



the Cohort

Office of Student Services

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Rogers Elected to Serve on CPA Ethics Committee

by Eric Rogers, Ph.D. Student

Palo Alto University is proud of the fact that its students serve as active members of the local psychological community. In September 2010, PAU's own Eric Rogers, M.S. was elected to serve a one-year term as the Graduate Student Member of the California Psychological Association Ethics Committee. The student liaison assists in taking calls from CPA members presenting professional and ethical dilemmas/concerns. Student members develop and suggest strategies for resolution of the conflict through direct consultation with other members and the Director of Professional Affairs using the APA ethics code and state laws as a guide. The student member also has opportunities to develop small research projects, assist in conducting ethics workshops throughout the state, and develop articles related to ethics for publication in *The California Psychologist*. To learn more about the CPA Ethics Committee, please go to www.cpapsych.org and click on the "Ethics on call" tab on the left side of the page.

Project Created to Break Social Boundaries

by Rosalind Lee, Psy.D. Student

As a social species, our paths inevitably intersect and criss-cross with those of others. But how many times do we ever stop to think about that person and what their life might be like? I find myself exchanging pleasantries with strangers on a daily basis but I have never crossed that unspoken boundary between idle conversation and true heart to heart dialogue.

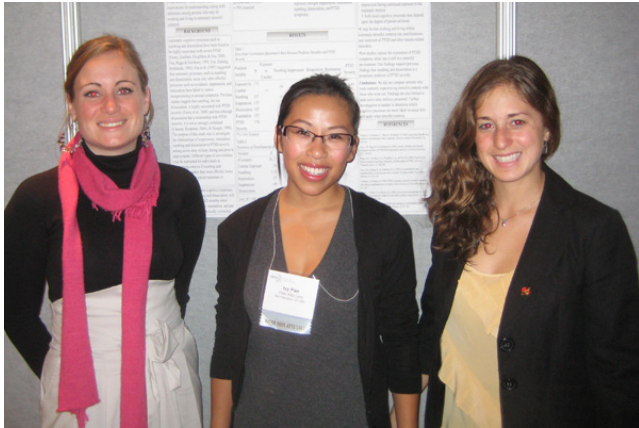
Last year, I created *Breaking Boundaries* – a social experiment designed to give you a chance to break this boundary. Two students were randomly paired and asked to meet in dyads to exchange their personal histories using the RESPECTFUL model. We are all diverse individuals with interesting and unique stories and this was a chance to communicate on a deeper level than one normally does. The goal was to come away with an increased awareness of yourself and a greater perspective. And perhaps even a new friend.

The participants last year had a debriefing session and many had stated that it was a very enriching experience that had impacted them in ways they hadn't anticipated. The common theme was that despite all their differences, they found that they had more in common with one another than they had expected. If you're interested in participating in this social experiment, look out for *Breaking Boundary* activities in January. You can RSVP with *Breaking Boundaries* in the subject line to seca@paloaltou.edu.

Posters & Presentations

PTSD POSTER PRESENTED AT MONTREAL TRAUMA CONFERENCE

by Allison Delorefice, Ivy Pan & Alli Shapiro, Ph.D. Students



IN PHOTO: Allison Delorefice, Ivy Pan & Allison Shapiro

Third year Ph.D. students Allison Delorefice, Ivy Pan, and Allison Shapiro recently presented a poster, *Response to Intrusions and PTSD Among Active Duty Military*, at the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies conference in Montreal, Canada. Their poster, coauthored by Dr. Lynn Waelde, described the findings from a project examining the response to intrusions while in, or anticipating, a threatening environment.

In a simultaneous multiple regression, numbing and dissociation, but not thought suppression or rumination, were significantly related to PTSD severity when past combat exposure was statistically controlled. This suggests that persons who are currently in the threatening environment may cope with intrusions through numbing and dissociation to a greater extent than rumination or suppression.

Although many studies have investigated response to intrusions among veterans and returning active military, this study is one of the few that responses include those anticipating deployment or who are currently in a stressful environment. The participants (N=207) included reserves deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom combat era.

POSTER ON GROUP THERAPY PRESENTED AT SAN DIEGO APA CONFERENCE

by Neda Kharrazi, Psy.D. Student

In August 2010, Amanda Vaught and Neda Kharrazi, 4th year doctoral candidates in the PGSP-Stanford Psy.D. Consortium, joined Dr. Louis Moffett in presenting a poster at the 118th Annual American Psychological Association Convention in San Diego, CA. The poster was entitled, *Using Social Climate Scales in Group Therapy Training*. They described a procedure for co-therapists to assess their ideal social climates prior to conducting group therapy, by using the Group Environment Scale (Moos, 2002). The aim of this procedure is for co-therapists to share their ideals of various group interactions, such as Cohesion or Leader Control, before engaging clients in group therapy. The hope is that having dialogue about ideal social climates prior to providing group therapy will ultimately assist in more effective co-group facilitation.

POSTER ON THE EFFECT OF GRATITUDE ON BIPOLAR PRESENTED AT ABCT CONVENTION

by Pascale Stemmler, Psy.D. Student

Fifth-year Psy.D. student Kelley Busjaeger presented a poster, *Gratitude and Time to Mood Episode Recurrence in Recovered Patients with Bipolar Disorder*, at the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT) Convention in San Francisco. Her poster, coauthored by Dr. Jenifer Culver and other Stanford researchers, described the findings from a longitudinal study examining whether gratitude during periods of euthymia was associated with decreased rates of mood episode recurrence in patients with bipolar disorder. Over one year follow-up, gratitude predicted a reduced risk of mood episode recurrence, and was negatively associated with self-reported depression symptoms. These findings highlight the significant risk of recurrent mood episodes in bipolar illness, and the importance of focusing on gratitude in psychosocial interventions for bipolar disorder.

