

Psych Matters

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Editor, Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor of Psychology

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The Newsletter of the University of Mary Washington Department of Psychology

Dr. Hilary Stebbins is Happy to be Back at UMW

By Joshua Vickstrom, Psychology Major, '10



Dr. Hilary Stebbins

This fall, Dr. Hilary Stebbins began her tenure as Assistant Professor of Psychology; however, she is not new to UMW. Dr. Stebbins was a Visiting Assistant Professor during the 2006-2007 academic year, and she graduated with a B.S. in Psychology from Mary Washington College in 2001. After completing her undergraduate education, Dr. Stebbins attended

Brown University in Rhode Island, from which she received her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology in 2006. From Rhode Island, she came back to Fredericksburg for the visiting position at UMW. Then, Dr. Stebbins began her first tenure-track job as an Assistant Professor at Elmira College in upstate New York. After teaching at Elmira for one year, Dr. Stebbins moved to Virginia Beach to teach at Virginia Wesleyan College. She worked there for two years before returning to UMW.

Although Dr. Stebbins enjoyed her previous jobs, foremost the teaching experiences they offered, she felt those institutions and departments were lacking the cohesiveness she appreciated at UMW. Dr. Stebbins observed that the people at UMW, specifically, the psychology department faculty and students, worked together to maximize students' educational experiences inside and outside of the classroom.

Dr. Stebbins says she is "truly happy" to be back at UMW and that having been here before as a student and as a professor provides her with a unique perspective. She's excited to teach some of her favorite courses at UMW. This fall, her courses include Biocognition and Physiological Psychology. In the spring, she will teach Physiological Psychology again and Research Methods. In the future, she plans to teach Behavior Genetics.

In addition, Dr. Stebbins is mentoring a research team with Dr. Dave MacEwen this year. The team is investigating attention; specifically, they are studying the errors made when people process rapidly-presented stimuli. Working with Dr. MacEwen has been a particularly pleasurable and enlightening experience because they worked together not only when Dr. Stebbins was a Visiting Professor, but also when she was an undergraduate at Mary Washington College. Talk about coming full circle!

Dr. Stebbins has great plans for future research involving psychology students. In the past, she has worked extensively with elderly populations, including those with Alzheimer's or Parkinson's-related neurological decline. In the future, Dr. Stebbins hopes to develop connections in the community allowing access to a neurologically compromised older population, as well as a normal older population, in which the effects of aging on cognitive processing can be studied. Ultimately, she hopes this research can inform programming for patients suffering neurological decline, such as rehabilitative yoga clinics for Parkinson's patients.

When Dr. Stebbins is not teaching (or grading!), she enjoys photography. Her photographs are displayed on the website hesphoto.com. Dr. Stebbins' photographic work is largely nature-inspired, often featuring alluring florals and lush landscapes. Clearly, her travels have provided much of the raw material she has captured on film. Recently, Dr. Stebbins' love for travel guided her exploration of the western part of the United States including Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana.

Dr. Stebbins is a runner also; she has completed several



Dr. Stebbins and her dog, Grady, in Wyoming

half marathons and even a marathon. She also enjoys eating all types of cheese! The psychology department is excited to welcome the marathon-running, cheese-eating Dr. Stebbins back to UMW, and we are grateful that she plans to stay for the long run.

Career Forum Panelists Describe Work Filled with Challenges and Rewards

By Megan Tisdelle, Psychology Student Representative, '09-'10

I can speak for most of my fellow seniors when I say we have been pondering the question, "What am I going to do with my life?!" Although the Career Forum may not have provided an answer to that specific question, it provided direction in our efforts to answer it.

Held on February 23, 2010, the annual, Psi Chi-sponsored Career Forum was a great opportunity for students to get some ideas for life after graduating with a bachelor's degree in psychology. As the student attendees ate pizza, the panelists discussed their current careers and the path they took to get there since graduating from college.

Megan Hall, a licensed professional counselor, was the first to speak. Megan is the Regional Director at Family Preservation Services, Inc. in Fredericksburg. Family Preservation Services provides a number of services, including substance abuse treatment and foster care. The services are designed for high-risk children and their families, often including individuals who are on welfare or parole. As Regional Director, Megan coordinates these services for approximately 10 counties, and one of her primary tasks is training staff to provide services. In addition, Megan is a certified sex offender treatment advisor.

