

Psych Matters

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Tom Moeller, Editor

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The Newsletter of the University of Mary Washington Department of Psychology

Graduate in Residence Brings Spirit of "Aloha" to UMW Psychology Department

For two days in September, the UMW psychology community was honored to bring to campus **Dr. Lori Daniels** as the department's 12th annual Graduate in Residence (GIR). During her time on campus, Dr. Daniels spoke in Dr. Hampton's human sexuality class; Dr. McBride's applied methods class; and Dr. Handley's clinical psychology class. In addition, she met with faculty and attended lunch and shared ideas with students.



Dr. Lori Daniels gives her public lecture

On Thursday evening, Dr. Daniels attended a dinner with approximately 60 psychology faculty and students. Afterwards, she gave a public lecture entitled, "Then and Now: Adjustment Issues Among Vietnam Veterans and Soldiers/Veterans From Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom."

Dr. Daniels is a 1984 graduate of UMW, an assistant professor of social work at Hawaii Pacific University in Honolulu, and an expert on posttraumatic stress disorder. She holds a master of arts in social services from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. in social welfare from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She is also a licensed clinical social worker and holds her diplomate in clinical social work.

Dr. Daniels's therapy and research has focused on posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a psychological disorder that occurs in response to life-threatening trauma and that involves symptoms such as flashbacks, anxiety dreams, sleeping difficulties, and feelings of anxiety. In particular, Dr. Daniels has had extensive experience in treating PTSD among war veterans. In this capacity, she has worked closely with the Veterans Administrations, and she has co-produced a video series on PTSD among Asian-American and Pacific Islander veterans.

In addition to her other accomplishments, Dr. Daniels is also a world-renowned frisbee player, having won first place in five different state women's frisbee championships, and first place in women's double disc court at the World Disc Games

in California in 2003. In 1997, she was also the director of the World Freestyle Frisbee Championship tournament in Honolulu.

In her public talk, Dr. Daniels said that the possibility of multiple redeployments to the war zone and the difficulty of discriminating who is the enemy and who is an innocent civilian are two factors that increase stress among U.S. service personnel in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Dr. Daniels said it is natural for returnees from war to experience acute stress reactions after returning home. After a month or two, most veterans spontaneously adjust, but some do not, and they are the ones who need intervention.

Soldiers' prewar personality and experiences affect their psychological reactions to war, and their postwar support networks affect how well they adjust after coming home, Dr. Daniels said. It's important for returnees who are experiencing postwar stress symptoms to be able to talk to someone about their feelings, she said, and it is equally important for that someone to respond in an empathetic and supportive manner.



Dr. Lori Daniels with her student "lunch bunch"

Dr. Daniels said that when a veteran returns home, the temptation is for the family to want everything to be the way it was before the soldier deployed. For example, she said, wives often want their soldier-husbands to take over all their former household duties immediately upon return. However, Dr. Daniels said, it's best to change things gradually and allow the veteran to adjust more slowly, rather than to expect a total readjustment immediately.

Dr. Daniels said that disasters such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina have made us realize that everyone can become traumatized, and that posttraumatic stress can happen to anybody. And this, she said, has reduced the stigma associated with PTSD among soldiers.

Following her two days on campus, Dr. Daniels was the guest of honor at a reception at the home of Dr. Steckler.

Dr. Nissim-Sabat Offers "Psychology in Europe" Course for Summer, 2007

If you like psychology and like to travel, you'll love the new course that Dr. Denis Nissim-Sabat will be teaching during the summer of 2007.

That's because the course, IDIS 350F (Psychology in Europe) will be conducted as a tour of important psychology-related sites in Europe. The group will leave Dulles airport on Monday, May 14, and return on Monday, May 28. In between, they will visit London, Paris, Munich (and the Dachau Concentration Camp), Passau, and Vienna.

Altogether, the group will visit 11 psychology-related sites, such as the Freud Museum in London, the tomb of Descartes' heart in Paris, the Museum for the Institute for the History of Psychology in Passau, and the Viktor Frankl Institute and Freud's Apartment and Museum in Vienna.

Prior to the trip, each student will research one of the 11 sites and then will make an oral presentation on the day the group actually visits the site in Europe. In addition, each student will be required to keep a daily journal, which will be turned in at the end of trip.

The fee for the course is \$3500, which includes round-trip airfare plus most of the other related expenses. The fee does not include the cost of tuition, lunches, dinners, and other incidentals.

