

IN THIS ISSUE

1

Service to Those Affected by Hurricane Sandy

Strategic Planning Meeting
APA Headquarters

2

Using Technology for Weight Maintenance in Adolescents

CBT for Depression in Ethnically Diverse Older Adults

3

ACT for Psychosis Therapy Group

Illness Uncertainty Predicts Outcomes Post-Transplant in Adolescent Recipients

4

Former SECA President Receives Robert E. Kantor Medal

Introducing Ricardo F. Muñoz, Director of i4Health at PAU

Editors of The Cohort

Samantha Rafie, M.S.
Doctoral Candidate
Assistant to Office of Student Services

Elizabeth M. Hilt
Vice President of Student Services

Ana Castrillo
Associate Director for Student Services

Service To Those Affected by Hurricane Sandy

by Tara Weldon, Ph.D. Student

After Hurricane Sandy made landfall in the Northeastern United States on October 30, 2012, the region was left in ruins. Areas of dense population were dramatically affected, making recovering from emotional trauma and repairing property damage an incredibly large task. First year PAU student Tara Weldon was asked by FEMA and Liberty Mutual Insurance to consult on recovery efforts being made on Long Island and Staten Island. Helping to organize resources for displaced residents as well as assisting with plans on repairing the Islip Airport were some of the tasks at hand.

Tara traveled to the region for 4 days in November in order to view the destruction, and be in contact with community members in need. Tara has extensive experience with catastrophe work and was happy to take on this time-limited yet important consulting assignment.

Strategic Planning Meeting, APA Headquarters

by Jeannie Celestial, Ph.D. Student



IN PHOTO: Jeannie Celestial, far right

In Fall 2012, PAU 4th year PhD student Jeannie Celestial, with the support of Drs. Amy Wisniewski and Stanley Sue, was selected to serve as one of six Regional Diversity Coordinators for the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs (APAGS-CEMA). The Committee invited Ms. Celestial to Washington, D.C. for its strategic planning process.

APAGS-CEMA's mission is to promote a pipeline for ethnic minority students in psychology to foster culturally relevant and adaptive science and practice. APAGS-CEMA envisions a field of psychology in which all ethnic minority graduate students are empowered through each professional development stage, and in which all psychology graduate students demonstrate cultural competency.

Ms. Celestial will assist in designing and organizing resources and activities to support ethnic minority students and to increase cultural competency. For example, APAGS-CEMA produces the APAGS Resource Guide for Ethnic Minority Students, which can be downloaded for free at the following web address:

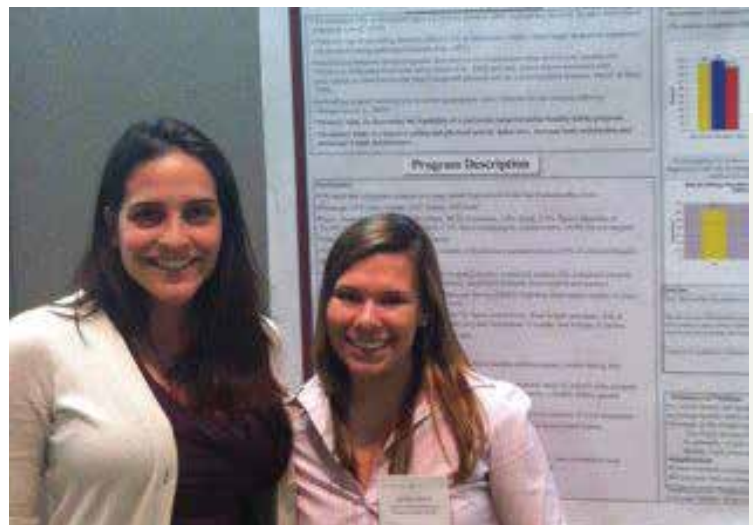
<http://www.apa.org/apags/resources/ethnic-minority-guide.pdf>

Research & Presentations

Using Technology for Weight Maintenance in Adolescents

by Katherine Taylor, Psy.D. Student

Third-year PsyD student, Katherine Taylor, presented a poster at the 33rd annual meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine in New Orleans, Louisiana. The poster, “Staying Fit: A pilot study of a school-based online universal and targeted health weight regulation/eating disorder prevention program” was a results of a collaboration between Stanford’s Behavioral Medicine Lab, Washington University at St. Louis’ Department of Psychiatry, and the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute in Victoria, Australia. The study was co-authored by Dr. Megan Jones, Andrea E. Kass, Jakki Bailey, Brooke Genkin, Marianne Rizk, Alivia Shorter, Morgan Redman, Paige Romer, Dr. Joanne Williams, Dr. Mickey Trockel, Dr. Denise Wilfley, and Dr. C. Barr Taylor.