The next panelist to speak, **Elizabeth Randall '06**, obtained her masters in clinical social work, with a certificate in school social work, from Virginia Commonwealth University after graduating with a psychology major from UMW. Currently, Elizabeth works for KidsPeace which provides emotional and physical care, including foster care, as well as educational services to children in



Sarah Sullivan, Kristin Martin, Elizabeth Randall, and Megan Hall

need. Elizabeth is a family resources specialist; she handles every referral received by her office and places children in appropriate foster homes if necessary. In addition, Elizabeth recruits and trains potential foster parents.

Like Elizabeth, **Kristi Martin '05** received her undergraduate degree from UMW and was a psychology major also. Currently, Kristi is Community Based Supervisor for First Home Care. The mission of First Home Care is to provide placements in foster care or group homes for "hard to serve" children, for example, children with clinically complex treatment histories. In addition, First Home Care provides treatment in school- and home-based settings. Primarily, Kristi's job consists of supervising day treatment counselors. Also, Kristi is involved in hiring new counselors.

The last panelist to speak was **Sarah Sullivan '07**. Like Elizabeth and Kristi, Sarah received her bachelor's degree from UMW; however, she majored in sociology. Continuing her education at UMW, Sarah received her master's degree in special education. In addition, she is a applied behavior analyst, which means she has knowledge of the application of principles of behavioral learning to address the needs of, for example, autistic individuals. Currently, Sarah works for Autism Outreach, Inc. Sarah is a senior program consultant; her tasks include performing assessments, conducting school observations, overseeing therapists, and creating curricula.

Career Forum (Continued on page 7)

Psychology Department Faculty and Alumni Present at Association for Psychological Science (APS) Meeting

Drs. Mindy Erchull, Assistant Professor, **Miriam Liss**, Associate Professor, **David Rettinger**, Associate Professor, **Holly Schiffrin**, Assistant Professor, and their former research team members presented their research at the May 2010 APS meeting. Drs. Erchull and Liss presented a poster titled, Young adults' ideal and actual expectations for self and partner life trajectories, with alumna Sabrina Askari. Dr. Rettinger presented a poster titled, Cheating and cheaters: The influence of personality, with alumni Jennifer Hicks, Brittany Killian, Patrick Love, Natalie McLarty, and Melissa McTernan. Dr. Schiffrin presented a poster titled, The impact of affect of cognitive processes, with alumni Rebecca Groman, Allison Sleeman, Elinor Tuhy, Caitlyn Yantis, and Eric Zupko.



Allison Sleeman '10, Dr. Christine McBride, Dr. Mindy Erchull, Rebecca Groman '10, Caitlyn Yantis '10, Sabrina Askari '09, Elinor Tuhy '10, Dr. David Rettinger, Patrick Love '10, Jennifer Hicks '10, Melissa McTernan '10, Dr. Holly Schiffrin, Natalie McLarty '10, Eric Zupko '10, and Brittany Killian '10

Association for Psychological Science (Continued on page 5)

Study Abroad Makes Psychology Come to Life!

By Stephanie Lichiello, Psychology Student Representative, '10-'11

For two weeks in May, 2010, Dr. Denis Nissim-Sabat, Professor of Psychology, and his wife, Mary Lou, traveled with ten students to a number of European countries during the fourth Psychology in Europe trip. The trip is a relatively brief study abroad experience for which students receive course credit as well as fulfillment of a General Education requirement.

This year, the group traveled to the cities of London, Amsterdam, Wurzburg, Prague, and Vienna. When asked which country was her favorite, Brittney Rusch replied, "I liked visiting all of the countries, but Germany was extra special for me because I am the first person in my family to visit the country after my great grandparents moved from Germany to America."

Although the plane ride took longer than expected, due to the volcanic eruptions in Iceland, and the weather was unusually cold for May, the students embraced the European cultures and enjoyed the historical sites they visited. Sites visited included: Sigmund Freud's house, the Van Gogh Museum, Anne Frank's house, and the Viktor Frankl Institute.

The academic goal of the trip is to trace the development of psychology in Europe prior to its origin in the United States. This year, in addition to background research on the cities and sights, students were required to read several articles and books as well as watch certain movies relevant to the places visited and people studied. The readings and movies were selected to make students' experiences of the different sites more meaningful and to give students a better understanding of the role of key individuals in the history of psychology.

