



the Cohort

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PAU Students Receive Diversity Scholarship

by Sarah Rizvi, Ph.D. Student

Congratulations to Jessica Byrd-Olmstead, Ginny Estupinian, Loanie Huynh, Grace Niu, Juanita Gomez, Anthony Masini, Veronica Palad, Sarah Rizvi, Jennifer Sanchez and Lilia Sheynman, recipients of the Diversity and Community Mental Health (DCMH) Scholarship. The DCMH proficiency track is partnered with a scholarship program sponsored by the California Department of Mental Health. The aim of the scholarship program is to support emerging clinical psychologists committed to working in the public mental health system.

Community Mental Health I (CMI I) prepares students to assume a variety of roles in the community mental health system. Currently, they are learning about the historical emergence and future directions of community mental health. This course has introduced students to a diverse range of theoretical models and techniques practiced in community mental health settings. Also, Ginny, Loanie, Juanita, Veronica, Sarah and Lilia are involved with Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI). This agency serves a diverse range of clients in multiple languages with a variety of clinical issues.

For Sarah, being able to integrate what she has learned in CMH I with her training at AACI has added to the richness of her practicum experience. Specifically, the course has provided a more complete understanding of how to utilize different theoretical models in order to better serve clients.

PAU Students, Professor Join Housing Effort

by Arthur Mullin, Psychology and Social Action Program Student



FROM LEFT: Presella Ling, Katie Kristaan

Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley is a non-profit organization that performs free home accessibility and safety repairs for older adults and disabled homeowners in Santa Clara County. On October 24th, a team of five PAU undergraduates (including myself) from the Social Action program, one Ph.D. student and Dr. Paul Marcille joined together with 200 other volunteers at Woodbridge Mobile Home Park in San Jose.

Our PAU team tackled a variety of projects throughout the day. We helped install new flooring, power washed the exterior of a home, installed flashing to the skirt of a mobile unit, replaced a toilet, installed safety bars in a bathroom, changed locks and installed smoke detectors. There is great satisfaction in working together, helping someone in need and seeing the work accomplished at the end of a day of volunteering.

Posters & Papers

FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT POSTER PRESENTED AT TRAUMA CONFERENCE

By Sherry Hoang, Ph.D. Student



FROM LEFT: Dr. Allison Briscoe-Smith, Sherry Hoang, Christopher Mulchay

Sherry Hoang, Christopher Mulchay, Gwynneth Smith and Dr. Allison Briscoe-Smith recently presented at the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, in November 2009. The case presentation was entitled *Rates of Failed Placements in a Foster Care Population: A Picture of Chronic Trauma*. Hoang and colleagues have spent the past year analyzing a subset of children who have experienced multiple foster placements in Alameda County.

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PAU STUDENTS WIN BEST PAPER AWARD

by Kathy Blau, Ph.D. Student

In May 2009, 4th year PhD candidate Kathy Blau and 3rd year PhD student John Holman were honored as contributing authors on a research brief that received the 2009 Best Paper Award at the 6th International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management (ISCRAM) in Gothenburg, Sweden. The paper presented results from a National Science Foundation (NSF) funded project examining psychological factors involved in emergency manager performance in large-scale disasters using a modified command & control simulator. Kathy assisted the project by developing training manuals and scripting the time lines for the simulated events. John's military experience allowed him to provide feedback to the development team during pilot testing. Both John and Kathy assisted in training and running participants through the simulator. Zeno Franco, a recent PGSP graduate, was Senior Investigator and lead author for this paper, in collaboration with Dr. Nina Zumel (Quimba Software) and Dr. Larry Beutler.

ALZHEIMER'S POSTER PRESENTED AT NEUROPSYCH CONFERENCE

by Katherine Lou, Psy.D. Student

In November, Psy.D. student Katherine Lou presented a poster at the annual meeting of the National Academy of Neuropsychology. The poster, *Sensitivity and Specificity of Select Neuropsychological Assessment Battery (NAB) Subtests in the Diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease (AD)*, examined the diagnostic utility of NAB variables in differentiating cognitively normal individuals from those diagnosed with AD. From data on 212 participants, Lou and her colleagues at the Boston University Alzheimer's Disease Center retrospectively analyzed the sensitivity and specificity of the test variables.

Their findings illustrate that NAB variables from most major cognitive domains have good diagnostic utility for diagnosing AD. As expected, the best tests for diagnosis were those that measured episodic memory. In addition, the finding that optimal cutoff scores varied widely (range = 32—55) suggested that universally applied cutoffs (e.g., $T < 35$) may limit sensitivity and/or specificity when diagnosing for AD using neuropsychological batteries such as the NAB.

