

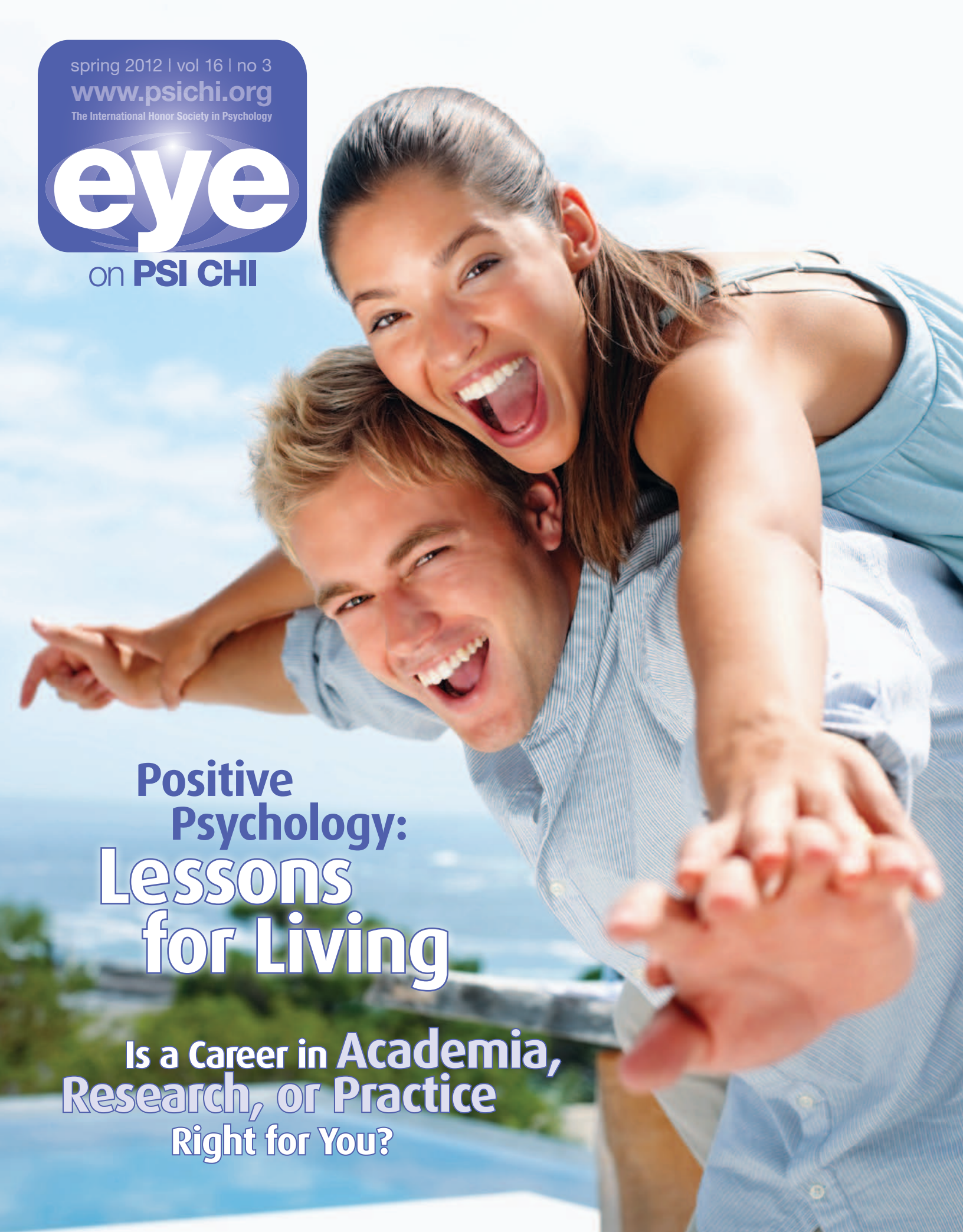
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The International Honor Society in Psychology

**eye**

on **PSI CHI**



**Positive  
Psychology:  
Lessons  
for Living**

**Is a Career in Academia,  
Research, or Practice  
Right for You?**

# 82 years and growing!



For Psi Chi, this means that we need to broaden the scope of our mission to embrace students and colleagues regardless of geography. The time is right for Psi Chi to sit at the global table and join the transnational discourse on psychology! (Wang, 2010)

Spread the Word. **PSI CHI** is going global.





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## Remember What You Want to **ACHIEVE**



**Susan Amato-Henderson, PhD**  
Psi Chi Society President  
Michigan Technological University

**A**t this time of year, students at Michigan Technological University (MTU) are recovering from their Winter Carnival celebration. Winter Carnival is a four-day celebration that follows on the heels of a month-long snow statue building competition. Activities include a queen coronation, sporting events, student competitions (such as snow volleyball and human dog-sled racing), beard growing, broomball, and ice bowling. Winter Carnival is a time to celebrate winter in a community ranked as the “third snowiest city in America” by the Weather Channel.

**C**elebrations at universities are common—most schools have their own version of MTU’s Winter Carnival (although I’ll bet none utilize the snow as well as we do!). There are many good reasons to have such celebrations, including students bonding with their school (alumni offices love this!), stress relief, and celebration of what makes each school unique. However, the weeks preceding and following these celebrations can be just as challenging for faculty as they are for students! There are always some students who never seem to read or prepare for class and who always have another excuse for their lack of preparedness. In fact, sometimes I wonder if student preparation for courses is no longer an appropriate expectation for faculty to have!

**H**ence the purpose of this column (finally!): to remind students of faculty expectations that they should consider when planning their weekly schedule. For every credit hour in which you register, you are expected to devote 3 hours of work outside of class. Thus, if you are enrolled in 15 credits of coursework, you have 15 hours of classroom instruction and 45 hours of out-of-class work each week. There are 168 hours in a week. You likely spend at least 50 hours per week devoted to sleeping (that is if you sleep less than 8 hours per night!). With only 58 hours remaining in our week, we still have to consider time to eat, shower, do laundry, be involved in sports and other campus organizations (Psi Chi should be high on your priority list!), Facebook, email, and text message. Assuming these things take up at least half of the remaining time, now you have less than 30 hours left in each week!

**I**n case you didn’t notice, the above schedule did not include time to watch your favorite TV shows (*Pretty Little Liars*, *Big Bang Theory*, *American Idol*, or *House*, to name a few of mine), share some quality time with your significant other, or even meet a potential significant other. Nor does it include time to become ill, attend a funeral, work a job, plan your spring break trip, or read a novel.

**E**verybody is stressed, trying to pack too much into their day. Inevitably, some things fall by the wayside. I can understand why many students choose not to read their textbooks, but will their achievements be negatively impacted?

**V**ersatility on your resume is good but not if it interferes with what you wish to achieve.

**E**ducation is the vehicle through which you arrive at your goals. Remember what you want to achieve and prioritize your educational responsibilities accordingly!

# Psychology and Political Engagement

**W**hen it comes to politics, many courses in psychology provide information that can inform constituent decision-making and promote engagement in the political process. Think about your first psychology courses, in particular research methods and statistics. What are the most basic questions you must answer before making a decision about the validity and generalizability of findings presented in a research article? How are psychological topics relevant to political decision-making and political involvement?

## Applying Psychology to Voting

Put your psychology background to work in judging political arguments, poll results, and advertising. For example, when you hear about poll results, can you identify the population of interest and whether the sample was representative? Are the differences significant? What are the estimated error ranges and what do these mean for the topic in question? When listening to debates or watching advertisements, can you tell if statements are being made that present significant correlational results as if causation is known? What evidence is cited to support each side's arguments? What techniques of persuasion and influence are being used in political advertisements, polling, or debates? What emotions do ads try to evoke and why? Can you verify any of the claims by finding reliable sources?

An important part of studying a science—like psychology—is learning to ask the right questions and seek the right information to answer those questions. These skills can serve you well whether your questions are about your latest research interest or politics.

## Voting at the Chapter Level

Psi Chi students can become involved in politics in their local chapters. You could run for a chapter officer position, ask the chapter to revise chapter bylaws, decide what events to hold at meetings, or consider how to spend chapter funds. Just as with government voting opportunities, your involvement in chapter voting can make you an active participant in shaping the future of an entity or organization, in this case Psi Chi.

## Voting in the 2012 Psi Chi Board of Directors Election

By the time you read this column, Psi Chi's 1,123 chapters will have had the chance to vote for the next President of the Board of Directors. In addition, chapters in three regions will have had the chance to vote on their new regional Vice-Presidents (chapters in the other three regions vote on their Vice-Presidents next year). These three Vice-Presidents and the President-Elect will serve as members of the 11-person Board of Directors and help to shape Psi Chi's future as an organization.

Notice I said that 1,123 chapters *had the chance to vote*, not that they all did vote. Many Americans have followed the Republican presidential candidate debates over the last few months. Some of us live in states that have already been

inundated with political advertising on TV, robo calls, and political fund-raisers. Some of us have had the opportunity to vote in a presidential primary this year. Unfortunately—just like with Psi Chi's elections—many who are eligible to vote will not exercise that right.

Psi Chi's Mission Statement emphasizes the Society's goal of producing ethical and socially responsible citizens and psychological scientists. That means becoming a participant in both your Society and your country. One way to become a participant is to educate yourself about the issues and candidates so you can vote responsibly. Psi Chi provides information to members about candidates and Constitutional changes when they are on the ballot. Whenever the Board proposes a Constitutional change, members may write letters for or against the changes. These letters are then posted online for all members to read before chapter voting begins and chapters record their votes with the Society.

*The mission of Psi Chi is to produce a well-educated, ethical, and socially responsible member committed to contributing to the science and profession of psychology and to society in general (Psi Chi, 2012).*

## Voting in the 2012 U.S. Elections

When it comes to U.S. local, state, or national politics, college students can vote from their home district via absentee ballot or switch their residency to the city where their university is located. Each state has somewhat different voting rules, so go to <http://www.canivote.org/> to see the details for both your home state and county, and your university's state and county before you decide where to maintain your residency and vote. (Note: Determining your residency for the purposes of voting is not the same thing as determining your residency for the purposes of paying in-state tuition.) At the [canivote.org](http://www.canivote.org) site you can also verify whether or not you are already registered to vote in a state, find out how to switch your residency to vote where you live now, find your polling place, learn about candidates, and read the voting FAQ's for the state where you live or attend university. More information about voting and primaries is available on the National Association of Secretaries of State website at <http://www.nass.org/sos/sos.html>.

*"The right to vote stands as one of our greatest American freedoms. Many Americans have made the ultimate sacrifice to secure this right. Today, across the world, people in other countries struggle to win the right to vote for their own people. Here at home, our government does best when it follows the informed choices made by the American people at the voting booth. Registering to vote is the first step young Americans can take to begin a lifetime of responsible, effective citizenship (Missouri Secretary of State, 2012).*

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**Martha S. Zlokovich, PhD**  
Psi Chi Executive Director  
Associate Editor

Please present to your active chapter members the information about the candidates nominated by chapters in Psi Chi Board of Directors elections. Your chapter's vote is extremely important because the chapters determine the leadership of Psi Chi, and thus Psi Chi policy. **Deadline: March 15, 2012.**

Please use the following as a guide to the voting process.

- 1** On or before February 1, election ballot information regarding the candidates for Psi Chi's Board of Directors and how to vote online was sent to all Psi Chi chapters.
- 2** Chapters should plan to organize a chapter meeting where all members can be present when the candidates for office are announced. Use this meeting time to read the candidates' biographical information, their position statements, and their goals for their term of office. Have your chapter make an informed decision about selecting which candidate your members think would best benefit your chapter and the Society.
- 3** To access the electronic ballot, your Psi Chi chapter president, with assistance from the faculty advisor as needed, should log in as a chapter administrator between **February 1** and **March 15** on the Psi Chi website at [www.psichi.org/SignIn.aspx](http://www.psichi.org/SignIn.aspx)  
  
If your chapter has lost its chapter administrator login information, it can be emailed to your chapter's current email contact by selecting the link "retrieve your username/password."  
  
**4** On the menu that appears after successfully logging in, a section for ballots/voting will appear in the list of administrator options. Click on that section's link to continue. This section will only be visible
  - a) between the dates of **February 1** and **March 15**, and
  - b) if your chapter has not previously cast its vote.
- 5** You will be presented with your chapter's ballot(s). All chapters will have a ballot and be able to vote for the Psi Chi President-Elect position. All chapters in the Midwestern, Southeastern, and Southwestern regions will also have a ballot and be able to vote for their region's vice-president (the other three regions' vice-presidents are elected in odd-numbered years).
- 6** Select the ballot for which you want to cast a vote, choose the candidate your chapter has selected, and click on the "Submit Ballot" button. A confirmation screen will appear with your candidate selection, and if necessary, allow you to cancel your vote and make changes if you made an error. Just as with mail ballots, once you submit your vote, you cannot edit or change your vote. Please contact the Psi Chi Central Office if you have any questions about voting.

## PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATE

**Maria J. Lavooy, PhD**, Florida Institute of Technology

### Position Statement:

I became a member of Psi Chi during my undergraduate years. This marked the beginning of what continues to be a most gratifying affiliation with an outstanding organization. With twenty years of experience as an installation officer and advisor, I was invited to serve as a member of the Southeastern Regional Vice-President's steering committee. After three years in that position, I was elected to serve as the Southeastern Regional Vice-President. While in these positions, I have tried to give back to Psi Chi, and its members, some of what they have given me over the years. Now that my second term as Vice-President is nearing its end, I find that I am compelled to continue my association with this incredible organization; therefore, I accepted the nomination to run for the position of President. If I were to be elected to this position, I would continue to work hard to facilitate and expand opportunities at all levels for all members. I am familiar with the processes, have an excellent working relationship with SEPA and APA, and would continue to organize programming at the annual meetings to meet your needs. I welcome the opportunity to further serve you, the Psi Chi members, and to help the organization realize its mission.

### Biographical Statement:

Maria J. Lavooy earned an undergraduate degree in biopsychology and went on to earn an MA and PhD in psychology from Miami University, Ohio. Now in her 26th year of teaching, she serves as the chair of the Applied Psychology Program at the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Florida. She became a member of Psi Chi as an undergraduate in 1978 and has served as a chapter advisor since beginning her teaching career. She was a 3-year member of Psi Chi's Southeastern Regional steering committee and is currently serving Psi Chi in the position of Southeastern Regional Vice-President, planning Psi Chi events and awards for SEPA's annual meetings. She also attends and contributes to numerous conferences and workshops on behalf of Psi Chi.



## MIDWEST REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT CANDIDATES

**Regan A. R. Gurung, PhD**, University of Wisconsin–Green Bay

### Position Statement:

Psi Chi is the go-to place for bright, hardworking students of psychology who want to be the best majors they can be. It is also the home for faculty who are passionate about teaching and student learning. I have had the opportunity to serve professors of psychology in many ways as an active member of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (e.g., past-president). I realize that while serving teachers helps students indirectly, I would like to directly work to help advance the science of psychology with students and help students capitalize on all the Psi Chi has to offer. I want to help make it easier for psychology majors to find jobs, to get the skills they need to do well in school and work, and to help make it easier for students to successfully face the many challenges they will have to encounter, whether it be how to best study, how to apply for a job or graduate school, or how to best use psychology to live better. I believe that my experience as a leader in the teaching of psychology and within Psi Chi positions has prepared me well to serve as Vice-President of the Midwestern Region. I have attended many Psi Chi sessions at MPA and have been impressed with the ideas and passion that Midwestern chapters in particular bring to the table. There is a lot we have done in the region and a lot more we can do.

