



Neuroscience in the Popular Press

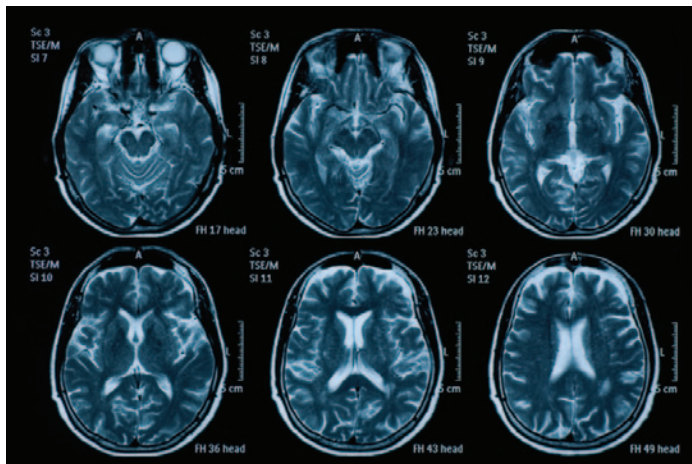
Articles Should Show Full fMRI Image Comparisons to Support Claims

By Diane Beck

These days the science sections of our national newspapers boast articles with such eye-catching titles as “Cells that Read Minds” and “Neuron Network Goes Awry, and Brain Becomes an iPod.” These are just a couple of examples of what has been a vast increase in the number of popular press articles covering brain-related research following the advent of functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). Because fMRI is fundamentally grounded in behavior, this press coverage is a boon to all of psychology and neuroscience, raising awareness of and interest in the behavioral sciences more generally. However, in their rush to “sell” a story or to simplify it for a general audience, it is worryingly common for press articles to misrepresent the science.

The rush to “sell” the story very often results in overblown claims: “Scientists claim to pinpoint cerebral source of human IQ,” “Men see bikini-clad women as objects.” In fact, those of us involved in research know that all results require interpretation. No single piece of data can definitively establish a theory. Theories are instead built up over time and honed by course corrections along the way.

Although simplifying a story has the positive effect of allowing the information to reach a wider audience, it too may not come without cost. The deceptively simple messages the headlines and fMRI images afford appear to undermine critical thinking. For example, McCabe & Castel (2008) showed undergraduates brief press-like articles summarizing fictitious brain imaging findings



Professor Beck says that a raw fMRI image is not interpretable by anyone. Instead, all fMRI results depend critically on a comparison.

that included claims not substantiated by the data. Having read the article, the participants had to rate, among other things, whether the scientific reasoning in the article made sense. Despite the fact that the stories were identical, undergraduates rated the scientific reasoning in the stories accompanied by a brain image as more sound than those accompanied by either no graphical representation or a bar graph.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that an fMRI image, despite its photo-like quality, is not a photograph, even in the sense in which an X-ray image can be said to be a photograph. Instead, fMRI images are constructed from signals derived from the complex interactions of a large magnet, radio waves, and the magnetic properties of the hydrogen and oxygen in our blood. Thus, a great deal of sophisticated mathematics and signal processing is performed even before the researcher obtains his or her raw fMRI images. But these raw fMRI images are still not what appear in the articles. A raw fMRI image is not interpretable by anyone. Instead, all fMRI results depend critically on a comparison. When area X is said to light up in response to condition Y, what is really meant by that is that there was more blood flow to area X when the subject did Y than when she or he did something else. That “something else” then is not only absolutely necessary to seeing anything light up at all but it is also essential to be able to critically evaluate the claims of the paper.

For example, if you were to read that the ventral striatum, a reward center of the brain, lights up in response to the taste of chocolate, you should ask yourself, “compared to what?” If the reward center lights up more to chocolate than, say, Brussels sprouts, it becomes clear that knowing the specifics of the comparison (chocolate versus Brussels sprouts) is essential to understanding what the fMRI activation actually means. It is easy to see that such a difference in brain

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From the Department Head

It is a pleasure and honor to write this welcome as the Interim Department Head (while our "real" Head, David Irwin, is on sabbatical). Budget problems continue in the state and higher education, but the University is starting to rebuild.

Psychology had two searches (Kanfer Chair in Clinical/Community, see page 3; Developmental Neuroscience) plus a joint search with the School of Labor and Employment Relations for an Organizational

Psychologist. The Kanfer search is ongoing, but the others have successfully ended with three excellent hires. We were lucky to recruit two Developmental Neuroscientists, Daniel Hyde and Eva Telzer, and an Organizational Psychologist, Nichelle Carpenter. In addition, a new Social Psychologist, Michael Kraus, who studies the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral consequences of social class will be arriving in the fall of 2012. Although we have reduced faculty and grad student numbers over the last few years, we have been able to keep our psychology majors fairly constant at around 1,300.

The Department of Psychology continues to thrive in many ways. Psychology is often mentioned at University meetings as a model for excellence in various achievements, such as our alumni advisory board, faculty diversity, and undergraduate teaching. The Graduate College did a thorough review of the 91 graduate programs and psychology was one of only nine rated as excellent. All of this is in addition to the continued awards and honors our faculty and students receive for teaching and scholarship (see page 11). Our undergraduates have many opportunities for experiences outside of the classroom including community projects (Community Advocacy, Child Abuse Prevention, Cunningham Children's Home, Girls Advocacy, Juvenile Detention Center Intervention, Counseling Center ParaProfessional), Capstone undergraduate research, Honors Program, advanced research in psychology, and the internship program. Even after 29 years here, I have been greatly impressed by the excellence of the staff, faculty, students, and alumni, who make this department such a vibrant place to work.

A few high points of the fall semester:

- The Kanfer family's gift in memory of our distinguished colleague, Fred Kanfer, will help provide research funds for a professorship and graduate student support in self-management or behavior change (page 3).
- The Alumni Advisory Board continues to be an active source of ideas and programs, under the leadership of Larry Moller and Steve Wiet. The Board members are working on improvements in Career Information Night and Internships. In addition, they started the "Shape the Future Today Fund" and are developing a mentoring program (page 8).
- Dr. Nicholas Christakis gave this year's Lanier Lecture, "Human Social Networks and Evolutionary Time," a fascinating and well-attended general lecture (page 6).

I hope you enjoy this issue that highlights "Neuroscience in the Popular Press" (page 1) by Diane Beck, a faculty member in the Brain and Cognition Division; the graduate research of Laura Chaddock on cognition and the perceptual skills of athletes (page 10); and the reflections of an alumni board member, Dr. John Shustitzky, on his 30-year career in community service organizations (page 5).

Please feel free to visit the department if you can. You are always welcome.

Brian H. Ross

Professor and Interim Head

Endowed Professorship and Fellowship Honors Kanfer Legacy

A significant gift from the estate of Ruby Kanfer of Champaign, Ill., for the Department of Psychology was announced at the University of Illinois Foundation's annual meeting held on September 22-24, 2011. The estate gift created the Fred and Ruby Kanfer Professorship Fund and the Fred and Ruby Kanfer Clinical Psychology Fellowship. The Kanfer Professorship and Fellowship follow the Frederick and Ruby Kanfer Award, which assists undergraduate students in the Department of Psychology.

The Kanfer funds honor the memory of the late professor Frederick H. Kanfer, a pioneer in the behavioral therapy movement and a founding father of self-management therapy. Kanfer's seminal research on self-control and applications to the therapeutic process provided the foundation for the modern theories of self-management and cognitive-behavior therapy methods widely practiced today.

