San Francisco State University

Psych News

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Staff News

This spring we said good-bye to Garett Howard, (MS, ’11) the Psychology Clinic Coordinator. Jessica McLachlan (MS, ’14) joins us as the new Coordinator.

Rachael Cortz, long time student assistant, became the Student Services Coordinator in January. She’ll be receiving her BA in Studio Art – Ceramics this spring. Her work was featured at the CCACA 2017 Conference in Davis, CA.

Singing Chen, Assistant to the Chair, will receive her MA in Chinese and Miranda Triay, Graduate Secretary, is receiving an MA in Philosophy. The three staff members are looking forward to being at AT&T Park on May 26th 2017 for commencement.

Psychology Distinguished Speakers

The Department hosted two scholars as part of our Distinguished Speakers Series. On Feb. 22, Dr. Michael Spivey from UC Merced gave a well-received presentation titled: "Who You Are: The Dynamics of Brain-Body-Environment."

Dr. James Gross of Stanford University visited April 12. His presentation was entitiled "Emotion Regulation: Taking stock & moving forward." He was introduced by his mentee and collaborator, our own Dr. Gaurav “Rav” Suri.

Save the dates for our Fall 2017 speakers: Dr. Amanda Morrison (Oct. 4) and Dr. Stuart Klapp (Nov. 29). The Coordinator of the Colloquium Series is Dr. Ezequiel Morsella.

A New Addition to the SF State Psychology Family!

Congratulations to Dr. Ryan Howell and his wife Colleen, who welcomed Carolyn Elise Howell to their family. (Perhaps another future psychologist!) Big sister Kathleen looks happy with the new arrival as well.

Peer Advising Class Resurrected

Dr. Jeff Cookston, the Department’s Undergraduate Coordinator, reinstated PSY 680, Peer Advising, a three unit course that trains psychology majors interested in serving in our Peer Advising Program. Peer Advising is a great experience for students wanting to gain skills and experience in working with others, especially those interested in a career in College Counseling. For information on becoming a Peer Adviser, contact Dr. Cookston at cookston@sfsu.edu. Here is a screen shot of some of our current Peer Advisors and Dr. Cookston holding a videoconference through Zoom. Many thanks to Ben Saffer, Samantha Del Castillo, Victor Varela, April Harris, Nathalia Menjivar, and Sam Dinoso for their work advising our majors this semester.
The 2017-2018 Psi Chi Officers

Benjamin Safer will be the Psi Chi President for the 2017-2018 school year. He is a transfer student from City College of San Francisco who is interested in Developmental Psychology. As the incoming president, Ben is committed to making Psi Chi more visible and having students more involved in the university and in the department.

Fardosa Osman will assume a new leadership role in Psi Chi, as Vice President. She is a transfer student from San Diego. It is her passion to better understand, specifically, those in our society who are misunderstood merely due to a less “normal” representation in this world. As incoming VP, she wants to really focus on having Psi Chi be a part of the community and to help those who are underserved.

All students are welcome to attend Psi Chi meetings and activities, and to become involved even before being formally inducted into the Society.

Student News

Michael Curtis King received a 2017 HR Symposium Lyn Boone Memorial Scholarship this May.

Ashish Mehta and Arnon Domingo, members of Dr. Gaurav “Rav” Suri’s Readiness, Activation, and Decision-Making Lab (RADLab), received lab sponsored travel grants to attend the Society of Affective Science meeting in Boston. Ashish was also the first author on a paper with other students, Dr. Sarah Barber, and Dr. Suri examining differences in emotional regulation in Indian and U.S. populations that will appear in the International Journal of Indian Psychology. You can find the article at [http://ijip.in/Archive/v4i2/18.01.160.20170402.pdf](http://ijip.in/Archive/v4i2/18.01.160.20170402.pdf).

Helen Mott will begin the Social Work program at Smith College in MA after graduation. Helen is the departmental undergraduate honoree.

Jamie Renna was admitted to San Diego State University to study with Prof. Phillip Holcomb.

Zaveira Reyes was awarded a doctoral fellowship at the State University of New York at Buffalo and will work with Prof. Mark Seery.

Christopher Sanders will enter the Social and Personality Psychology program at the University of Missouri, where he will work with Dr. Laura King. He will receive the G. Ellsworth Huggins Scholarship.

Monica Tawasha secured a position as a behavior therapist with Therapeutic Learning Consultants.

Nicholas Yeh presented a poster based on his master’s thesis at the Society for Affective Science, and was selected to give a spoken spotlight on the poster.
Psychology Department China Exchange Programs

Dr. Jae Paik worked for more than two years with Chengdu College of Arts & Sciences in China to create an exchange program between the two universities. This April, 29 Chinese students participated in the first ever exchange program in our department, entitled Psychology and Social Sciences from a Global Perspective. The students enjoyed numerous activities, projects, and presentations given by Drs. David Gard, Ryan Howell, Rita Rodriguez, Amy Smith, and Chris Wright. The program was so successful that Chengdu College and the International Institute for Chinese Education Enhancement Research (IICER), the host agency that arranged the students’ visit, announced a new agreement for future collaborations at the program’s closing ceremony. A second cohort will visit from China this June before Dr. Paik and Dr. Rodriguez take fifteen SF State students to Chengdu in our first study abroad program.