### Biographical Statement:

Regan A. R. Gurung is the founding faculty advisor of the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay's Psi Chi chapter and has been advisor since its inception in 2004. He has also served Psi Chi on the National Leadership Conference planning committee and for many years as faculty consultant reviewing grants and applications. Most important and relevant to the position he is nominated for, he has served on the steering committee for the Midwestern region. Dr. Gurung got his BS in psychology at Carleton College (MN) and then moved to Seattle to get a PhD in social/personality psychology at the University of Washington in Seattle. He followed that with a postdoctoral position as a health psychologist at UCLA, and then got his first academic job at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay (UW) where he has been since 1999. Locally, he has served as the chair of psychology, the chair of human development, and the associate dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Nationally, he has served as the president of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology. Dr. Gurung has authored, coauthored, edited, or coedited 10 books and over 70 articles and book chapters. He is also an award-winning teacher, winning the Carnegie Association's Wisconsin Professor of the Year, the UW System Regents Teaching Award, the UW–Green Bay Founder's Award for Excellence in Teaching as well as the Founder's Award for Scholarship, UW Teaching-at-its-Best, Creative Teaching, and the Featured Faculty Award. He is also a fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science.

**Tim Koeltzow, PhD**, Bradley University (IL)

### Position Statement:

Each Psi Chi chapter celebrates and recognizes student excellence, both academically and scholarly. Under this broad umbrella, the vitality of each chapter depends upon its ability to support three key pillars: professional development, service to the community, and fund-raising. A successful chapter has the power to advance student engagement and post-graduate outcomes and can help sustain a truly vibrant departmental culture. Psi Chi provides an abundance of opportunities to support each individual chapter across all three pillars, and it would be one of my chief objectives to make opportunities as accessible as possible. New media represents not only an authentic opportunity to elevate chapter engagement within the region, but can empower Psi Chi to better sustain contact with post-undergraduate members. If elected as the Midwestern VP, I would work hard to foster strong, collegial relationships among faculty advisors and student leaders, to share best practices throughout the region, and to strengthen the Psi Chi presence at small undergraduate conferences. In sum, I genuinely believe the mission of Psi Chi represents an opportunity to inspire, transform, and elevate students, chapters, and the discipline of psychology. It would be an honor for me to serve Psi Chi in this capacity, and I hope to have the opportunity to assist both those chapters that are striving for improvement as well as those oriented towards sustaining excellence.

### Biographical Statement:

I'm an associate professor of psychology at Bradley University, where I have served as the Psi Chi faculty advisor since 2006. During that time, we've powerfully strengthened our membership base, reconfigured our executive committee structure, and developed an array of programming that serves both membership and the broader mission of the department. Thanks in large part to inspired student leadership, we've been recognized with Model Chapter status for the past 3 years and have been honored to receive the Midwest Regional Chapter Award and the Ruth Hubbard Cousins Chapter Award. One of my proudest career achievements was earning the Psi Chi Regional Faculty Advisor Award in 2011. I simply love teaching psychology and am lucky to have the opportunity to regularly teach physiological psychology, history of psychology and research methods. My doctoral training is in neuroscience, and my research program at Bradley has been to assess the effects of environmental enrichment, or chronic stimulant treatment, during adolescent development on subsequent drug-seeking behavior in rodent models of ADHD and depression.

## SOUTHEAST REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT CANDIDATES

### **Merry Sleigh, PhD**, Winthrop University (SC)

#### Position Statement:

Psi Chi has provided me with many educational and professional opportunities, and I have a deep appreciation of and loyalty to our honor society. Throughout the years and across institutions, I have tried to actively support Psi Chi and its members through every avenue available. I have enjoyed serving as a faculty advisor for 14 years, and now I am seeking new ways to serve our members and the discipline. The Vice-President position would allow me to continue working on behalf of Psi Chi with an even broader focus and potentially greater impact. To its credit, our organization is characterized by constant self-reflection and improvement. I'm excited to participate in this process as we transition to a global perspective and update our journal and awards. I'm particularly interested in how we can support chapters of all sizes, recognize the hard work of our chapter leaders (both officers and faculty advisors), and financially assist student researchers. I've been part of the southeastern region for 22 years and am committed to its success. I would be honored to have this opportunity to encourage and inform our members, represent our regional needs on the Board of Directors, organize helpful programming at our regional conference, and continue learning from my colleagues at all levels of the organization.

#### Biographical Statement:

Dr. Sleigh became involved with Psi Chi as an undergraduate, serving as treasurer at James Madison University. She completed her PhD at Virginia Tech and a post-doc at Indiana University in developmental psychobiology. She was the faculty advisor of Psi Chi at George Mason University for six years, where she received the 2000 Teaching Excellence Award and the 2003 Southeastern Region Faculty Advisor Award. Dr. Sleigh is currently an associate professor at Winthrop University (WU) and director of undergraduate research for the College of Arts and Sciences. She has served as the Psi Chi faculty advisor for the past eight years. The WU chapter regularly wins the Model Chapter Award and won the Southeastern Regional Chapter Award in 2008. Dr. Sleigh has served on Psi Chi's regional steering committee, regional research awards committee, and national research awards committee, as well as working as a reviewer for the Psi Chi/CEPO section of the Southeastern Psychological Association convention. Dr. Sleigh has also written several articles for *Eye on Psi Chi* and reviews for the *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*. She recently received the 2010 Southeastern Region Faculty Advisor Award, the 2011 Southeastern Psychological Association Mentor Award, and the 2011 Psi Chi/ Florence Denmark Advisor Award.

### **Christina Sinisi, PhD**, Charleston State University (SC)

#### Position Statement:

I am excited to be considered for the position of Southeastern Vice-President of Psi Chi. When I first took on the position of advisor at my small university, I had no overarching goal other than getting the chapter running again. Because of the vacillating interests of students from year to year, our chapter had declined the previous year to the point that no induction had been held and only one officer remained. That first year of my tenure, a handful of students and I started in the fall to build a thriving, amazing chapter. The chapter has weekly meetings with speakers and logs an average of ten service projects per semester in addition to fund-raising, induction, and regular officers' meetings. Because Psi Chi raises funds that otherwise would not be available to students, we have been able to take nearly 200 students to conferences (in a school of 200 majors) with over fifty presentations. My hope is to take this enthusiasm and priority for students to the regional level. I also plan on creating programs concerning leadership and other student-centered topics. Thank you for your consideration!

#### Biographical Statement:

Dr. Christina Sinisi received her bachelor's degree in psychology from Hollins College, and then followed her military husband to Kansas State where she received her masters and PhD. From there, she taught at Georgia Southern University for two years and became tenure-track at Charleston Southern University (CSU) in Charleston, SC. She was there for the creation of the chapter of Psi Chi at CSU in 1994 and became advisor in 1999. At that time, the chapter had faded to the point where no induction was held in the spring of 1999, and no meetings were being held. She took the helm in the fall of 1999, and the organization won Academic Club of the Year in the spring of 2000. Since then, CSU's Psi Chi has won either Academic Club of the Year or runner-up six times, was the Southeastern Regional Chapter of the year in 2003 and again in 2008; the chapter was also awarded the Ruth G. Hubbard Cousins Chapter Award in 2004 and 2010. Dr. Sinisi received the Southeastern Regional Advisor Award in 2003 and 2009. Also, in 2009, she received the Charleston Southern Faculty Club Advisor of the Year, the first time this award was given at the university. She has served on Psi Chi's Southeastern steering committee, the research grants committee, and the Psi Chi leadership committee. She is married to Kyle Sinisi, a history professor at the Citadel, and has two children, Scott, 18, and Lindsey, 14.

## SOUTHWEST REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT CANDIDATES

**Sean Charlton PhD**, University of Central Arkansas

### Position Statement:

Active participation in Psi Chi provides some of the most important experiences that undergraduate and graduate students can receive. Unfortunately, I did not realize this until too late. I joined Psi Chi in order to list it on graduate applications. As a graduate student, I believed Psi Chi was only for undergraduates. Over the past several years, I have seen that my incorrect ideas about Psi Chi are not uncommon among undergraduates, graduates, and faculty. My main goal as faculty sponsor has been to change the perceptions of Psi Chi at UCA. Since 2007, our chapter has seen growth in membership among both undergraduates and graduates and our students have become very active in applying for, and receiving, Psi Chi grants and awards. During this time, our students and faculty have begun to view Psi Chi as a critical component of the department's success. As the Southwest Regional Vice-President of Psi Chi, my goal would be to encourage a similar change in perception of Psi Chi across our region. I see three main ways to accomplish this: (1) assist regional chapters in meeting the Model Chapter requirements; (2) facilitate the horizontal flow of ideas and initiatives across the chapters in the Southwest region; and (3) serve as the communication point between the regional chapters and Psi Chi's Board of Directors. Success in these three areas will raise the visibility of Psi Chi and increase the benefits that students in the Southwestern region receive from their membership in Psi Chi.

### Biographical Statement:

My initial interest in psychology developed through conversations with my father, a clinical psychologist. Despite this early fascination with human behavior, I began my undergraduate career in 1996 as a double major in computer science and engineering. I reconsidered this career trajectory during a break from school (1997–1999), during which I worked with people from a broad spectrum of personal and economic backgrounds in Santiago, Chile. During this time, I became fascinated with the apparent difficulty that we have with recognizing the connection between personal choices and long-term outcomes. Upon returning to Utah State University (USU), I changed my major to psychology, was inducted into Psi Chi (spring 2000), and completed my BA in 2001. After USU, I completed my graduate education at the University of California, San Diego, where I earned both a MS and PhD in experimental psychology. Since 2007, I have been assistant professor of psychology at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) where my research interests focus on how biological and contextual factors influence our ability to recognize and focus on long-term outcomes. In the classroom, my teaching interests include psychology of learning, evolutionary psychology, and judgment and decision-making. I have served as the faculty advisor of the UCA Chapter of Psi Chi since August 2007.

**Evan Zucker, PhD**, Loyola University, New Orleans (LA)

### Position Statement:

Psi Chi is opportunity. Psi Chi, of course, provides opportunities to students. Being at a private, liberal arts institution, my interactions are primarily with undergraduates. When students become eligible for Psi Chi membership, their academic records indicate that they have the capabilities to succeed. By joining, these students affirm their interest in *doing* something with those capabilities. Psi Chi is opportunity. Psi Chi is opportunity for faculty advisors, as well. As a Psi Chi advisor, not only have I been able to work with intelligent, creative, and motivated students, but through the Psi Chi network, I have been able to provide members with opportunities in the city, the region, and the nation. A chapter advisor's influence goes beyond just chapter activities, potentially affecting positively the personal and professional lives of Psi Chi members. As the Southwestern Vice-President, I will work to ensure and further promote the opportunities for Psi Chi members and advisors in the region, in turn, ultimately benefiting others (inter)nationally and outside Psi Chi. I have served on the Southwestern steering committee for the past four years and have come to know (and appreciate) much more about the work of the regional Vice-Presidents and the Board of Directors. I am committed to bringing quality and timely programming to the regional conference and in all contexts, providing members (at all levels) with the support needed to develop and showcase their work, to learn from peers and other professionals, and to act on the opportunities presented by Psi Chi.

### Biographical Statement:

From Rockville, MD, I earned a BS in psychology (University of Maryland, College Park; December 1974), and then an MA in experimental psychology (Emory University; 1980), and a PhD in biopsychology (Emory; 1983). In 1984, after two years at Rollins College, I moved to Loyola University in New Orleans, where I am now a professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences. I have been the Psi Chi chapter advisor since March 1995! I regularly teach physiological psychology, plus health psychology, environmental psychology, psychopharmacology, and comparative psychology. I oversee the senior research and senior thesis courses, which enable advanced undergraduates to develop their own studies under the supervision of our faculty. Our students' interests are diverse, so when it comes to student-initiated research, my interests are similarly diverse. My own research centers on social interactions and life histories of nonhuman primates, and I have studied nonhuman primates in captivity and in the wild. Current work with scientists at the Caribbean Primate Research Center addresses relationships between matrilineal status and several reproductive variables in corral-housed female rhesus monkeys. In collaboration with ecologists in Mexico, I will soon start exploring black howling monkey health, habitat quality, and reproductive parameters. To date, I have published approximately 50 articles and book chapters, and presented over 100 papers and posters at professional conferences, including many at SWPA and SEPA. I have served on two editorial boards and actively review for several journals, including the *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*.

# Distinguished Lecturers

## for the 2012 Psi Chi Regional Conventions

### Southeastern Regional Convention

**Adrian Raine, D.Phil.**  
University of Pennsylvania

#### **The Brain Basis to Crime: Ethical and Legal Implications**

**Adrian Raine, D.Phil.**, is the Richard Perry Professor of Criminology, Psychiatry, and Psychology, and also chair of the Department of Criminology at the University of Pennsylvania. Following two years as an airline accountant with British Airways, he received his bachelor's degree in experimental psychology from Oxford University in 1977 and his D.Phil. in psychology from York University, England, in 1982. After spending four years in two top-security prisons in England, where he worked as a prison psychologist, he was appointed as lecturer in behavioral sciences in the Department of Psychiatry, Nottingham University in 1984. In 1986, he became director of the Mauritius Child Health Project, a longitudinal study of child mental health that today constitutes one of his key research projects. He emigrated from England to the United States in 1987 to take up a position as assistant professor in psychology at the University of Southern California. He was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1990 and to full professor of psychology in 1994. In 1999, he was the recipient of an endowed chair, the Robert G. Wright Professorship of Psychology, at USC. He has published 5 books and 271 journal articles and book chapters and has been the principal investigator on 17 extramural research grants and main mentor on 11 NIH pre- and postdoctoral awards. He has given 252 invited presentations in 25 countries. For the past 34 years, Dr. Raine's interdisciplinary research has focused on the biosocial bases of antisocial and violent behavior in both children and adults and prevention implications. His research interests include neurocriminology, nutritional interventions to prevent child behavior problems, white-collar crime, neuroethics, neurolaw, alcoholism, schizotypal personality, positive psychology, brain imaging, psychophysiology, neurochemistry, neuropsychology, environmental toxins, and behavioral and molecular genetics.

### Eastern Regional Convention

**Herbert Terrace, PhD**  
Columbia University

#### **Project Nim: The Untold Story**

In the mid-70's, I directed a project at Columbia University to teach Nim, an infant chimpanzee, to use American Sign Language. Project Nim, a documentary that opened on July 8, loosely describes the project. It shows Nim interacting with his teachers after he arrived from his birthplace at the Primate Institute in Norman, Oklahoma, when he was two weeks old. Viewers would have to close their eyes not to appreciate Nim's loveable personality and his endearing antics. But, unfortunately, they would be hard pressed to see the science on which the project was based. That's because the documentary pointedly avoided that topic, which is a shame because the project provided important scientific insights into what chimpanzees can tell us about humanity. The project's goal was to determine whether a nonhuman primate could learn to use grammatical rules to create particular meanings, the essence of language. Positive evidence of Nim's grammatical ability would undermine the claim of human uniqueness in the animal kingdom. Negative evidence would raise the question, "Why can't a chimpanzee learn a grammatical language?" My talk addresses that question and also outlines what there is about the evolution of humans that made them specifically equipped to learn language.

### Southwestern Regional Convention

**Joseph (Joe) R. Ferrari, PhD**  
DePaul University

#### **Still Procrastinating? The No Regrets Guide to Getting It Done**

**Joseph (Joe) R. Ferrari, PhD**, is a psychology professor and Vincent DePaul Distinguished Professor at DePaul University (IL), since 1994. He was the founding director of the PhD program in community psychology and now director of the MS in general psychology program. Dr. Ferrari is a fellow in APS, APA, APA/Div 27, EPA, MPA, and until recently, member of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology (SESP). DePaul awarded him in 2001 the 'Excellence in Research' and in 2009 the 'Excellence in Public Service' awards.

Since 1995, Dr. Ferrari is the editor of the *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*. He is the author of over 200 scholarly research articles, 7 scholarly books, and 450 professional conference presentations. His research interest includes community volunteerism/service, sense of community, and addiction recovery. Within social-personality, Dr. Ferrari is considered the international research expert on the study of PROCRASTINATION.

A popular, sought-after public speaker, Dr. Ferrari's work on the causes and consequences of procrastination appeared in *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Cranes Business Weekly*, *Money*, *Fitness*, *Self*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Psychology Today* and NPR, ABC radio, CBS radio, as well as local and national TV, such as *ABC/NEWS—Good Morning America*.

