

Welcome From The Chair

Welcome to the first edition of **UNCW Psychology!**

This newsletter is designed to keep our alumni and friends up to date with the exciting developments in the department and to provide alumni news and contacts. Some of you will remember when the Psychology Department was founded as a separate unit in 1972 with three full time faculty members! Today we have 30 full time faculty positions, more than 500 undergraduate majors and pre majors, more than 200 undergraduate minors, and 49 graduate students. Our graduates work throughout the region and country in hundreds of different settings ranging from counseling

business to community service to training dolphins at Sea World! Excellence in classroom teaching continues to be a hallmark of the department. Eight faculty members have won campus wide teaching awards including the coveted Board of Trustees Teaching Excellence Award, the Board of Governors Teaching Excellence Award, and Distinguished Teaching Professorships. UNCW psychology faculty members are also engaged as mentors of students in research and practicum settings. Our departmental commitment is to involve our students in active learning that goes beyond the classroom and hopefully



Dr. Mark Galizio, Psychology Department Chair & Professor

extends throughout their lives. Last year alone, 11 of our students were co-authors on publications and 58 were co-presenters at conventions.

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Staying in Touch

→→ Attention Alumni

The psychology department wants to hear from you. Please visit the department's web site at:

<http://uncw.edu/psy>

and take a minute to fill out the alumni survey under the "what's new" heading. We would like to know what you have been doing since leaving UNCW, both in psychology and non-psychology fields. Plus while you are there, you can tell us if you would like to receive a physical or electronic copy of the department newsletter for future issues.

Hurricane Katrina Changes Recent Grad's Plans

Spring 2005 psychology graduate Alex DePrince was all set to begin her first semester as a graduate student at Tulane University in New Orleans. She arrived in the Big Easy on Friday, August 26 and immediately visited Tulane to familiarize herself with the campus and look around the city. She put down a deposit on an apartment and was scheduled to move in that Sunday. By Saturday morning Alex was confronted with ominous weather warnings on the



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Alex DePrince

Welcome from the Chair cont'd



UNCW Social and Behavioral Sciences Building



In addition, 100 students participated in our counseling and community field placement courses, and more than 200 students took part in individual student research projects. We are proud that our students regularly win competitive awards for their research including recent awards from such organizations as the American Psychological Society, Psi Chi, the Association for Behavior Analysis, the Southeastern Psychological Association, and the North Carolina Academy of Sciences.

neurochemistry to the development of creativity among artists. At present there are over \$3 million in active grants and 17 of our current faculty have been investigators or co-investigators on externally funded grants at some point during their career at UNCW. Our faculty members have come to be recognized as leaders in scientific psychology and are making significant impacts in many areas of the field. Four department members are or have been American Psychological Association division presidents and others have been

with special needs. Many faculty are active in forensic psychology. Some are called upon to consult with the local law enforcement and state and federal prison officials. Others provide scientific and psychological assessment consultation to attorneys all over the country. Still others are working to increase school safety in our community and several have developed a new community initiative to improve early detection of memory problems in the elderly.

You can learn more about the exciting accomplishments of our faculty and alumni on our department web page www.uncw.edu/psy and in this newsletter. But, we want to learn more about you! One purpose of the newsletter is to try to make contact with alumni and friends to see what you have been up to and to help you to network with your friends and teachers. I hope that you will find the newsletter valuable and that you will contact us through the alumni page of our website and tell us what you have been doing. We are hoping to organize reunions, homecomings and other events that will bring together faculty, alumni and students: the UNCW Psychology family. Of course, we always welcome visits from our alumni and we hope to hear from each of you!

Please visit the psychology department website at www.uncw.edu/psy



UNCW Student working with animals in the lab



Child participating in research at Dr. Nguyen's Cognitive Development Lab

Faculty members are heavily involved in international exchanges. In recent years faculty members presented papers and collaborated with universities in Brazil, Spain, Mexico, China, Cuba, the Netherlands, Italy, Wales, Ireland, Russia, Canada and South Africa, and New Zealand. We have conducted courses in Costa Rica and Ecuador where students study animal behavior in tropical rain forests, and two faculty members recently led a group of students to the Galapagos Islands.