This course is a great opportunity for our students, so take advantage of it if you can. For further information, contact Dr. Nissim-Sabat (654-1558; dnissim@umw.edu). The course is limited to ten students, so if you're interested, you should get going on it as soon as you can.

Psi Chi Officers Receive Award at APA

Three officers of the 2005-06 UMW Psi Chi chapter traveled to the American Psychological Association convention in New Orleans this past August, where they were presented with the Ruth Hubbard Cousins National Chapter Award for the one chapter in the country that best achieves the purposes of Psi Chi.

This award is the highest honor bestowed by Psi Chi and consists of a plaque and the sum of \$3,500.

The award paid the travel expenses of co-presidents **Molly Hurt** and **Laura Ramsey** and secretary **Nina Damgaard**, who accepted the award on behalf of the UMW chapter. In addition, as part of the ceremony, the UMW students also read the chapter's essay on "How to Become a Successful Psi Chi Chapter." The essay, written by the three officers plus treasurer **Katelyn Pulito**, compared running a successful Psi Chi chapter to the process of running an empirical research study. The essay was recently published in the Fall 2006 issue of the newsletter, *Eye on Psi Chi*.

The chapter budgeted a large portion of its award money to pay the induction fees for candidates who have financial need. Some of the money will also be donated to a charity of the members' choice, and some will be used to purchase items for the annual Topher Bill Auction.

Upon returning from the convention, Molly reported that although there was some confusion at the awards ceremony, the UMW group got its message across, and she said their talk was well received.

After the ceremony, the UMW contingent attended a Psi Chi reception, where they met several national Psi Chi officials and received numerous compliments about UMW. They also received words of approval from members of the chapter that won the award last year.

Afterward, the UMW group was rumored to have been seen somewhere in New Orleans called Bourbon Street.

We congratulate the officers and members of the UMW Psi Chi chapter and their advisor, Dr. Liss, on being named the outstanding Psi Chi chapter in the country!

Dr. Liss Is A Proud Mom!

Dr. Miriam Liss and her husband, Julian Kilmartin, are the proud parents of baby Daniel, born on Thursday, April 27, and weighing seven pounds and fifteen ounces. Dr. Liss, who is on parental leave for the Fall 2006 semester, reports that Daniel is a very good baby, but that she has now discovered first-hand what it's like to be sleep-deprived!



New Reps for 06-07

The psychology students have elected their representatives for the 2006-07 academic year. Returning from last year is **Ashley Tucker**, who has been joined by new reps **Megan Ferguson**, **Amber Forster**, and **Josh Rutherford**.

Thanks, Dr. Breedin

Dr. Sarah Breedin has left the department after filling temporary positions for the past two years. We thank Dr. Breedin for her dedication to the students, department, and university during the time she spent here, and wish her well in the future.

Students See Lots of New Faculty Faces Around Chandler

This year - with Drs. Kilmartin and Kolar on leave all year, and Dr. Liss on maternity leave this semester - students are seeing a lot of new psychology professors inhabiting the classrooms of Chandler Hall. Some of the “newbies” are brand-new to UMW, but others are familiar faces who have returned in a new role.

A Yankee Comes South

Our one brand-new full-time professor is **Dr. David Rettinger**, who last year was an assistant professor and chairperson of the psychology department at Yeshiva University in New York City. While at UMW, Dr. Rettinger will be teaching introductory psychology and cognitive psychology, as well as other research and experimental courses.



Dr. David Rettinger

Dr. Rettinger is a native New Yorker who heeded Horace Greeley’s advice and went to college at the University of Michigan, then headed even more west to Colorado, where he earned his Ph.D. in cognitive psychology at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Upon receiving his degree, Dr. Rettinger returned to the east coast, where he taught at Middlebury College in Vermont before going to Yeshiva.

Coming to UMW was a culture shock to Dr. Rettinger in a number of ways. For one thing, at Yeshiva, he taught only males, and now his classes are populated mostly by females. But Dr. Rettinger says that both groups of students are “engaged, smart and enthusiastic,” so the change hasn’t been too hard for him.

Moving from “the City” to Fredericksburg also presented a challenge. In New York, Dr. Rettinger

could often go to the Bronx to see his beloved Yankees play. In addition, he and his wife Julie often took advantage of New York’s great attractions, such as museums and restaurants. Fredericksburg, of course, can’t quite compare to New York in those respects, but Dr. Rettinger loves the clean air, the “unbelievably” friendly people, and the cost of living in Fredericksburg.