Kanfer earned his PhD in clinical psychology from Indiana University in 1953. He held faculty positions at Washington University, Purdue University, the University of Oregon School of Medicine, and the University of Cincinnati. In 1973, he joined the faculty at the University of Illinois, becoming a University Scholar in 1990 and professor emeritus in 1995. He published over 150 scientific articles and served on editorial boards of U.S. and international psychological journals.

Kanfer exerted worldwide influence on clinical psychology. A Fulbright Professor in Europe, he was awarded the Alexander von Humboldt Senior Scientist Award and the Gold Medal of Honor from Vienna for his contributions to the advancement of clinical psychology in Europe. In October

2002, Kanfer was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychologie. He was a diplomate of clinical psychology, a fellow of the American Psychological Association, and an honorary member of the German Psychological Society as well as the Italian, German, and Uruguayan behavior therapy associations.



Above: Fred Kanfer. Right: Fred and Ruby Kanfer. Ruby was an active partner in her husband's career. She was a homemaker, mother of two, Ruth and Larry Kanfer, both of whom have close ties to the U of I, and the proud grandmother of three—Sarah, Anna, and David.

Fred and Ruby Kanfer's children, Ruth and Larry, were in attendance at the meeting along with their respective spouses, Philip Ackerman, and Alaina Kanfer.

Ruth Kanfer, a professor of psychology at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, completed post-doctoral work in the Department of Psychology. Her husband, Phillip Ackerman, earned his master's and doctoral degrees in psychology at Illinois, and he is also a professor of psychology at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Larry Kanfer earned a bachelor's degree in architectural studies at Illinois. He is a nationally acclaimed photographic artist with galleries in Champaign and online. His wife, Alaina, completed post-doctoral work in psychology at Illinois. She was a social science researcher at the U of I's National Center for Supercomputing Applications and is actively involved in Larry's photographic business.

“The Kanfer Professorship will allow us to attract a senior faculty member with a strong international reputation in the area of self-management, self-regulation, and/or behavior change. The Kanfer Fellowship will help fund students in these areas as they proceed through the demanding clinical graduate school course of study.”



Larry and Alaina coauthored *Illini Loyalty*, a book celebrating the rich traditions and greatness of the University of Illinois through images and stories, using their deep personal connections to Illinois.

Thanks to the generosity of the late Ruby Kanfer, Frederick Kanfer will be memorialized through endowed support for faculty and graduate students in the Department of Psychology.

Scholarship Honors Spoor Legacy

James E. Spoor passed away September 12, 2010, at the age of 74. Spoor was a distinguished alumnus of the Department of Psychology. The James E. Spoor Scholarship Fund was established by his wife, Mrs. Nancy Spoor, to honor her husband and to help worthy undergraduate students.

Spoor earned his undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Illinois in 1958. While at the University he was an active member of the Alpha Chi Rho Fraternity. After graduation, Spoor enlisted in the U.S. Army and was proud of his service to the country.

Spoor had a very successful career that covered more than 25 years in human resources, line management, and global HR operations with several respected Fortune 500 corporations in the energy, high tech, and food processing industries. During his career, Jim earned a reputation as a respected visionary, pioneer, and innovator who focused on exploiting technology to address strategic business issues.

In 1984, Spoor founded SPECTRUM Human Resources Systems Corporation. With his passion for HR and technology, SPECTRUM established itself as a leading provider of HR, benefits administration, talent acquisition, and training and development systems to high expectation mid-market organizations.

Spoor authored many articles, was a contributing author to several professional handbooks and textbooks, and was a frequent speaker and panelist on diverse topics including HR, HR systems, entrepreneurship, and emerging trends in technology. His dedication to the growth of the HR industry, business, and community was best demonstrated by his involvement in several organizations including serving



Spoor shares insights with psychology undergraduates, their parents, faculty, and staff at the department's award program.

over seven years on the Board of Directors of the International Association for Human Resource Information Management (HRIM), the Steering Committee for the Global Special Interest Group of IHRIM, and a long-time member of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), and IHRIM.

As a businessman, Spoor was heavily involved in the Council of Growing Companies, an international organization for CEOs of rapidly growing companies, where he served as president and chairman emeritus. He also served as chairman for the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, a

nonprofit organization serving the outdoor experience needs of individuals with disabilities.

In recognition of his achievements, the department presented Spoor with a Distinguished Alumni Award at the department's graduation ceremony on May 13, 2007. The department would like to express our deepest appreciation to Nancy Spoor for establishing the James E. Spoor Scholarship Fund in memory of her husband and we look forward to working with her to honor his legacy at Illinois.

JAMES E. SPOOR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Six senior undergraduate students received a James E. Spoor Scholarship for the 2012 spring semester based upon their outstanding academic achievements.



2012 Spoor Scholarship recipients: Katherine Anderson, Rajiv Khattar, Victoria Briones, Michelle Martinez, Edward Clint, and Emily Schuld.

A Lifetime of Community Service

By John Shustitzky

I had an extraordinary experience as an undergraduate in the Department of Psychology. As is the case now, the faculty was comprised of the leading thinkers, researchers, and teachers in psychology. While it is difficult to single out one or two, I believe that two faculty members, Dr. Julian Rappaport and Dr. Jerry Cohen, had the biggest influence on my decisions regarding graduate school and my career as a whole.

Through Julian Rappaport's Community Psychology class, I gained an appreciation for how psychologists can, and should, use their skills to help make the community a healthier place, and not merely focus on addressing clinical problems at the individual level. I have turned to Dr. Rappaport's writings throughout my career. In my senior year, I had the good fortune of enrolling in a social psychology research course with Dr. Jerry Cohen. Cohen's enthusiasm for his work and his accessibility to our group of advanced undergraduates made research methods come alive for me. The scholarship he modeled for us, and his encouraging supportive style, are qualities I emulate as I work with graduate students today, decades later.

As an undergraduate in the Department of Psychology, I was exposed to the full array of specialties and inquiries that are part of our field. I also explored the broad range of disciplines within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. I think that the college and the Department of Psychology succeeded in teaching us how to think, how to ask questions, and how to seek out answers to those questions. Having gained an overview of the field of psychology and an appreciation for research, I was ready to narrow my focus to the provision of direct clinical services and community consultation. I planned to gain leadership and management education as well as honing my clinical skills when I returned to the University of Illinois for my PhD program in Counseling Psychology within the College of Education.

Over the past 30 years, I have worked in seven mental health and human services organizations in four states. Each of these organizations was unique, and each

community had its own strengths and challenges, assets and areas for development. In my role as the chief executive officer of these nonprofit organizations, I worked directly with the Boards of Directors, and led the management teams. In addition to program development and evaluation, I spent much of my time in the community,



John Shustitzky says that he gained an appreciation for how psychologists can, and should, use their skills to help make the community a healthier place, and not merely focus on addressing clinical problems at the individual level.

collaborating with other organizations, interacting with various funding bodies and government agencies, and raising money.

In the past few years, the need to spend a substantial amount of time advocating with members of the state legislature and Congress has grown steadily. While the organizations I have served have been of varying sizes and the communities quite diverse, they have had some common themes. Each of them:

- Provided culturally competent clinical services, without regard to ability to pay for those who might not otherwise have access to such services.
- Provided a full array of prevention and early intervention services.
- Consulted with all sectors in the community.
- Valued collaboration among community providers, rather than competition.
- Worked to make the community a healthier place.

I served as director and CEO of Pillars for 10 years. Pillars is a large, comprehensive community mental health and human services organization that serves over 10,000 people each year in 37 west and southwest suburban communities near Chicago. The organization is the product of a number of mergers through its 83-year history and

provides a remarkable array of services including: mental health, addictions, domestic violence and sexual assault services, a Head Start and day care center, transitional housing and comprehensive services for people who are homeless. Planning for a geographically, economically, and racially/ethnically diverse service area is difficult and complicated, but is a challenge that is met by Pillars' staff.