In addition to reading and movie viewing, students were asked to come up with thought-provoking questions to ask the group about an assigned topic. The discussions promoted by these questions took place at coffee shops, in train stations, and during breakfasts prior to visiting each site. As one of the Psychology in Europe students, I found the discussions to be a great way to express our own thoughts as well as take into consideration the opinions of other students.

Study Abroad (Continued on page 7)



Attendees of the Psychology in Europe Trip, 2010: Broderick Collins, Brittany Rusch, Jane Ballard, Aliza Sial, Karen Ellrod, Catherine Lane, Elinor Tuhy, Stephanie Lichiello, Karissa Herrick, Alexander Morris, and Dr. Denis Nissim-Sabat

American Psychological Association (APA) Awards Recognize Psychology Department Members

Christopher Kilmartin, Professor, was named "Researcher of the Year" by Division 51, the Society for the Psychological Study of Men and Masculinity, of the APA. This award honors outstanding research in the psychology of men. **Mindy Erchull, Assistant Professor**, was given the Mary Roth Walsh Award for the Teaching of Psychology of Women by Division 35, the Society for the Psychology of Women, of the APA. This award, intended to encourage young faculty to teach Psychology of Women, recognizes innovation in the teaching of the course.

In addition, alumna and former graduate-in-residence **Bonnie Moradi '96** was recognized as an emerging leader for women in psychology by the APA's Committee on Women in Psychology. Dr. Moradi, currently an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Florida, earned a B.S. in psychology and a B.A. in women's studies from Mary Washington College, and a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from the University of Akron. Congratulations to our award winners!



Dr. Chris Kilmartin (left) receiving the "Researcher of the Year Award."



Dr. Mindy Erchull (right) receiving the Mary Roth Walsh Award for the Teaching of Psychology of Women.

Psi Chi Symposium Presenters Given Awards for Outstanding Research

At the Psi Chi Symposium, outstanding research was recognized in three categories: Methods Course Research, Laboratory Course Research, and Independent Study Research. **Lisa Feeley, Emily Southers, and Joshua Vickstrom** were given the award for best Methods Course Research. Their project was titled, The effect of appearance on perceived credibility and level of attention. They completed this project in Dr. Mindy Erchull's class. **Katie Giles and Nina Sawyer** were given the award for best Laboratory Course Research. Their project was titled, Smart environments: The effect of enriched environments on rats' performance. They completed this project in Dr. Dave MacEwen's course. Last, **Jennifer Hicks, Brittany Killian, Natalie McLarty, Patrick Love, and Melissa McTernan** were given the award for best Independent Study Research. Their project was titled, Cheating and cheaters: The influence of personality. They completed their research with Dr. David Rettinger. Congratulations to our award winners and to all the Psi Chi Symposium presenters!

These awards were presented following a keynote address by **Dr. Kelly Lambert** (photo at right), Professor of Psychology at Randolph-Macon College. Her address was titled, The dynamic parental brain: Lessons from ancient brains, recent vice-presidential candidates, and rodent models.

Food Ruled at the Topher Bill Auction!

The Psychology Department's Topher Bill Auction was held on February 24, 2010, and some of the hottest items on the auction list were delectable edibles created by faculty, staff, and students. Debra Hydorn, Professor of Mathematics, donated two beautiful cookie jars filled with homemade cookies. Erma Baker, Assistant Vice President for Business Services, donated a Sherry Cake, and Psychology Department alumna Caitlin Messinger '10 donated a Chocolate Lover's Basket including brownies, cookies, and fudge. Yum!

Meals with faculty were also popular items. Debra Steckler, Associate Professor of Psychology, and Dana Hall, Assistant Professor of Athletics, Health and Physical Education, donated dinner at J. Brians. David Rettinger, Associate Professor of Psychology, his wife, Julie, and their daughter, Ellery, donated a brunch at their home.

One of the reasons meals with faculty are so popular is because they allow students to take advantage of the sense of community they feel in the psychology department and at the university. Caitlin Messinger commented on the connectedness she felt as a member of the psychology department, in particular. She said, "I have always loved how close the psychology department is at UMW." Furthermore, Caitlin viewed the auction as, "another great example of how the department comes together toward a common goal."

