

Psych Matters

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Editor, Jennifer Mailloux, Assistant Professor of Psychology

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The Newsletter of the University of Mary Washington Department of Psychology

Board Certified Associate Behavior Analyst Course Sequence a Valuable Credential

By David Flores, Psychology Student Representative



Joni Briganti '08 at graduation from the UMW College of Arts and Sciences

Joni Briganti '08 knew she wanted to work with children with autism after graduation. For anyone else with the same goal, the Board Certified Associate Behavior Analyst (BCABA) course sequence is the way to go.

The University of Mary Washington College of Graduate and Professional Studies offers three options for acquiring training in behavior analysis techniques. These techniques, validated by extensive research, are used to create change in the environments of

individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. These changes are made to increase skill acquisition and decrease problem behaviors in these individuals. The UMW CPGS programs are geared toward teachers, professionals, and parents who want to help individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.

One option, a four-course sequence, allows students to obtain a Certificate in Teaching Students with Autism. A second option allows students to complete a three-course sequence and field-experience hours that prepare them for the BCABA exam. Passing the exam is required to become a board certified behavior analyst. The third option, consisting of six courses and field-experience hours, allows students to obtain a Certificate in Teaching Students with Autism as well as complete the course sequence that prepares them for the BCABA exam.

Joni is completing the second option now; she is completing the BCABA course sequence and field experience hours. To complete the course sequence, Joni will take the following courses:

- Principles of Learning and Behavior
- Basic Methods of Applied Behavioral Analysis
- Techniques of Applied Behavioral Analysis.

In addition, Joni will complete field experience hours monitored by a certified BCABA supervisor.

To fulfill the field experience requirement, Joni is working for Reaching Potentials, Inc. as an ABA therapist. Reaching Potentials, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides services such as ABA training and outreach to children with autism and their families. Joni will complete 1,000 hours of field work as part of the BCABA course sequence.

According to Joni, there is more to the BCABA course sequence than advertised. Joni has enjoyed completing interesting projects in her courses. For example, as part of her Techniques of Applied Behavioral Analysis course, Joni created her own reinforcement and punishment schedule to help her train for a half-marathon she will run in the summer. In addition, Joni creates lessons for tasks autistic individuals must learn. For example, if a child needs to learn how to brush his or her teeth, Joni determines what steps are needed to help the child complete the task.

When asked how completing this program will influence her future plans, Joni said that it will be a perfect complement to the advanced degree in school psychology she intends to earn. Anyone who wants to work with autistic individuals should consider enrolling in the UMW CPGS BCABA course sequence. Training to be a certified ABA therapist broadens one's understanding of the disorder.

To enroll in these UMW CPGS programs, teachers,



Board Certified Associate Behavior Analyst Course Sequence brochure

BCABA (Continued on page 6)

Graduate in Residence Bob Franklin Discusses Public Education Outreach

By Grace Boyers, Psychology Student Representative

Last fall, the Psychology Department was honored to have former student **Robert “Bob” Franklin ’92** return as the department’s 13th Graduate in Residence. During his two-day stay, Bob talked to students and faculty about his career in sexual abuse prevention, highlighting the benefits and difficulties in the area of public education outreach and illustrating how training in the field of psychology can be applied in this area.

During his time at Mary Washington College, Bob helped start the campus White Ribbon Campaign, a movement to end violence against women that focuses on educating men. Once a year, members of the campus community may wear a white ribbon, which represents a pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women.

After graduation, Bob attended Shippensburg University, where he received a master’s degree in counseling. For the last six years, Bob has been working with the Virginia Department of Health as the male outreach coordinator for sexual violence prevention, and he works with schools across the state to organize sexual abuse prevention programs.

While at the University of Mary Washington as Graduate in Residence, Bob visited Dr. Kilmartin’s Psychology of Men class, met with students for a discussion over lunch, and held an open forum for students. During the forum, he answered questions and discussed career options for psychology students interested in public education outreach.

In addition, Bob delivered a public lecture entitled, *Isn’t She a*

Little Young? He discussed how public outreach campaigns are created. Specifically, Bob spoke about his current project, *iGracias, Papá!*, a sexual abuse prevention program aimed at the Latino population.



Bob Franklin, 2008-2009 Psychology Graduate in Residence

This campaign is distributed in both English and Spanish, and part of it consists of a pamphlet resembling a fotonovela – a format similar to a comic strip but with real photographs. It is a familiar medium to Latinos, which is why Bob chose it as the medium through which to address sexual abuse prevention in that population.