Faculty research interests range from

president of such diverse organizations as the National Academy of Neuropsychology, the Association for Behavior Analysis International, the North Carolina Psychological Association, the North Carolina Psychological Foundation, and the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis.

UNCW psychology faculty are also active in community service. Three faculty members have served as President of the Board of the local substance abuse treatment agency, and another served as Chair of the Board of a local preschool for children

Faculty Highlights



Nicole Alea



Kate Bruce



Carrie Clements



Dale Cohen



Mark Galizio

- **Nicole Alea** published several articles on autobiographical memory in the elderly — her research specialty — including one in a special issue of the journal *Social Cognition*.
- **Kate Bruce** is vice president of the National Collegiate Honors Council and will serve as president of the organization next year.
- **Carrie Clements**, recently appointed director of UNCW's Center for Teaching Excellence is conducting a large-scale project (funded in the amount of over \$1 million over three years) to evaluate the Safe Schools/Healthy Student Violence Prevention Program.
- **Dale Cohen** completed his joint project between UNCW and the American Institutes for Research (\$235,000 from the National Center for Education Statistics). He also was a co-investigator on an interdisciplinary grant on virtual learning communities funded by NSF in the amount of \$124,485.
- **Karen Daniels** published a major article and a book chapter on aging and memory.
- **Steve Dworkin** presented the Presidential Address for Division 25 (Behavior Analysis) describing his research at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychology Association and is currently president of the Southeastern Association for Behavior Analysis.
- **Mark Galizio** and **Ray Pitts** continued their three year grant project from NIDA (\$149,651) to study effects of club drugs such as MDMA (ecstasy) and methamphetamine on learning and memory.
- **Robert Hakan** served as faculty editor of the *UNCW Psychology*, the first departmental newsletter.
- **Anne Hungerford** published a paper on the use of anatomically correct dolls in forensic investigations in the *Journal of Forensic Psychology Practice*.
- **Andy Jackson** is president of the North Carolina Psychological Association.
- **James Johnson** and **Nora Noel** are co-investigators on a grant from the National Cancer Institute to New Hanover Regional Hospital studying psychological variables that might improve cancer outcomes for African-Americans.
- **Julian Keith** continued his five year NIH grant (\$1.3 million) on adult neurogenesis, the creation of new neurons in the adult brain, and was part of an interdisciplinary team that was awarded \$310,000 from NSF to purchase a confocal microscope to enhance this research.



Karen Daniels



Anne Hungerford



Andy Jackson



James Johnson



Julian Keith

Faculty Highlights



Joe Kishton



Len Lecci



Sally MacKain



Bryan Myers



Simone Nguyen

- **Joe Kishton** received a grant funded by the LEF foundation (\$2,000) to the Henry Miller Library as part of a collaborative project with UNCW to archive Henry Miller audio files.
- **Sue Lamb** helped create and served as advisor for the psychology student service organization Psi Omega.
- **Len Lecci** was awarded the 2005 Distinguished Teaching Professorship. **Len Lecci, Dale Cohen** and **Julian Keith**, in partnership with UNCW, founded the Memory Assessment Research Services (MARS) corporation. MARS provides services to elderly individuals who are concerned about memory loss.
- **Sally MacKain** received a grant of \$18,000 NC Health & Wellness Trust to work with Coastal Horizons Center on prevention of tobacco use among Latino youth.
- **Bryan Myers** published several articles on his research in forensic psychology including a paper in the APA journal, *Psychology, Public Policy and Law* on the prejudicial nature of victim impact statements that has implications for capital sentencing policies.
- **Simone Nguyen** co-authored a book length monograph in the influential *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* that presents a large-scale study of how children develop their concepts and beliefs about gender.
- **Nora Noel, Andy Jackson** and **James Johnson** continued research on their NIAAA grant (\$605,000 over 5 years) on alcohol and sexual assault.
- **Richard Ogle** published an article on abusive relationships in college students.
- **William Overman** published a report of his research on the development of brain regions that affect decision-making and judgment in *Neuropsychologia*.
- **Carol Pilgrim** became associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. She also presented a paper at an international conference in Brazil.
- **Ray Pitts** and **Christine Hughes** began a major research collaboration at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand last year studying environmental factors that determine impulsive behavior and how impulsivity is affected by drugs.
- **Tony Puente** received a Presidential Citation from the American Psychological Association to recognize his “dedication to advancing the recognition of psychological services and for his sustained advocacy of psychology.”
- **Kim Sawrey** served as interim director of the Office of International Programs.
- **Adrian Sherman** is UNCW’s new director of the Office of International Programs.



