, she wants to take a year off to find a job in the human research field. Later, she wants to apply to grad school for the 2011 fall semester at the competitive schools of New York University or the Chicago School of Psychology. In the long-term, she aspires to work as an industrial organizational psychologist in a marketing and research firm or as a human-resources professional.

At New Paltz, Christina participated in Psi Chi as the treasurer, and enjoyed the real-life experience opportunities it provided as well as the personal

relationships she was able to develop with her professors. She recommends that students take advantage of real-life, applicable opportunities because the value of getting out of the classroom is enormous. Because of this, she said some of her favorite classes were more unconventional classes like Group Behavior or Seminar in Psychology.

Christina started to plan further in her career the more she got involved in psychology. While she originally had planned to just do a masters, she now is considering getting a doctoral degree.

Congratulations Christina Norman on all your hard work and dedication to the field of psychology here at New Paltz.



Christina Norman receiving Outstanding Student Award from SUNY New Paltz President Steven Poskanzer

NEEPS Conference 2010

By Rachael Carmen, winner of 2009 Panman award and current MA student in the New Paltz Evolutionary Psychology lab

The annual NorthEastern Evolutionary Psychology Society (NEEPS) conference was held on March 25th-28th at its birthplace at SUNY New Paltz, in New Paltz, New York this year. The society was originally thought up by Dr. Glenn Geher and a few of his students in 2006. What started as a small society, geared toward catering primarily to the Northeastern portion of the United States, turned out to attract people from all over the globe, including NEEPSters from Austria, Germany, England and Canada! The conference itself had record-breaking attendance, with numbers well above what NEEPS had seen in the past.

This year, the conference launched on a Thursday, (one day earlier than usual) to accommodate for the first

workshop meeting of the Feminist Evolutionary Psychology Society (proof that NEEPS is still in the process of expanding). That night, NEEPSers gathered in Elting Gym and played Kickball to kick off the conference!



NEEPS Kickball Players in Elting Gym

Friday began with a crowded poster session in which attendees were able to view the broad scope that encompasses Evolutionary Psychology. Though the society is technically called a Psychology society, there were presentations representing a broad array of fields, including Biology and Anthropology, among others.



NEEPS volunteers: Hidetoshi Hama and Nicole (Gigi) Giordano

Friday night, NEEPSers got the pleasure of attending a Keynote lecture by world-renowned biologist, Dr. Marlene Zuk (which was also open to the public) entitled “Sex and the Scala Naturae” in which she discussed deeply entrenched male biases that permeate research across sexually reproducing species.



NEEPS volunteers and members of New Paltz’s Evolutionary Psychology Lab (from left): Rachael Carmen, Nicole Giordano, & Haley Dillon

NEEPS’ second keynote address, given by Harvard anthropologist Dr. Richard Wrangham, was similarly compelling. This talk, titled, “How Cooking Made us Human,” addressed Wrangham’s theories regarding the onset of cooking and how it changed the evolution of humans.

In sum, this conference was a huge success, largely due to the tireless efforts of so many New Paltz student and faculty volunteers including Alice Andrews, Kim Belmonte, Mike Camargo, Rachael Carmen, Matt Curren, Haley Dillon, Ben Crosier, Nicole Giordano (NEEPS 2010’s official Volunteer Organizer and Superstar), Hidetoshi Hama, Laura Johnsen, Abbey Kurtz, and Heather Mangione

As of this past June, Glenn Geher has stepped from the position of NEEPS president to NEEPS past-president. The new NEEPS president, Rosemarie Sokol Chang, is also an instructor in the Psychology Department (currently teaching a section of Psychology of Personality this summer for SUNY New Paltz).

Next year’s annual conference will be at Binghamton University with the Director of Evolutionary Studies (EvoS) at Binghamton, David Sloan Wilson, as primary organizer. For more information, check out: www.neepsociety.com

Student Research Conference Returns to New Paltz

By Doug Maynard

In April 2007, the Psi Chi chapter of SUNY New Paltz organized and hosted a regional student research conference, entitled the Mid-Hudson Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference. After being held for two years on the campus of Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, the Psi Chi chapter brought the conference back home to New Paltz for its 4th year on Saturday, April 24th, 2010. Since its first year, the conference, now called the **Mid-Hudson Psychology Research Conference**, has been expanded to also feature graduate student research in psychology.