During his lecture, Bob stressed that a public outreach campaign is not simply a collection of posters, nor is it “a stand-alone solution.” A good public outreach campaign challenges commonly held attitudes and beliefs, leading to awareness and, eventually, a change in behavior.

Bob noted that there are many challenges to developing an effective public outreach campaign, including a lack of demand for change and competing messages. For example, the message conveyed by the *iGracias, Papá!* campaign competes with the commonly-held belief among Latinos that it is acceptable for a younger woman to date an older man.

During his visit, Bob was able to educate many students and faculty about topics not usually addressed in typical psychology classes, as well as raise awareness about the challenges of public outreach campaigns. His discussion of public education outreach appealed to psychology majors and non-majors alike – as evidenced by the crowded lecture hall – and his unique experiences gave students new insight into possible careers in public health.

Bob had quite an impact during his undergraduate career at Mary Washington, and he had a quite an impact as our 2008 Graduate in Residence. The Psychology Department was honored to have him as our guest.

Psychology Majors Invited to Join Phi Beta Kappa

The following psychology majors were invited to join the UMW Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa: **Ellie Barch, Kathryn Carter, Sarah Hepp, Brittany Killian, Petra Thompson,** and **Maggie White.**

Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776, is 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.

Psychology Majors Invited to Join Mortar Board

The following psychology majors were invited to join the UMW Chapter of Mortar Board: **Michelle Bond, Jennifer Hicks,** and **Sonia Roschelli.**

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.

Career Forum Highlights Opportunities for Psychology Students

By Stephanie Kulakowski, Psychology Student Representative



Katie Nelson, Jannan Holmes, Linda LaFave, and Stephanie Baldwin

This is the time of year when seniors dread the inevitable question, “What are your plans after graduation?” The Career Forum, held on February 24, 2009, provided the perfect opportunity for seniors and juniors to get some ideas for life after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in psychology. This annual event is sponsored by the UMW chapter of Psi Chi. This year, four professionals formed a panel and fostered a discussion about their current careers.

The panel included **Stephanie Baldwin ’08**, a Psychology Department alumna and child-services provider for a non-profit organization; **Jannan Holmes ’89**, a Women’s Studies alumna and a licensed professional counselor; **Linda LaFave**, also a licensed professional counselor; and **Katie Nelson ’08**, a Psychology Department alumna and a laboratory coordinator and research assistant at George Mason University.

As the student attendees enjoyed pizza and soda, they asked the panel questions about topics including how to decide whether and when to go to graduate school. Katie Nelson always had her sights set on graduate school; however, she was very happy that she took a year off between graduating from UMW and attending graduate school. This allowed her to acquire desirable skills including, for example, data collection, test administration, and intake evaluation, thereby improving her résumé.

Attendees also asked the panelists how they decided on the populations with whom they wanted to work. Stephanie Baldwin works for the Rappahannock Council on Domestic Violence (RCDV), a non-profit organization providing confidential domestic violence crisis intervention (e.g., a 24-hour hotline, temporary emergency shelter) to the people of Fredericksburg and the surrounding areas. Stephanie became familiar with RCDV while completing the out-of-class requirement for the psychology major at UMW.

Stephanie enjoys making a difference in women’s lives, and she is beginning to work with teenagers as well. Her work with teens involves education outreach to prevent domestic violence. Although Stephanie never thought she wanted to work with teens, she finds interacting with them challenging and rewarding. Her advice to the career

forum attendees was to keep their eyes open for all kinds of opportunities with all kinds of people.

Jannan Holmes and Linda LaFave have their own private practices, so they were able to give the career forum attendees a sense of what it is like to work in the private sector. Jannan works in Fredericksburg and her focus is with children. She attended Virginia Commonwealth University and received a master’s degree in social work. Jannan enjoys the variety of experience her job provides. A typical day’s experiences might run the gamut from playing Lego’s with a young child on the floor to trying to talk to a reluctant teenager. These changes of pace keep her work interesting.

Linda’s job is similar to Jannan’s, although the two women have different training. Linda received her master’s degree in psychology from the University of Virginia. She performs marital and family counseling; her practice is located in Fredericksburg. Linda finds the mental challenge of providing therapy to clients rewarding and enjoys searching and learning about new ways to help clients.

Overall, the panelists expressed satisfaction with their professional lives, which was comforting to the students in the room contemplating their futures. The message students received was that life after graduation is full of opportunities to be embraced, not feared. Every opportunity along the path to where one wants to be can provide valuable experiences. Students found one observation, in particular, quite comforting. This observation was that, at the present time, none of the panelists had a doctorate. Students often worry about the opportunities available to psychology graduates with a bachelor’s or master’s degree. The professional lives of the panelists illustrated that there are many opportunities for psychology graduates without doctorates.