While Julie, a former Wall Street banker, goes job-hunting, she and Dr. Rettinger are living in an apartment near Dr. Liss. Eventually, they plan to buy a house which is convenient to both their work places.

Dr. Rettinger says he’s impressed by the friendliness of everybody at UMW as well as by the quality of our students. He also says that our secretary Jean Bennett has done a lot to help him fit in, and that he’s especially happy not to be a chairperson anymore!

Dr. Rettinger is a big sports fan, loves the theater and museums, and also likes outdoor activities like camping and canoeing. He’s excited to be in Fredericksburg, and would welcome any student who would like to stop by his office and meet him.

Two “New” Old Faces

Two of our new professors - Dr. Stebbins and Mr. Franklin - are former Mary Washington psychology majors.



Dr. Hilary Stebbins

Dr. Hilary Stebbins graduated from MWC in 2001, then headed up the coast to Brown University, where just this spring she received her Ph.D. in experimental psychology with a specialty in cognitive neuroscience. She is our full-time replacement this year for Dr. Kolar, and this semester is teaching introductory psychology and the

psychology of personality.

Dr. Stebbins says that as a graduate student, she always wanted the opportunity to teach at a college similar to UMW, but didn’t think she would get the chance to actually teach here. As an undergraduate, she loved the atmosphere at UMW and missed that kind of experience in grad school, so she jumped at the chance to return here for a year.

Like Dr. Rettinger, Dr. Stebbins says that her adjustment to UMW has been smooth. Her experiences at Brown prepared her well for handling the kind of teaching load she has now, and she especially likes being able to have control over the content in her courses. In addition, she has been impressed by the enthusiasm of our students.

Dr. Stebbins says the department is much like it was when, as a student here, she enjoyed the opportunity to interact with and get to know her professors. One change that has occurred is the number of new professors who have come here since she graduated. Dr. Stebbins says that she is extremely impressed with the new professors and thinks that their enthusiasm, research interests and backgrounds are wonderful models for our current students.

Right now, Dr. Stebbins lives in Richmond and uses her morning commute to mentally prepare herself for the day and her evening commute to review the day’s activities. When not at school, she enjoys running and photography - and, in fact, she has a photography website that she updates from time to time.

Now that she has experienced both a research university and a liberal arts college, Dr. Stebbins would like to find a permanent position at a primarily undergraduate college where she can do research and teaching and also involve her students in her research. We are fortunate to have Dr. Stebbins with us this

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New Faculty Faces

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year, and we know that she will do a great job wherever she goes in the future!

Bob Franklin is currently teaching one course for us, the psychology of men. Bob received his B.S. in psychology from MWC in 1992. While at MWC, Bob was active both in the department and in the larger college. Among other things, Bob was on Dr. MacEwen's research team; he served as head resident of both Mercer and Bushnell halls; and he played the string bass in the MWC Orchestra.



Bob Franklin

After graduating from MWC, Bob earned his master's degree from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania in student counseling and student development. After working in student activities at a number of colleges, Bob took a job as the male outreach coordinator on sexual violence prevention at the Virginia Department of Health in

Richmond. In connection with this job, Bob has been interviewed by a number of news organizations, including CBS News and CNN.

In his spare time, Bob loves to bike and run (he runs 10K races). In addition, he is a gourmet cook (dating, no doubt, from the time he flipped hamburgers at the psychology department picnic when he was a student here).

We're glad that Bob has "come home" this semester to share his knowledge with our students. Welcome back, Bob!

Cultivating Students

Rita Navaratte-Jones, our final new professor this semester, has something in common with Dr. Rettinger - they both attended graduate school in Colorado. However, while Dr. Rettinger was in Boulder, Rita was up the road at the University of Northern Colorado, where she received her master's degree in psychology.

Rita is a full-time replacement professor this semester for Dr. Liss. While at UMW, Rita is teaching introductory psychology as well as two sections of learning and motivation. She is also a doctoral candidate in educational psychology at Catholic University.

When not at UMW or working on her doctorate, Rita enjoys playing with her two daughters (both adopted from Korea) and gardening. When asked about UMW, Rita replied that it is "the warmest campus I've ever been on."

We are happy to have Rita with us this semester and we wish her well in the future.