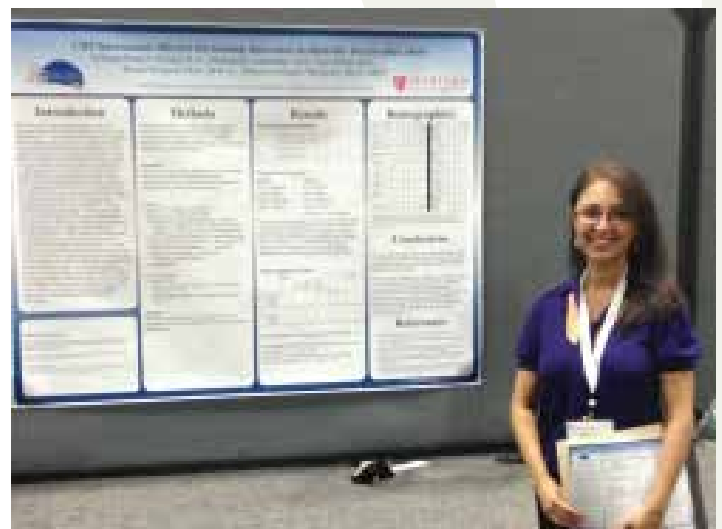
IN PHOTO: Katherine Taylor, left

Students who completed the Staying Fit program increased their fruit and vegetable consumption over the course of the intervention. Self-report body mass index decreased in students at risk for overweight. Findings supported the feasibility of providing a technology-based behavior change intervention for school-based adolescents.

CBT for Depression in Ethnically Diverse Older Adults

by Johanna Rengifo Nevarez, Ph.D. Student

The older adult population is rapidly growing, with minority adults being the largest growing subpopulation. Unfortunately, depression is common among older adults and has been associated with functional difficulties, cognitive impairment, medical comorbidity, and mortality in older adults. There are myths that older adults may not be good candidates for CBT. Some say, “to be old is to be sick” and “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks.” There is even less research on the unmet mental health needs of minority older adults, which is why it is crucial to examine interventions that benefit minorities. This study aimed to determine whether a group of ethnically diverse older adults would have a decrease in depressive symptoms, following a 12-week structured individual CBT interventions. Results demonstrated that our structured program was effective for ethnic minority older adults with English as their second language, without culturally modifying the intervention.



IN PHOTO: Johanna Rengifo Nevarez

Fourth year PhD student Johanna Rengifo Nevarez, along with Sasha Stepanenko and Ann Bilbrey, presented a poster “CBT intervention effective for treating depression in ethnically diverse older adults” at the Gerontological Society of America’s Annual Scientific Meeting in San Diego in November, 2012.

ACT for Psychosis Therapy Group

by Julia Hernandez, Ph.D. Student

As part of program development for the Tenderloin Outpatient Clinic in San Francisco, CA, Aaron Fett and Julia Hernandez developed and implemented an ACT for psychosis therapy group, utilizing the protocol influenced by Steven Hayes. Data on symptom severity, patient's values, consistent living, and acceptance were collected at various points during treatment. The results were presented at the Association for Contextual Behavioral Science World Conference in July 2012, in Washington D.C. The poster, titled "The use of an Acceptance and Commitment group therapy to reduce distress caused by auditory hallucinations and increase value-based living with individuals with psychosis in a community mental health clinic: A pilot study," suggested patients experienced increased acceptance of symptoms, and increased ability to act independently of hallucinations post-intervention. Further, the group is planned to continue at the clinic, providing evidence for the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing evidence-based treatment in community mental health settings.