Faculty News

Dr. Sarah Barber received a Presidential Sabbatical Award for Fall 2017. Dr. Barber recently published a theoretical review of stereotype threat in Perspectives on Psychological Science. A pre-publication version of the article can be found on her lab’s website at http://www.cognitionaginglab.com/uploads/4/3/6/5/43652835/examinationagebasedstereotypethreat_inpress.pdf. Dr. Barber is also collaborating with Dr. Kate Hamel of the Kinesiology Department on a DRC funded study of how aging stereotypes affect older adults’ gait.

Dr. Caran Colvin, Sarah Holley, and Zena Mello were all awarded sabbaticals for Fall 2017. Dr. Jeff Cookston was awarded a sabbatical for Spring 2018.

Dr. David Gard received two years of funding from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) for the project, Enhancing Social Functioning in Schizophrenia through Scalable Mobil Technology.

Dr. Zena Mello and colleagues published an article on time perspective, psychological well-being, and risky behavior in runaway adolescents in Applied Developmental Science.

Dr. Guarav “Rav” Suri and colleagues have an upcoming article entitled, “Reducing Behavioral Risk Factors for Cancer: An Affect Regulation Perspective,” that will appear in Psychology Health.

Dr. Chris Wright agreed to serve as the Department’s Associate Chair beginning Spring 2017.
It seems this semester has flown by, but there were two special moments I want to share with you. One was at the closing ceremony for the China Exchange program (see pg. 3). As I listened to the Chinese students share what they had learned and the former Mayor of Sunnyvale, Anthony Spitaleri, speak about the important of intercultural interactions, I couldn’t help but think back to the meetings Dr. Jae Paik and I had with AVP of International Education, Yenbo Wu and his Assistant, Michelle Hong of OIP. Dr. Paik and Dr. Wu in turn met with Hui Li, CEO of IICER. I was not around when the idea for the exchange first came up years ago, but it was still very rewarding to see the seeds planted in our meetings last fall come to fruition in such a stellar program.

Another moment was listening to our alumni talk about their job search experiences at our first career panel. Dr. Chris Wright and I discussed the idea a couple of years ago, before I was Chair or he was Associate Chair. I really appreciate the work he and our Student Services Coordinator, Rachael, put in to pull it off, with an assist from Psi Chi.

We are all excited about the upcoming graduation celebrations, and especially our own Hooding Ceremonies on May 25th and the Undergraduate Recognition Ceremony on May 26th. Hope to see you there!

M. Dawn Terrell

Alumni News

Sabrina Bhangal (BA ’14, MA ’16), who has been teaching for the department this year, was awarded a doctoral fellowship at the University of Missouri and will work with Prof. Moshe Naveh-Benjamin.

Dr. Norma Perez-Brenna (BA ’05, MA ’07), Assistant Professor of Family and Child Development, credits the mentorship she received from Dr. Jeff Cookston while working in the Family Interaction Lab for her interest in research on the psychological and social processes that impact immigrant families. You can read more about her work at http://latinocaucus.srcd.org/spotlights/norma-perez-brena/.

Lindsay Lavayssse (BA ‘13) was awarded a national Science Foundation Research Fellowship. Lindsay is in a doctoral program in I/O psychology at Washington State University.

First Annual Psychology Department Alumni Career Panel

The Department put together a panel of 10 alumni to share their experiences with current students, including tips for the job search and strategies for achieving career goals. Kimberly Bishop (BA ’12), a Client Advocate at CORA, and Sandy Mejia-Lopez (BA ’15), Case Manager at Caminar, described how they leveraged volunteer experiences into paid positions in the counseling field. Jessica Lam (BA ’14; MS ’16), Recruitment & Selection specialist at Poll Everywhere, talked about how experiences working in research labs in the department led to her first paid positions in research. Anthony Ferraras (MS ’10), People Analytics specialist at Symantec, indicated that data analytic skills and a genuine interest in looking at data to create solutions has been central to his success. Jeremy Hannah (MS ’06), Talent Management specialist at Driscoll’s, and Gina Scibilia (BA ’16), Training and Development at Active Wellness, spoke about the importance of balancing personal values and quality of life factors in assessing fit with an organization. Other panelists included Kari Loken (MS ’10) Learning and Development at Autodesk who grew her career from a job in college in HR for a large retailer; Rosa Ortiz (MS ’15), Recruitment & Selection specialist for the SF Human Services Department who noted there are many “helping” careers that do not necessarily involve direct service to clients; and Athalie Tom (MS ’14), who does Human Capital Consulting with Towers Watson, and who found like others that skills gained in earlier jobs in other fields can prove very useful as one establishes one’s career.