Dr. Ferrari's first popular book was released in 2010, *Still Procrastinating? The No Regrets Guide to Getting It Done* (J Wiley & Sons, publisher).

Rocky Mountain Regional Convention  
**Richard Bootzin, PhD**  
University of Arizona

### **If We Know Sleep is So Important, Why Do We Get So Little of It?**

Good quality sleep is intricately entwined with our health, sense of well-being, productivity, emotion regulation, memory and cognitive functioning, and positive social interaction. Yet, the stresses of daily life, 24-hour businesses, sleep-disrupting technology such as instant messaging, late-night TV, computer gaming, and social networks put pressure on sleep, leading to sleep deprivation and the development of insomnia. A developmental perspective underscores the conclusion that persistent sleep disturbance at any time during the life span from infancy to old age has a lasting impact. Dr. Bootzin will provide vivid illustrations of the paradox we face and explore how we can live our lives in the 21st century without destroying our sleep and all that it affects.

**Dr. Richard R. Bootzin** is a professor of psychology at the University of Arizona. He is the recipient of the 2008 Mary A. Carskadon Outstanding Educator Award from the Sleep Research Society and the 2011 Distinguished Scientist Award from the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology. Dr. Bootzin has coauthored successful textbooks for introductory psychology and abnormal psychology and is a frequent grant reviewer for NIH and NASA. He is president of the board of the Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System, a new organization that strengthens the role of psychological science within clinical training programs. Best known for his research on sleep and insomnia, Dr. Bootzin has extended the treatment of insomnia to adolescents. He is also involved in basic research in sleep and its impact on memory, learning, and health.

Western Regional Convention  
**Hall 'Skip' Beck, PhD**  
Appalachian State University (NC)

### **Finding Little Albert: Adventures in the Search for Psychology's Lost Boy**

In 1920, John Watson and Rosalie Rayner claimed to have conditioned a baby boy, Albert, to fear a laboratory rat. In subsequent tests, they reported that the child's fear generalized to other furry objects. After the last testing session, Albert disappeared, creating one of the greatest mysteries in the history of psychology. This presentation summarizes the efforts of Dr. Beck, his students, and his collaborators to determine Albert's identity and fate. Examinations of Watson's personal correspondence, scientific productions (books, journal articles, film), and public documents (national census data, state birth and death records) suggested that a wet nurse at the Harriet Lane Home was Albert's mother. Contact with the woman's descendants led to the individual believed to be "Little Albert."

**Dr. Hall 'Skip' Beck** received his PhD from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro in 1983, specializing in social psychology. He accepted a position in the Psychology Department at Appalachian State University in 1984 and is still happily at that university. For the past decade, most of Beck's research has focused upon improving student retention; he is a codeveloper of the College Persistence Questionnaire. His other main area of inquiry is human-computer interaction, especially the use of automated devices to reduce fratricide in the military. The search for Little Albert began as a lark, but soon became a passion taking Beck and his students on a historical journey to John B. Watson's infant laboratory.

Midwestern Regional Convention  
**James Pennebaker, PhD**  
University of Texas

### **How Our Words Reveal Who We Are**

Dr. Pennebaker will describe how the words we use reflect who we are. He has produced substantial research indicating how words provide clues to understanding individuals' personalities and social situations, and the effects our language use can have on psychological well-being and physical health.

**Dr. James W. Pennebaker** is the Regents Centennial Professor of Liberal Arts and the departmental chair in the Psychology Department at the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his PhD in 1977. He has been on the faculty at the University of Virginia, Southern Methodist University, and, since 1997, the University of Texas. He and his students are exploring the links between traumatic experiences, expressive writing, natural language use, and physical and mental health. His studies find that physical health and work performance can improve by simple writing and/or talking exercises. His most recent research focuses on the nature of language and emotion in the real world. The words people use serve as powerful reflections of their personality and social worlds. Author or editor of 9 books and over 250 articles, Pennebaker has received numerous awards and honors.

# A Three-Step Guide to Exploring Occupations With Your Baccalaureate Degree

**H**ow often have you and your classmates wondered what you can do with your bachelor's degree in psychology? In this column, I will summarize a three-step process for exploring occupations that enable you to apply your psychology major.

## Step 1. Identify Potential Occupations and Careers

Appleby, Millspaugh, and Hammersley (2011) created *An Online Resource to Enable Undergraduate Psychology Majors to Identify and Investigate 172 Psychology and Psychology Related-Careers*. This excellent resource can be accessed from the Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology (OTRP) at <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/index.php?category=Advising>, along with other helpful career related articles. The Appleby et al. resource enables you to obtain information such as: (a) the knowledge, skills, abilities, tools, and technologies that graduates need in order to enter and succeed in a particular occupation or career; (b) the kinds of tasks performed, with asterisks identifying those careers that require a post-baccalaureate degree or certification; (c) interests, values, and work styles manifested by successful employees; (d) salary information; (e) current and projected employment numbers; and (f) additional information about this and related careers.

The website links you to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)*, *O\*NET*, the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)*, and additional links that Appleby et al. designate as WILD CARDS, such as the *Psychology Career Center* and *All Psychology Careers*.

## Step 2. Create Contacts

Perusing Appleby et al. (2011) is easy and instructive, but contacting an individual who works in a particular position may become challenging. For example, if you want to test your interest in becoming a market research analyst after exploring the DOT, O\*NET, and WILD CARD sites that describe that occupation, how could you meet someone who performs that work, preferably in an area of your interest, such as the environmental products industry? Begin by asking friends, family, teachers (including your business/commerce department faculty), staff, and neighbors if they know anyone who works in market research. Perhaps the career services center can provide leads. Perhaps your psychology department and alumni office can identify graduates who work in marketing. Check with your reference librarian or surf the Internet to locate environmental products and services organizations. *Persist* until you identify a source whom you can contact in person or, if you attend college in rural area, by phone, Skype, or email.

## Step 3. Conduct Informational Interviews

Marty Gahbauer worked in advertising for 20 years before he became the employer relations coordinator at Loyola University Chicago. During the 14-month period between these positions, he conducted 125 informational interviews, more than enough to establish expertise in what he calls "Mastering the Art of Informational Interviewing" (2011).

Gahbauer defines informational interviewing as a highly focused discussion with a network contact (the interviewee) for the sole purpose of gaining knowledge about a particular job or occupation. Informational interviewing is *not* a job interview, so if you take a resume, keep it tucked in your folder unless you are asked for it. Informational interviews have several benefits

- 1) You can learn about specific skills and abilities needed for a particular job, and then assess the extent to which you possess or can develop those requirements.
- 2) You will likely discover jobs, occupations, and careers you never knew about and how they are achieved.
- 3) Because these interviews require careful planning, they afford an opportunity to practice the skills you subsequently use during job interviews.
- 4) Informational interviews are opportunities to generate contacts and become visible to that organization.



**Paul Hettich, PhD**, Professor Emeritus at DePaul University (IL), was an Army personnel psychologist, program evaluator in an education R&D lab, and a corporate applied scientist—positions that created a “real world” foundation for his career in college teaching and administration. He was inspired to write about college-to-workplace readiness issues by graduates and employers who revealed a major disconnect between university and workplace expectations, cultures, and practices.



You can contact Paul at [phettich@depaul.edu](mailto:phettich@depaul.edu)

5) Unlike job interviews where the interviewer is in charge, you construct and sequence the questions to gain the information you need.

**Obtaining an interview.** Once you have a name and contact information, use email or LinkedIn to request an interview. Your request should contain three paragraphs: (a) a statement indicating how you obtained that person's name and why you are seeking an informational interview; (b) a concise summary of your background; and (c) a request for an informational interview about that person's job and occupation. In your last sentence, indicate you will follow-up with a phone call. Gahbauer also recommends that you request only 20 minutes for the interview. This is beneficial because many professionals schedule meetings at 30-minute intervals, but some interviewees will likely offer additional time for which you will be grateful. Next, follow your initial request with a phone call within three or four business days if you do not receive a reply. If there is still no reply, follow-up a second or third time if necessary.

**During the interview.** If your contact agrees to meet, be very aware that the person is doing you a favor; be well prepared to use the time efficiently. Gahbauer recommends you carefully script and rehearse your questions with friends or family. Dress and act professionally; be punctual. Introduce yourself with a brief summary of your background. Inquire about your contact's background and then ask the questions you prepared. Remember, your time is limited, so glance at your watch periodically and pace your questions accordingly. Your Internet search of the Appleby et al. (2011) resource guide should provide you with basic facts about the occupation, so you may want to clarify and expand that information with a few of the questions Gahbauer found helpful in his interviews:

- How did you get into this work?
- What particular skills are needed for success in this position?
- What do you like most and least about your work?
- How would you describe a typical day in your job?
- How rapidly is this field growing?
- In what other areas can I find persons who do this kind of work?
- To what extent is a graduate or professional degree or certification necessary to succeed and advance?
- Do you have names of individuals I can contact to learn more?

To this list I suggest you consider these queries:

1) What is the availability of internships related to this or similar positions?

2) What academic coursework within and outside of the psychology major will help me?

3) Are there extracurricular or volunteer experiences that would help develop skills required for that position?

Be prepared to listen—it's your primary task in an informational interview. Be courteous, be time-conscious, be yourself, and enjoy the experience. Gahbauer also recommends that you ask if there is anything you can do for your contact—you never know where an offer of reciprocation will lead you. Finally, thank the person for his or her time and the information you received.

**After the interview.** Send an e-mail or a hand written card of thanks within a day. Follow-up on any contacts or suggestions you received. If you felt the interview was particularly productive, send the interviewee an occasional update on your activities. Do not expect to be a polished interviewer after only one or two experiences; seek additional informational interviews about the same or related occupations that interest you.

Gahbauer views informational interviewing as a three-phase process. In Phase I, you *explore opportunities* available in a particular occupation, and your target contact may be anyone working in it. In Phase II, *clarification and validation*, you seek additional or more specific information about the occupation, perhaps with a different person. In Phase III, *strategic prospecting*, your contact is an individual working at one or two levels higher than the current job or occupation you are investigating. In each phase, the process is essentially the same: Summarize your background, inquire about interviewee's background, ask your questions, request contacts, offer to reciprocate, express your gratitude, and follow-up. After each interview, you should critically evaluate your performance and identify specific steps for improving your next interview.

In conclusion, there *are* several rewarding jobs, occupations, and careers that use an undergraduate psychology major, and they can help you decide if and when a graduate or professional degree is necessary for advancement. Be prepared, however, to aggressively investigate these areas *now*, while you are still in school, so that you can graduate from college oriented toward and better prepared for one of these occupations. It may not as simple as 1–2–3, but this three-step process can certainly help you establish career objectives thoughtfully and ease your job search when you graduate.

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- Gahbauer, M. (2011). *Mastering the art of informational interviewing*. Retrieved from [www.prezi.com/explore/search/?search=Mastering+the+art+of+informational+interviewing](http://www.prezi.com/explore/search/?search=Mastering+the+art+of+informational+interviewing)

# The “Danger to Others” Exception to Confidentiality: Once More Unto the Breach

In my last column (<http://eye.psichi.org/index.php/vol-16-2/135-handelsman>), I talked about how important confidentiality is in psychotherapy, and how psychologists are obligated to respect the privacy of their clients. In this column, I want to introduce one major exception to this obligation—when clients present a danger to others. Consider the following case:

A client comes into therapy in an agitated state. A few minutes into the session he talks about how angry he is at his brother-in-law. “I feel like killing him sometimes,” he says. Later in the session, he mentions that he has a gun, and is, in fact, going over to his brother-in-law’s apartment to “take care of business.”



Do you keep the client’s disclosures confidential, or do you take some action to protect the client’s brother-in-law from harm that appears imminent? In fact, this kind of case involves a *duty to protect*, a principle most notably articulated by the California Supreme Court in the *Tarasoff* case (Tarasoff, 1976). A description of this case is beyond the scope of this article (see Blum, 1986, and almost any psychology ethics book for more information). Since the court decision in California, many states have written some version of the *Tarasoff* duty into their laws. For example, the Colorado Revised Statutes, section 13-21-117, states that psychologists need to breach confidentiality when “the patient has communicated to the mental health care provider a serious threat of imminent physical violence against a specific person or persons.”

How do psychologists protect the potential victim of a threat? The first way is by contacting the potential victim—this is called the *duty to warn*. The second way, in the words of the Colorado law (section 13-21-117), is by “notifying an appropriate law enforcement agency or by taking other appropriate action including, but not limited to, hospitalizing the patient.”

Although not all states have *duty to warn* or *duty to protect* provisions, the APA (2002) Ethics Code mentions the duty to protect. Standard 4.05 (Disclosures) states, in part:

(b) Psychologists disclose confidential information without the consent of the individual only as mandated by law, or where permitted by law for a valid purpose such as to ... (3) protect the client/patient, psychologist, or others from harm....”

By the way, clients have a right to know that their confidentiality must be broken if they make such a threat. Thus, the APA Code Standard 4.02 (Discussing the Limits of Confidentiality) says:

Psychologists discuss with persons ... and organizations with whom they establish a scientific or professional relationship (1) the relevant limits of confidentiality and (2) the foreseeable uses of the information generated through their psychological activities....



You can contact Mitch at [mitchell.handelsman@UCDenver.edu](mailto:mitchell.handelsman@UCDenver.edu)

**Mitch Handelsman** received his BA in psychology from Haverford College and his PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Kansas. He is currently professor of psychology and a CU President’s Teaching Scholar at the University of Colorado Denver, where he has been on the faculty since 1982. He served for a year (1989-1990) in Washington DC as an APA Congressional Science Fellow. In 2003-04, he was president of the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association. He is a licensed psychologist and a fellow of the American Psychological Association.

Mitch won the 1992 CASE (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education) Colorado Professor of the Year Award, and the Excellence in Teaching Award from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (APA Division 2) in 1995. He has published several book chapters and over 50 articles in journals ranging from the *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* to the *Journal of Polymorphous Perversity*. His major research area is professional ethics; he is the coauthor (with Sharon K. Anderson) of a text on ethics in psychotherapy (*Ethics for Psychotherapists and Counselors: A Proactive Approach*) from Wiley-Blackwell. His ethics blog, “The Ethical Professor,” can be found at <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-ethical-professor>.

This Standard alludes to the *Tarasoff* duty but also includes other limits to confidentiality, which we can explore in future columns.

As with many parts of the APA Code (see “The ABCs of the APA Ethics Code”; <http://eye.psichi.org/index.php/eye-on-psi-chi--fall-2011--vol-16--no-1-columns/100-ethics-matters-the-abcs-of-the-apa-ethics-code>), this provision seems straightforward enough when you first read it; however, implementing this broad provision includes many judgments. For example, the client’s threat needs to be of *physical* violence. If our client had threatened to steal all his brother-in-law’s money, the *Tarasoff* duty would not apply (Think how you would feel knowing that your client will be stealing money but not being able to tell anybody about it).

Three more criteria for breaching confidentiality to protect a victim are stated by Knapp and VandeCreek: “In order for the duty to protect or warn to arise, the victim needs to be identifiable and the threatened harm needs to be *substantial* and *imminent*” (2006, p. 132; emphases added). These elements of decision making can involve very difficult judgments. What if, for example, the client had said that he wanted to kill *somebody*, but did not specify a specific person? Does the therapist need to ask the client who he is threatening? What constitutes substantial harm? What counts as imminent? A gunshot certainly causes harm immediately. But what if a client threatens to infect someone with a sexually transmitted disease? The harm might be substantial, but is it imminent?