Psychology Major Receives Writing Center Recognition

Caitlin Yantis was a winner in the 2008 Writing Center Contest Natural and Social Science category. She wrote, *Breaking the ice: Personalization and non-personalization in small groups*, for the Applied Research Methods course taught by Dr. Sarah Breedin. The paper was the product of a study conducted by Caitlin, Emily Blease, Moire Garahan, and Teagan Snyder. Congratulations!

Psi Chi Inducts New Members

Dr. Virginia Mackintosh, the keynote speaker, welcomed a number of psychology majors into the UMW chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. The fall 2008 inductees were:

Emily Azzara

Elizabeth Barch

Bethany Bodengraven

Meredith Bojarski

Emma Clay

Barbara Conord

Caitlin Dail

Melissa Eads

Kristin Feickert

Sarah Hepp

Brittany Killian

Stephanie Kulakowski

Anne Macheel

Caitlin Messinger

Paul Murray

Hye Rim Park

Melissa Shepherd

Sarah Smith

Rebecca St. Clair

Petra Thompson

Joseph Tweeddale

Sadie Tyree

and **Jessica Van Brocklin.**

Topher Bill Auction Raises Record Funds for Psychology Scholarships

By Margaret White, Psychology Student Representative



Maggie White, encouraged by Dr. Hampton, showcases a sweet treat up for bid.

The Psychology Department's annual Topher Bill Auction was held on February 18, 2009. The auction began with a packed house, full of professors, staff, students, and members of the community. The auction ended with a record-breaking amount of money raised. From beginning to end, this year's auction was a great success!

The auction is held in honor of the late Dr. Topher Bill, a well-loved psychology professor. Money raised at the auction goes toward scholarships for psychology majors, one of which is in Dr. Bill's name. This year's auction raised \$3,076, which is over \$500 more than last year!

Popular items at the auction included dinner with faculty members and delicious baked goods created by faculty from the psychology, business, and mathematics departments as well as staff from different administrative offices. There were many gift baskets up for auction, including a homemade canned goods basket, a movie night basket, and a spa basket.

Competition was fierce on some of the "big ticket" items of the evening, including outings with faculty members. Drs. Debra Steckler and Dave MacEwen offered a kayak trip on the Potomac River. Drs. Dave MacEwen and Tom Moeller offered a trip to a Potomac Nationals baseball game. Another popular item was a two-night stay at the Mt. Washington Bed and Breakfast in New Hampshire.

This year, one of the items up for bid was a Topher Bill Auction first – David Flores, a psychology major and student representative, donated himself for a date! When asked how he felt about the auction and his contribution to it, David said, "The Topher Bill Auction is one of the most unique and entertaining events we have on campus. I think every psychology major should offer him- or herself as a date!"

Our majors are good company, for sure.

Part of the reason the auction is so unique and entertaining is because of



Stephanie Kulakowski showcases a movie gift package that piqued Dr. Hampton's interest.

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Faculty News

The last couple of years, **Drs. Mindy Erchull**, Assistant Professor, and **Miriam Liss**, Associate Professor, have been conducting research on feminist identity together, along with numerous undergraduate psychology students. Their efforts have resulted in a number of publications. Recently, in *Sex Roles*, they published a paper titled, *Identity in action: Predictors of feminist self-identification and collective action*. Also, they published a paper in *Psychology of Women Quarterly* titled, *Predictors and effects of self-objectification in lesbians*.

Furthermore, Drs. Erchull and Liss presented two posters. The first, at the Association for Psychological Science meeting in May 2008, was titled, *Misperceptions of social norms about marriage, children, and division of household labor*. The other, at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association in August 2008, was titled, *Synthesis: Beginning or end? Investigating the Downing and Roush model*. Last, Dr. Erchull presented a poster titled, *Preparing students for their futures*, at the biennial Psi Chi National Leadership Conference.

Dr. Steve Hampton, Associate Professor, and **Dr. Holly Schiffrin**, Assistant Professor, presented *Integrating a research component into the undergraduate psychology major* at the Eastern Teaching of Psychology conference in June, 2008.

Dr. Roy Jarnecke, Adjunct Instructor, presented a play at the Virginia Psychological Association meeting in fall 2008. Written by Dr. Jarnecke, the play was selected for presentation because it combines the practice of psychology with the arts. *Thresholds* is a one-act play about seniors in high school facing the future while managing problems originating in their families of origin. It explores themes associated with family alcohol abuse, management of anxiety, and counseling activity. The cast of five actors was directed by Dr. Jarnecke and production assistance was provided by Stage Door Productions.