The Topher Bill Auction is held in honor of the late Dr. Topher Bill, a former psychology professor, to raise money for a scholarships offered by the department to rising juniors and seniors, one of which is in Dr. Bill's name. In addition, the auction allows faculty, staff, and students to laugh with Steve Hampton, Associate Professor of Psychology and auctioneer, and to witness the occasional bidding war – both of which are always entertaining! According to Psychology Department alumna Brittany Killian '10, the auction "is one of my favorite department activities because not only do you get to bid on all types of goodies with your friends, but also you get to see the interesting items your professors bid on."

Food may have ruled at the auction, but there were plenty of non-edible items on the auction block. Notably, recent retiree Roy Smith, Emeritus, Professor of Psychology, donated some memorabilia he collected during his 40-year tenure at UMW. These items included a phrenology bust, (photo below right) a set of Freud and Jung action figures, and a plaster cast of a gorilla foot. (They all sold at decent prices!) The auctioning of these items illustrates that you really cannot predict what might go up for bidding!

The psychology department would like to thank all the individuals who donated food, dinners, memorabilia, excursions, crafts, etc. to be auctioned. Your generosity is appreciated. Furthermore, the department is grateful to last year's psychology department representatives, Kendall Cloeter '10, Akhil Rachamadugu '10, Liz Shewark '10, and Megan Tisdelle '10 who helped run the show. Special thanks to Jean Bennett, Psychology Department Office Manager, for collecting and organizing the items to be auctioned and to Steve Hampton, the auctioneer.

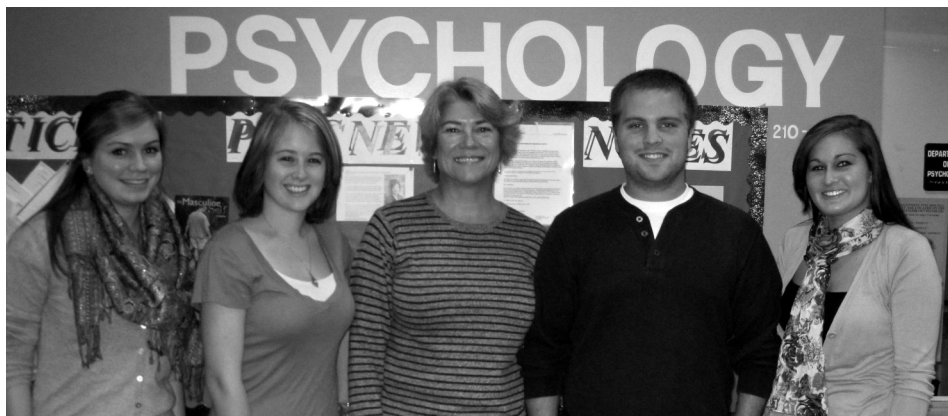


Dr. Kelly Lambert



Dr. Smith's phrenology bust among a selection of sweets

New Student Representatives and Lab Aides for '10-'11



Student Representatives: Lisa Feeley, Rachael Wonderlin, Dr. Debra Steckler (Advisor), Noah Tucker, and Stephanie Lichiello

Last spring, **Lisa Feeley, Stephanie Lichiello, Noah Tucker, and Rachael Wonderlin** were elected by their peers to serve as psychology department student representatives. The representatives have been busy organizing events like the Majors Meeting and the Fall Picnic this semester. Also, they contributed to this newsletter!

Four students were selected by their peers to serve as lab aides. Returning from last year are **Lauren Hartwell** and

Lindsay Meredith.

They will be joined by **Kasi Hunnicutt** and **Robert Meissner**. The lab aides oversee the computer labs in Chandler Hall which serve all psychology and business majors. This year, the lab aides will be advised by **David Rettinger**, Associate Professor.

On behalf of the psychology and business departments, thank you to the psychology representatives and the lab aides for the services you provide.



Lab Aides: Robert Meissner, Kasi Hunnicutt, Dr. David Rettinger (Advisor), Lauren Hartwell, and Lindsay Meredith

Students Awarded Honors in Psychology

Honors are awarded to academically outstanding psychology majors who complete a theoretical paper or an empirical investigation either independently or as part of the work of a research team. In addition, these students present their work to an honor's project committee for evaluation. Patrick Love, Melissa McTernan, and Caitlin Yantis were awarded honors for the '09-'10 academic year. Congratulations!