During these challenging times, the demand for Pillars' services has increased substantially as the financial support from most government funders has declined. Fortunately the individual, corporate, and foundation donors have continued to support Pillars very generously. While the full impact of the Health Care Reform legislation won't be clear until 2014, it is certain that there will be an increased emphasis on the integration of behavioral healthcare and primary care. Pillars is well poised

for success under this new service model.

Early in my career, much of the funding for mental health services came from the federal government. During the Reagan era, mental health funding, like funding for many other services, was sent to state governments through Block Grants for distribution. Over time, there has been a shift from awarding grants to paying for services on a fee-for-service basis. As the country has experienced the recent economic crisis, much of the funding for mental health services has been administered through the states' Medicaid programs.

In Illinois, the trend has been reductions in state funds and greater limitations placed on eligibility for state-subsidized service. To make matters worse, the state's budget crisis has resulted in major delays in payments to organizations like Pillars, requiring them to borrow money from banks or reduce the scope of their programs. On a more positive note, Illinois and other states are promoting a greater level of collaboration between behavioral health and primary health care organizations. With financial

FALL 2011 LANIER LECTURE HUMAN SOCIAL NETWORKS IN REAL AND EVOLUTIONARY TIME

by Daniel Simons

If you have ever played the “small world” game or calculated how many steps removed you are from Kevin Bacon, you already have a sense of the powerful spread of connections. For the past decade, Nicholas Christakis and his colleague James Fowler have been exploring the nature of our social connectedness and what it means for our health and our social world.

Christakis imparts great importance to friendships, arguing that social connections are an evolutionary influence on par with—and in some ways even more important than—physical and biological constraints. Until recently in our history, we had relatively little ability to reshape our physical environment and biological needs, but throughout our evolutionary history, we have shaped and created our social networks and they have shaped us. Christakis espouses the social brain hypothesis, arguing that “our assembly into groups may have accelerated, if not created, our very tendency to think.”

Obesity and Contagion

You likely are familiar with media coverage of the obesity epidemic in the United States. The prevalence of obesity has been increasing, but is it an epidemic in the sense that it spreads from one person to another like a virus? To address the question, Christakis analyzed data from the Framingham Heart Study, a massive project tracking the health of thousands of people over decades. In addition to their physical characteristics (height, weight, etc.), the data set also includes information about their social connections: their friends, family, and neighbors. Christakis plotted the changes in these social and physical variables, creating a three-dimensional structure in which each person was represented by a single point in a complex, interconnected web.

The social network showed striking clusters: People who are obese tend to be interconnected with other people who are obese. If your friends are obese, you are 45 percent more likely to be obese yourself. Critically, this correlation is not limited to your direct connections. If your friend's friends (a 2nd-degree connection) are obese, you are

still 25 percent more likely to be obese yourself. In fact, if your friends' friends' friends (a 3rd-degree connection) are obese, you are 10 percent more likely to be obese. Christakis showed that, if he knows nothing about you other than the obesity of your friends' friends' friends, he can predict whether or not you are obese at better than chance levels. (As an example of just how far removed from our daily experiences such a connection can be, for me, Stephen Colbert is a 3rd-degree friend.)

What is the basis for these associations? One possibility is homophily: People with common traits and interests are more likely to become friends in the first place. Another possibility is that the clustering is due to a third factor. If you live near a gym, you might be more likely to work out. Others living near that gym might work out as well, and you are more likely to become friends with someone who lives near you and works out with you. In that case, the clustering is caused by the proximity to a gym.

Christakis's most controversial claim is that these obesity associations in social networks result from a causal process, one in which your friends' weight gain directly influences your own weight gain, much like a cold virus spreads from one person to another, and not due solely to homophily or common third factors. This claim has come under fire because the data in the Framingham Heart Study are observational rather than experimental in nature. In this sort of natural social network, it is impossible to conclusively rule out alternative causes like third factors or homophily because an experimenter cannot randomly assign some people to become obese and then measure the effects on other people.

The fundamental challenge for Christakis's research, once he identified these associations, has been to show that they actually spread contagiously from one person to another. He has begun to do that by using experimental social networks in which he explores the consequences of changes to the network over time.

Emotional Contagion

Although it would be difficult to study the spread of obesity experimentally, it is possible to study other forms of social contagion for more short-lived changes. When someone smiles at you, you smile back at them. That is a form of contagion. Mass panics or riots also involve what appears to be emotional contagion, but they could also be driven by a third factor, the common reaction to some external trigger. Like obesity, happiness tends to cluster within social networks. The friends of happy people tend to be happier, as do their friends' friends and their friends' friends' friends. Unhappy people tend to be more isolated in social networks, and happy people tend to be more central. According to Christakis, they are more likely to catch the “happy wave” as it spreads through a network.

To address the controversy over his claims that obesity and happiness spread causally through a social network, Christakis and his colleagues conducted a novel experiment. They assigned Swiss college students to groups of four to play a public risk game. During each round of the game, each player was given a small pot of money and they could either cooperate by anonymously contributing some of the money to others or they could defect and keep the money for themselves. After each round, the players were placed into different groups and played again. By looking at changes in cooperation across rounds, Christakis could look to see whether an initial act of altruism propagated over time. It did. If Abby initially was kind to Brian, Brian was more likely to be kind to Cheryl, and Cheryl in turn was more likely to be kind to Duane. Note that Abby's initial act of altruism influenced Cheryl's decision to help Duane even though neither Cheryl nor Duane ever interacted with Abby. The downstream effects of Abby's altruism led to more total altruism throughout the network. People do “pay it forward,” magnifying the positive impact of an initial act of kindness. This controlled study allows a more clear-cut causal interpretation. The social actions of one person can influence those of people three degrees removed from them.

The Shape of Social Networks

The structure of human social networks serves to magnify the impact of an initial act. In fact, such networks tend to magnify whatever they are seeded with. They magnify the effects of altruism just as they magnify the consequences of an Ebola outbreak.

Connectedness in a network has both costs and benefits. Being central to a network means that you are more likely to catch anything passing through the network, whether that is a juicy bit of gossip or a deadly germ. How you are interconnected can matter as well. If all of your friends are friends with each other too, then your tightly interconnected group might work together more effectively. However, if your goal is to seek novelty, you would be better off with friends who did not know each other as that would generate greater diversity of information. The costs and benefits of your particular position in a network depend crucially on what is spreading through it.

Social Networks, Genes, and Evolution

You might think that your place within a network is determined entirely by your choices, but it seems that at least in some cases, your genes affect your network placement. The networks of monozygotic twins, who share identical genotypes, tend to be more similarly shaped than those of dizygotic twins who are genetically no more similar than other siblings. These twin comparisons suggest that 46 percent of the variation in the number of friends in a network can be explained by genes.

In a counter-intuitive twist, your genes are also associated with whether or not your friends know each other. If Tom is friends with both Dick and Harry, Tom's genes can predict (better than chance) whether Dick and Harry are friends. In other words, the odds of Dick and Harry being friends depends on their friendship to Tom and to Tom's genes. Christakis suggests a mechanism for this effect: Tom's genes influence whether he introduces his friends to each other.