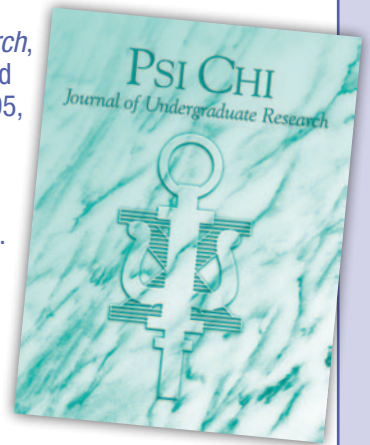
I am not going to answer these questions for you; they are too complicated for a short article and involve many gray areas. As I’ve said before, ethics is not a series of specific rules to follow. When somebody definitely threatens to murder an identifiable person immediately, the choice is clear. But students of psychotherapy (and seasoned professionals) need to develop ways to make judgments about the gray area cases. One way to develop these ethical skills regarding confidentiality and moral values is to explore your own experiences with friends, teachers, and other professionals. How do you handle secrets? To what extent do you feel motivated to gossip about friends and enemies? What does it feel like when people do not respect your privacy? Exploring questions about your own background and morality will help you understand and adapt to the ethics of psychology (Anderson & Handelsman, 2010).

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## Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research Undergoes Exciting Changes

The *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research*, Psi Chi’s peer-reviewed journal founded in 1995, recently underwent several changes in order to increase its viability into the future. Submission eligibility has been expanded from undergraduate first authors only to graduate student and faculty Psi Chi members as well. Faculty first authors must also have at least one student coauthor.



To find out more, go to <http://www.psichi.org/PDF/JN-ChangeAnnNov711.pdf>

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# Applying to Graduate School in Psychology:

## A Professor's

### PART II

# Perspective

This article is the second part of a two part series on applying to graduate school. Part one of this series focused on finding a program and a mentor that fit your needs, as well as the benefits of becoming a career psychologist. In this article, **Annette La Greca, PhD**, a professor at the University of Miami, offers her perspective on ideal candidates for graduate school, experiences needed to be an attractive graduate school applicant, how to write a personal statement, and general words of advice.

#### Describe your ideal prospective graduate student.

**La Greca:** There are four things I concentrate on the most:

1. Intelligence—I want to work with someone who is really smart, someone who has good grades. GPA is incredibly important. It's ideal to have good GREs and strong letters of recommendations that convey the person is intelligent.
2. Hard Working—I look for evidence that the person is hardworking; this information can come from an applicant's GPA and letters of recommendation. Another way to get this information is to look at the person's resume to see what kinds of things that person has been working on. Is this a person who has managed to get a good GPA and do research, but also has part-time interests or other hobbies or jobs? I look for applicants who really apply themselves but are also well-rounded.
3. Similar Research Interests—I look for an applicant who is highly interested in my areas of expertise, because that is someone I can mentor more effectively. It doesn't have to be an exact match, but it should be someone who could build on one of my areas of expertise. For example, one of my former graduate students applied to work in my lab, and she was really interested in bipolar disorder. I am not an expert in bipolar

disorder, but she was interested in building on my expertise in peer relations to bring that into the bipolar area. That was a good fit, because then I felt like I could contribute to what she was doing. I'm going to be more excited and enthusiastic about someone whose interests match well with the research that I'm doing—something in trauma, peer victimization, peer relations, internalizing disorders. Those are the themes I would look for if I were trying to recruit a student.

4. Good Interpersonal Skills—Grad school can be much more fun if you're curious and like learning new things. I also think enthusiasm and collaboration are important, so I look for applicants who are enthusiastic and enjoy collaborating with others, rather than someone who always has to do things his or her own way or would rather work alone. I often find evidence of interpersonal skills from a letter of recommendation before inviting someone to interview. Upon meeting the person, I try to gauge what it would be like to work with the applicant, since we are going to be working together for a long while. It's really a pleasure when you have people who are fun to work with.

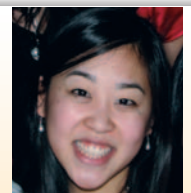
#### What experiences, both in and outside of psychology, will a good candidate have on their Curriculum Vitae (CV)?

**La Greca:** Again, there are four things I look for:

1. Research Experience—Number one for someone who is interested in a PhD program is research experience. That could be attained through work in a lab. Although often you do not have control over this, it helps if you can work in a lab with someone who is doing research that is similar to work that you want to do in the future, because that mentor will know other people from the field in the graduate programs that you apply to. For example, one of my graduate students worked with Edith



**Whitney M. Herge MA**, is a third year clinical psychology PhD student (Pediatric Track) at the University of Miami working with Dr. Annette La Greca. She earned her bachelor's degrees in both psychology and English from Boston College, graduating Summa Cum Laude, and earned her master's degree in general psychology from The American University. Ms. Herge is currently working on her dissertation, which is focused on identifying peer victimization profiles through latent profile analysis, as well as examining the prospective relationship between peer victimization, anxiety and somatic symptoms in adolescents.



**Sherilynn F. Chan, BA**, is a second year clinical psychology graduate student (Pediatric Track) at the University of Miami working with Dr. Annette La Greca. She earned her honours bachelor's degree in psychology at the University of British Columbia. Sherilynn is interested in risk and resilient factors as they relate to children's and youth's psychological and physical health. Her current research is focused on examining the relationship between peer victimization and adolescent substance use, and the moderating roles of gender and peer aggression.

Chen at the University of British Columbia. Edith is wonderful, and I would take very seriously any student she recommended to me. It isn't essential that you have a mentor who is familiar to the person that you are applying to work with, but it helps. Also related to research is the coauthoring of presentations and publications. Although not necessary, the probability that an application will get attention is enhanced if it shows coauthoring experience.

2. **Good Statistics Grades**—I know undergraduates often tend to shy away from statistics and might only take a minimal amount of statistics, but it looks great on their resumes if they have not only the basic statistics courses, but also a more advanced statistics course. Experience with statistics in a lab setting is also great and makes the applicant look more attractive.
3. **Extracurricular Activity**—Something that rounds out a person's academic and research experience is participation in a service organization like Psi Chi, or some other extracurricular activity. This shows an interest in working with people. It is even better if that person has played a leadership role in an organization.
4. **Multitasking Ability**—Another strength is evidence that the applicant is able to handle multiple tasks. For example, someone who is doing well in school and also has a job or a volunteer position shows the ability to juggle a number of tasks—a skill that is definitely needed in graduate school.

**What should the tone of a personal statement be, and how can applicants best convey their personality and experiences?**

**La Greca:** Most critically, the personal statement needs to be well written. Even if you are a good writer, have other people check it and recheck it, because that'll be an immediate turn off if it's not a well-written statement. It should be positive and upbeat, focusing on things you have learned from your experiences. Convey your enthusiasm—enthusiasm for learning or enthusiasm for something in psychology you want to pursue for your career.

Further, you want to say something about you personally. It could be a personal anecdote or an interest you have such as running. Maybe you've learned from running. If you run long distance, you've learned how important it is to train and to have endurance. You can then take that and apply it to why some aspect of psychology interests you. Maybe running makes you interested in health; maybe the endurance part of running might make you interested in resilience in the face of stress or disasters. Look for something about you personally that you can convey in a positive way but also ties into your interests in psychology.

Additionally, it's ideal if you can use the personal statement to show why you match well with a specific graduate program. Most

graduate programs have more qualified applicants than they could ever interview, so once you are in the ballpark of being competitive, then a lot of it is about how well you fit with the program. You may have one potential mentor that you would really like to work with, but if there are other faculty whose interests are also fairly closely aligned, convey that in the personal statement as well. Sometimes the person that you most have your heart set on working with may already have someone in mind that they want to work with, or they might not be taking students that year, but there may be others who would also be a good match. That's why it's so important to convey something about the match with the program and with multiple professors, otherwise faculty are not going to be sure about whether or not you are a good fit for the program. You should mention specifically which faculty you're interested in working with, what type of training they offer that you are interested in, why it meets your short and long-term career goals, and also, if relevant, why you like that location. Maybe if you have family in the area or grew up in the area; that would be a good thing to reveal in an application, because people may think, "Here's somebody who's already been to this area and would enjoy living here," and who might be more likely to come. Keep in mind that the faculty members reading your statement are going to be thinking, "Well, why should I select you?" So give them some good reasons to select you!

**General words of advice?**

**La Greca:** We've mostly been talking about preparing an application—however the application only gets your foot in the door. If you're fortunate enough to get an interview, there are still several things you can do to enhance your chances of being selected. Prepare carefully for the interview process. Know the program really well, know about the faculty in the program who you're likely to meet, know about what their interests are and what their training is so that you're prepared to ask intelligent questions about the program. Remember, while you're on an interview, you may be evaluated at any point: it's not just when you're sitting one-on-one with a student or a faculty member in a formal interview. People might also be paying attention to how well you fit in, whether you socialize with others, and whether you seem to be someone who's positive and enthusiastic. So, I think those kinds of interview behaviors and interpersonal skills are behaviors that need to come through during the entire interview process. There's no real down time during an interview, and I think that's extremely important to remember. Finally, you can usually set the tone for how things go by being positive and enthusiastic during interviews, so make sure you let your excitement shine through!



**Valentina A. Podkowirow** is a fourth year undergraduate at the University of Miami. She is studying to receive her bachelor's of science in psychology with a minor in chemistry. Ms. Podkowirow is working as a research assistant under the supervision of Dr. Annette La Greca. She is currently examining post-disaster functioning, as well as the potential moderating effect of disclosure on the relationship between peer victimization and somatic symptoms.



**Betty Lai, PhD, MST,** is a child psychologist currently completing a postdoctoral fellowship with the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine. She graduated from the clinical psychology program at the University of Miami (Child Track), and she completed her clinical internship at the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford/Children's Health Council.

# Questions (and Answers) About Graduate School

From University of La Verne (CA)

*The University of La Verne Psi Chi Chapter was chartered in 1990 and has been one of the most active and prominent student clubs on the campus. The chapter has active undergraduate and graduate student members who participate in events and who have won a variety of awards for leadership and scholarship. The chapter offers academic, professional, and personal development workshops on a variety of issues and topics, as well as engages in monthly philanthropic activities with the local community, including promoting Mental Health Awareness, sending care packages to troops overseas, writing supporting letters to terminally ill children, and fund-raising for nonprofit charities, like Project Sister Family Services. The chapter has also won Psi Chi's Best Web Site award and model chapter awards in the past, and their advisor recently was honored with the 2012 Psi Chi/Florence Denmark Advisor Award.*



Chapters members and Dr. Ngoc Bui (faculty advisor) of the University of La Verne.

## I have my bachelor's of science in psychology. What entry level job positions are available for me to apply to?

**Landrum:** How I wish there were a short answer to this complex question. It might be just as easy to ask the question this way—what entry level job positions are *not* available for me to apply to? The bachelor's degree in psychology is so applicable and so broad that those characteristics are both a blessing and a curse at times. If you had majored in engineering, teacher education, nursing, or accounting, you would have a good idea about the exact type of entry level position. In any case, I recommend that you begin your networking as an undergraduate and work toward designing the entry-level job that you would like—being proactive and making connections now may smooth the later transition from college to career.

**Handelsman:** I agree that opportunities are wide open, because you have learned a variety of skills that are widely applicable. One thing I'd recommend is to visit your campus career center. Their job is to help you in this process.

**VanderStoep:** I tell students that psychology trains someone to do potentially many things but not one thing in particular. Everyone *always* asks a psychology major “what are you going to do with a psychology degree?” but people never ask a nursing major that

question. I tell students to focus on their passions and their skills. Where does that combination lead? A psychology major might end up working in a museum, hospital, lab, bank, or vineyard. Tell potential employers about your skills: SPSS, writing/proofreading skills that you learned as a research assistant, listening and group skills you learned on your internship, knowledge of personnel/hiring from your industrial psychology course. And tell potential employers about your passions: commitment to understanding and serving those with addiction, solving intellectual problems, discovery, collaboration, understanding other cultures. A self-assessment of your own skills and passions will lead you to many career choices, and the skills you've learned through rigorous study in psychology will assist you. When you've done that, you'll move from getting a job to embodying a vocation. To paraphrase the theologian/philosopher Frederick Buechner, your vocation is where your greatest joy meets the world's greatest need.

## What kind of financial aid is offered to those who are in graduate school?

**Landrum:** Many of the same types of federal financial aid programs will still be available to you in graduate school, often with increased amounts of annual loan limits. Additionally, be sure to check into the options available at the school level. Some of the financial aid

programs may not be available for you to apply to until you are admitted as a graduate student (departmental or university-wide opportunities). Also, be sure that you are careful to differentiate an assistantship from a fellowship. Generally speaking, an assistantship (such as a teaching or research assistantship) may require a weekly work commitment to the department or to a particular faculty member and may not technically be financial aid—although work study monies may come into play. Typically, a fellowship is a financial grant that does not require any type of work as reciprocation. So be sure you explore all of your options on both the federal and school-specific levels. One last tip: many of those that offer assistantships and fellowships to prospective recipients have instituted a “social media” search prior to making the award. Make sure that nothing posted by you or about you on Facebook could be potentially damaging or embarrassing to the granting agency.

**Handelsman:** The work required in assistantships can be quite beneficial. For example, my assistantships gave me a publication or two and some invaluable teaching experience. In general, do not let a lack of money, or lack of perceived financial aid opportunities, stop you from applying. I say this because (a) the range of aid, including grants, assistantships, and fellowships, is huge; (b) aid comes from agencies, the school, the department, and the program; and (c) aid is sometimes awarded after acceptance. And, of course, there are always state lotteries.

**VanderStoep:** Most doctoral programs in nonclinical areas come with tuition reduction and a research or teaching assistantship. Doctoral clinical programs that award the PhD degree usually have this financial aid as well. PsyD programs are less likely to have such assistance. Doctoral programs at professional schools offer assistance less often. These programs are often stand-alone programs that are not connected to a university and therefore do not have teaching opportunities. Also, the professors at these schools are less likely to have research grants than faculty at major research universities. Finally, my students who have been admitted to master’s programs less often receive tuition reduction or opportunities for research or teaching. It’s not impossible, but there are fewer available.

### Can you give us some insight on the benefits of each degree? For example, what are the benefits of getting a PhD compared to a PsyD?

**Landrum:** It may be that the PsyD is one of the most misunderstood degrees in the past century. From a clinical/counseling perspective, a PhD is meant to be a scientist-practitioner degree, meaning that this individual can not only contribute to the corpus of scientific knowledge but also utilize such knowledge in actual practice. A PhD both generates scientific knowledge and consumes scientific knowledge in practical applications. The PsyD recipient is trained more in the practitioner perspective; these individuals may not be generating as much original research, but they are highly trained as consumers of scientific knowledge and specialize in its practical application. Sometimes, the PsyD program is part of a traditional Department of Psychology at a college or university, but other PsyD programs are offered at stand-alone locations, where the professional PsyD degree program is all that is offered at a particular location. The litmus test for either degree—at least as how it applies

to clinical, counseling, or school psychology programs—is to determine whether the PhD or PsyD program is accredited by the American Psychological Association.

**Handelsman:** People with PhDs are more likely to be hired as professors than are people with PsyDs (with the possible exception of PsyD programs). If your career plans include—or do not rule out—teaching and/or research, the PhD will give you an edge. If you are sure that you want a career doing direct services such as assessment and psychotherapy, the PsyD might be for you.

**VanderStoep:** Most people usually make the distinction between a PsyD as a practitioner’s degree and the PhD as training someone to do both research and clinical practice. It’s not impossible for a PsyD to be hired as a faculty member, although as someone who has hired psychology professors (intermittently) for the last 20 years, my experience is that a PsyD has a much bigger hurdle over which to jump to be considered (even at a liberal arts college that values teaching). PsyD programs tend to be less competitive (but still competitive), and, as I mentioned above, students have to pay for a lot more of the cost out of their own pocket. I have a current student enrolled in a PsyD program at a professional school. He came from a middle-class family and anticipated coming out with a huge grad-school debt load. It turns out to be not as big as he thought, but it’s still substantial. Yet, he has absolutely no regrets and is very excited about starting his clinical practice once he finishes all of his requirements. Let the loan repayment begin.