Students Named Scholarship and Award Winners

A number of students were awarded scholarships for the '08-'09 academic year. The Topher Bill Scholarship was awarded to **Alexandra Zelin** for her outstanding performance, particularly in statistics and research. The Burney Lynch Parkinson Scholarship, for a student who intends to make education a career, was awarded to **Emily Wampler**. Minnie Rob Phaup Scholarships, named in honor of a former faculty member, were awarded to **Stephanie Lichiello, Lindsay Meredith, and Sarah Spangler**. Last, the Outstanding Senior Award was given to **Melissa McTernan**.



Dr. Debra Steckler and Melissa McTernan, Outstanding Senior '09-'10

Association for Psychological Science (From page 2)

In addition, **Dr. Christine McBride**, Professor, presented a poster titled, The relationship between perceived stigma and social support in women with postpartum depression.

Where Are They Now?

Rebecca Asher '08 is working for Kratos Defense and Security Solutions in Dahlgren, VA, where she analyzes, interprets, and distributes statistics generated during weapons-systems tests.

Michelle Bond '10 began the masters in elementary education program at UMW this fall. While studying for her masters degree, Michelle will complete a Graduate Assistantship. Specifically, she will be working for the student health center, psychological services, and judicial affairs to promote overall wellness on campus. Last summer, Michelle worked at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. She coded videotapes of infants of depressed and non-depressed mothers to assess face and body anger cues after a toy was taken away from the child.

Alyssa Berns '10 began medical studies at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, WV this fall.

Elizabeth (Ellie) Barch '09 began the Psy.D. program in Clinical Psychology at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology this fall.

Mike Dooley '10 is working for the American Institutes for Research (AIR) in Washington, D.C. AIR is a non-profit health, education, and international development research group. Mike monitors many contracts and grants and assists with proposal and project development. Prior to working for AIR, he conducted telephone interviews at George Mason University's Center for Social Research.

Mallory (Frazier) Esperon '07 married **Steve Esperon '08** in July, 2010. In addition, Mallory

recently completed a master's degree in psychology/neuroscience at Texas A & M University. Shortly thereafter, Mallory was hired as a research assistant for the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc. After one year as research assistant, Mallory will become the research coordinator for a project investigating mild traumatic brain injury in veterans. To facilitate her commute, Mallory and Steve recently relocated from Texas to Bethesda, Maryland.

Kristin Gauta '10 began the masters in elementary education program at UMW this fall.

Natalie McLarty '10 began the masters in special education with licensure preparation for severe disabilities at Simmons College in Boston, MA, and is working at the New England Center for Children.

Caitlin Messinger '10 began the masters in education program in Family Counseling at the College of William and Mary. Over the summer, she worked as a mentor for Family Preservation Services.

Amanda Price '97 is currently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania. She teaches courses in cognitive neuroscience and her research interests focus on problem solving and decision making in healthy individuals of different ages as well as individuals with Parkinson's disease.

Laura Ramsey '06 is making progress toward a doctorate in Social Psychology at the University of Michigan. Recently, she was appointed as the student member of the Hyde Student Research Grants Committee of Division 35, Society for the Psychology of Women, of the APA.

Melissa Shepherd '09 began the doctoral program in Social Psychology at Florida State University this fall.

Matt Straub '08 is making progress towards a master's degree in School Counseling at Southern Connecticut State University. Matt is a Graduate Assistant in the program; he is involved in admissions. In addition, Matt is a Student Assistance Counselor for the community Youth and Family Services Agency; he meets with students who need support for various reasons and is involved in outreach programs.

Kristynn Sullivan '09 is making progress toward a doctorate in Quantitative Psychology at the University of California, Merced.

Jennifer (Farr) Smith '05 is currently an early childhood special educator for Stafford County Public Schools. In addition, Jennifer will complete a master's in Early Childhood Special Education at Virginia Commonwealth University in the near future.

Megan Tisdelle '10 began the masters in social work program at George Mason University this fall. Last summer, she worked at the Fun and Friends Child Development Center in McLean, VA, where she cared for babies 10-18 months old. Also, she worked as an ABA Therapist for Autism Outreach, Inc. in Herndon, VA. She provided therapy to an 11-year-old girl with severe autism.

Kia Williams '98 is currently a personnel research psychologist at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management in Washington, D.C.