Nora Noel



William Overman



Carol Pilgrim



Ray Pitts



Tony Puente

Faculty Awards

Dr. Len Lecci was recently recognized for his outstanding teaching contributions to UNCW by receiving the 2005 Distinguished Teaching Professorship Award. Dr. Lecci was also honored with the Board of Trustees' Teaching Excellence Award. Dr. Lecci is a past recipient of the Chancellor's Teaching Excellence Award. These awards add to the recognition of outstanding teaching on the part of Psychology Department faculty. Over the past decade, psychology faculty have received twelve campus-wide teaching awards and three Faculty Awards for Scholarship.

At the 2005 annual APA convention in Washington, the American Psychological Association awarded a Presidential Citation to Dr. Tony Puente in recognition of his work with the American Medical Association and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid in the U.S. Government to provide new procedural (CPT) codes for psychology and neuropsychology. These new billing codes give psychologists greater recognition for their professional work, new fee structures, and more precision in doing research on the provision of psychological services.

Announcing Newly Established John T. Williams Lee A. Jackson Merit Scholarship



UNCW will provide a \$500 merit scholarship to an outstanding psychology major annually in the honor of the department's first leaders.



Recent Grads' Plans cont'd

Weather Channel and quickly decided to evacuate to a former roommate's house in Lake Charles, Louisiana. "When I saw the damage on all of the news channels, I knew I'd be staying in Lake Charles for a while," Alex recalls. Six days later, Tulane informed students the fall semester was cancelled. Alex kept hearing that schools all over the country were accepting Katrina evacuees for free. She found out that "free" meant Tulane kept her tuition and she would be considered a visiting student someplace else for fall semester.

For several reasons, Alex decided not to pursue the visiting student option and instead, hit the job-hunting trail in earnest. "Thanks to my bachelor's degree in psychology I got an interview at Dreamweavers Unlimited in Gastonia, NC, and was hired at a professional level. I work with children with developmental delays or disabilities in the early intervention program (0 up to 3 years old). I was excited to find a position where my bachelor's degree made me a professional."

Alex is unsure whether she will try to reenter graduate school next fall. That uncertainty is because one of her main goals in pursuing graduate studies was in order to gain the skills needed to provide service in a community setting quickly. Alex's current job affords her that opportunity to work in the community already making her unsure of her future educational plans.

Alex is cautiously optimistic about her future. "I know it will be helpful to have some money saved in case there is another natural disaster. It seems likely that could happen again, because everywhere I stayed after Katrina was damaged due to severe weather. Rita hit Lake Charles pretty badly, where I stayed for a week, then Starkville, Mississippi, where I helped my hosts clean some of their Katrina damage, had a major tornado that damaged much of the town. My friends get nervous when I tell them I would like to visit them."



Continuing to Grow

New Program for Graduate Students

In the fall of 2005 the psychology department started a new graduate degree program. The Applied Behavior Analysis concentration focuses on the conceptual and methodological foundations of behavior analysis and takes a data based approach to behavioral assessment and clinical psychology. Emphasis is placed on providing intervention services for individuals with severe developmental disabilities such as autism and mental retardation.

