



the Cohort

Office of Student Services

Winter Quarter 2009

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MARCH 2009

30th Spring Quarter Begins

APRIL 2009

17th PGSP Spring Gala
25th Annual PRS Forum

MAY 2009

17th Bay to Breakers Run
30-31st Relay for Life

Ph.D. Postdocs Receive Prader-Willi Grant

by Mary Mazaheri & Raazhan Rae-Seebach, Ph.D. Students

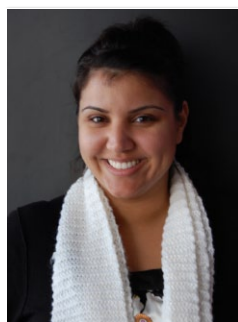
Mary Mazaheri and Raazhan Rae-Seebach are pleased to announce that they recently received a \$1000 grant from the US national Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) Association in support of their seminal research related to parents and healthy siblings of children diagnosed with PWS.

PWS is a complex genetic disorder characterized by multiple physical and mental health issues including obesity, hypotonia, feeding difficulties, cognitive delays, and short stature. It is considered to be the most commonly identified genetic cause of life-threatening obesity. Although PWS has a relatively low base rate, the impact on families and well siblings is typically associated with a wide variety of chronic psycho-social, emotional and behavioral difficulties.

Mary is currently on internship with Sharp in California and Raazhan is on internship with the Hincks-Dellcrest Treatment Centre in Toronto, Canada. After successfully defending their dissertations, they are now involved in writing journal articles based on their research. Mary and Raazhan are very grateful for the expertise and guidance of Drs. Wendy Packman and Nigel Field, Suzanne Cassidy, M.D., the families who participated, and the volunteers who assisted in gathering data. You can obtain more information by contacting Mary or Raazhan at pwsresearchers@gmail.com.

Pacific Research Society Announces Forum

by Nusha Nouhi, Ph.D. Student



Hello all students! The Pacific Research Society (PRS) is excited to announce its upcoming events for the Spring quarter of 2009. PRS is a student organization designed to support the research efforts of PGSP students.

The PRS Forum is an annual event set up like a professional conference in which PGSP students present their current research interests. First-year students present their research proposals and second-year-plus students present their current projects. This year's forum is schedule for Saturday, April 25th, 2009, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Presenters are responsible for printing their own poster, which costs approximately \$10 at Kinkos for a black & white, 36" height by 48" width poster. Please note that the PGSP logo must also be on all posters. PRS will provide presenters with a poster board and push pins for their presentation.

All other PRS activities and events are posted on the PRS board, located in the student lounge. If you have any questions, or would like to suggest a research-oriented activity or event, please e-mail us at prs@pgsp.edu.

Research, Etc.

STUDENT INTERNS AT EQUINE NONPROFIT

by Kresta Painter, P³ Student



PHOTO: "RAVEN" AND KRESTA PAINTER

The Flag Foundation (TFF) for Horse/Human Partnership is an up-and-coming nonprofit focused on repurposing rescued horses to become teachers in the fascinating field of equine guided education (EGE) and animal assisted therapy. EGE integrates cognitive insight and kinesthetic learning with equine activities to develop a positive self-image as well as healthy social and relationship building skills.

My experience as program coordinator and student Intern at TFF has been a captivating foray into the world of a fledgling nonprofit. I have been given an informative look into board meetings, volunteer operations, the creation and registration of workshops, as well as a

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COLLEGE SUICIDE ARTICLE PUBLISHED

by Sarah Wood, J.D./Ph.D. Student

I was the primary author of an article entitled *Suicide in College Students: Prevalence, Prevention and Liability* published in the California Psychologist's July/August 2008 issue (volume 41, number 4). Fellow PGSP student, Houri Andalibian, and faculty member, Wendy Packman, JD, PhD were the second and third authors respectively. The article discussed the frequency of suicide on college campuses and successful programs colleges across the country have implemented to help with the problem. Additionally, the article incorporated legal issues, discussing the liability placed on colleges when one of their students commits suicide. The article was also part of a selection of works in the publication that, if read together, could count as continuing education units.

EARLY ESTROGEN THERAPY MAY MODULATE BRAIN AGING

by Heather Kenna , Distance Learning Student

The utility of estrogen therapy (ET) for maintenance of cognitive function in menopausal/postmenopausal women has become a point of contention in recent years. Observational studies suggest a protective effect of ET, whereas results from the WHI studies suggest an increased risk of dementia with ET use. However, more recent WHI data analysis found a timing effect for ET, in that women who initiate ET close to the time of menopause have beneficial effects, while initiation years after menopause can have harmful effects. This has been termed the "window of opportunity."

It is presently thought that the beneficial cognitive effects of ET may result from modulation of the thalamic-striatum cholinergic and dopaminergic systems. My recently published study found significant thalamo-basal ganglia connectivity among ET+ women but not among ET- women, supporting that notion that ET initiated at or near the menopausal transition may modulate brain aging by mediating complex sensory-motor functions. The entire study can be found in the February, 2009 issue of Neurochemical Research (volume 34, number 2).

Heather Kenna is Executive Director of the Stanford Center for Neuroscience in Women's Health, and is a first year distance learning student planning to enroll in the PGSP PhD program. She can be contacted at hkenna@stanford.edu.