### What are the do’s and don’ts of graduate school interviews?

**Landrum:** My answer to this addresses two sides of the same coin—DO be yourself and DON’T try to be someone you are not. If you are to the point that you are being interviewed (telephone, Skype, or in-person), that means that you qualify for admission-congratulations! The interview is usually all about match and fit: will you fit in with other students in a faculty member’s lab group, does the professor think you’ll work hard, be able to balance multiple demands, be personable under pressure, and so forth. Make sure that you are yourself. Remember, you are interviewing THEM as much as they are interviewing YOU. By being yourself, you can gauge whether your future colleagues will be good to work with. Two additional DON’Ts for your graduate school interview: First, do not continuously check your cell phone; make sure you demonstrate that you can be “in the moment” and that you can concentrate on one task (rather than having a continuous distraction in checking for missed calls, text messages, Facebook updates, etc.). Second, if there is an opportunity during the interview process to consume alcohol, decline to do so. Even if you do enjoy alcohol, do not consume it during an interview—you are being evaluated, everyone around you is not. Take the high road and avoid a potentially embarrassing misstep. One last tip: From the moment you make your first contact with someone on campus to the very last moment, you are being interviewed. The graduate student picking you up at the airport will most certainly be reporting back about your interactions to graduate faculty members. So, remember that you are being interviewed throughout the entire visit.

**Handelsman:** DO develop lists of questions you want to ask of faculty, students, and others at the interview. They will probably ask you questions about your weaknesses. I think it’s a good idea to ask

# Three Heads ARE Better Than One

programs about theirs—in a nice way. “What do you see as the next improvement you can make in your program?” “If you had an extra \$50,000 in your budget, what’s the next priority?” You get the idea.

**VanderStoep:** DO your homework on the faculty in the program. Read at least one research article from two of the faculty members with whom you’d like to work. Ask a lot of questions. And most importantly—find the right balance between humility and confidence. If you enter an interview appearing like you already know everything, you’ll get eliminated. On the other hand, if you’re quiet and detached, you’ll also get bounced. How to strike that balance? It’s hard. I would recommend framing yourself as a willing collaborator who is eager to learn from more experienced peers and mentors.

## What are the types of graduate programs to become a therapist besides clinical psychology?

**Landrum:** This is a good question, and the answer actually spans beyond psychology, and the specific answer may vary depending on where you live. As for conducting psychotherapy with individuals or groups and being able to secure third-party payments (i.e., insurance companies) for such services, individual states have differing laws on licensing. So the answer may not be as much about the type of graduate program, but the type of license the graduate program can lead you to in your state. Generically speaking, in addition to a clinical psychology program leading to the ability to be a therapist, so could counseling psychology, school psychology, school counseling, counseling education, social work, and so on.

**Handelsman:** An additional strategy: Find people who are doing the kind of work you want to do, and talk to them about (a) the type of training they had, and (b) what they’d recommend.

**VanderStoep:** People with master’s degrees can do some level of therapy, provided they are supervised by a doctoral level psychologist or psychiatrist. This supervision won’t be full-time babysitting,

but simply checking in with your supervisor approximately once a week to go over your caseload. However, that means you will need to be employed in a setting where such a relationship can occur, perhaps a college counseling center or hospital. Degrees that would qualify someone to do this work would be an MSW (with the clinical licensing to be designated LCSW) and a master’s in marriage and family therapy (with certification from AAMFT).

## Is there a way to get dual doctorates in both psychology and psychiatry at the same time?

**Landrum:** Just to lay the foundation, a doctorate in psychology would be either the PsyD or the PhD, and the psychiatric route requires a first pass through medical school and the MD. Specialized psychiatric training follows the awarding of a MD, so doing both at the same time would be arduous as well as take quite a bit of time. So my best answer is “I don’t know.” But my question to you would be “Why would you want to do that?”

**Handelsman:** Another way to phrase that question: “What do you want to do, and what’s the best (e.g., most efficient) way to train for what you want to do?” The dual-degree MD/PhD programs I’m aware of are not in clinical, but prepare physicians to do medical research.

**VanderStoep:** The only way I can think of is through a joint MD/PhD program. This usually involves going the first two years of medical school, then beginning a doctoral program. Most students in these programs pursue doctorates in biochemistry or molecular biology. Psychology is possible, provided the medical school had such an arrangement with the psychology department and the department accepted you. I would not recommend this, but I think it’s theoretically possible. As Mitch said, MD/PhD programs are medical science training programs, designed to prepare students for medical research (e.g., genetics) rather than psychotherapy or clinical medicine.



**Mitch Handelsman, PhD**, is currently professor of psychology and a CU President’s Teaching Scholar at the University of Colorado Denver, where he has been on the faculty since 1982. In 2003–04, he was president of the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association. He is a licensed psychologist and a fellow of APA. He currently writes the quarterly column Ethics Matters for *Eye on Psi Chi*. His blog, “The Ethical Professor,” can be found at [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com).



A frequent contributor to *Eye on Psi Chi*, **R. Eric Landrum, PhD**, is a former Psi Chi Rocky Mountain Regional Vice-President (2009–11). A professor at Boise State University (ID) and the chapter’s faculty advisor, Dr. Landrum often give talks about issues such as graduate school admissions. He has over 225 professional presentations at conferences and published over 20 books or book chapters, and has published over 65 professional articles in scholarly, peer-reviewed journals.



**Scott VanderStoep, PhD**, previously served as Psi Chi Midwest Regional Vice-President from 2002–06 and President from 2008–09. His educational journey began in the same place where he currently works—Hope College (MI)—and where he is associate professor and department chair. In his 18 years of college teaching, he has taught introductory, developmental, social, cognitive, industrial/organizational, research lab, psychology of religion, and advanced data analysis.

# Positive Psychology: Lessons for Living

Jordan Bradford, Alissa Teske, Lauren Gledhill, Britany Helton, and Heather A. Haas  
LaGrange College (GA)

**A**lthough many people immediately associate psychology with abnormal psychology, disorder, counseling, and therapy, the theoretical and statistical tools of psychology can also be applied to studying the positive side of life. As Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi wrote, "...psychology is not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue" (2000, p. 7). Thus the proponents of positive psychology have encouraged researchers to pay as much attention to the study of positive emotions, positive character strengths and virtues, and the positive institutions that cultivate these positive outcomes as they have to negative emotions, character deficiencies, and the risk factors that are so often publicized as causes of these problems.

In the last decade or so, many institutions have begun offering courses on positive psychology (Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson, 2005), introducing students to what researchers have learned about happiness, life satisfaction, resilience, and strengths of character. In a positive psychology course we completed last year, we found that different students were struck by different aspects of the course material. In this article, four of us share our reflections on the findings we found to be the most meaningful for our own lives. We also asked several researchers in the field to share what they have learned from their work so far, and we've reprinted their responses here as well. Perhaps not surprisingly, we found that we agreed, in many ways, about the most important lessons to be learned from the study of positive psychology.



Years before the positive psychology movement began, **Dr. David Myers** was already studying happiness. He is a professor of psychology at Hope College in Michigan, a member of Psi Chi, and the author of the book *The Pursuit of Happiness: Discovering the Pathway to Fulfillment, Well-Being, and Enduring Personal Joy*. Dr. Myers says, "My engagement with research on happiness has helped lessen any lust for self-indulgent spending and reminded me of the importance of close relationships, exercise, and a communally engaged spirituality."

**Lauren Gledhill** is a senior psychology major with a biology minor who last year coordinated a campus-wide fund-raiser for the organization Autism Speaks. She is interested in a career in marriage and family therapy. Lauren was also struck by the research that shows that money does not ensure happiness. She says, "There is much more to life than affluent living. Many people believe that if they could just get a certain job, salary, or house, they will find happiness. But people need to realize that their happiness will never come from just money. The material possessions that come along with the 'American Dream' can be gone in a blink of an eye. Many people learned this the hard way through the recent economic crash. Things are temporary, but strong relationships can endure no matter what a person's economic status. Having things is not bad, but they should not be thought of as the gateway to happiness. Research in positive psychology teaches us that we should also put time and energy in meaningful relationships."



**Dr. Ed Diener** is the Joseph R. Smiley Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois and a member of Psi Chi. In addition to authoring approximately 200 articles on well-being, he has also served as the editor of the *Journal of Happiness Studies* and coauthored, with his son Dr. Robert Biswas-Diener, the book *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth*. Dr. Diener also believes that investing effort into meaningful work and meaningful relationships are key elements to living well. Dr. Diener says:

“I tend to be a pretty happy person, but I have learned a couple of interesting things: First, my happiness comes much more from doing my research, which I live, than from external rewards like awards. You can win acclaim or an award or praise, and it makes you happy briefly, and then wears off in a day or two. But the work itself, if you like it a lot, can continue to give pleasure for a lifetime.

Second, not just thinking positive things, but saying positive things to others. It is very easy for me, and I think others too, to only mention

something when it is a problem and overlook it when others do good things. Perhaps the good things seem “natural” or something you just expect. So when your kids are playing nicely, you don’t mention it. If they get loud or break something, you get down on them. But you forget to mention to them when they do all sorts of little things good. Same with spouses. People get mad when the other person forgets something but fail to say something nice when the other person does something good, even if small. This is all about the “Gottman ratio”—that you need a ratio of way more positives with people than negatives. Sometimes a gentle criticism is needed, but it should be counterbalanced by lots of positive remarks. Thanks and gratitude. Compliments. Praise. Friendly remarks. Humor. So I work on this with my family and friends. Not only does it make them happy, and hopefully make them like being around me more, but it also makes me happier because it means I focus more of my own attention on what people are doing right, not wrong.”

**Alissa Teske** is a senior psychology major with a minor in English, a member of Psi Chi, and is interested in a career in human resources. Alissa agrees that when it comes to happiness, a little effort goes a long way. She says, “Dr. Seligman claims that there is a difference between the “pleasant life,” which consists of striving for moment-to-moment pleasures, and the “meaningful life,” which involves more effortful engagement. He also notes that the pleasant life is not the life that will probably create the greatest long-term happiness. I noticed this same pattern in my reactions to a variety of activities we completed for class. Although sensual pleasure and passive leisure made me happy in the moment, the happiness quickly faded. But activities that involved more effortful kindness, like expressing gratitude, produced more lasting happiness. For example, one afternoon I called my grandfather and told him how grateful I am for everything he has done for me. After the conversation was over, I realized that my level of happiness had increased significantly, and given his reaction, I believe that his did as well. I believe that my happiness increased as much as it did partly because it made use of one of my signature strengths, but I think that it also worked because it strengthened the bond between my grandfather and myself. I believe that expressions of gratitude probably usually increase the happiness of both the giver and of the receiver, and so these actions will almost always have a positive effect on a person’s life. More generally, it seemed clear that the activities that required more effort were the ones that produced the highest levels of satisfaction. The saying, “you get out of it what you put in” seems to apply in the search for happiness.”

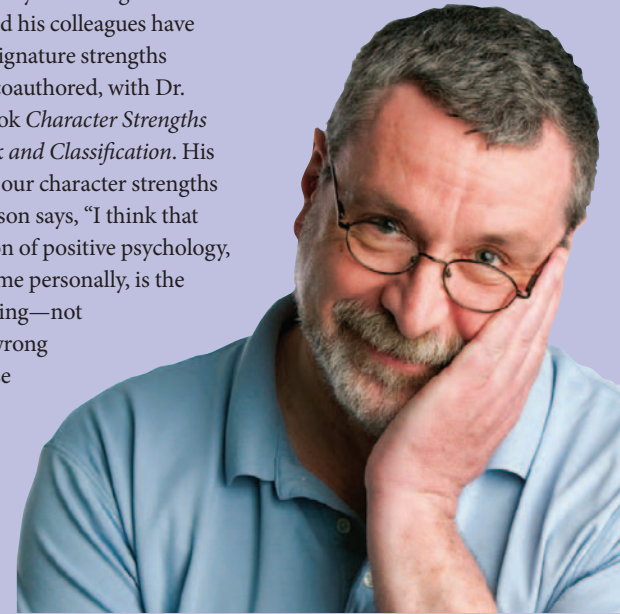
**Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky**, the author of the book *The How of Happiness*, is a professor of psychology at the University of California, Riverside and a member of Psi Chi. She received the Templeton Positive Psychology Prize for her research on what makes people happy and how to help people become even happier, and her research supports the idea that effort plays a key role in the pursuit of happiness.

Dr. Lyubomirsky says, “There are really two lessons I have learned from my research. The first is that becoming happier requires a great deal of effort and commitment. Much like it takes dedication and effort to achieve any meaningful goal in our lives (e.g., advancing in our careers, raising children, building a home), it requires the same to improve our emotional lives as well. The second theme is that of ‘person-activity fit.’ That is, not every happiness-increasing strategy is going to match every person’s personality, goals, resources, values, preferences, or lifestyle. So it’s important to choose the activity that feels most natural, enjoyable, and the ‘best fit’ for you.”



**Britany Helton**, a psychology major and former Psi Chi president, has career interests in program evaluation within the realm of community psychology and public health. In the positive psychology class, Britany realized that psychological research actually suggests that life can be more fulfilling if you learn to value effort not only in the pursuit of happiness, but in any aspect of life. She says, “One thing that really hit home with me personally is that the world would be better if people understood the value of effort. People can even become ‘smarter’ if they just apply more effort and challenge themselves more often. I feel that more people would be able to live happier lives if they had what researcher Carol Dweck calls the growth mindset. Dweck says that children should be praised for the effort put into something instead of simply being told that they are smart. Teaching children at a young age that effort is important may help them excel, not only in school, but in life in general.”

**Dr. Christopher Peterson** is a professor of psychology at the University of Michigan and a Psi Chi member. He and his colleagues have developed a number of signature strengths questionnaires. He also coauthored, with Dr. Martin Seligman, the book *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. His research focuses on how our character strengths affect our lives. Dr. Peterson says, “I think that the most important lesson of positive psychology, in general, as well as for me personally, is the power of positive reframing—not denying what has gone wrong but trying to see what else might be going right in the situation.”



**Jordan Bradford** is a senior psychology major with a history minor and the current president of Psi Chi at LaGrange College. She is interested in pursuing a career in clinical psychology. Jordan has also learned that recognizing your own personal strengths really can help you live a happier life. She says, “In my class on positive psychology, I not only learned what my strengths were by taking the VIA Survey of Character Strengths and Virtues, but I also realized that something I have always considered a weakness is actually one of my best qualities. Caution is one of my top virtues, and although I viewed this quality negatively in the past, I now understand that caution is a good characteristic to possess. It’s a sign of a mature and responsible person. Learning about the various character strengths has led me to value things in myself that I previously saw as limitations.”

Clearly both researchers in the field and students just beginning to learn about positive psychology agree that studying not only how to fix what is wrong but also how to enhance what is right is not just an academic pursuit. Many of the lessons of positive psychology are lessons for living.

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**Jordan Bradford, Alissa Teske, Lauren Gledhill, and Britany Helton** are all seniors at LaGrange College in LaGrange, Georgia. They completed a course in positive psychology as a psychology capstone course during the interim “Jan Term” of 2011. **Dr. Heather A. Haas**, now an associate professor of psychology at The University of Montana Western, was the course instructor.

# Is a Career in

Academia, Research, or Practice

# Right for You?

Amira A. Wegenek  
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**M**ost students major in psychology because they are interested in the subject matter or because they want a career in which they can “help people” (e.g., Harton and Lyons, 2003; Marrs, Barb, and Ruggiero, 2007). Many who major in psychology are surprised to find that most of their major course work focuses on psychological research and theory rather than providing training in the practice of helping others with psychological issues. This is because psychology can be broadly separated into two major categories—academic and applied psychology. The types of training required for careers in these two areas differ. The earlier you can decide whether a career in research or practice is best suited to you, the sooner you can start on the appropriate path to attaining your career goals.

Academic psychologists are typically involved in research and/or teaching. Applied psychologists conduct research or otherwise practice psychology (i.e., apply psychological knowledge in real world settings). Clinical psychologists are among those considered practicing psychologists. Though the typical undergraduate program serves to provide the broad background in psychological theory and research that is needed by all types of professional psychologists, psychology undergraduates do not generally receive formal training in the practice of clinical or counseling psychology.