The program is designed to be completed in two and a half years

and consists of 50 credit hours of coursework including a research practicum, an applied practicum, and an empirical thesis. Upon completion of coursework and research, there is a six month/ 1000 hour internship. Students who successfully complete this program will obtain a Master of Arts Degree in Psychology with a clinical concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis.

The program meets all education and experience requirements to prepare graduates for certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (www.bacb.com) and

licensure in North Carolina as a Licensed Psychological Associate (www.ncpsychologyboard.org).

While master's programs in applied behavior analysis are increasing nationally, the UNCW's psychology master's program in applied behavior analysis is unique to North Carolina and the near southeast (i.e., VA, SC, and GA). Individuals with knowledge, training, and skills in applied behavior analysis are in great demand in our region to meet the needs of underserved clients with autism and mental retardation.

New Player Joins the Team

With the addition of the new degree program in the psychology department, a new faculty member also came on board. Dr. Ruth Hurst joined the psychology department in the fall of 2005 after receiving her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Although her Ph.D. may be recent, she is a veteran in terms of experience in applied behavior analysis. Upon receiving her masters in applied behavior analysis from Drake University in 1979, Hurst started working and using her knowledge in a practical setting with people with mental retardation and autism. She soon found herself as the director of psychology in that setting, and continued to work with other behavior analysts in that capacity. Ruth was able to see the field of applied behavior analysis grow and felt that she would like would like to develop the skills and credentials necessary to guide others and do research. This desire for academics and research may be in part because her father has a Ph.D. in animal science and Hurst grew up around his

research with cows, rats and mice. Hurst also has a brother who is a mechanical engineer, a sister who is a veterinarian and another sister who works with Johnson and Johnson in the human resources division. Considering her father's work and her siblings' achievements, it is clear that education and success are not new to her family. So after eighteen years of working in the field applied behavior analysis, made the choice to come to North Carolina and finish her Ph.D.

While there is a serious and hardworking academic side to Hurst there is much more. She has a supportive family that includes a husband and a son in high school who loves to play basketball. She has traveled to Hong Kong to help families deal with autism. In addition, Ruth can share some great stories about hiking and rafting which are among some of her favorite recreational activities.

In an interview Hurst said that she felt honored to be selected to join the psychology department here at UNCW, but we would argue that UNCW faculty and students are truly lucky to have her join us.

Alumni in Focus: Rex Backes

Rex Backes currently works as a vice president on the assessment team in the staffing practices division at Bank of America. He supports multiple lines of business, including the consumer bank and consumer real estate lines. Rex's role is to consult on the pre-employment selection and assessment processes in place within the divisions. He has been with the bank since August 2004. Prior to that, Rex was the director of industrial psychology for seven years for Spherion, a national staffing and HR consulting organization.

Rex received a Masters Degree in Industrial Psychology from Clemson University in 1994. Rex also completed his MBA from the McColl School of business at Queens College in 2002. Rex was selected to be a McColl Fellow during his time in the McColl School. Rex has served in leadership capacities for a variety of organizations. Most recently, Rex was elected to the Board of Directors for the McColl School Alumni Association. Rex has also served as treasurer for the Charlotte Area Personnel Association (CAPA), and as Membership Chair for the N.C. State Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Council. He has also been a member of the Charlotte Leadership Forum (an organization of Christian businessmen) and

NCIOP (North Carolina Industrial/Organizational Psychologists).

In a personal interview with Rex he commented that his original major was not psychology, but after his first psychology class he was hooked. After changing his major to psychology, he continued to take the classes and many options in the field of psychology unfolded in front of him during his degree completion. During that time Backes also participated in animal research involving voles. With so many choices in front of him from so many interesting classes, he said that choosing a direction was a challenging task. Rex said that he enjoyed his time at UNCW and felt that he learned a great deal through the program and his research opportunities. With all that Rex has going on in his work he still continues to be involved in talking to students and working on research in his field of Industrial/Organizational psychology.

The UNCW psychology department is delighted to have alumni like Rex who continue to learn, grow and be involved. We look forward to hearing more from Rex!