We choose our friends and associates, and their genes influence us too (as do those of their friends). Your survival and evolutionary fitness may depend not just on your own genes, but on those of the people around you (and the people around them). To illustrate this point, Christakis cites a study of hens, stress, and feather conditions. When under stress, hens tend to molt. It turns out that the likelihood of molting is determined less by a hen's own

genes than by the genes of the hens in adjacent cages. It's not hard to envision a reason why—maybe those hens are more aggressive and peck more. The key, though, is that your phenotype depends not just on your own genes, but on those of your friends and neighbors. Your phenotype is based on your genes and your environment, and a crucial aspect of your environment is your friends (and their genes).

That is why Christakis argues that your social network might lead to larger and more rapid evolutionary change than the more traditionally studied physical or reproductive factors. The genes of our friends can influence our phenotype, and we choose our friends, giving us the

power to influence our evolution in a much more rapid way. More broadly, in choosing our friends, we also can change the structure of our social networks. And, by changing our network, we may change ourselves.

In Christakis's view, social networks are central to our biological makeup. We seek friendships, and those friendships influence us in return. They provide for and magnify the spread of happiness, love, justice, and other societal goods. To quote Christakis, in this view of evolution, the "spread of germs may be the price we pay for the spread of ideas."

Watch Christakis's lecture:
www.psychology.illinois.edu/news/video



Dr. Christakis received a BS in biology from Yale University (1984), MD from Harvard Medical School (1989), MPH from Harvard School of Public Health (1988), and a PhD in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania (1995). He is currently a professor of medical sociology in the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School; professor of medicine in the Department of Medicine at Harvard Medical School; professor of sociology in the Department of Sociology in the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences; and an attending physician in the Department of Medicine at the Harvard-affiliated Mt. Auburn Hospital.

Dr. Christakis was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences in 2006. In 2009, he was included on the annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time magazine, and ranked 50th by *Foreign Policy* magazine in its list of top global thinkers. He has served on many editorial boards and review panels both in the U.S. and abroad, and he has presented over 100 lectures all over the world including Australia, Germany, Italy, London, South Africa, and South Korea. Dr. Christakis has over 100 original, peer reviewed articles, 13 book chapters, and four books, including *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*.



Daniel Simons is a professor in the Visual Cognition & Human Performance division of the Department of Psychology. His research explores the limits of awareness and memory and the reasons why we often are unaware of those limits. He received a BA in psychology and cognitive science from Carleton College and a PhD in experimental psychology from Cornell University. He then spent five years on the faculty at Harvard University, before coming to the University of Illinois in 2002. He is a Fellow of the Association for

Psychological Science and the recipient of the 2003 Early Career Award in Psychology from the American Psychological Association. In addition to his scholarly research, he has penned articles for the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (among others). In 2010, he and his long-time collaborator Christopher Chabris co-authored the *New York Times* bestseller, *The Invisible Gorilla*. You can read more about him and his work on his laboratory webpage: www.simonslab.com.



The Lanier Lecture is supported by a fund established by L. Gene and Catherine Lemon and Lyle Lanier, Jr., in memory of Catherine and Lyle's father, Lyle Lanier, former head of the Department of Psychology (1951-1959), dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Science, and provost of the Urbana campus. The Lanier Lecture brings a distinguished psychologist to campus whose work is of interest to the general campus community.

PSYCHOLOGY ALUMNI BOARD INITIATIVES

It has been three years since the Department of Psychology Alumni Advisory Board was created to help undergraduate psychology students obtain career opportunities upon graduation. The Board has been working diligently with the Department's faculty and staff to implement four key platforms: internships, mentoring, communications, and development. We are excited to update you on our progress of these initiatives.

Internships

We had 28 internships available to our undergraduate psychology students during the summer of 2011, and 136 alumni stepped forward to express interest in this initiative. These internships span the gamut—from healthcare services to consumer package goods. We are grateful to those psychology alumni who have gone the extra mile in creating or advocating internships for our undergraduates. Our goal is to continually increase this number every year and we hope you will consider working with us and the University to bring on board a psychology student within your company. Please contact Leslie Vermillion, senior director of development, at (217) 244-6320 or at lrv@illinois.edu if you would like more information.

In the classroom, Dr. Robert Wickesberg has championed a career development course for students who have had internships—either those offered through the department or found on their own. The course is increasing in popularity. Now in its second year, class size has doubled.

The goal of the course is to leverage the insights and learning from their internships and prepare for the next step—a career. The course brings in volunteer psychology alumni to enhance their job interviewing and resume writing skills. It also hosts outside speakers, many of whom are U of I psychology alumni, to provide their insights on various career-related issues.

Mentoring

The Psychology Alumni Advisory Board is pleased to announce the creation of a Psychology Mentor Program for undergraduates. The program will provide an opportunity for students and alumni to share information and experiences regarding their education, career objectives and options, and facilitate one-on-one relationships between students and alumni. Alumni will have the opportunity to provide “real world” guidance regarding career planning and skills development that classes alone cannot provide to students. While the program is being initiated with the intent to benefit students in the Department of Psychology, we anticipate that both alumni and students will find the program a rewarding experience. Applications are available on the department's website at:

www.psychology.illinois.edu/alumni/MentorProgram.html

For more information, please contact Gary Wszalek, head undergraduate advisor, at (217) 333-6478 or mentoring@cyrus.psych.illinois.edu.

Our annual Psychology Career Information Night has dramatically increased in size. U of I Psychology alumni have successful careers in many different fields. The Career Information Night gives our undergraduates the opportunity to explore the many different career paths that are available to them. At last year's event, 28 alumni and over 100 students participated, and included a terrific panel discussion led by distinguished alumni. Your role simply involves having casual discussions with our psychology students about what you do and how your psychology major helped shape your career. You can contact Cheryl Berger, assistant head for alumni relations, at (217) 333-3429 or cberger@illinois.edu if you would like more information about participating in our 2013 event.



Communications

The Communications Subcommittee focuses on ways to enable the connections of both our current students and our alumni network through social media, written/electronic communications, and special events. Current initiatives have included the use of social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as the bi-annual newsletter. Our goal is to engage directly with our powerful alumni network to drive initiatives as well as develop and maintain connections.

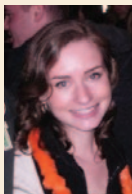
The subcommittee's long term goals include developing an “e-Newsletter,” continuing to connect with, and motivate alumni to share or update their information, and to improve the quality of alumni relationships with the department. An essential component of this strategy is the accumulation of alumni contact information. There are multiple ways to ensure that your information is up-to-date, and to help be a part of this exciting initiative. You can “Update Your Information” at www.psychology.illinois.edu/alumni or email your information to alumni@cyrus.psych.illinois.edu. This combined with electronic media will help enable fast, concise, and effective communication!

Also new this year, the department has asked our undergraduate students to enter a “Design a Psychology T-shirt Contest.” The T-shirt is being designed for our 2012 senior graduating class and for alumni who participate in

INTERSHIPS HELP SHAPE STUDENTS' CAREER GOALS

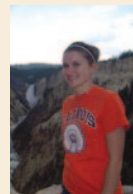
I was a distinguished events planning intern at the American Cancer Society Illinois Division in Chicago and served on the Distinguished Events Team. We spent three months planning a young professional event, the Skyline Soiree, at the River East Arts Center. I raised \$2,000 fair market value in silent auction donations from restaurants and businesses in the Chicago area.

Some of my other internship experiences included: managing guest registration and room preparation for the Associate Board of Ambassadors meetings. I also had the opportunity to discuss strategic initiatives in a panel discussion with leaders of other nonprofit organizations including the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Juvenile Diabetes Association, and Children's Memorial Hospital. My internship was a great experience that has given me insight about how to conduct business professionally in an organization. It was fun to meet and work with new people for a shared goal.