Dr. Liss, **Dr. Jennifer Mailloux**, Assistant Professor, and **Dr. Erchull** published a paper titled, *The relationships between sensory processing sensitivity, alexithymia, autism, depression, and anxiety*, in *Personality and Individual Differences*.

Dr. Virginia Mackintosh, Assistant Professor, and colleagues published two papers in *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*. One paper is titled, *Parental reports on the efficacy of treatments and therapies for their children with autism spectrum disorders*, and the other paper is titled, *My greatest joy and my greatest heartache: Parents' own words on how having a child in the autism spectrum has affected their lives and their families' lives*.

Dr. Jennifer Mailloux presented a poster titled, *"Deal or No Deal" decision making: The roles of experiential and rational processing*, at the Eastern Conference on the Teaching of Psychology in May, 2007. Also, she presented a poster titled, *The effects of statistics coursework on math anxiety, computer anxiety, and numeracy in psychology undergraduates*, at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology in January 2009.

Dr. David Rettinger, Assistant Professor, presented a poster at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science in May 2008, titled, *The psychology of high school and college academic dishonesty*. Also, Dr. Rettinger chaired a symposium at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association in August 2008, titled, *Student see, student do, or why cheating is contagious. The psychology of academic integrity: Understanding and preventing student cheating*. Last, Dr. Rettinger published a paper in *Research in Higher Education*; it was titled, *Situational and personal causes of student cheating*.

Dr. Holly Schiffrin published a paper titled, *Stressed and happy? Investigating the relationship between happiness and perceived stress*, in the *Journal of Happiness Studies*. In addition, Dr. Schiffrin has given a few presentations recently. At the National Annual Care and Prevention Grantee Conference in December 2008, sponsored by the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Dr. Schiffrin presented, *Tips from a parent coach: Supporting teen pregnancy prevention*. At the Prevention Grantee NetConference in December 2008, also sponsored by the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Program, she presented *Parent coaching*. Last, at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology in January 2009, she discussed *Integrating reading, writing, and speaking assignments to enhance higher order learning*.

Dr. Roy Smith, Professor of Psychology, authored a chapter, *Successful department models of undergraduate research: Mary Washington*, in the book, *Developing, Promoting, and Sustaining the Undergraduate Research Experience in Psychology*. Dr. Smith served as an editor of the text. Also, Dr. Smith authored a chapter, *Signals, signs, and words: From animal communication to language*, in the book, *Language: Introductory Readings*.

Announcements

Please consider recognizing your psychology department with a monetary contribution. Go to www.umw.edu/gift/make_a_gift to contribute online or learn how to make a gift by phone or mail. However you choose to contribute, please note either online, on the phone, or on your check that you would like the funds to go to the Psychology Department. Your donation would be used to support student scholarships and student presentations at conferences. We would appreciate your support!

Keep in touch with your psychology department and fellow graduates. Join the UMW Department of Psychology Alumni Group on Facebook!

The department encourages students to visit 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!

BCABA *(Continued from page 1)*

professionals, and parents must have a bachelor's degree and undergraduates must have earned at least 90 credits. The minimum preferred grade point average for all applicants is 3.0. For more information, contact Dr. Nicole Myers by calling (540) 286-8026, sending an email to nmyers@umw.edu, or visiting www.umw.edu/academics/degrees/master_education/autism_certificate.

Also, the UMW CPGS maintains a website containing information on resources developed by faculty and students in the autism certificate program. Called the Center for Autism Resources for Educators (C.A.R.E.) website, it can be found at www.careumw.edu. This site includes links to a flyer for the BCABA course sequence programs and to the application for the autism certificate program.

Topher Bill Auction *(Continued from page 4)*

auctioneer, Dr. Steve Hampton. In true Dr. Hampton fashion, the auction began with a flurry of jokes no doubt fueled by the giant "martini," complete with olives, Dr. Hampton poured for himself to get the party started. The Psychology Department would like to thank Dr. Hampton for continuing to serve as the auctioneer; he never fails to keep guests entertained.

The Psychology Department would like to thank Jean Bennett also. Jean, the Psychology Department office manager, did a lot of the behind-the-scenes work, including keeping an inventory of items, collecting the items, and tagging the items in preparation for the auction. A "thank you" goes to the psychology student representatives, too; they organized the auction, publicized it, and were there the day of the auction to show the crowd the goods.

Last, the Psychology Department would like to thank all the people who donated to and attended the auction. The auction, and our scholarship program, would not be a success without your support. We hope to see you next year!