POSTER ON MINORITY VETS WITH PTSD PRESENTED AT TRAUMA CONFERENCE

by Jennifer Sweeton, Psy.D. Student

Third year Psy.D. student Jennifer Sweeton recently presented a poster, *Ethnic Minority Veterans with PTSD May Have Unmet Needs for Substance Treatment*, at the International Society For Traumatic Stress Studies conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Her poster, coauthored by Dr. Craig Rosen and additional Palo Alto VA researchers, described the findings from a project examining whether minority and Caucasian PTSD VA patients differ in terms of their needs and actual treatment received for substance use disorders. Results show that minority veterans suffering from PTSD report a greater need for immediate drug and alcohol treatment than do Caucasians. However, minorities and Caucasians report comparable use of mental health services. Thus, it is possible that even with comparable number of visits to providers, there is a disparity if the needs of two populations are different. These findings indicate that minority veterans' reported need for immediate VA substance use treatment should be considered when devising culturally-competent, specialized treatment plans for veterans with PTSD.

TERRORIST COMMUNICATIONS POSTER PRESENTED IN BELFAST

by Harrison Weinstein, Ph.D. Student

Third year Ph.D. students Harrison Weinstein and Darvis Frazier traveled to Belfast, Ireland this summer to present their findings at the 2009 Society of Terrorism/Coloquios Internationales Sobre Cerebro y Agresion annual conference. Appropriate to the location, the students presented on a content analysis of al-Qaeda and Irish Republican Army messages.

Differences were seen in dimensions such as religion, social processes, and emotional processes. Along with a description of the study and its results, the presenters provided information regarding the implications and future research initiatives. In Belfast, Harrison and Darvis witnessed an environment that has been subjected to years of terrorist attacks and met with many individuals who have been impacted directly. A corresponding paper is currently in the works to be submitted to the organization's journal *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*.

PAU STUDENTS CONDUCT DEPRESSION RESEARCH AT STANFORD

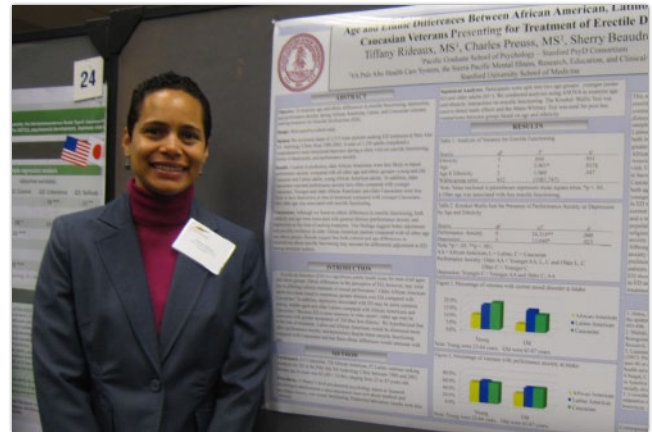
by Eric Rogers, Ph.D. Student

Students at PGSP are not only producing quality research within their faculty run research groups, many are also participating in cutting edge research elsewhere. 3rd year students Eric Rogers and Meena Saleh, together with 2nd year Bibi Stang, and 4th year Andrea Che are also employed as part-time Research Assistants and Clinical Raters in the Depression Research Clinic (DRC) in the Department of Psychiatry at Stanford University School of Medicine. Founded in 1992 by Alan F. Schatzberg, M.D., the DRC conducts research on the causes of and treatments for unipolar depression.

Today, the clinic is home to numerous NIH funded studies examining the cognitive and neuroendocrinological correlates of Major Depression with psychotic features and Schizoaffective disorder. In addition to providing extensive clinical training with severe populations for its research assistants, the DRC provides a plethora of research opportunities. Andrea Che, Eric Rogers, and Dave Marshall (now on internship) presented their respective research projects at the annual meeting of the National Academy of Neuropsychology in New Orleans, LA.