—Mary Henderson

In my internship with Advanced Midwest Institute of Counseling and Psychotherapy, I was the executive assistant to the clinical director. This experience showed me that I want to do therapy. I was able to make connections within my field. I never thought that I would be able to have this experience.



—Erin Hellwig

My internship at Cook County Juvenile Court gave me the opportunity to interact as a professional with clients in the juvenile justice system. I went on home visits with probation officers; conducted my own interviews in clients' homes; and met with social workers and others who worked with our clients. The experience led me to consider a career working with a system involving youth.



—Elizabeth Arnold

department events such as Career Information Night. The winner of the contest will receive special recognition from the department. The department will share photographs of students and alumni wearing the T-shirt, "Psychology WearAbouts," throughout the year on our Facebook page and under Alumni News at: www.psychology.illinois.edu/alumni/news. We look forward to seeing the novel ways the department T-shirt is worn on vacation, business trips, or at special events. If you have not done so already, please join our two networking sites:

Development

We are excited to have kicked off our "Shape the Future Today" campaign this past July. We designed this project to invest in our current students' future TODAY. The money raised will be targeted in two different ways—one inside the classroom, and the other outside the classroom. First, we are raising funds to offer need-based money to students who cannot accept a summer internship due to financial reasons. This allows all psychology undergraduate students the experience and competitive edge they need to compete for jobs during a time when job opportunities for undergraduates are at an all-time low. Second, funds are also being used to add state-of-the-art audio/visual technology in the Psychology Building classrooms to enhance the students' educational experience. These tools give faculty and students alike the means of creating more powerful presentations, accessing web-based knowledge, and enabling them to participate in career presentations and web-based job interviews. To date, we have raised a total of just over \$13,000. For those of you who have already shown your generosity with a gift, we thank you. If you would like more information or want to make a donation, please visit www.psychology.illinois.edu/giving/AlumniFundDrive.html.

In conclusion, our four platforms form the foundation for providing our psychology students with skills, knowledge, contacts, and hopefully a true understanding and appreciation of the value of a psychology degree. But it takes volunteers to make a difference. If you would like to be a member of this committed group of University faculty, staff, and alumni, please send us a note to learn how you can make a difference.

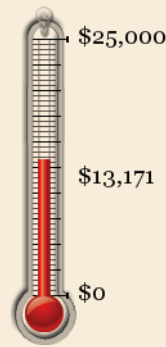


Larry Moller, President, Alumni Advisory Board and Stephan Wiet, Vice President, Alumni Advisory Board

ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD NEWS

PSYCHOLOGY ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD "SHAPE THE FUTURE TODAY" FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Members of the Psychology Alumni Advisory Board contributed to get the fund drive underway and YOUR donations are moving us closer to our goal. For more information about the Shape the Future Today Fund, visit www.psychology.illinois.edu/giving/AlumniFundDrive.html.



CROCKER JOINS PSYCHOLOGY ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD

The Department of Psychology is pleased to announce that **Matthew Crocker** (BS '07; MS '09, human resources and industrial relations) joined the Alumni Advisory Board in October 2011. Crocker is an associate human resource manager III at a General Mill's manufacturing facility located in Los Angeles, Calif.



MCGRORY SETS COURSE RECORD AT NEW YORK CITY MARATHON

Amanda McGrory (BS '10) is a force to be reckoned with in the sport of wheelchair racing. She had a record-breaking year, winning marathons in Paris (4/10/11) and London (4/17/11). One week prior to the New York City Marathon, she finished 2nd place in the women's division of the 31st Oita International Wheelchair Marathon in Japan. She also competed in the Gasparilla 15K in Tampa, Fla., on February 26, 2012, and is preparing for the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games that will take place in London.



McGrory set a course record in the women's wheelchair race at the New York City Marathon on November 6, 2011. She finished the marathon in 1 hour, 50 minutes, and 24 seconds.

McGrory said that the University of Illinois is the best place in the world for her to train for events. She participates in a rigorous training program as part of the Men and Women's Wheelchair Track Team, and she is one of two women on the team that competes in marathons. McGrory said that she can race at peak performance for years. Stay up-to-date about her future racing events at <http://amandamcgrory.com>.

Do Athletes Excel at Everyday Tasks?

By Laura Chaddock

We live in a fast-paced, multitasking world. We encounter daily situations that require efficient processing of environmental stimuli and attention to concurrent tasks. An ability to focus and divide attention, quickly integrate perceptions and memories, and sustain concentration while juggling multiple tasks is likely to improve performance on everyday challenges.

Crossing a street is a multitask challenge that requires the performance of more than one task concurrently. To successfully cross a street, pedestrians have to simultaneously attend to the flow of traffic, monitor and remember vehicle distances and speeds, and execute a crossing. In our study, we examined whether involvement in sports influences the ability to successfully cross a street.

What the Research Tells Us

Previous investigations have found that athletes outperform non-athletes on sport-specific tests of attention, memory, and speed. For example, soccer players have higher scores than non-experts when searching for a soccer ball in a realistic visual search scene. Sport expertise also transcends sport to influence fundamental cognitive and perceptual measures outside the sport-specific domain. That is, performance benefits for athletes relative to non-athletes have been observed in classical laboratory tasks in which the testing environment is stripped of sport context.

We extended the research on sport-specific and sport-general cognitive enhancements associated with competitive sports training by studying athlete and non-athlete performance on a realistic street crossing task. A street intersection was modeled in an immersive virtual reality environment at the Beckman Institute, and collegiate varsity athletes competed against non-athlete collegians in a test of traffic-dodging skills by walking on a manual treadmill that was integrated with the virtual world.

We predicted that an elite soccer player, for example, not only shows an ability to multitask and process incoming information quickly on a fast-paced soccer field by run-

ning, kicking, attending to the clock, noting the present offensive and defensive formations, executing a play, and finding open players to whom to pass; he or she also shows these skills in the context of common real world tasks.

Methodology

To test our hypotheses, we recruited 36 male and female students, ages 18 to 22. Half of the participants were varsity Division I athletes at the University of Illinois, and they represented a wide variety of sports, including cross-country running, baseball, swimming, tennis, wrestling, soccer, and gymnastics. The rest of the volunteers were young non-athlete collegians, matched to the athlete group in terms of age, gender, height, weight, GPA, and video game experience.



When the students arrived at the Beckman Institute's virtual reality CAVE environment (www.isl.uiuc.edu/Labs/CAVE/CAVE.html) they were soon immersed in a busy virtual cityscape, with cars zooming by between 40 and 55 miles per hour. Large viewing screens surrounded the treadmill, and participants wore goggles that provided depth and realism. Students were told to walk across the virtual road and to try to dodge vehicles when they thought it was safe. They attempted to cross the street while undistracted as well as while conversing on a hands-free cellular phone or listening to music on an iPod, two realistic distractor tasks that might introduce additional multitask challenges. The use of technological devices has become a common and widespread campus practice while students navigate roads around campus.

We designed our paradigm to replicate many of the important aspects of street crossing, while also enabling the objective measurement of pedestrian behaviors in a safe situation, and with sufficient levels of difficulty to ensure the power to detect group differences. The high quality graphics and high level of interaction and immersion, as reflected by participant movements controlling the virtual world, suggest that the paradigm provides a valid and realistic approximation of what might be encountered in the real world.

Research Findings

Student athletes showed higher street crossing success rates than non-athletes, during the undistracted, listening to music, and talking on a cell phone conditions. While one might expect that students in peak physical condition outperform non-athletes on a treadmill test, the results do not suggest that the performance differences were a result of athletes being more coordinated or more athletic. Athletes did not walk faster than the other students.