THOMPSON AUTHORS ARTICLE ON WRITING MEMOIRS AND THERAPY

by Jason Thompson, Ph.D. Student

First year PhD student Jason Thompson's article "Leaving the Boy in the Room" will be published in early 2011 in the journal, "Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology" (The Johns Hopkins University Press). The article discusses the benefits and risks of personal memoir composition as an adjunct to psychotherapy, based on the author's experience as a memoirist.

The potentially transformative impacts of both psychotherapy and literary art are compared and contrasted. The risk of writing as a self-therapeutic modality is that writing about trauma can inadvertently become a mechanism to perpetuate a self-defeating traumatic narrative, rather than a means of re-scripting that narrative, Thompson argues. The article is accompanied by six commentaries from clinicians and philosophers of psychiatry, followed by the author's response to those commentaries.

NEUROPSYCH STUDENTS PUBLISH IN THE CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGIST

by Yael Mansoor, Ph.D. Student

Three PAU Ph.D. Students, Courtney Lockwood, Yael Mansoor and Elizabeth Homer-Smith, in collaboration with Dr. James A. Moses, Jr., produced a manuscript which was accepted for publication by the well-respected, peer-reviewed journal *The Clinical Neuro-psychologist* in June 2010. The research, based on archival data from the Palo Alto VA, indicated that the trials of the Benton Visual Retention Test measure separate cognitive constructs. This finding is important as it affects interpretations of performance on this test, which has been treated as a measure of a unitary construct since it was first published in 1946.

Preliminary results were presented at three national conferences: one poster was presented at the 2009 National Academy of Neuropsychology in New Orleans, and two posters were presented at the 2010 American Psychological Association Conference in San Diego. The authors are currently working on a follow-up study to determine the nature of the dimensions underlying this test.

ARTICLE ON THE INTERFACE OF SOCIAL AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PUBLISHED

by Jennifer Sweeton, Psy.D. Student



IN PHOTO: Jennifer Sweeton

PGSP-Stanford Psy.D. Consortium students Jennifer Sweeton and Bries Deerrose recently published an article in *The New School Psychology Bulletin*, titled "Causal Attributions: A Review of the Past and Directions for the Future." This article addresses the interface of social psychology and clinical psychology, and offers suggestions about how clinicians can use social psychology findings to conceptualize and treat clients with depression.

For instance, cognitive behavioral therapy, which explores the link between cognitions, emotions, and behavior, often employs reattribution as a method of encouraging patients to take into consideration multi-factorial causes of a situation. However, most cognitive-behavioral handbooks do not include a detailed explanation or analysis of attributional style (a social psychology concept), nor do they discuss the cognitive factors involved in a causal attribution (i.e., locus of causality, controllability, stability, consistency, consensus, and distinctiveness).

Including information from the subfield of social psychology may add efficacy and generalizability to cognitive-behavioral treatments targeting moods or emotions that are related to attributions. The article can be found at www.nspb.net.

Posters & Presentations (continued)

POSTER ON RELIGIOSITY AND DEMENTIA CAREGIVERS PRESENTED

by Kathlyn Vo, Ph.D. Student



IN PHOTO ON RIGHT: Kathlyn Vo

Kathlyn Vo, a 3rd year PhD student, presented as first author a poster titled, “The Effects of Religiosity on Dementia Caregivers’ Depression and Burden,” at the APA Convention in San Diego last year. The study explained the effects of four different aspects of religiosity on depression and burden of dementia caregivers: 1) the relationship between positive religious coping; 2) negative religious coping; 3) no reliance on God; and 4) active religious participation.

643 dementia caregivers participated in the larger study entitled Reach II. The results suggested that the effects were more about beliefs as opposed to the practice of religion and that religiosity variables better explained dementia caregivers’ depression than burden. Special thanks to Dr. Gomez and her depression research group, as well as the co-authors for their contribution in this project.

MAPLE SYRUP URINE DISEASE POSTER PRESENTED AT GENETICS CONFERENCE

by Samantha Rafie, Ph.D. Student



IN PHOTO ON RIGHT: Samantha Rafie

Fourth year Ph.D. student Samantha Rafie presented a poster, Psychosocial Aspects of Adolescents and Young Adults Affected by Maple Syrup Urine Disease, at Stanford University’s Annual Genetics Exchange conference. This research was jointly conducted by psychology researchers at PGSP and genetics researchers at Cal State University Stanislaus. Maple Syrup Urine Disease, or MSUD, is a rare autosomal recessive metabolic disease, most commonly diagnosed in early life and is characterized by sweet smelling urine. Complications of the disease include progressive neurodegeneration and encephalopathy.

Participants expressed greatest frustration regarding following a diet and social isolation. Though moderate cognitive impairment was noted in some participants, the mean IQ score for this group of participants was in the average range. Findings suggest that with adequate diet management, normal intellectual development may occur. As more adolescents with metabolic conditions, such as MSUD, survive longer and enter adulthood, the issues of transition from pediatric to adult settings become an increasingly important topic to address.

CALENDAR

MARCH 2011

18th End of Winter Quarter
28th Start of Spring Quarter

APRIL 2011

16th PRS Forum

JUNE 2011

10th End of Spring quarter