Such lack of training may leave many psychology majors who desire a career in “helping others” wondering how to decide if a career in academia, research, or the clinical side of applied psychology is right for them. This is an especially important question for an undergraduate psychology major to consider before graduation (or at least before applying to graduate school) given that there are two distinct educational tracks that prepare one to work as a teaching and/or research psychologist (in academia or other settings) or as a practitioner. To help you decide whether a career in academia, research, or practice is right for you, an overview of various careers and helpful self-assessment exercises are provided below.

### Careers in Academia

Academic psychologists work as professors at academic institutions as professional researchers and teachers. Professors usually hold PhD degrees and their professional duties vary from institution to institution depending upon how much of an emphasis

the institution places on teaching vs. research.

Professors who work at teaching-oriented colleges, usually 4-year liberal arts colleges or 2-year community colleges, are not always required to conduct research. They spend the majority of their time completing teaching-related duties, interacting with students, and working on college committees. There are 4-year teaching-oriented institutions that require professors to conduct some research, but the research demands placed on faculty are generally much lighter than what is required of faculty at research-oriented institutions. Many universities that emphasize teaching, however, increasingly demand research and publication as well. Such institutions may encourage faculty to involve undergraduates in their research and respect research and publications on teaching as well as within the faculty member’s subject area.

Professors working at research-oriented institutions teach fewer courses and are expected to continually conduct original research, publish research reports in scientific journals, and devote a large proportion of their time to training graduate students in research and writing research grant applications.

In general, there are many benefits of being a professor, including:

- enjoying an intellectually stimulating environment,
- having colleagues who share your enthusiasm for your area of study,
- being able to share your love for psychology with students, and
- having a flexible schedule.

Another potential benefit of entering the professoriate is that most teaching-oriented and research-oriented colleges grant tenure, a special status of job security, for faculty after several requirements have been met over a period of years. People who are self-driven and are very curious in nature are most likely to enjoy being a professor at a university or college.

Some challenges also exist for aspiring professors. Those who wish to become professors at teaching-oriented colleges will find that a lot of competition exists for these jobs. Competition is even more fierce for positions at research-oriented institutions because fewer of these positions exist. In fact, many PhD recipients who wish to work as professors at research-oriented colleges

first spend a few years as a post-doctoral researcher at an academic institution or other research setting in order to make themselves more competitive in the job market. New professors may also have to move far away from home and/or out of state to find a full-time tenure track position. If the job description and rewards seem especially appealing to you and you aspire to become a professor, be sure to ready yourself for the fierce competition and long road ahead.

### Careers in Psychological Research

Professors aren’t the only professionals conducting psychological research. Psychological researchers can work in the private sector (i.e., industry and other nonacademic arenas including government agencies and nonprofit organizations) in addition to working in academia. Most researchers in the private sector hold at least a master’s degree and most often hold a doctoral degree. A doctoral degree allows one to work in more senior, higher-paying positions that involve the direction or supervision of projects (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006).

Researchers in the private sector work in many different settings including pharmaceutical companies, high-tech companies, consulting firms, healthcare companies, large corporations, and private and public agencies (Wegenek and Buskist, 2010). Many companies hire psychology researchers who conduct research on human behavior as it relates to their specific industries and products. Psychologists whose research takes place in real world settings and/or addresses real world problems are considered to be applied psychologists. To read about research related careers outside of academia in fields such as forensic psychology, sports psychology, statistical consulting, and more, visit these websites: [www.mypsychmentor.com](http://www.mypsychmentor.com) and <http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/profiles/index.aspx>.

Although the duties of a researcher may differ depending on one’s position and one’s particular area of study, typical day-to-day activities related to conducting research can include collecting and analyzing data, writing reports, and giving research presentations. Senior level researchers may be involved more with the planning of research projects including designing studies, training personnel to collect data, and writing reports.

In recent years, there has been significant growth in areas such as human-computer interaction, software development, product usability, marketing research, and industrial-organizational psychology. This makes the job outlook for research in the private sector look promising (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006).

If you are wondering if a career in research might be right for you, the best way to find out is to become involved in research yourself. You can contact professors at local colleges to find out if you can work in their laboratory as a research assistant. In fact, some colleges even offer college credit for this type of research experience. You should also be sure to take courses in research methods and statistics and those that contain a laboratory component if these are available to you. In addition, you should consider your answers to the questions provided below.

These are some of the questions that Wegenek and Buskist (2010) pose as important questions for students to ask themselves if considering a career in research (in either the private sector or academia):

- Am I a naturally inquisitive person who often asks why things occur?
- Do I truly enjoy the process of solving puzzles? Or do I become easily flustered and give up?

- Do I enjoy reading and learning?
- Do I like giving presentations?
- Do I enjoy writing?
- Can I handle criticism of my work?
- Do I enjoy planning long-term projects?
- Can I make my own work schedule and stick to it?
- Am I willing to move myself and possibly my family for my career if necessary?\*
- Am I self-driven and highly motivated?\*

*\* Especially important to those interested in a research career in academia.*

According to Wegenek and Buskist, if you answer “yes” to many or most of these questions, then you may be well suited for a career in research.

### Careers Related to the Practice of Psychology

There are many careers that involve working in the practice of psychology. The first such career that usually comes to students’ minds is clinical psychologist, or maybe a counseling psychologist. Licensed psychologists hold a doctoral degree from programs that train graduate students to apply therapeutic techniques to help individuals cope with psychological or emotional issues.

Licensed psychologists can work with many different populations depending upon

their job setting. Typical job settings for psychologists include group practices, hospitals, counseling centers, clinics, schools, universities and colleges, substance abuse facilities, and correctional facilities (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006).

Providing therapy requires many skills including patience, listening, and social skills. There are many different approaches to therapy. A therapist’s role is not to give advice or solve clients’ problems. One common approach for therapists is to lead clients through their own process of self-discovery based on their client’s therapeutic goals. Another common approach is to help the client to identify and to modify maladaptive behaviors. Therapists must be professional and able to handle listening about difficult situations with an empathetic, yet objective ear.

Students are often surprised to learn that many other professions involve job duties similar to those of clinical or counseling psychologists but do not necessarily require a doctoral degree. Social workers, marriage and family therapists, counselors, and other professionals may help individuals on a daily basis. The distinction between many helping professions is not always clear for two reasons: professional duties may be similar across professions and individuals working under the same title (e.g., social worker) may fulfill very different roles depending upon their work setting and experience level. Work duties vary depending upon position and work setting, of course, but can include assisting individuals who may be having difficulties personally, socially, educationally, or occupationally.

Other common job duties may include conducting client interviews, administering diagnostic tests, and maintaining clients’ case records. Table 1, below, provides a list of several common job titles that involve helping others and a brief description that explains job duties and educational/licensure requirements. To learn more about what it might be like to work in these professions, read the first-person professional perspectives provided at [www.mypsychmentor.com](http://www.mypsychmentor.com).

If you are wondering if a career related to the practice of clinical psychology might be right for you, consider your answers to the questions below. These are some of the questions that Wegenek and Buskist (2010) pose as important questions for students to ask themselves if considering a career that involves helping others:

**Table 1:**  
**Popular Helping Professions Related to Psychology and Typical Professional Duties and Preparation Required**

(Adapted From Wegenek & Buskist, 2010)

Psychology Related Helping Professions	Professional Duties	Degree and/or Licensure Required
Clinical Psychologist	Provide psychotherapy to clients suffering from mild to severe mental illness. Trained in various methods of assessment and diagnosis of psychological pathology.	PhD or PsyD/ State Licensure
Counseling Psychologist	Provide psychotherapy to clients who are not suffering from severe mental illness; focus on emotional, social, educational, health, and organizational concerns. May conduct vocational and career counseling and assessment.	PhD/State Licensure
Marriage & Family Therapist	Treat emotional disorders within the context of the family unit. Focus on resolving relationship and communication issues, child-parent problems, and guiding clients through transitional crises (e.g., death of a loved one, divorce).	Masters Degree/ State Licensure or Certificate
School Psychologist	Work with students, parents, teachers, and school administrators to address students’ social and behavioral problems and to ensure that students can learn in a safe and appropriate environment. Conduct several types of psychological and educational assessments to identify the source of students’ problems. Consult with parents and teachers.	PhD or Masters Degree/ State Licensure
Social Worker	Work with clients using various therapeutic tools such as psychotherapy, individual or group counseling, crisis intervention, case management, substance abuse counseling, and hospice counseling. Social workers who work in community practice focus on community organizing, policy analysis, and management in human services. May work for nonprofit organizations, government agencies, political organizations, etc.	Masters Degree (for Clinical Work)/ State Licensure
Psychiatrist	Work in medical settings, prescribe medication, may perform psychotherapy or refer patients to clinical psychologists for clinical/behavioral treatment.	MD/ Medical License

- Am I sensitive to individual differences in cultures, values, and religion?
- Do I relate well to people interpersonally?
- Do I have extremely high levels of patience?
- Can I accept the fact that I cannot “cure” everyone?
- Can I separate my professional life from my private life very well (i.e., Can I leave the day’s job at work when I go home)?
- Is helping others rewarding to me?
- Am I willing and able to complete a graduate school program to obtain the training necessary for a helping career?

According to Wegenek and Buskist, if you answered “yes” to many or most of these questions, then you may be well suited for a career in helping others and the practice of clinical psychology.

There are many other careers involving the practice of psychology that are not clinical in nature. Careers in applied psychology are diverse, are likely to involve working in various real-world settings, and often contribute to improving the human condition (Donaldson, Berger, Pezdek, 2006).

For example, industrial organizational psychologists apply psychological principles to improve work place settings. They may work in corporations, public agencies, or other organizations to address such issues as improving management, leadership, teamwork, or work place safety. To learn more about industrial organizational psychology, visit the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Division 14 Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Web site: <http://www.siop.org/>.

Human factors psychologists also work to improve the world in which we live. They design products (e.g., computer systems and consumer products) and create work settings that optimize productivity and communication and decrease safety concerns. To learn more about human factors engineering and engineering psychology, visit the APA Division 21 Applied Experimental and Engineering Psychology Web site: <http://www.apa21.org/>.

Psychologists can be found applying psychological knowledge in the legal system as well. Trial consultants may assist with jury selection, develop effective trial strategies for a prosecution or defense team, create compelling exhibits, work with witnesses,

provide expert testimony regarding a criminal’s state of mind or defendant’s ability to testify, and more. To learn more about forensic psychology, visit the APA Division 41 American Psychology-Law Web site: <http://www.ap-ls.org/> or the American Board of Forensic Psychology Web site <http://www.abfp.com/brochure.asp>.

For many more examples and descriptions of careers in applied psychology (e.g., school psychologist, trial consultant, health psychologist, science writer, and more), visit these Web sites; [www.mypsychmentor.com](http://www.mypsychmentor.com) and <http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/profiles/index.aspx>.

Perhaps the best way to determine if a career in applied psychology might be right for you is to get some hands on experience. Volunteer positions related to psychology can be found in a wide range of settings. You should try to choose a setting in which you are considering working. For example, if you are interested in clinical or counseling psychology, you may be more interested in a volunteer position related to psychological health. However, a volunteer position that involves working in a hospital might be better suited to you if you are interested in social work. It is best to try to work with the kinds of people who you think you may want to serve in the future.

A volunteer position can provide you with invaluable experience. It can enable you try out a potential career before committing to it and also provide you with some new skills to prepare you for graduate school or future employment. This is true no matter what psychology related career you may be considering.

There are many possible ways to contact a potential volunteer site:

- Look up contact information in the phone book.
- Contact your local county governance offices to find out if they have a volunteer placement program linked to the community services that they offer.
- Find out if your campus has a referral or placement service at its career services center.
- Check the many Internet-based volunteer services that help match volunteers with volunteer sites (e.g., the US Government National Volunteer web page <http://www.volunteer.gov/gov/>, Smart Volunteer [www.smartvolunteer.org](http://www.smartvolunteer.org)).

- Refer to books written specifically about professional development activities available to psychology majors (e.g., Silvia, P. J., Delaney, P. F., & Marcovitch, S. (2009).
- Inquire within your college’s psychology Department
- Inquire within your own college’s chapter of Psi Chi or Psychology Club

Although psychology majors are not traditionally taught about all potential career opportunities in their courses, psychology students can be proactive and learn on their own about the many possibilities that exist. Go for it!

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**Amira Rezec Wegenek, PhD**, is a professor of psychology at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, CA. Dr. Wegenek has taught, mentored, and advised undergraduates at the university and college level for more than a decade. She has received numerous awards for teaching and leadership, including the Psi Beta National Honor Society

in Psychology’s National “Rising Star” Award for mentoring undergraduates in scholarship, research, and service. Her students have won national recognition for their research and service activities as well.

Dr. Wegenek’s publications span the areas of sensation and perception, cognitive psychology, and teaching of psychology. Her writings include a student-centered psychology laboratory manual. Currently an active member of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology, she conducts research related to student retention and success. Her most recent book, entitled *Insider’s Guide to the Psychology Major: Everything You Need to Know About the Degree and Profession* (Wegenek and Buskist, 2010), is published by the American Psychological Association and is aimed at informing and motivating psychology undergraduates.

Dr. Wegenek’s Web site, [www.mypsychmentor.com](http://www.mypsychmentor.com), offers resources related to careers in psychology for students and faculty including multiple testimonials from professionals in psychology.

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Psi Chi is pleased to offer over **\$300,000** in awards and grants to its members each year. Don't miss the exciting opportunities and funding these programs provide! Here are some upcoming deadlines to add to your chapter calendar or website:

### March 15

RMPA Travel Grants

### April 1

Kay Wilson Leadership Award

### May 1

Allyn & Bacon Psychology Awards  
Guilford Undergraduate Research Awards

### June 1

Faculty Advisor Research Grants  
Psi Beta/Psi Chi Building Bonds Award  
STP Assessment Resource Grant

## Graduate & Undergraduate Research Grants

Five undergraduates and nine graduates were recipients of Psi Chi Research Grants that were due November 1. This grant program provides funds for Psi Chi members to defray the cost of conducting a research project. The 2011–12 winners, along with their schools, research advisors, and project titles are listed below.

### Undergraduate Winners

#### Robert Blenis

Georgia Institute of Technology  
RA: Audrey Duarte, PhD  
“Source Memory Improves in Contexts Consistent With Cultural Values”

#### Steven Boomhower

Idaho State University  
RA: Erin Rasmussen, PhD  
“Effects of Haloperidol on Delay Discounting in the Genetically Obese Zucker Rat”

#### Megan Crawford-Grime

Texas A & M University—Corpus Christi  
RA: Miguel A. Moreno, PhD  
“The Crisis of Suggestion: Persuasion and Risky Behavior”

#### Abdiel Flores

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona  
RA: Bettina J. Casad, PhD  
“Exploring the Relationships Among System-Justifying Ideologies, Stereotype Threat, and Cardiovascular Reactivity”

#### Ryan Ford

Wake Forest University (NC)  
RA: Wayne E. Pratt, PhD  
“Examining Phentermine and Sibutramine’s Role in Cue-Induced Reinstatement of Food-Seeking”

#### Hannah Frank

Georgetown University (DC)  
RA: Rachel Barr, PhD  
“The Effects of Bilingualism on Executive Functioning Tasks in Infants”

#### Sasha Goluskin

St. Mary’s College of Maryland  
RA: Aileen Bailey, PhD  
“Investigating the Role of the 5-HT1B Receptor in the CA1 of Rats”

#### Emily Mutch

University of Minnesota, Morris  
RA: Jeffrey Ratiiff, PhD  
“A Test of Evolutionary Views of Jealousy Based on Gender and Sexual Orientation”

#### Katerina Placek

St. Mary’s College of Maryland  
RA: Aileen Bailey, PhD  
“Prenatal Exposure to Fluoxetine: Mitigation of Adverse Emotional Effects Through Tactile Stimulation”

### Graduate Winners

#### Reiko Hirai

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities  
RA: Patricia Frazier, PhD  
“Longitudinal Study of International Students’ Adjustment Trajectories”

#### Alice Ann Spurgin

Stanford University (CA)  
RA: Peter Stavinoha, PhD, ABPP  
“Effect of Extrinsic Motivation on Academic Fluency Outcomes in Pediatric Medulloblastoma Survivors”

#### Matthew Thibeault

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
RA: Dr. Julia Mendez Smith, PhD  
“Psychological Well-Being and Adjustment in Recently Arriving Immigrant Adolescents”

#### Sumeyra Tosun

Texas A & M University  
RA: Jyotsna Vaid, PhD  
“Believe Me, I Was There! The Impact of Evidentiality on Trustworthiness”

#### Laura Smalarz

Iowa State University  
RA: Gary L. Wells, PhD  
“Postidentification Feedback and the Discriminability of Accurate and Inaccurate Eyewitnesses”

## Regional Chapter Awards

Psi Chi congratulates the following chapters for winning this year’s competition for the Regional Chapter Awards. Listed alphabetically, the 2011–12 winning chapters are as follows:

Baruch College, CUNY  
Eastern Region

Central Michigan University  
Midwestern Region

Utah State University  
Rocky Mountain Region

University of La Verne (CA)  
Western Region

University of Louisville (KY)  
Southeastern Region

Regional Chapter Awards are presented annually to chapters in each of Psi Chi’s six regions. Chapters that best achieve Psi Chi’s purpose—“to encourage, stimulate, and maintain excellence in scholarship of the individual member in all fields, particularly in psychology, and to advance the science of psychology”—will be named as winners.