SURVEY MEASURES GRAD STUDENT TRAUMA TRAINING AND PREPARATION

by Ashley Dillon , Ph.D. Student

Vicarious trauma is a stress reaction that therapists and other service professionals often experience when their patients share their traumas. I was invited to write an article for the Trauma Psychology (APA Division 56) Newsletter regarding interns' level of readiness for trauma-related pre-doctoral internships. We conducted an online survey that provided important information to current graduate students who are interested in working with individuals who have experienced trauma. Of the 50 participants, 38% said their programs did not include vicarious trauma in their training. There were mixed responses on whether interns felt academically prepared in working with trauma populations. Thirty-three percent

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Conferences & Presentations

RAPE RESEARCH PRESENTED AT BOSTON AAPA CONVENTION

by Loanie Huynh, Ph.D. Student

With the support and encouragement from my advisor, Dr. Joyce Chu, I presented my research that demonstrated the relationship of acculturation, rape myth acceptance, and attitudes toward rape victims at the Asian American Psychological Association's (AAPA) 2008 Annual Convention in Boston. It was an honor to present to my mentors and peers from all across the US.

Other highlights from my experience at the AAPA included: being featured in the Division on Women Newsletter as one of two women-centered programs offered at the event, attending the leadership breakfast to learn more about leadership opportunities within AAPA and APA, attending workshops focusing on issues of sexuality among Asian American and Pacific Islander women, learning about the future directions in Asian American psychology, and watching the documentary *Never Perfect* dealing with how ideals of beauty are shaped by race and history.

RECOVERING ADDICT IDENTITY POSTER PRESENTED AT D.C. CONFERENCE

by Jessica A. Byrd-Olmstead, Ph.D. Student

This past November, I had the honor of presenting a poster entitled *Recovering Addict Identity Formation* at the 32nd Annual National Conference for the Association for Medical Education and Research in Substance abuse (AMERSA), held in Washington D.C. I presented preliminary data supporting the existence of a recovering addict identity including an analysis of transitions from active drug abuse to sobriety, shame experienced before and after the recovery transition, stigma experienced by the recovering addict, and identity management strategies that may help to maintain positive psychological well-being for the user. I had the opportunity to attend workshops on cutting edge opioid replacement therapies, and substance abuse treatment services for veterans.

The timing of the conference could not have been better. I was able to experience D.C. on November 5th, 2008, the day after what many are calling the most historic presidential election of our lifetime. Not only was it an amazing professional experience to present at a conference about something I feel so passionately for, but to do it at a time when much of the country had come together, as one, with a unified passion for change.

MULTICULTURAL CONFERENCE LAUDED

by Jennifer Chen, Psy.D. Student



FROM THE LEFT: Melissa Weller, Rosalind Lee, Jennifer Chen & Mona Mardini

I attended my first conference as a graduate student in New Orleans, from January 16–17th. The National Multicultural Conference and Summit (NMCS) showcased prominent psychologists from around the world who came to speak on and share ideas about social justice as it intersects with multicultural psychology. I did not realize how much I would benefit from NMCS until I heard the first speaker give the keynote on mental health relief. Each speech, symposium, and break-out session reaffirmed why I am in grad school. I want social

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VETERAN TBI OUTCOME PAPER PRESENTED

by Pascale Stemmler, Psy.D. Student

Third-year Psy.D. student, Campbell Sullivan, presented a paper at the International Neuropsychological Society's 37th Annual meeting in February. The study was entitled *Do Periodic Follow-up Evaluations Improve Long-Term Functional Outcomes after Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)?* Campbell and her colleagues at the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center studied 100 veterans who received acute inpatient care for moderate to severe TBI. Half of the veterans received one extra interdisciplinary intervention, while the other half received a total of four extra interventions (at baseline, 6, 12, and 24 months). They found that veterans who received the four extra interventions had greater employment, productive use of time, and life satisfaction, while those who received one extra intervention reported significantly worse disability ratings, neurologic complaints and anger. Their findings indicate that periodic interventions in the first two years after TBI may lead to reduced symptoms, enhanced functioning, and improved quality of life.

EQUINE NONPROFIT INTERN cont.

chance to interact with various groups and participants. However, the most interesting aspect of my internship has been the interaction with the horses.

I have been pleasantly surprised at my own personal growth throughout the last few months. Although I was not actively seeking to “learn” things about myself while at TFF, I am frequently finding myself having “a-ha” moments and a clearer sense of purpose in my own life whenever I interact with these incredibly intuitive animals. I am very grateful to TFF and the opportunity afforded me to take a peek at an alternative to a traditional treatment through animal assisted therapy and EGE. We are facilitating our 2009 workshops at Stanford’s Red Barn, so please let us know if you would like to participate in a discounted student demo.

You may contact us at the theflagfoundation@gmail.com or check us out at www.theflagfoundation.org.

TRAUMA TRAINING SURVEY cont.

of the interns stated that their education prepared them very little and 48% believed they were moderately prepared. A majority (73%) of the interns stated that they did not take any courses related to trauma and stated that their internship sites adequately prepared them for working with this population.

If you would like more information regarding APA’s Division 56, please go to www.apatraumadivision.org. You may also contact me at: adillon@pgsp.edu.

MULTICULTURAL CONFERENCE cont.

justice to be at the heart of my profession, not as an afterthought of community service from time to time. Furthermore, I felt lucky being able to network with psychologists who were conducting research on topics of great interest to me. If you have not been to a conference yet, I highly recommend attending one soon.

Community (Not Otherwise Specified)

HELP FIGHT CANCER WITH OTHER PGSP STUDENTS IN RELAY FOR LIFE

Help to fundraise money and support the community's efforts to fight cancer in the Relay for Life on May 30-31 in Mountain View. Join your classmates while building community outside of PGSP! Donate money or come walk the track and camp out for the evening! For more information contact Alli Shapiro: ashapiro@pgsp.edu

BAY TO BREAKERS REMINDER

Come join other PGSP students in the Bay to Breakers on May 17, 2009 in San Francisco. You can either run the 12k or cheer our runners in enthusiasm! For more information, feel free to contact Andi Scott at scott150@gmail.com.

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