Awards Helping Students Grow and Develop Research

Psychology student Krista Willimas was awarded a Chancellor's UNCW Undergraduate Student Research and Travel Award for Fall 2005. She is receiving up to \$1000 for a presentation coauthoring by Dr. Simone Nguyen on "Sources of Information that Children Use in Evaluative Categorization." They will be presenting this work at the Biennial Conference of the Cognitive Development Society in San Diego California in October. Four additional UNCW psychology students have also won CSURF Chancellor's UNCW Undergraduate Student Research and

Travel Awards this Fall. Carol Dwan won a teal award in the amount of \$1000 and Erica Blackwell, Bridget Byrd and Laura Bullard have all won gold awards in the amount of \$500. The funding supported their travel to the Neuroscience Society meetings in November 2005 to present their research on the effects of "club drugs" such as MDMA and methamphetamine on learning and memory with their research supervisor, Dr. Mark Galizio.

History in the Making

Psi Chi Induction

The national honor society for psychology, Psi Chi, had its annual induction ceremony for new members April 9, 2006. Faculty advisor Dr. Christine Hughes welcomed a group of outstanding new initiates, faculty, and many honored guests, including invited speaker Dr. Wendee Wechsberg, Director of Substance Abuse Evaluation and Intervention at Research Triangle Institute and an internationally known expert on behavioral health issues. This year's ceremony was unique because with it came an anniversary for Psi Chi and an announcement from the psychology department. This ceremony marked the 25th anniversary for Psi Chi at UNCW since its first group of inductees in 1981. Three of these original inductees (faculty members Dr. William Overman and Dr. Joseph Kishton, and former student, Stacy Smaltz, DDS.) were in attendance at this anniversary. The attendees of the ceremony warmly remembered the chapter's founder Dr. Joseph C. Awkard, who passed away in February, 2006.

Announcement of Williams-Jackson Merit Scholarship

Also at the Psi Chi ceremony, Dr. John Williams and Dr. Lee A. (Andy) Jackson were honored for their service and leadership as Psychology Department Chairs. In 1972, Dr. John Williams founded the department as its first chairperson. His commitment to the quality

teaching of scientific psychology established a program that became well known and respected. After



Dr. Mark Galizio, Dr. Lee A. Jackson, Jr., Dr. John Williams, Jr.

19 years as chair, he turned the department over to Dr. Jackson in 1991. Dr. Jackson presided as chair for 13 years in a period of growth and saw the department through the development of its first graduate programs. Dr. Mark Galizio, who is now the third psychology department chair, honored these two original leaders by announcing the development of the John Taylor Williams/Lee Anderson Jackson Merit Scholarship in Psychology. This scholarship will provide support to outstanding psychology majors annually and was made possible through the generous contributions of many individuals including alumni and faculty. Dr. Galizio is hopeful that through continued support from contributions that this scholarship can become an endowed scholarship and thus continue to support generations of future students in the same way that Drs. Williams and Jackson have through their years of leadership.



Dr. Hughes and 2006 Psi Chi Officers



1981 Psi Chi members from left to right: William Overman, PhD, Stacy Smaltz, DDS, and Joe Kishton, PhD



2006 Psi Chi Inductees

Help Us Grow !

We wish to sincerely thank the department's alumni and friends who have been so generous in their support over the years. We continue to need support. Donations and gifts to the Department of Psychology may be allocated to support merit scholarships for undergraduate students, faculty and student research or our departmental speaker series. Since the inception of the psychology department we have continued to strive for excellence and you can help us reach that goal.

In appreciation of your support, the department would like to place you on our newsletter mailing list so that you can continue to stay abreast of what is happening in the department. Also, we would like to recognize your donation on our website and in future issues of the newsletter. Of course, if you would like your donation to remain anonymous then please indicate that to us and we will accommodate that request.

Please consider contributing to the Psychology Department's continued excellence and growth. Your gift will qualify as a charitable donation. You may designate how your donation will be allocated by indicating your choice on the form below and sending this form in with your donation. Also, you may visit the website and under the tab "Alumni and Friends" print out the same donation form.

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