POSTERS ON AGING PRESENTED AT GSA CONFERENCE IN ATLANTA

by Tiffany Rideaux, Psy.D. Student



IN PHOTO: Tiffany Rideaux

I presented two posters at the Gerontological Society of America annual meeting in Atlanta, November 19th through the 22nd. I attended on behalf of student coauthor, Charles Preuss as well as coauthors Sherry Beaudreau, Ph.D., Senaida Fernandez, Ph.D. and Ruth O'Hara, Ph.D. The first poster, *Age and Ethnic Differences Between African American, Latino American and Caucasian Veterans Presenting for Treatment of Erectile Dysfunction (ED)*, presented results from a retrospective

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PAU STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN FIRST RESPONDER SYMPOSIUM

by Amanda Ferguson, Ph.D. Student

In August of 2009, I presented as first author in a three part symposium at the APA convention in Toronto, Canada with Harrison Weinstein and Knute Ayhens-Johnson, both first authors and students at Palo Alto University (PAU). The symposium, Role of Graduate Students in Psychological First Aid Trainings, discussed the Palo Alto Reserve Corps (PAMRC), which is supervised by Dr. Bruce Bongar and Dr. Larry Beutler at PAU. The PAMRC trains graduate students to train first responders in Psychological First Aid (PFA) to provide services to civilians in times of national crisis. In 2008, Elaine Gierlach collected cross-cultural data on risk perception of national crisis both before and after PFA training as part of the PAMRC. Interestingly, results indicated that mental health professionals trained in PFA are likely to continue to perceive high risk of a national crisis. Risk perception and implications for mental health professionals and society were discussed.

Community, Etc.

PAU SOFTBALL TEAM FINISH FIRST SEASON

by Andi Scott, Ph.D. Student



Congratulations to the PGSP “Action Potentials” softball team who recently finished their first season in the Palo Alto adult recreation league. The “Action Potentials” are a coed team open to Ph.D. and Psy.D. students as well as faculty and staff at Palo Alto University. With new uniforms and gear made possible by Dr. Calvin, the team was styling on the field every Wednesday night. Although the scoreboard may not have been in our favor, the Spring league is right around the corner and ready for domination! For details or questions about the team, feel free to email Andi Scott at scott150@gmail.com.

SASO MEMBERS VOLUNTEER AT SAN FRANCISCO FOOD BANK

by Mark Held, Ph.D. Student

On November 8th, students from Palo Alto University (PAU) woke up at dawn to carpool up to San Francisco to volunteer with the San Francisco Food Bank. The volunteers consisted of students from every PAU program. The Student Association for Sexual Orientation (SASO) organized the volunteer opportunity. This year, SASO plans on getting students in the organization and general PAU community more involved in assisting those in need. Please send ideas of places to volunteer at in our community to mheld@pgsp.edu. In total, the group helped package 3300 lbs. of rice in the three hour span that they volunteered and had a wonderful time. The Food Bank helps provide food to over 22,000 households in San Francisco and Marin every week and they plan on distributing 36.5 million pounds of food this year alone! For more information, please visit their web site at www.sffoodbank.org.

BINGE EATING & AXIS II DISORDERS POSTER PRESENTED AT S.F. SYMPOSIUM

by Neda Kharrazi, Psy.D. Student

During the fall quarter of 2009, I had the privilege of presenting a poster at the Bay Area Clinical Science Symposium in San Francisco. This symposium attracted both clinical and research professionals from various disciplines, including medical and mental health professionals. While most of the day consisted of oral presentations, I spent one hour standing next to my poster, wondering what questions would come my way. My topic: Binge Eating Disorder and Axis II disorders in an inpatient population. In sum, this experience allowed me to broaden my understanding of how we as future psychologists fit into the professional world. Not only was a poster a conversation starter with other professionals, but it was a great “escape” from the graduate school bubble to a different professional arena, where I could network and communicate with professionals from various lines of work.

AGING POSTER cont.

study of 838 veterans seeking treatment for ED at the Palo Alto VA Andrology Clinic. We observed age and ethnic differences in self-reported distress, with older African Americans reporting less performance anxiety compared with older Caucasians and Latinos and younger adults in all three ethnic groups. The second poster, *Clinical Validity of the Mini-Mental State Exam (MMSE) and the Fuld Object Memory Evaluation (FOME) with African American, Latino and Caucasian Older Adults*, provided results from a cross-sectional study of 845 older adults enrolled in the Aging, Demographics, and Memory Study, a supplement to the Health Retirement Study. For both Caucasian and African American older adults, a combination of the MMSE and FOME provided the best clinical validity for detecting dementia. The MMSE alone was the optimal measure for Latino older adults.

FOSTER CARE POSTER cont.

Findings presented indicated 20% of children within the larger data set have experienced between 2—10 foster placements within three years. This group consisted primarily of African-American females mostly between the ages of 11—18. Current research links placement disruption with behavioral and mental health problems, educational difficulties and juvenile delinquency. Findings add to the limited research and further promote the need to advocate for this growing population.