Actually, our data raise the possibility that cognitive differences, as reported in other athlete-cognition investigations, relate to differences in success rates on the realistic street-crossing paradigm. We administered a behavioral task of simple reaction time (i.e., "Press a key when you see a star appear on the screen!"), and athletes were faster than non-athletes in the coordination of a motor response and the processing of information. While efficiency of information processing may be one cognitive mechanism underlying athlete and non-athlete differences in street crossing performance, additional research is needed to characterize other cognitive factors that play a role in the cognitively complex multitask paradigm that involves

attention, speed, working memory, and inhibition.

In sum, the exciting study extends the literature on the cognitive and perceptual skills of the expert athlete by studying athlete and non-athlete performance on a realistic street crossing multitask paradigm. Cognitive skills trained in sport may engender transfer to performance on everyday challenges. Practicing a sport, whether an athlete is trained in endurance or timing or balance or strength, may sharpen information processing and increase the ability to dodge through a busy intersection without incident.

A final note! Please put your cell phones away while navigating roadways. No amount of sports training makes walking and talking in traffic a wise move. All participants were involved in more collisions when chatting on the phone relative to when undistracted or listening to music.



Laura Chaddock is a PhD student in the Brain and Cognition division. Dr. Art Kramer, director of the Beckman Institute, is her primary research advisor, and she also collaborates

with Dr. Chuck Hillman, associate professor in kinesiology. Chaddock is interested in brain and cognitive plasticity. She studies the relationship among aerobic fitness, brain structure, brain function, and cognition across the human lifespan, especially in a preadolescent population. She has used structural and functional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques to examine the brains of higher-fit and lower-fit children, and she has several articles published in this area. She is currently exploring the effects of a nine-month physical activity intervention on academic achievement, cognitive function, brain structure, brain function, and street crossing performance in 9- to 10-year-old children. Her research interests extend to include the relationship between athletic participation and cognition, as described above.

FACULTY AWARDS

American Psychological Association Distinguished Scientist Award

Edward Diener (emeritus) is the recipient of this award that honors psychologists who have made distinguished theoretical or empirical contributions to basic research in psychology.

Association for Psychological Science

Kara Federmeier, John Hummel, and Daniel Simons have been elected Fellows of APS. Fellow status is awarded to APS members who have made sustained outstanding contributions to the science of psychology in the areas of research, teaching, service, and/or application.

Helen Corley Petit Scholar

Justin Rhodes has been designated as a 2012-2013 Helen Corley Petit Scholar on the basis of his extraordinary record as an assistant professor. Helen Corley Petit, an alumna of the College of LAS who passed away in 2002, provided an endowment for the development of the scholarship and teaching of young faculty members in the college. Winners are determined by the LAS Executive Committee, following the review of all promotion and tenure dossiers in the college.

Psychometric Society

Hua-Hua Chang has been elected president of the Psychometric Society for 2012-2013.

Psychonomic Society 2011 Best Article Award

Dave Irwin received the award for his article in *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics*, "Where does attention go when you blink?"

Society for Personality and Social Psychology Career Contribution Award

Harry Triandis (emeritus) is the recipient of this award that is designed to honor a scholar who has made major theoretical and/or empirical contributions to social psychology and/or personality psychology or to bridging these areas. Recipients of this award are recognized for distinguished scholarly contributions across long and productive careers. Recognition for the award will come at the upcoming 2012 SPSP meeting.

Cohen Named Neuroscience Program Director

Neal Cohen was named director of the Neuroscience Program effective August 16, 2011. Cohen is a faculty member in the department's Brain & Cognition Division and in the Beckman Institute Cognitive Neuroscience Group. His field of research is cognitive neuroscience, directed specifically at issues about memory systems of the brain, about amnesia, and other disorders of memory.

International Society of Developmental Psychology

Janice Juraska is president-elect for ISDP.

FACULTY PROMOTIONS

The department is pleased to announce that Dean Ruth Watkins and the LAS Executive Committee endorsed our recommendation to promote **Michael Kral** and **Justin Rhodes** from assistant professor to associate professor, and **Aaron Benjamin** and **Kara Federmeier** from associate professor to professor.



Neuroscience in the Popular Press (continued from cover)

activation may not reflect a love of chocolate but, instead, a dislike of Brussels sprouts (particularly if, like me, you are not very fond of Brussels sprouts). This is, of course, just a made-up example, but the same logic and thus the same potential pitfalls underlie all fMRI research.

Unfortunately, the failure to report the full fMRI comparison is one of the most common oversights of the press. Without both sides of the comparison, it is impossible for the reader to critically evaluate the article's claims. Diligence on the part of the researcher and reporter in making sure that the comparisons so fundamental to any fMRI result are adequately conveyed will not only better educate the public about fMRI research in general, but will also provide the reader with an opportunity to decide for themselves whether or not they agree with the article's claims.



Dr. Diane Beck received her PhD from the University of California–Berkeley in 1998. She did postdoctoral work at University College London and Princeton University, and has been

a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois since 2005. Dr. Beck's research focuses on visual cognition from a neuroscience perspective, and specifically she explores the neural mechanisms underlying our limited attentional capacity, visual awareness, and natural scene perception. She and her lab use a variety of methods to address these questions, including functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), behavioral methods, and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS). She was recently promoted to associate professor and is the Cognitive Neuroscience Group Leader at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology. Her work has appeared in *Nature Neuroscience*, *Psychological Science*, *Journal of Neuroscience*, *Perspective on Psychological Science*, and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, among other publications.

A Lifetime of Community Service (continued from page 5)

incentives for effective collaboration, it is likely that artificial segmentation of “mind” and “body” will be reduced.

With the exception of the time I lived in Oregon, I have been affiliated with the Chicago School of Professional Psychology for 20 years as a professor in the Clinical Psy.D. Department. As my full-time jobs have moved more and more into the management realm, I have been able to retain my identity as a psychologist by teaching, supervising clinical work, and working with doctoral students as they conduct their dissertation research. This year, I will teach classes in Ethics, Diversity, and a seminar in Professional Practice. I have three research clerks who will assist me in providing support for the Illinois Mental Health Planning & Advisory Council.

It is my privilege to serve as the co-chair of the Mental Health Advisory Council, along with a colleague who is herself living with mental illness. Our council has members from across the state, and includes persons living with mental illness, their family members, psychologists, social workers, and other mental health professionals, advocates, and representatives of various agencies of state government. We review the state's annual mental health plan before it is submitted to the federal government, and have a direct voice to SAMSHA regarding the strengths and areas for growth demonstrated by the state Division of Mental Health.

Serving on the Illinois Mental Health Planning & Advisory Council has been an experience unique among the many groups I have served on during my career. I would like to think that our deliberations and our recommendations have a positive effect on the services provided across the state. However, the current financial downturn limits the improvements that are likely to be accomplished anytime soon.

Over the course of my career in community mental health I have learned from the individuals served by these organizations that:

- Treatment works.
- People living with mental illness or addiction can and do improve and participate fully in their lives, families, and communities.
- Those affected by violence can heal, and that the cycle of violence can be broken.
- The stigma related to mental illnesses and related problems prevent many people from seeking treatment, and must be eradicated.
- The community can become a healthier place.

I have been working as a senior leader of various community organizations for most of the past 30 years, and I have decided that my next adventure will take me in some different directions. I plan to become more involved in graduate teaching and supervising research. I expect to begin some consulting projects, and will look for ways to become more active in my community, perhaps on a volunteer basis. I am fortunate that I have the flexibility to take the time to be really intentional about the next phase of my career. Our generation seems to be reinventing and redefining traditional career paths, and I look forward to deciding how to use my skills and interests in some new ways.