This year's conference brought together undergraduate psychology majors and psychology graduate students from as far away as Plattsburgh and the state of New Jersey to showcase their scholarship. Over one hundred students and faculty attended the conference, and students from seven different institutions gave both oral and poster presentations on their in-progress and completed empirical work. This also represented the first year that the conference was co-hosted by three other Psi Chi chapters: Mount Saint Mary College, Marist College, and Vassar College.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. Susan E. Brennan, Professor of Psychology and Computer Science at Stony Brook University. Dr. Brennan earned her Ph.D. in Psycholinguistics and Cognitive Science from Stanford University. She has published extensively in neuroscience and psychology journals, including *Psychological Science*, *Cognition*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, and *Journal of Memory and Language*. Dr. Brennan's talk focused upon the ways in which speakers and addressees adapt their processing and behavior to one another as dialogue unfolds.

The conference was expertly organized by this year's Psi Chi chapter officers: Brenna Fearey (President), Nicole Mueller (Vice President), Secretary Randi Krassner (Secretary), Christina Norman (Treasurer), and Ashley Stauffer (Public Relations Officer). The officers and Faculty Advisor Doug Maynard would like to give special

thanks to incoming Psi Chi Secretary Lauren Burrier, who went above and beyond the call in helping us to prepare for the conference.

Financial support was provided by the Psychology Department at SUNY New Paltz, Marist College, the Office of the Provost, College Auxiliary Services, and the SUNY New Paltz College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The college's Conference Services department, led by Christine Waldo-Klinger, provided excellent assistance leading up to the event.

There are plans to continue the conference in 2011 for its 5th anniversary; the location and date will be decided in the autumn. To learn more about the conference, please visit the website at:

<http://www.newpaltz.edu/midhudsonpsyconf/>



Psi Chi Officers during the Mid-Hudson Conference



Dr. Susan Brenner of Stonybrook; keynote speaker of this year's Mid-Hudson conference

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Aimee Hughes (BA, 2008)



I'm currently in the last semester of classes before my internship starts in the fall! I'll be working alongside the School Psychologists at Three Village School District on Long Island. Besides classwork, I'm mostly concentrating on two things. First is my thesis which looks at *theory of mind* and social skills in general education students. The second project is my program evaluation which determines if "Banana Splits," the program for children of divorced and separated parents, is actually benefitting them. No one really knows, but schools continue to use it quite frequently.

New Paltz definitely gave me the background necessary for success in graduate school. I worked alongside Dr. Tabitha Holmes on independent studies with children and also attended the Society for Research on Adolescence conference in Chicago. I was a disaster studies minor which was a wonderful asset because when disaster strikes in a school, the school psychologist (hopefully me one day) is ultimately the first line of defense. I feel that the psychology department at New Paltz made me extremely well rounded in all aspects of psychology and I continue to use everything I learned as an undergraduate, here in Plattsburgh.

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Nadia Fadonougbo (BA, 2008)



Based in the Hague, The Netherlands, the International Criminal Court is the first-ever permanent international institution, with jurisdiction to prosecute individuals responsible for the most serious crimes of international concern: genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The jurisdiction of the ICC is complementary to national courts, meaning that the Court only acts when countries themselves are unable or unwilling to investigate or prosecute. The ICC has strong protections for due process, procedural safeguards to protect it from abuse, and furthers victims' rights and gender justice under international law.

Becoming a psychologist was motivated by my desire to make a contribution to the wellbeing and productivity of individuals in the workplace. The internship placement in the **Division of Common Administrative Services** at ICC has geared me towards my goal. My educational background at New Paltz and my status as an Industrial Organizational Psychology student at Springfield College have both prepared me for this exciting and rewarding opportunity at ICC. My foundational studies and experiences in the Psychology Department at SUNY New Paltz have made me confident that my educational qualifications are suitable for the position in the Human Resources Sector. Throughout the four years spent at New Paltz, I learned to develop and strengthen my skill and ability to communicate clearly and empathetically, while being well-organized and working efficiently. I acknowledge and give thanks to my professors for the guidance and support they have provided me during and after my four years at SUNY New Paltz.