Psi Chi Inducts New Members and Elects New Officers

Professor Chris Kilmartin, the keynote speaker, welcomed a number of psychology majors into the UMW chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. The spring 2010 inductees were: **Kristine Alger, Alyssa Berns, Carolyn Brodeur, Shannon Brown, Lisa Feeley, Joshua Kaminski, Stephanie Lichiello, Christina Lloyd, Bethany Mastroilli, Ashley Maynard, Alexander Morris, Samantha Notti, Susan Ramsland, Christine Reardon, Deanna Rennon, Katrina Shilling, Neil Thorne, Stephanie Watkins, Diana Weigel, and Alexandra Zelin.**

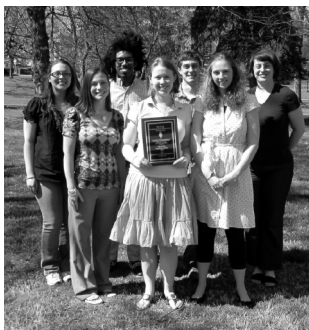
Also, the Psi Chi chapter elected new officers last semester. **Alexandra Zelin** and **Lauren Hartwell** will serve as Co-presidents, **Karen Ellrod** will serve as Secretary, and **Katrina Shilling** will serve as Treasurer. Also, **Stephanie Lichiello** will serve as Historian and **Bethany Mastroilli** will serve as Fundraising Chair.

Psychology Majors Invited to Join Phi Beta Kappa

The following psychology majors were invited to join the UMW Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa: **Melissa Buckley, Katherine Giles, Lauren Hartwell, Sarah Speicher, and Diana Weigel.**

Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776, is well-known for being the oldest undergraduate honors association in the United States. Its mission is to foster and recognize excellence in the liberal arts and sciences.

Psi Chi Wins Model Chapter Award!



This award is given to recognize chapters that consistently maintain outstanding records of membership

inductions, chapter correspondence, and service projects. Our chapter was awarded a plaque and a \$100 reward. Congratulations UMW Psi Chi!

Elizabeth Shewark '10 - Secretary, Melissa McTernan '10 - Treasurer, Sean Freeman '10 - Historian, Caitlin Messinger '10 - Co-president, Patrick Love '10 - Fundraising Chair, Brittany Killian '10 - Co-president, and Dr. Mindy Erchull - Advisor

Psychology Majors Invited to Join Mortar Board

The following psychology majors were invited to join the UMW Chapter of Mortar Board: **Sarah Spangler, Diana Weigel, and Alexandra Zelin.**

Mortar Board, established in 1918, is a national honor society that recognizes college seniors for excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, and service. Mortar Board members represent the top scholars and leaders on their campuses.

Fall Picnic



This year's Fall Picnic took place on a balmy day in early October at St.

Clair Brooks Park. Students and faculty enjoyed hamburgers, hot dogs, some faculty-made side dishes, and cake. Volleyball and softball games kept folks busy. A fun time was had by all!

Career Forum (from page 2)

Although each panelist shared her unique story, a common theme emerged from their descriptions and the ensuing discussion. Although all of the panelists found their jobs quite challenging at times, they also found their jobs extremely rewarding. All of the panelists work with children who need some type of specialized physical, mental, or educational treatment. The consensus was that helping these children flourish is well worth the effort.

For the student attendees, many of whom are pursuing a degree in psychology to apply the knowledge they gain to better the lives of others, learning that that providing specialized treatment that makes a difference that is rewarding was encouraging. The Career Form is held every year. This year, it will take place on February 17, 2010 at 5:00 pm. The location and this year's panelists are to be determined. Save the date!

Study Abroad (from page 3) Nevertheless, the trip is not all business. Non-academic sightseeing and free time for exploration and fun with fellow students are part of the trip as well. Overall, the Psychology in Europe students had an overwhelmingly positive opinion about the trip. Alex Morris commented that, "Psychology in Europe was the single best learning experience I have ever had, not just at UMW, but ever." Brodie Collins stated, "I learned more while on the trip than I have learned in any one class during my career at UMW." Apparently, the combination of educational and recreational experiences the trip offers make it much more than memorable.

Dr. Nissim-Sabat has been busy recruiting students for next year's Psychology of Europe trip. He has changed the itinerary a bit. Next year, the group will visit Munich instead of Prague. Specifically, students will visit the Dachau concentration camp in Munich instead of the Terezin camp in Prague. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity please contact Dr. Nissim-Sabat at dnissim@umw.edu.



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The department encourages visitors to the psychology department website, psyc.umwchandler.net. You will find information about obtaining an advanced degree in psychology, careers in psychology, opportunities for research and internships in psychology, activities sponsored by our chapter of Psi Chi, and more!