John Shustitzky (BS '73, psychology; MS '75, PhD '79, counseling psychology) has spent the majority of his career working in nonprofit community mental health and human services

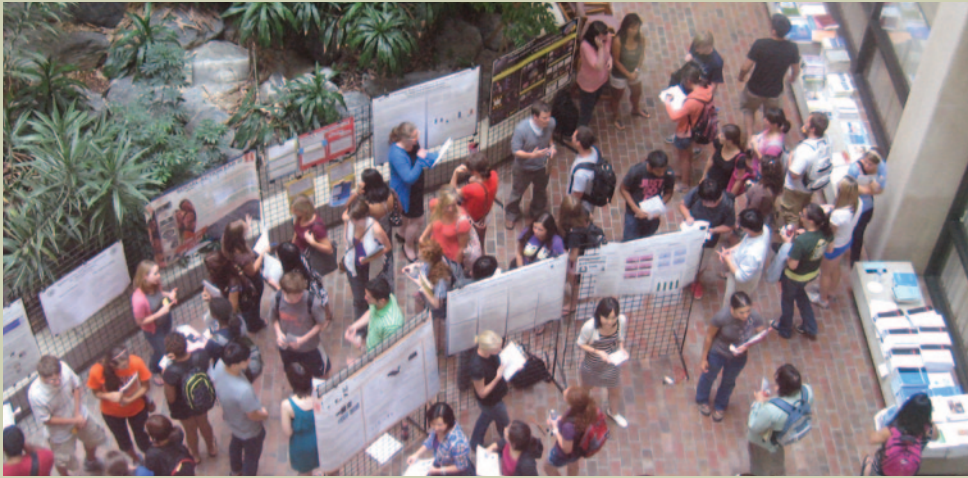
organizations in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Oregon.

In September 2011, he retired from Pillars, a large, multiservice organization in the western suburbs of Chicago, where he served as the president and CEO for 10 years. He continues as a professor in the Clinical Doctoral Program at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. As a volunteer, he serves as the co-chair of the Illinois Mental Health Planning & Advisory Council, a member of the Department of Psychology's Alumni Advisory Board and a member of the State of Illinois Social Services Advisory Council.

Since 2002, Shustitzky has been part of the “ACT Against Violence” program developed by the Public Interest Directorate of the American Psychological Association. This research-supported program addresses violence prevention activities focused on the parents of young children.

Shustitzky lives in Lake Forest, Ill., with his wife, Christine Chakoian, a Presbyterian minister. Their daughter, Anna, a recent psychology graduate from the University of Chicago, is serving a volunteer year in South Korea.

PSYCH 290 FAIR DRAWS A CROWD



The fall Psych 290 Fair generated interest in the special topics course. The course offers supervised participation in research and scholarly activities usually as an assistant to an investigator. Students develop an understanding of the theoretical background of the particular research in which they are involved and actively participate in research design, data acquisition, coding and analysis, or reporting of research results.

Every semester approximately 250 students enroll in Psych 290. Faculty from all of the divisions in the department participate in this unique educational opportunity.

INCOMING GRADUATE STUDENT CLASS



The department welcomed 28 graduate students into our doctoral program for the fall 2011 semester.
 Front row: Shelbie Sutherland, Lin Bian, Seong Hee Cho, Wenting Mu, Rui Guo, Cassandra Jacobs, Jacinth Tan
 Middle row: Ariel James, Leslie Wise, Miatta Echetebe, Elizabeth Trawick, Ryan Hubbard, Chinmayi Tengshe
 Back row: Nathaniel Anderson, Jonathan Cottrell, Brian Metzger, Andres Buxo, Aldis Sipolins, Allison Letkiewicz, Ryan Steele, Konrad Bresin, Michael Niznikiewicz, Mengyang Cao, Chin Hong Tan, Brian Griffin
 (Not pictured: Sarah Banducci, Ruth Yeh)

PSYCHOLOGY MCNAIR SCHOLARS

Three psychology undergraduates, **Victoria Briones**, **Michelle Martinez**, and **Marissa Zayas** participated in the summer component of the TRiO Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program and presented their research at the 2011 Illinois Summer Research Symposium.

Prior to their presentations, the students participated in an intensive eight-week research experience, attended weekly workshops on topics such as the nature of academic life, standardized test preparation, writing and research skills, and the graduate school application process.

The overall goal of the TRiO Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program is to prepare and encourage scholars to obtain a doctorate degree and become faculty to diversify the ranks of the American professorate. More than 60 percent of McNair Scholars at Illinois have been accepted to graduate schools during the 20 years of the program's existence on this campus.



Victoria Briones is a senior in psychology and Latina/o studies.

"Rising to the Challenge: Latino Males' Road to Academic Success"



Michelle Martinez is a senior in psychology.

"New Pathways to Love: Relating Through Communication Technologies"



Marissa Zayas is a junior in psychology.

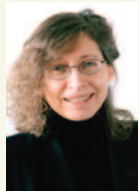
"An Examination of Latino Caregivers and Utilization of Mental Health Services: A Qualitative Analysis of Cultural Expectations"



Marion Morse Wood Fellowship

Melanie Tannenbaum received the fellowship for her proposal entitled "The Role of Message Content and Sentence Structure in Interpersonal Communication and Behavior Change."

Faculty Retirements



Peggy J. Miller (PhD Teachers College, Columbia University) has been on the faculty at U of I since 1991, with a split appointment in the Departments of Psychology and Communication. Miller is also

affiliated with the Center for Writing Studies, the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies, and the Department of Educational Psychology.

Miller is a developmental and cultural psychologist whose scholarship bridges psychology, communication, and anthropology. She is an expert on early socialization, the process by which children become cultural beings through their participation in everyday talk. Much of her work has focused on personal storytelling as the prism through which socialization transpires, selves are constructed and transformed, and social inequalities are reproduced. Committed to comparative research, she has studied personal storytelling within and across cultures (Taiwan and the U.S.) and social classes.

She is also an expert on ethnographic methods. Her publications include three books, three edited books, and many chapters and articles in journals, including *Child Development*, *Human Development*, *Social Development*, *Journal of Child Language*, *Journal of Family Communication*, *Culture and Psychology*, *Ethos*, and *American Ethnologist*. Her monograph, "How Socialization Happens on the Ground: Narrative Practices as Alternate Socializing Pathways in Taiwanese and European-American Families," will be published in the spring in *Monographs of the Society for Child Development*.

Miller has been a Fellow in the Center for Advanced Study and the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities. In 2006-2007 she was Helen Putnam Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University. She appeared many times on the Incomplete List of Excellent Teachers and received the Graduate College Outstanding Mentor Award in 2001.

Miller's goal in "retirement" is to work on one thing at a time. Her latest book project explores self-esteem as a cultural ideal, childrearing goal, and discursive practice that circulates widely in contemporary American society. She continues to collaborate with former students and remains editor of the book series that she co-founded, *Child Development in Cultural Context* (Oxford University Press).

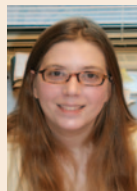


Gregory A. Miller (PhD University of Wisconsin-Madison) is now professor emeritus in the Department of Psychology and affiliate of the Beckman Cognitive Neuroscience Group. He moved to the University

of Delaware in 2011, where he is professor and chair of the Department of Psychology, after serving U of I as the director of the Beckman Biomedical Imaging Center, head of the Beckman Cognitive Neuroscience Group, and program director of the NIMH-funded "Training in Cognitive Psychophysiology" training grant. Formerly he served as director of Clinical Training and Associate Head in the U of I Department of Psychology, where he was a member of the Brain & Cognition and Clinical/Community Divisions.