- *Psych Department Representatives
Amber Forster, Megan Ferguson, and Josh Rutherford contributed to this story*

UMW Team Wins Award for VPA Presentation

A team of UMW students won the Frederick B. Rowe Award for the best undergraduate paper presentation at the Spring meeting of the Virginia Psychological Association. The team consisted of **Alex M. Mejia, Jennifer Moore, J. Ryan Phelps, Elizabeth G. Randall, and Karen Sturm**. The title of their paper was *Internet vs. Face to Face Interaction: The Influence on Identity Formation*, and their research supervisor was **Dr. Steckler**. Undergraduates from colleges across the state present their research at this conference. The award is sponsored by the Virginia Academy of Academic Psychologists and is underwritten by the Virginia Psychological Foundation.

Students Win Scholarships for 2006-07

A number of students have been awarded scholarships for the 2006-07 academic year. The *Topher Bill Scholarship*, for the student who best exemplifies dedication to statistics and research, was awarded to **Allison Gorczowski**. The *Burney Lynch Parkinson Scholarship*, for a student who intends to make education a career, was awarded to **Ashley Tucker**. And the *Minnie Rob Phaup Scholarships*, named in honor of a former faculty member, were awarded to **Amber Forster, Wendy Lindner, Danielle Mead, Debra Rezendes, and Molly Sullivan**.

Psi Chi Symposium

Dr. Timothy Ring, licensed clinical psychologist in Pennsylvania, gave the keynote address at the 21st Annual Psi Chi Research Symposium held in April. Dr. Ring talked about his work on disaster mental health after the tsunami, in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, and in New York City after 9/11. One of Dr. Ring's main ideas was that he received far more from his work in these situations than he gave.

The winners of the symposium research awards were:

Psyc 491 Research: *Feminism: What is it Good For?*, by **Megan Haines, Molly Hurt, Jaclyn Nelson, Laura Ramsey, and Dixie Turner**. Drs. Erchull and Liss were the advisors.

General Research: *The Effects of Social Influence on Food Preference in Rats*, by **Fred Russe and Ashley Tucker**. Dr. MacEwen was the advisor.

Methods Research: *J-E-L-L-Is it Orange? The Effect of Color-Flavor Expectations on Taste Recognition*, by **Amber Forster and Danielle Mead**. Dr. McBride was the advisor.

Dr. Smith Hands Over Department Duties to Dr. Steckler



Dr. Smith

After a three-year term as chairperson, **Dr. Roy Smith** has turned over the reins of the psychology department to **Dr. Debra Steckler** and has returned to full-time teaching.

One accomplishment of which Dr. Smith is especially proud was the establishment in 2004 of the annual Topher Bill Auction, named in honor of a longtime psychology faculty member and chairperson. This event raises money for the Topher Bill Scholarship, awarded to an outstanding psychology major, as well as for other local charities.

In an interview with the departmental reps, Dr. Smith said the thing he will miss most about being chair is meeting and getting to know the new majors, and having students constantly stopping by his office. On the other hand, he said, he will now have more time to teach, the thing he said he's here for and what he loves to do.

As those who have been there know, being chair is often difficult, and we thank Dr. Smith for all his efforts and accomplishments over the past three years.

Our new chairperson is Dr. Steckler, whose first decision



Dr. Steckler

was to not move her office from the palatial quarters she inhabits on the middle floor of Chandler. To facilitate communication with our administrative assistant Jean Bennett, rumor has it that Dr. Steckler has hooked up a state-of-the-art tin-can-and-string-telephone between her office and Jean's!

In an interview earlier this semester, Dr. Steckler said the

thing she likes most about her job is chatting with the students and getting to know more about the department. As for the challenges faced by the department, she pointed out the need to satisfy a growing department and to continue to provide students with the best we can give them.

As for the challenges she faces personally, Dr. Steckler said: "Before, I was a teacher, a parent (her son, Bryan, just began his first year of high school), a taxi driver, and a cook . . . now I'm all those AND a department chair!" Nevertheless, she said, the satisfaction is worth it.

We are fortunate to have Dr. Steckler as our new chair, and we wish her the best in the years to come.

*- Psych Department Representative
Ashley Tucker contributed to this story.*

Class of 2006 Moves On

Members of the Class of '06 have let us know of their plans after graduation. A number of them are staying at UMW to work on their master's degree in education. They include: **Liz Koch**, **Mary Beth Loy**, and **Kate Miller**.

Marion Bernstein is teaching English in Japan this year as part of the Japanese Exchange of Teachers (JET) program.