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Steven Rappelyea (BA 1994; MA 1996)



Steve got his NP undergrad degree in Psychology in '94 and his MA in '96 under the direction of Phyllis Freeman (his thesis was a review of the body dysmorphic disorder literature) and actually worked out the plan for his eventual doctoral dissertation project at New Paltz as well. Much of what he reviewed/proposed in that MA thesis has since been addressed by researchers over the years!

Steve was a TA for Alison Nash and Maryalice Citera (during her very first semester at New Paltz) and also served as the grad office assistant (one of a series of wonderful red-haired assistants who worked with Dr. Freeman over the 12 years she was Grad Coordinator).

Steve reports that he finished his doctoral degree through a distance learning program in California at California Southern University- PsyD ("ouch, glad it's over!"). He says that his Dissertation was nowhere near as good as his Master's Thesis (for which he credits his advisors :-).

"I have been studying Karate with (New Paltz adjunct and former grad student) Dr Maurey Levitz now for almost 4 years, am on the Editorial board of the New York School Psychologist, led a disaster relief mission to Biloxi the Christmas immediately following Katrina, and have received a few community awards over the past few years for my work with children."

Dr Rappelyea has been working in Poughkeepsie City Schools since 2005 and as a school psychologist since 2001. He also is an adjunct instructor at Marist College in the Grad School Psych program. "My kids are really quite old now. Noelle is 17, Maggie is 16, and Alec is 13. I am not old enough yet! Looking forward to retiring in only 20 short years!" says Steve.

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Nicole (Gigi) Giordano (BA, 2009)



After receiving my BA from New Paltz in 2009, I had such a positive experience and respected the faculty so much I decided to continue to work on an MS in Mental Health Counseling from New Paltz as well. My undergraduate career at New Paltz provided me with resources to become involved with many areas of research and explore multiple interests.

The psychology department has given me the opportunity to explore a wide range of topics such as rejection sensitivity, evolutionary psychology, gender roles, traumatic event survivors, and the LGBTQ community. The Mental Health Counseling program has been ideal to explore research while gaining experience with individual counseling and career counseling. The level of supervision that I have received in the program

by faculty and staff has truly been more than I had ever expected. I have learned so much about from everyone, and hope to continue doing so in the upcoming year.

The program has also given me the opportunity to develop time management and organizational skills that will be useful later on. This year, I was able to assist Dr. Glenn Geher in the 2010 Northeastern Evolutionary Psychology Society's Annual Conference. I was able to become familiar with offices and administrators on campus, as well as important skills while running a conference. The conference also gave me an opportunity to meet several highly intelligent scientists in the field and to learn about things from hooking up to ovulation to ancestral cooking. I would never have had this opportunity without the flexibility and openness of our Counseling and Psychology program.

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Bobbie Coleman (BA, 2009)



My name is Bobbie Coleman and I graduated with the class of 2009 with a B.A. in Psychology. Since graduation, I relocated to Minneapolis, Minnesota and work with the Minnesota AIDS Project (MAP). As a Housing Specialist with MAP, I assist clients living with HIV/AIDS in obtaining and maintaining housing. The consumers referred to the housing program are homeless, and stable housing is a key element in the efficacy of treatment for HIV. Many of the consumers in the program also live with mental illness and/or chemical dependency. I assist clients in finding housing, advocate with clients to landlords, and communicate with other support networks in the community to ensure that the clients are receiving the quality care they deserve.

Earning my degree at SUNY New Paltz prepared me greatly for my work with MAP. Many of my day-to-day responsibilities include continuous education. I learn about new HIV/AIDS prevention messages, attend professional conferences discussing research on upcoming HIV/AIDS medication regimens and review results of epidemiological studies (yes, statistics is important, after all!). My coursework in psychological statistics, research methods and senior seminar about stigma equipped me to be successful in my work with the HIV+ population.

I do plan to attend graduate school next year to learn more about HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment and eventually conduct research. I also plan to travel to Africa so I can educate the citizens of Zimbabwe about HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment! Many thanks to the New Paltz psychology faculty for their support!

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Warren K. Bickel, Ph.D. (BA, 1978)



Early developmental processes play a pivotal role in later life. The Psychology Department at the College at New Paltz was an important developmental process that has helped shape my life and career. In particular, Dr. Robert Presbie and Dr. Phyllis Freeman taught me how to think psychologically and experimentally about behavior. I am grateful to them for shaping my behavior and pointing the way.