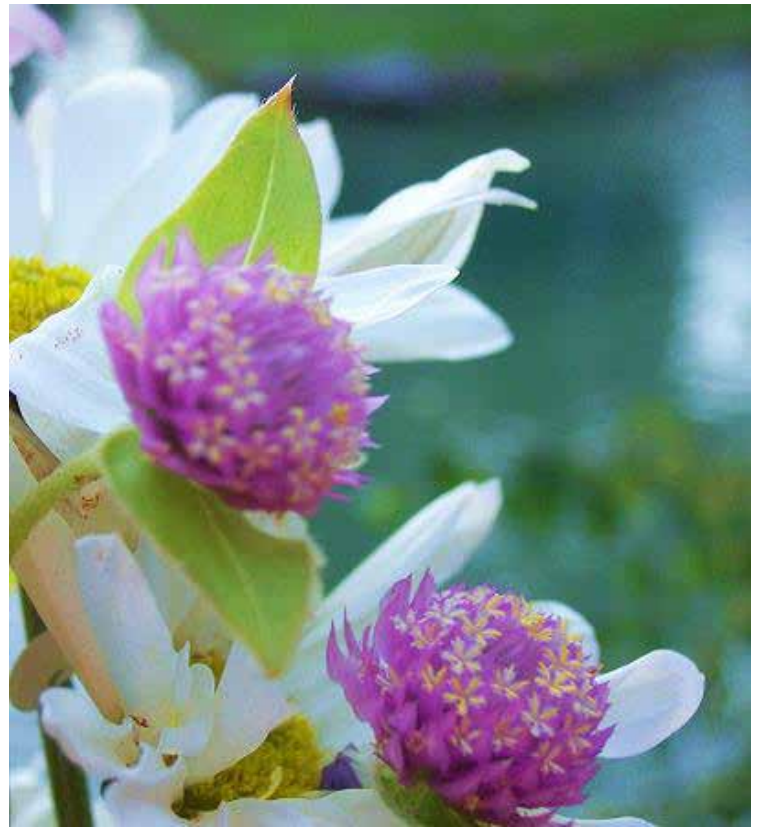


PHOTO CREDIT: Samantha Rafie

Illness Uncertainty Predicts Outcomes Post-Transplant in Adolescent Recipients

by Samantha Rafie, Ph.D. Student

Sixth year PhD student Samantha Rafie's poster, "Illness uncertainty as a predictor of adjustment in adolescent and young adult kidney transplant recipients," was named the 2nd place winner of the Best Graduate Student Poster Award at the annual meeting of the Arkansas Psychological Association.

Data presented outlined the significant risk of psychosocial maladjustment 1 year post-transplant in adolescent and young adult kidney transplant recipients. Illness uncertainty was the strongest predictor of both positive and negative adjustment. It is recommended that patients be educated about expected side-effects of immunosuppressive medications, possible psychosocial reactions, managing stress, and identifying their need for assistance. Thus, managing illness-related uncertainty, and reducing the risk of maladjustment post-transplant.

Medical and mental health care providers are encouraged to consider guiding young kidney transplant recipients to the following existing web-based resources to support mental and behavioral health: transplantbuddies.org; patientslikeme.com; ihatedialysis.com; rsnhope.org.

Ms. Rafie is currently a predoctoral health psychology intern at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System in Little Rock.

Awards & Announcements

Former SECA President Receives Robert E. Kantor Medal

by Neda Kharrazi, Psy.D. Alumnus

On June 9, 2012, Dr. Natalie Todd, a graduate of the PGSP-Stanford PsyD Consortium, was awarded the Robert E. Kantor Medal for being an outstanding community leader who exemplifies characteristics of imagination, courage, and vision in building an organization. Throughout her studies, Dr. Todd demonstrated a commitment to understanding diversity as it related to psychology. As Co-President of Palo Alto University's student group Students for Cultural Awareness (SECA) for two years, and a student member of the PAU Diversity Committee, Dr. Todd spearheaded a number of community events and conversations, which paved the way for cultural exchange and dialogue between PhD and PsyD students, as well as faculty and staff.

Dr. Todd is the first PsyD graduate to receive this award. She thanked mentors Dr. Lynn Waelde, Dr. Stanley Sue, and SECA members. Dr. Todd hopes that her recognition will inspire others to engage in their communities to explore how diversity impacts the work that they do.



IN PHOTO: Natalie Todd, PsyD

Introducing Ricardo F. Muñoz, Director of i4Health at PAU



IN PHOTO: Ricardo F. Muñoz, Faculty

I joined PAU September 2012, as professor and founding director of PAU's i4Health (Institute for International Internet Interventions for Health). I immigrated to San Francisco's Mission District from Peru when I was 10. My bachelor's is from Stanford and my Ph.D. was completed at the University of Oregon. For 35 years, I have been a professor of psychology in the department of psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). I also served as Chief Psychologist at San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH), where I was the founding director of the Depression Clinic and director of the Clinical Psychology training Program.

My goal is to use psychology to help as many people as possible. I specialize in the development of evidence-based manuals for the prevention and treatment of major depression and for smoking cessation. Our manuals are available at no charge on my UCSF website: <http://medschool.ucsf.edu/latino/>. Since 1998, I have focused on creating and testing Internet interventions and mobile apps. I welcome PAU students to join i4Health to: 1) develop Internet interventions and apps in English, Spanish, Chinese, and other languages, 2) test them at SFGH, the Gronowski Clinic, and throughout the world via the Web, and 3) if effective, leave them at the PAU i4Health site to benefit people worldwide.