Each winning chapter is presented a check for \$500 and a plaque to display in its department. The awards are intended to honor the chapters, to identify chapters as role models for others, and to promote the purpose of Psi Chi. Criteria for selecting winners is based on effective chapter activities for the past 3 years, strict adherence to the application procedures, and creative and effective presentation of application materials.

The deadline for next year’s Regional Chapter Award competition is December 1, 2012. Chapters are encouraged to start now to prepare applications for this prestigious Psi Chi award.

## Regional Faculty Advisor Awards

The Psi Chi Awards Committee is pleased to announce the 2010–11 winners of the Regional Faculty Advisor Awards. The recipients are presented a \$500 check and a plaque to display in their department. Regional Faculty Advisor Awards are intended to identify outstanding Psi Chi faculty advisors and to promote the purpose of Psi Chi. The deadline for next year's competition is December 1, 2012. Chapter officers are encouraged to consider nominating the faculty advisor for their chapter.



**Mark G. Rivardo, PhD**

**Mark G. Rivardo, PhD**  
Saint Vincent College (PA)  
Eastern Region

Dr. Mark G. Rivardo is an associate professor of psychology at Saint Vincent College. He received his BS in psychology from Saint Vincent College and his MA and PhD in experimental psychology with a concentration in cognition from Bowling Green State University (OH). In addition to advising thesis students in their research, Dr. Rivardo involves student collaborators in all of his research projects. He teaches introduction to psychology, research methods in psychology and laboratory, cognitive psychology, seminar in cognitive psychology, and collaborative research seminar. Dr. Rivardo has served as the faculty advisor for the Saint Vincent College Psi Chi Chapter since joining the faculty in 1999.



**Roger Vanhorn, PhD**

**Roger Vanhorn, PhD**  
Central Michigan University  
Midwestern Region

Dr. Roger Van Horn is a professor of psychology at Central Michigan University (CMU). He earned his BS, MS, and PhD degrees from Iowa State University where he was inducted into Psi Chi in 1965. He came to Central Michigan University in 1971 from the Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development where he was a research scientist. His primary teaching assignments are classes in research methods and child and adolescent development. He also serves as director of Off-Campus Teaching in Psychology. Dr. Van Horn has been the faculty advisor of the CMU chapter for 16 years. Thanks to many bright, energetic and committed students who have devoted their time and talents, the CMU chapter has earned two Regional Chapter Awards, five Model Chapter Awards, and two Website Awards over the last 10 years. Chapter officers and members continue to work diligently to maintain their best traditions and enhance their efforts to promote the purposes of Psi Chi.



**Paula Varnado-Sullivan, PhD**

**Paula Varnado-Sullivan, PhD**  
Southeastern Louisiana University  
Southwestern Region

Dr. Paula Varnado-Sullivan has been a member of Psi Chi since being inducted as an undergraduate in 1987. She completed her doctoral work in clinical psychology at Louisiana State University and her internship at the University of Mississippi Medical Center/VA Consortium, graduating in 1997. She worked at an inpatient eating disorder facility before accepting a position at Southeastern Louisiana University in 1998. She specializes in research and treatment of eating disorders as well as mood and anxiety disorders. She has been honored to serve as the Psi Chi faculty advisor since 2002. Since that time, the chapter has grown in membership and actively participates in the university and local communities. Mentoring graduate and undergraduate students is the component of her position that she is most passionate about and from which she derives the most fulfillment. She is incredibly honored to have received this award.



**Lisa Cramer Whitfield, PhD**

**Lisa Cramer Whitfield, PhD**  
Santa Clara University (CA)  
Western Region

Dr. Lisa Cramer Whitfield received her PhD in developmental psychology from Arizona State University, studying planning and problem solving in school age children. Her passion for teaching and working with undergraduates was cultivated at North Central College, a small liberal arts college outside of Chicago. It was during her time as an associate professor at North Central College when she first joined Psi Chi, having been inspired by the chapter's activity level and members' enthusiasm for psychology. After a move to the West Coast, Dr. Whitfield has been very pleased to teach full time at Santa Clara University (SCU), where undergraduate teaching and scholarship are similarly valued. She has been the faculty advisor for the SCU Psi Chi Chapter since 2008 and has been proud to see growth in the program, not only in membership, but also in student-initiated activity.

## Dr. Ngoc H. Bui Wins Denmark Faculty Advisor Award

### 2011-12 Denmark Winner's Letter of Nomination

The Psi Chi chapter at the University of La Verne (ULV) proudly submits their nomination of Dr. Bui for the Regional Faculty Advisor Award. Dr. Bui is an essential component to the chapter, and through her devotion, dedication, and passion, our chapter and its members have flourished. Dr. Bui is an associate professor of psychology at ULV and has served as advisor of the Psi Chi chapter since 2002. Prior to joining the faculty at ULV, she taught at Metropolitan Community College in Nebraska and has been mentoring and fostering growth in students since then. Additionally, Dr. Bui served on the Psi Chi Board of Directors as the Western Regional Vice-President from 2008 to 2010. Her dedication to the continued growth in the field of psychology and mentoring students is apparent from the various positions she has held and continues to hold.

The reason Dr. Bui should win this award is because of her endless commitment to students. Through her continuous mentorship, she has helped students present at national and international level conventions and has published articles with students. Most importantly, she is always present for the chapter and its members. Dr. Bui attends the weekly meetings and is an active participant in the goals, activities, and future of the ULV Psi Chi Chapter. She serves not only as an advisor but as a confidant to students. She continuously offers the members and officers of Psi Chi endless support and encouragement. It is rare when a professor devotes so much time and effort to students, but Dr. Bui does it on a daily basis. Furthermore, it is even rarer to find a professor that can inspire and lead her students, but Dr. Bui does both. She is the heart of the ULV Psi Chi Chapter, and without her, the chapter would not be what it is today. She inspires both officers and members, and it is through her sacrifices and continued allegiance to the chapter that its members are able to flourish.

Dr. Bui is unique as an advisor because she allows officers to take the lead while still being actively engaged in all decisions. Her methods in teaching leadership are effective and this is evident through the officers of Psi Chi as well the club's accomplishments. Dr. Bui is an advisor that other advisors should aspire to. She is actively engaged in the organization and fully supports both members and officers. Most importantly, she follows the philosophy of not only Psi Chi, but also of ULV in that she promotes lifelong learning.

In an interview with the *ULV Campus Times* in 2002, Dr. Bui was a new, young professor at ULV, whose goal was to inspire students and share her knowledge with them. Nine years later, Dr. Bui has certainly made a mark at ULV. She continues to educate students with her vast knowledge in the field of psychology and inspires her students both in and out of the classroom. She has a natural, charismatic personality that draws students to her courses and to Psi Chi. Our chapter would not be what it is today if it were not for her perseverance. Dr. Bui is not only our advisor, she is also a

member of Psi Chi. She holds true to the fundamentals of both Psi Chi and ULV missions and adheres to them in her work through classes and the club. Her work has not gone unrecognized by the university: she has won Advisor of the Year multiple times and is the only advisor to have held the award for more than two years.

Dr. Bui consistently demonstrates why she is a strong candidate for this award: she attends weekly meetings, she engages students to be involved, and she participates in Psi Chi as both an advisor and a member. She has always demonstrated and upheld the qualifications, morals, and standards of our organization and continues to ensure the success of the club by immersing herself into it. She is not only a wonderful advisor, but is also a mother, full-time professor, and has served on international psychology boards. She is able to do all this and still help students succeed in her classes. She is a dedicated professor and advisor, but above all, she is a role model. Our nomination is our thanks to the endless dedication and sacrifices she has made for members, officers, and our Psi Chi chapter. Thank you for everything you do Dr. Bui.

*Michelle Alfaro  
University of La Verne  
Research Chair; Past Graduate President*

#### Ngoc H Bui, PhD University of La Verne (CA)

Psi Chi congratulates Dr. Ngoc H. Bui, associate professor of psychology at the University of La Verne (CA), for being selected as the winner of the 2011-12 Psi Chi/Florence L. Denmark Faculty Advisor Award. This prestigious award is presented annually to the one faculty advisor who best achieves Psi Chi's purpose and has made outstanding contributions to the field of psychology at local, regional, national, and international levels. The Denmark Award will be presented at the APA/Psi Chi Society Convention held in Chicago, Illinois, this August. Dr. Bui's deep commitment and enormous involvement with Psi Chi are described above in her chapter's letter of nomination.



Dr. Ngoc H. Bui is a tenured associate professor in the psychology department at the University of La Verne (CA). She received her MA and PhD in social psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1997 and 2000, respectively. Her research interests include teaching and learning statistics, psychology, science attitudes, procrastination, person perception, and media psychology. Dr. Bui has taught at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and her favorite courses to teach are statistics and social psychology. She has served as the University of La Verne Psi Chi Chapter advisor since she began teaching at ULV in 2002. She has also served as Western Regional Vice-President of Psi Chi for 4 years (2007-11). She spends her free time relaxing at home with her husband and two children (ages 7 and 4) and reading fiction of all genres.

## East

### Fordham College of Liberal Studies, Westchester (NY)

The chapter overcame challenges in order to remain active this fall. The chapter joined the Organizational Leadership program on November 30 to cohost a forum on “Asking Students’ Views on Their Fordham Experience,” which featured responses from Drs. Harold Takooshian (psychology), John N. Miggiacchio (statistics), Marin Kurti (sociology), Steven Horowitz (public relations), and Sheldon Marcus (education). On December 7, Dean Ann Rodier hosted a lively presentation titled “Industrial/Organizational Psychology: Preparing for a Successful Practitioner Career,” featuring I/O psychologist John K. Kennedy, Jr., of Half-Moon Consulting in Ossining NY. The chapter also held their induction ceremony on December 7, receiving Dr. John Kennedy as the Westchester’s newest member.

### Fordham University at Lincoln Center (NY)

The chapter had another active fall semester, sponsoring 16 diverse activities. Many of the activities took place with the Fordham Psychology Association and Graduate School of Education. These included two symposia on “Psychology in Russia: New Trends,” with Deans Evgeny Osin, Elena Mandrikova, and Vladimir Stroh of Russian State University Higher School of Economics; and a film screening of *A Beautiful Mind*, with Jake Kaufman. The chapter also took several trips to

local psychology events including John Jay College on the tenth anniversary of September 11, 2011; a history of psychology event in New York at Saint Francis College; a salute to Dr. Olivia Hooker at Manhattanville College; and the 23rd Behavioral Research Conference at Touro College. The chapter also participated in a forum on “Reforming IRBs” with Philip Hamburger (Columbia Law School), Richard M. O’Brien (Hofstra University), Henry Solomon (Marymount Manhattan), Kurt Salzinger (APA Science Directorate, retired), and Harold Takooshian (Fordham University); a lecture and book signing with author Dr. Dinesh Sharma on his new best-seller, *Barack Obama in Hawaii and Indonesia*, with discussants Uwe P. Gielen (St. Francis College), Joshua L. Brown (Fordham University); and the 31st Fordham Symposium on Graduate School Admissions in Psychology with Catherine Doran, Jake Kaufman, Mark E. Mattson, David S. Malcolm, Harold Takooshian, Karen Siedlecki, David S. Glenwick, and John J. Cecero. In the fall induction ceremony, thanks to Elizabeth Casey, the chapter welcomed 17 graduate and undergraduate students. The ceremony also included a message by Dr. Thomas F. Cloonan and a presentation of the 2011 Fordham-LC Outstanding Alumnus Award to Philip J. Spencer, MD, of Massachusetts.

### Lehman College, CUNY

The chapter had a very active fall semester, ranging from having three bake sales for donations and raising money for members to attend EPA, to raising

awareness of Psi Chi and inducting 14 new members. The chapter started off its semester by having a major bake sale to support the 9 members and friends participating in the American Cancer Society’s Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk. In all, the chapter raised \$470. At regular monthly officer and membership meetings, new events and future plans were discussed. The chapter hosted two colloquia and two workshops: Dr. Kincaid (Lehman College Department of Biological Sciences) presented “Using ‘R’ for Data Analysis”. Dr. Guerrero-Berroa (Department of Psychiatry Mount Sinai School of Medicine), a chapter member and alumnus, presented “Neuropsychological and Neuropsychiatric Cognitive Functioning and Decline”. Drs. Yates and Happany presented “Writing a Personal Statement and The Graduate School Application Process,” which welcomed all students from Lehman College. Leah Fredman (vice-president) presented her research, “The Terror of Pregnancy,” at the 23rd Greater New York Conference on Behavioral Research. The chapter also published two issues of its electronic newsletter, *The Psi Chi Connection*, with articles written by current and alumni members.

## Midwest

### DePaul University (IL)

The chapter had an encouraging start to the school year with a meet-and-greet event in which many potential Psi Chi members and returning members had

With over 1,000 chapters, Psi Chi members can make a significant impact on their communities. Let us know what your chapter has been doing and share your fundraiser ideas with others. See submission information listed below.

### Submission deadlines\*

Fall: July 15

Winter: September 15

Spring: February 15

Summer: February 15

\* Reports received (postmarked) after the deadline will appear in the next issue of *Eye on Psi Chi*.

### Submission specifications

- Only activities that have already occurred and are submitted in paragraph form will be published.
- Do not send future plans, calendars, or summarized lists.
- Limit reports to 250 words. If you wish to report more extensively on a special activity, series of programs, etc., contact the Central Office at [psichieye@psichi.org](mailto:psichieye@psichi.org).
- Write your report in the third person rather than the first person (e.g., “the chapter sponsored” vs. “we sponsored”).
- Include full names, degrees, and titles of speakers/leaders, their institutions, and their topics.
- Report chapter events such as: discussions, lectures, meetings, socials, fundraising events, conventions, field trips, and honors received by students, faculty members, and/or the chapter.
- Report attempted solutions to chapter problems—those that were effective and those not so effective.
- Color photos are welcomed; the number of photos per chapter is limited to two per issue. Include accurate, typed captions. Photos may be mailed (include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returned photos) or emailed to [psichieye@psichi.org](mailto:psichieye@psichi.org). For digital photos, email only high-quality resolution images (600KB) using a 5-or-higher megapixel camera. Do not send digital printouts from a photo quality printer.
- All photographs and chapter reports submitted to *Eye on Psi Chi* may be featured on our website ([www.psi-chi.org](http://www.psi-chi.org)).