After graduating from New Paltz, I received my Ph.D. in developmental and child psychology in 1983 from the University of Kansas, completed post-doctoral training in addiction research at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in 1985, and then joined the faculty

of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. In 1987, I moved to the University of Vermont where I became a Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology and Interim-Chair of the Department of Psychiatry for a period of 3 years. While in Vermont, I had the opportunity to contribute to the public debate about treating opioid-dependent individuals and was the Founding Director of the first methadone treatment program in the State of Vermont. In 2004, I moved to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). There I am a Professor in the College of Medicine and College of Public Health (COPH). I hold the Wilbur D. Mills Chair of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Prevention. I also serve as Director of the UAMS Center for Addiction Research, Director of COPH's Center for the Study of Tobacco Addiction at UAMS, and as Associate Director of the Psychiatric Research Institute.

I have had the chance to “pay forward” the training I received from Department of Psychology at New Paltz. I have served as primary mentor for 40 trainees (e.g., post-doctoral and pre-doctoral fellows). I was Principal investigator (PI) of an Institutional Training Award (T32) from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) for 15 years at the University of Vermont and I m currently the PI of an Institutional Training Award at UAMS.

I have been fortunate to be continuously funded at NIH since 1988 and I am currently a principal investigator on four research grants from NIDA. One of my projects that I find very exciting is one where we are developing Executive Function Therapy for addiction. I am grateful to be acknowledged for my work by receiving the Joseph Cochin Young Investigator Award from the College on Problems of Drug Dependence (CPDD), the Young Psychopharmacologist Award from the Division of Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse of the American Psychological Association, a NIH MERIT Award from NIDA, and Researcher of the Year from the Arkansas Psychological Association (ArPA) Honors for Outstanding Contribution. I have also had a chance to serve as a member of NIDA's Advisory Council and currently serve on one of the Food and Drug Administrations Review Committees, and served as President of the Division of Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse, American Psychological Association and as President of CPDD. I also served as the Editor-In-Chief of the journal, Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology, have co-edited five books, and published over 265 papers and chapters.

I am forever grateful to the Department of Psychology for opening the door to a wonderful opportunities and

letting me lead a life where I still look forward to each new data point.

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Psychology Department Kickball Tournament by Matt Curren

The Spring 2010 semester was busy to say the least, but all academic work was pushed aside for a special event of epic proportions, the Psychology Department Kickball Championship. Friday, May 7th marked the day when students and faculty laughed, ran, ate snacks, lost blood, supported each other, taunted each other and played some serious kickball!

The intensity between teams was matched by the unity amongst each of the seven teams. Dr. Corwin Senko and his mighty **Triangulators** lead a fierce trash-talking campaign against the grand **Team Pleistocene** empire, led by Dr. Glenn Geher. Evidently, talking was not enough for either team to bring home the beloved kickball trophy.

The wild banter was not as intense with Dr. Doug Maynard and Dr. Maryalice Citera's **Mean Squares** or Dr. KatySue Tillman's **PsychOut**, but they showed up to play equipped with awesome team shirts and the will to kick. Yet, this will was not strong enough to lead either team to the ultimate championship showdown. Even Dr. Melanie Hill's **Qualitative Queens** fell short, after blazing through last year's Kickball Championship. It was two new teams, **Minds At Work** and the **Masters of Disasters** who faced off in this year's championship.

The championship was a sight to be seen! Dr. Navin Viswanathan and Dr. Giordana Grossi led an impressive group, who traded in the desire for team uniforms for a desire to destroy their opponents. Still, the Masters of Disasters, led by Dr. James Halpern put up a fight. The team spirit between the Masters of Disasters could not have been matched, but in the end, Minds At Work were victorious.

Maybe that old cliché was correct; "you can do anything if you just put your mind to it." Congratulations to the Minds At Work! You have given the rest of the teams something to *think* about till the next tournament.



League Commissioner, Corwin Senko handing out the coveted departmental kickball trophy to Giordana Grossi, co-captain of Minds at Work

SPOTLIGHT ON YOU!

Would you like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter? Do you have any news you'd like to share? We want to hear from you! Please contact one of the editors:

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Dr. Geher (geherg@newpaltz.edu), or

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