A Moment in the History of the Psychology Department

Historical information courtesy of Dr. Tom Moeller, Emeritus Professor of Psychology

In 1973-1974, Dr. Roy Smith, Professor of Psychology, presented the faculty at the time with plans for a process by which students could earn honors in psychology. The process was approved by the rest of the faculty. Today, the opportunity to acquire honors in psychology is available to students who have completed 106 credit hours and who have an overall GPA of 3.0 and a psychology GPA of 3.5. To acquire honors, students must complete a theoretical paper or a paper based on an empirical investigation either independently or as part of the work of a research team. Furthermore, the students present their work and answer questions about their work to a faculty committee. More information about the honors process can be found in the Psychology Brochure.

Where Are They Now?

Kristin Borkoski '06 earned a master's degree in business administration degree (human resources) from Stony Brook University last May and started working as a human resource specialist in the National Federal Career Intern Program for the Department of Veterans Affairs in June. She works out of the Veteran's Medical Center in Northport, N.Y., and travels monthly for training purposes to various medical centers across the country.

Robyn Fielder '05, a doctoral student in clinical psychology at Syracuse University, and colleagues recently had a paper accepted by the *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. The work concerns predictors and consequences of "hook ups" in college freshmen. Also, Robyn is a therapist at the Syracuse University Psychological Services Center.

Allison Gorczowski '07 is an outpatient therapist at Heritage Behavioral Health Systems in Decatur, Ill. She plans to complete a master's degree in clinical-counseling psychology at Illinois State University in May. Allison is completing her thesis, *Childhood physical abuse and recent dating violence as predictors of career indecision and traditionality among college women*.

Kayli (Wright) Green '06 was married to Samuel Green last June. Kayli and Samuel reside in Maryland.

Allie (Krebs) Kochert '03 and her husband, Erik, became the parents of a baby girl, Leah Katherine, last February. Allie has worked as a licensed professional counselor with an older adult outpatient program in Philadelphia, Pa., for more than three years. Her husband, Erik, will complete a residency in emergency medicine in June. Then, Erik will begin his career at York Hospital. Allie plans to take some time off to spend with her daughter. In the future, she may work as an outpatient therapist or return to academia.

Elizabeth Brandon (O'Brien) Landes '99 lives in Lynchburg, Va., with her husband, Jason, her 3½-year-old daughter, Leland, and her 15-month-old son, Charlie. Before having her daughter, Brandon worked as a dispatcher for a concrete company.

Tara (Meuser) Rivera '05 plans to graduate from Catholic University of America's School of Law next May.

Jennifer Moore '07 married **Brian Cox '06** in September. They live in Philadelphia, Pa., where Jennifer is pursuing a master's degree in clinical forensic psychology at Drexel University. Brian is a behavioral health technician at the Veteran's Administration Hospital. He performs substance abuse and mental health screenings.

Janet Moriarity '04 is pursuing a master's degree in speech and language pathology at James Madison University. She may pursue employment in a hospital after graduation.

Sarah (Katie) Nelson '08 is the lab coordinator for the Cognition, Affect, and Temperament Lab at George Mason University. Katie will begin a doctoral program in social psychology next fall. She is deciding which school she will attend.

Sarah (Newman) Norlund '01 recently published a paper titled, *Recipient design in tacit communication*, in the journal *Cognition*. She dedicated the paper to late faculty member Dr. J. Christopher "Topher" Bill. Sarah was a member of Topher's research team the year before he passed away.

Mary Beth Ramsey '04 has been accepted into medical school at the University of Virginia.

Dianna Rowell '97 is a staff psychologist at the New Jersey Veterans Administration where she treats clients with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

Jennifer (Wood) Shand '97 earned a master's degree in theater arts from the University of Arizona in December. She lives with her husband, Mike, in Beaufort, S.C.

Brittany Shankle '06 recently began working as a program coordinator for the Father Woody Program and the Commitment Program at Regis University in Denver, Colo. Brittany guides college students through their mandatory community service which often involves working with the homeless and other underprivileged populations. Brittany was married to her long-time boyfriend, Joey, last January and she plans to begin graduate study at Regis University next fall.

Steven Sutherland '07, a doctoral student in brain and cognitive sciences at Southern Illinois University, is prospecting his master's thesis on the utilization of expert advice from an expected value approach. Notably, Steven was invited to join the Southern Illinois University graduate student honor society.

Wendy Sulc '98 is a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Miami's medical school. She hopes to be promoted to assistant professor of clinical pediatrics and enjoys being a mother to her daughter, Natalie.

Ashley Tucker '07 will earn a master's degree in school counseling from the College of William and Mary in May. This past year, Ashley has served as the president of the Graduate Education Association and as the president's assistant.



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