### ABBREVIATIONS:

APA	American Psychological Association
APS	Association for Psychological Science
EPA	Eastern Psychological Association
MPA	Midwestern Psychological Association
NEPA	New England Psychological Association
RMPA	Rocky Mountain Psychological Association
SEPA	Southeastern Psychological Association
SWPA	Southwestern Psychological Association
WPA	Western Psychological Association



New chapter members of Fordham University at Lincoln Center (NY) pose with 2011 Alumnus Awardee Philip J. Spencer, MD (Harvard).

## Chapter Activities

the opportunity to network and suggest future activities. Taking these future suggestions into account, Psi Chi hosted a graduate school meeting led by Drs. Theresa Luhrs, Or'Shaundra Benson, and Jennifer Zimmerman. These three guest speakers discussed options for graduate school, how to gain relevant experience in preparation for graduate school, and how to formulate a stellar application. In addition, current graduate students were invited for their perspective on graduate school and helped coach students in writing personal statements and resumes/CV's. Additionally, the chapter hosted an event on how to get involved in the community with an array of guest speakers. Monika Black, a current psychology graduate student at DePaul, offered an inspiring speech on how one's passion and work in psychology can be intertwined, and she also discussed the road to

cofounding her nonprofit organization. Secondly, Steve Nazaran from L'Arche, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to assisting people with intellectual disabilities, discussed the importance of becoming involved in the community and the benefits it can elicit. The event concluded with DePaul's Career Center discussing involvement on campus and in the community. Through these events, students were able to make invaluable connections with peers and professionals and find opportunities for their collegiate experience and beyond.

Christmas trees who would otherwise be unable to afford one. As a council, the chapter purchased a fake tree and ornaments and invited all Psi Chi members and psychology students interested in Psi Chi to join them in decorating the tree. The chapter really enjoyed this service activity and personally felt like their tree was the best looking one there!

accomplishments of the newly inducted members. In November, an event entitled "Everything You Wanted to Know About the Psychology Major but Were Too Afraid to Ask..." was held. Anyone with psychology-related questions was encouraged to attend, even if they were not psychology majors. A panel of three Davidson College psychology professors—Drs. Jessica Good (social), Julio Ramirez (neuroscience), and Scott Tonidandel (I/O)—answered questions asked by students. After the panel, underclassmen participating in the Psychology Mentoring Program had a chance to meet and talk with their upperclassmen mentors. The final event for the fall semester was a service trip in early December. Psi Chi members packed shoeboxes with small gifts and necessities such as toothpaste to contribute to Operation Christmas Child.

## Southeast

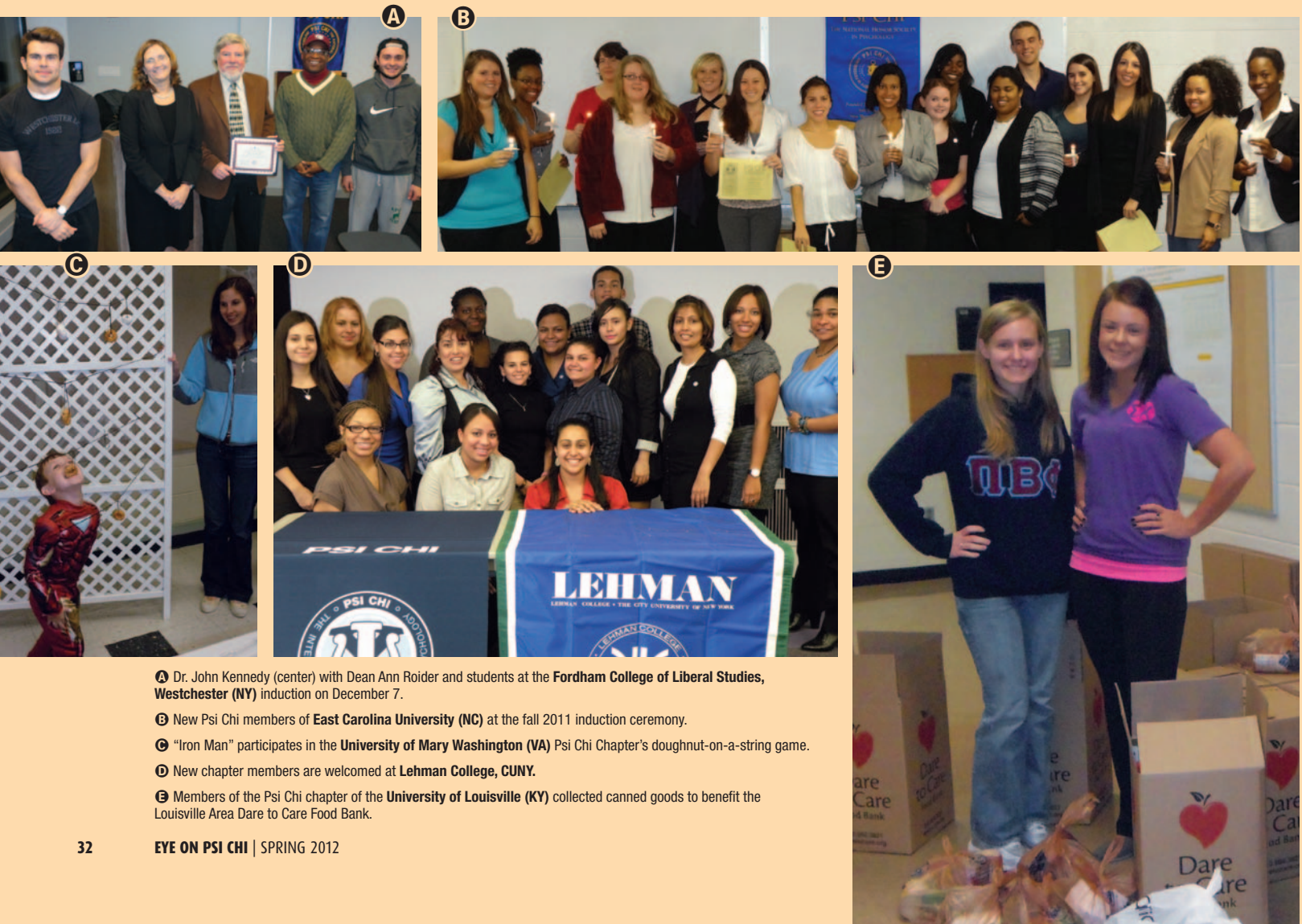
### Davidson College (NC)

It was an exciting and event-filled fall semester for the members of the Psi Chi chapter. At an October induction ceremony, five new members were welcomed into Psi Chi. The student officers conducted the formal ritual, and many faculty members and students attended the ceremony to celebrate the

## Rocky Mountain

### Utah State University

The chapter participated in the Utah State University Festival of Trees this year. The purpose of this event was to provide families in Cache Valley with



**A** Dr. John Kennedy (center) with Dean Ann Roider and students at the **Fordham College of Liberal Studies, Westchester (NY)** induction on December 7.

**B** New Psi Chi members of **East Carolina University (NC)** at the fall 2011 induction ceremony.

**C** "Iron Man" participates in the **University of Mary Washington (VA)** Psi Chi Chapter's doughnut-on-a-string game.

**D** New chapter members are welcomed at **Lehman College, CUNY**.

**E** Members of the Psi Chi chapter of the **University of Louisville (KY)** collected canned goods to benefit the Louisville Area Dare to Care Food Bank.

**East Carolina University (NC)**

The East Carolina University (ECU) Chapter members enjoyed an event-filled fall semester. In September, students were invited to learn more about Psi Chi and the Psychology Club, hear about planned events for Fall 2011 semester, and to get to know the current members and officers. Later in the month, current and prospective members met and discussed their ideas for community service projects and fund-raisers for the group to conduct over the course of the coming academic year. At the end of the month, graduate student guest speakers from ECU's masters and doctoral programs (pediatric school psychology, clinical health psychology, occupational therapy, general psychology, industrial organizational psychology, and social work) discussed careers in psychology. Speakers described their programs, the differences between undergraduate

and graduate education, and fielded questions from members. In October, members learned how to sign up for research assistantships, and ECU faculty members described their research to potential assistants. Also this month, members learned about the Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) degree, followed by an overview of the do's and don'ts of graduate school applications from Dr. Michael Baker. New Psi Chi members were formally inducted into the Society in November, and officers for the 2012–13 academic year were elected. Refreshments were enjoyed by all members as they socialized and welcomed the new recruits. In December, members and officers celebrated the end of a productive semester by watching the film *A Beautiful Mind* (based on the true story of a man suffering from schizophrenia) and sharing pizza.

**Longwood University (VA)**

The chapter enjoyed some interesting activities this fall. The chapter set up the Phrenology Booth at Oktoberfest where Psi Chi members gave phrenology readings. The chapter also held a bake sale as a fund-raiser. Together, over \$150 was raised for chapter activities. The chapter hosted a GRE information session and movie night for the members. On November 3, the chapter initiated 11 new members who all aced a test on the history of Psi Chi and the chapter.

**University of Louisville (KY)**

The chapter held a Fall Food Drive from October 17–27 to benefit the Louisville Area Dare to Care Food Bank. Through the efforts of many members, they were able to collect a total of 1,156 lbs. of canned goods. Their donation was distributed to needy families in time for

the Thanksgiving holiday.

**University of Mary Washington (VA)**

The chapter has been incredibly busy creating their 2012 Power Card; chapter officers and members had great success approaching various local businesses about advertising discounts on the card. The new Power Card features discounts from 23 businesses and can be purchased by students, faculty, and community members. The chapter also held a CV writing workshop to teach psychology majors how to set up a CV and display their best activities and accomplishments. For their fall service project, the chapter participated in Pumpkin Palooza, an event that provides community children with a place to safely trick-or-treat and participate in Halloween games and crafts. The chapter's Pumpkin Palooza game was doughnut-on-a-string, which involves



**F** Psi Chi Chapter of Longwood University (VA) member Caitlin Makayan giving a phrenology reading to Dr. Laws (psychology department chair) at Oktoberfest.

**G** The Psi Chi Chapter of Longwood University (VA) welcomes new members at its induction ceremony.

**H** West Virginia University Psi Chi Chapter members prepare to be frightened at the annual haunted house trip on Halloween.

## Chapter Activities

participants attempting to remove a doughnut using only their mouths. The kids and their parents loved it! Before heading off for winter break, the chapter also sponsored the Research Methods Fall Poster Session, during which research methods students, many of which are Psi Chi members, were able to present their research project results to students and faculty.

### West Virginia University

In the fall semester, West Virginia University's (WVU) Psi Chi Chapter continued to increase membership and gain visibility on campus. In October, the chapter had its annual haunted house trip to Rich's Fright Farm for a night full of both frights and memories. The chapter's Holding Every Life Precious (HELP) suicide prevention and mental health awareness program sponsored a booth in the student union with

members handing out "candy with compliments." With a nod to positive psychology, encouraging sayings (e.g., "enjoy today and every day") were printed on wrappers, attached to pieces of candy, and distributed to passersby. The chapter also hosted the monthly Analyze This!, an informal gathering of undergraduates and a departmental graduate student, to discuss graduate school in a relaxed atmosphere. Weekly pizza fund-raising continued to flourish, helping to support the chapter's involvement in making dinners for adults and children at the West Virginia Family Grief Center, and providing scholarships to members. Revitalized this year, the chapter held an induction ceremony in December to encourage earlier participation in chapter activities (i.e., in the Spring semester) by new members and to accommodate graduating seniors. The chapter also has been updating

its bylaws to leave a legacy for the membership in years to come. Working closely with the departmental psychology club, the chapter represented Psi Chi at the semi-annual WVU Department of Psychology Senior Capstone Poster Session, recruiting potential members and helping students enrolled in the psychology as a profession course in a pseudo scavenger hunt for psychology-related facts.

## Southwest

### Southeastern Louisiana University

The chapter of Psi Chi participated in Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF. Members were able to raise and donate over \$300. The chapter also held a food drive that benefited the Tangi Food Pantry of Hammond. The chapter held a meeting where Dr. Boulahanis (criminal justice

faculty member) gave a presentation titled "A Comparison of Reported and Unreported Homicides in New Orleans." This presentation focused on the impact that the media has on fear. Finally, the chapter held their annual fall induction on December 1.

### University of Houston (TX)

On September 29, the chapter held its first bake sale of the semester. A blend of excited Psi Chi and Psychology Club members mixed with chili cheese hotdogs, Frito pies, and mouthwatering goodies (such as fudge brownies, cupcakes, lemon tarts, and cookies) caused students and faculty to constantly flock to the chapter's table. All chapter officers attended including Brenda Lazowitz (president), Eeva Matikainen (vice-president), Mallori Henceroth (secretary), Tobi Awofodu (treasurer), Sonia Babu (historian), and Jessica



**A** University of Houston (TX) Psi Chi Chapter hosts a bake sale fund-raiser for students.

**B** Grant Shulman (president, left) and Anthony Arthur (committee chair, right) of the West Virginia University Psi Chi Chapter present a HELP (Holding Every Life Precious) T-shirt to Deborah Beazley, MSW (center), a program coordinator with Well WVU, after her talk about sexual assault prevention at a chapter meeting.

**C** For the fourth consecutive year, Millersville University of Pennsylvania Chapter members collected monetary donations and over a ton of nonperishable food items for the Lancaster County Council of Churches Food Bank. Pictured with a portion of the collected items are (from left) Amanda VanDixon, Jennifer Weathersby (president), Jacqueline Capozzoli (treasurer), Krystalyn Geesey (vice-president), Carolyn Lazarus (secretary), Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne (faculty advisor), and Clarissa Sube.



Balderas (academic affairs). From 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., members and officers volunteered and greeted customers as they purchased up to \$276 worth of goodies. The chapter's successful bake sale could not have been achieved without the support of its members, who also had the opportunity to bond and show off their advertising skills!

## West

### Hawaii Pacific University

The Hawaii Pacific University (HPU) Chapter of Psi Chi, in conjunction with the psychology department and the Psychology Club, hosted the 4th semiannual Psychology Student Research Dinner on the HPU campus. Students and faculty from HPU, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, and Chaminade University participated in this

informative, informal, and fun venue for students to discuss recent and ongoing student research ventures. A free dinner was provided by the HPU psychology department. The goal is to host this event each semester. Four individuals/teams from HPU shared their research. Six of the current eight officers of the HPU chapter are involved in ongoing research projects and they participated in this successful event.

The chapter held its induction ceremony for new members at the beginning of the monthly Psychology Symposium Series event held on November 18. Thirteen students and one faculty member were welcomed to the chapter. Dr. Brian Metcalf (faculty advisor) was joined by Matthew Wong (president), four other current officers, and two distinguished alumni officers (former president David Begg and former vice-president Alyssa Nuno)

in the ceremony. New members were awarded with their certificates and honors medallions in front of an audience of students and faculty from the department. A reception was held following the symposium.

### University of Victoria (BC)

The chapter had phenomenal year! The executive board met over the summer to organize classroom recruitment for the first day of classes and introduced them to nearly every psychology course, promoting their upcoming events and outreaching to potential members. The chapter hosted an orientation and movie night with complementary popcorn and refreshments so new students could become familiar with its members and the psychology department. The chapter also showcased their highly successful bi-annual TAUGHT presentation, where three professors gave talks on their

research and answered questions in a TED style format. Also, a debate was held between psychology and philosophy on the topic "can science answer questions of morality?" Twenty new members were inducted in October, with inspirational speeches from a faculty member as well as the chapter advisor and founder, Dr. Lindsay. Chapter members are currently working on planning events for next semester including a second TAUGHT conference, an information night for honors, an info night for undergraduates interested in graduate school, a volunteer fair, support for the university autism center and local autism walk. As a finale to the year, the chapter hosted a psycho-social banquet and awards ceremony, which brings faculty and students together to celebrate the year.



D



E

D Fall inductees, officers, and advisors of Southeastern Louisiana University. (Photo by Bryan Perissutti.)

E Students and faculty responded to the great turnout of students from three area psychology departments at the 4th semiannual Psychology Student Research Dinner, hosted by the Hawaii Pacific University Chapter of Psi Chi.



F

F Hawaii Pacific University Chapter officers, members, and faculty at the fall Induction Ceremony held on November 18, 2011.



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