He continues collaborations with colleagues at U of I and University of Konstanz (Germany) as well as at the University of Delaware. Miller's research pursues mechanisms relating cognitive, emotional, and physiological aspects of normal and abnormal human behavior, using the methods of cognitive, affective, and clinical psychophysiology/neuroscience. Interests include executive function, emotional dysregulation, and sensory processes as well as development of multimodal neuroimaging methods. The research integrates sMRI, fMRI, and dense-array scalp event-related brain potential (ERP) measures as well as structured diagnostic interviews. In collaboration with Professors Wendy Heller, Brad Sutton and Marie Banich, the MRI/ERP studies address questions of regional brain specialization in emotion and its effects on executive function, with a particular interest in differentiation of depression and anxiety. A collaboration with Professors Brigitte Rockstroh and Thomas Elbert and Drs. Nathan Weisz and Tzvetan Popov at the University of Konstanz (Germany) pursues MEG and EEG studies of compromised sensory, emotional, and cognitive processing in schizophrenia and nonspecific effects of stress and the development of a cognitive treatment method. Publications include philosophy-of-science issues that arise in psychological and biological research on cognition, emotion, and psychopathology as well as tutorials on method issues in psychophysiology/cognitive neuroscience.

New Staff Join Department



Sarah Challand joined the Psychology Business Office as an accounting associate October 2011 and works primarily with grants on the post-award side. Challand received a bachelor's degree from Illinois State University in 2003.



Keri Niehans joined the undergraduate advising office August 2011. Niehans previously served as an undergraduate advisor in the U of I's Department of Sociology. She earned a BS ('01) and a master's degree ('03) from the University of Texas, and was admitted into the U of I Department of Sociology program in 2003 (ABD).

Staff Retirements



Kathy Hatch retired from the Department of Psychology on December 31, 2011. Hatch served as director of budget and resource planning in the department's business office for 10 years.



Janice Morris retired from the Department of Psychology on August 31, 2011. Morris, an Accountant III, worked in the business office for 16 years.

Staff Departures



David Skadden served as an undergraduate academic advisor in the department for 11 years. He accepted a social work position at Circle Academy, a special education and therapeutic intervention program, in August 2011.

STAFF AWARDS



2011-2012 Department of Psychology Academic Professional Award
Firmino Pinto
Research Engineer



2011-2012 Department of Psychology Staff Award
Ashley Ramm
*Office Support Associate
Graduate Student Affairs*



2011-2012 Department of Psychology and College of LAS Staff Award
Katie Beall
*Office Manager
Associate Heads Office*



30-Year Staff Service Recognition
Lori Hendricks
*Administrative Aide
Graduate Student Affairs*

2011 Head Discretionary Award Recipients

Jim Clark
Terry Davis
Beth Etchison
Cindy Foster
Betty Heggemeier
Lori Hendricks

ALUMNI NEWS

1970s

Mitchell Waldman (BS '79) published a collection of 16 short stories, *Petty Offenses and Crimes of the Heart*, in August 2011 with Wind Publications. For more information see: windpub.com/books/PettyOffenses.htm or mitchwaldman.homestead.com.

Tom Waznis (BS '72) retired at age 50 after working for over 20 years as a manufacturing engineer in electronics in various companies in Phoenix and San Diego.

1980s

Laurie Kramer (PhD '88) is one of five U of I faculty members to be named 2011-12 Fellows of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation's Academic Leadership Program. Established in 1989, the program helps develop leadership and managerial skills of faculty members demonstrating "exceptional ability and academic promise." Kramer is the associate dean for academic programs in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. She is also a professor of applied family studies in the Department of Human and Community Development, and a licensed clinical psychologist. Kramer is the founding director of the Family Resiliency Center and U of I's Pampered Chef Family Resiliency Program.

1990s

Michele Gelfand (PhD '96) won an Anneliese Maier Research Award from the Humboldt Foundation in November 2011. It is awarded to a scholar whose scientific achievements have been internationally recognized in their research area. Gelfand is a professor of psychology and a

Distinguished University Scholar Teacher at the University of Maryland.

Kimberly Melton Lechner (BS '99) was appointed assistant director of student services by the District 96 Board of Education in June 2011. Lechner has a master's degree in school psychology from Governors State University. She completed a Type 75 certificate program in educational administration at Northern Illinois University and she is pursuing her doctorate in counselor education and supervision at NIU.

William Olson's (BS '96) second edition of his novel, *Right on Time*, has been published by Pelican Books to the iTunes iBookstore.

Melina Tomaras-Collins (BS '91) was nominated by Major J. Michael Houston in Springfield, Ill., to be the next director of the Department of Human Resources. She began as acting director on August 1, 2011. Tomaras-Collins most recently served as the human resources manager for Midwest Financial Holdings, LLC of Springfield. She received an MS in Labor and Industrial Relations from Loyola University Chicago.

Katie (Krause) Shobe (BS '93) is a naval officer and research psychologist. While on an eight-month deployment in Afghanistan she conducted mental health surveillance of naval personnel deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Shobe was also selected for promotion to commander.

2000s

Yasmine Kieso-Chelico (BS '08) married John D. Chelico on March 1, 2009, and they have resided in New York City since 2009. Kieso-Chelico attended New York University College of Dentistry and received an MS in Clinical Research. She is a clinical research intern at the Center for Brain Health at NYU Medical Center/NYU School of Medicine.

Amara S. Hussain (BS '09, psychology and molecular and cellular biology) is a third-year medical student at the University of Illinois and expects to receive her medical degree in 2013.

Jeff Sieracki (BS '04) was interviewed on *Fox Chicago News* on July 20, 2011, for tips on planning a stress-free family vacation. Dr. Sieracki is a staff psychotherapist at The Family Institute at Northwestern University. He has extensive training in empirically supported treatments and cognitive-behavioral interventions for children, adolescents, and adults.

2010s

Elaine Wu (BS '11) was offered a Fulbright to teach conversational English to high school students in Malaysia. She taught English in rural Taiwan in the summer of 2010 as well as on campus through volunteering as a conversation partner for the Intensive English Institute.

Send Us Your News

Email your personal and professional news to alumni@cyrus.psych.illinois.edu.

Department of Psychology

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Due to a technical error the Department of Psychology's former alumni networking group on LinkedIn is no longer in existence. Please join our new group, "**University of Illinois Department of Psychology Networking**" and expand your professional network.



Become a Psychology Facebook Fan

Find us at "University of Illinois Psychology Department" and keep up-to-date on important news and events.

Update Your Information

Update us on your latest news and current email address at www.psychology.illinois.edu/alumni.

PSYCHOLOGY LAUNCHES UNDERGRADUATE MENTOR PROGRAM

The Department of Psychology needs your help to prepare our undergraduate students for successful careers. The Psychology Alumni Advisory Board has created a mentoring program that will allow students and alumni to share information and experiences regarding their education, career objectives and options, and long-term professional development. Although in-person contact between the student and mentor is ideal, it is not necessary for a successful mentor relationship. The student and professional may communicate via email, telephone, or other forms of communication twice per semester. We hope that you will consider serving as a mentor to an undergraduate student. You can find more information about the Mentor Program at: www.psychology.illinois.edu/alumni/MentorProgram.html. You can also contact our head academic advisor, Gary Wszalek, at (217) 333-6478 or via mentoring@cyrus.psych.illinois.edu.

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The Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois has a reputation for excellence. The ability to maintain a challenging and dynamic environment is the key to continued excellence.

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