Lauren Bevard is working for Reaching Potentials as an ABA therapist.

Kristen Borkoski has been admitted into the MBA program at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. While in her program, Kristen will be concentrating in human resources management.

Autumn Brown has accepted a two-year position in the Cognition, Affect, and Temperament Laboratory in the George Mason University psychology department.

Kristin Dennen is working on her M. Ed. in counselor education at VCU. She plans on being a school counselor upon graduation.

Becky Haynes is attending Peabody College at Vanderbilt University, where she will pursue

her M. Ed. in early childhood special education.

Debie Kim spent the summer interning in the account management department of Golin Harris, a public relations firm in Chicago.

Christine Kukis is working on her master's degree in clinical psychology at Towson University in Maryland.

Lisa Lawler is working on her master's degree in elementary and special education at Hunter College in New York City.

Chrissy McConaughy is attending the master's program in applied behavior analysis and developmental disorders at Auburn University in Alabama.

Alex Mejia spent some time this summer traveling through Europe. He intends to apply to graduate school for the 2007-08 academic year.

Ryan Phelps and **Karen Sturm** are working as counselors at the Eckerd Youth Camp in North Carolina.

Marti Pierce has moved to Denver, where she is working on her master's degree in forensic psychology at the University of Denver.

Katelyn Pulito has moved to Southern California, where she plans to work with HIV/AIDS patients while

preparing to apply to graduate school.

Laura Ramsey is working on her Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Michigan.

Fred Russe is taking classes in social work at GMU.

Amy Stafford is working on her master's degree in Human Services and Community Counseling at the State University of New York at Oswego. Amy says, "Go Yankees!"

Dixie Turner has been accepted into the counseling Ph.D. program at Louisiana Tech University.

Katherine Wallace has been hired as a Human Resources Assistant at GeoLogics Corporation.

Jennifer Wells has moved to Boston, where she is enrolled in the master's of social work program at Wheelock College, with a focus in clinical social work with family and child studies.

Kayli Wright has left her home in the Lone Star State to move to Sandpoint, Idaho, where she is working for Partnerships for Inclusion, Inc. While there, Kayli will be working with autistic children as well as toward certification as an Intensive Behavior Intervention Professional.



Where Are They Now?

Dr. Wendy Sulc ('98) has completed her dissertation defense and has been awarded her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Maryland - Baltimore County.

Dr. Wendy Carlson ('00) recently received her Ph.D. in developmental psychology from the University of Missouri-Columbia and has joined the psychology department at Shenandoah University, where she is an assistant professor teaching courses in child and adolescent development, exceptional children, and educational psychology.

Brianne Patchell Friberg ('01) and husband Brian are proud parents of a baby boy, Keenan Robert, born July 22, in Madison, Wisconsin, where Brianne is finishing work on her Ph.D.

Dr. Eve Sledjeski (UMW '01, Kent State Ph.D. in Health Psychology) gave birth to a healthy baby boy, Lucius Jame Dinzeo, on April 9. Eve is now working as "research scientist" at Wesleyan University in Connecticut (which, ironically, is where Dr. Liss did her undergraduate work). Eve's husband is working on a postdoc at the Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health, so they plan on being there for the next year.

Heather Flory Driver ('02) has recently taken a new job as assistant director of the Women's Resource Center and Office of Sexual Assault Prevention at James Madison University.

Mechelle Jones ('02) has recently started nursing school. Rumor has it that Mechelle has a reading assignment of 500 pages a week. And you thought UMW was bad!

Christina Meluzio ('02) has been accepted into the Psy. D. program in clinical psychology at Argosy University in Washington, DC.

Melissa Rorie ('03) is beginning work on her Ph.D. in criminology at the University of Maryland.

Two of our **2005** graduates have received their master's degrees in education from UMW and are now teaching. **Katie Baird** has accepted a job teaching elementary school in Stafford County (VA), and **Janet Cooper** is teaching third-graders in Wake County (NC) public schools.

Robyn Fielder ('05) is working on her Ph.D. in clinical and health psychology at the University of Syracuse.

Pamela Hauke ('05) has begun working on her master's degree in special education at the University of Georgia. Pamela spent the past year working in a school for autistic children.

Ashley Davitt ('05) spent the last year working as a psychologists' assistant with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice in Richmond.

Katie Jensen ('05) has begun work on her master's degree in education at the College of William and Mary.