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Our Alumni are Our Legacy!

Edited by Miranda Schwabe and the Psychology Alumni Committee
Welcome to our Fall 2020 Psychology Department Newsletter!

We have been planning for some time to begin a regular publication to share current events in the Department with our alumni, and this will be the first of many. We bring this to you during a strange time in the world, in the nation, and in higher education. But as you will see here, the state of the Department is strong.

We are actively producing cutting edge research that impacts pressing social and scientific problems, attracting federal grant money, and educating the largest number of undergraduate and graduate students in the social sciences at UWM. We attracted a record number of applications for both the Clinical and Neuroscience doctoral programs this year and are in the final stages of University approval for a new multidisciplinary undergraduate major in Neuroscience, the first such offering in the eastern half of the State. We have made a Departmental commitment to be part of the solution to the racial pandemic that is all too evident in the country and the Milwaukee community. During 2020, we have mobilized Diversity Committees for the Department and for each graduate area, and our graduate students and faculty have been part of teams that have competed for University grants to support important initiatives (see inside). We will be reporting on progress of these efforts in upcoming newsletters. I look forward to your feedback on this publication and our activities in the Department of Psychology. I can be reached at hobart@uwm.edu

Fall 2020

Hobart Davies
Psychology Chair
Distinguished Alumni Spotlight

Kenira Thompson received a 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award. Dr. Thompson earned a Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from UWM in 2001. Her dissertation, mentored by Dr. Rodney Swain, explored plasticity of capillary networks in the mammalian cerebellum in response to aerobic exercise. Today, she is Professor, Dean of Research, and Vice President of Research at Ponce Health Sciences University, where she leads all research operations for PHSU and oversees research for 6 affiliated hospitals in south-central Puerto Rico. Most recently, Dr. Thompson has been selected to serve a three-year term on the National Steering Committee for the Group on Research Advancement and Development (GRAND) of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). She is the first Puerto Rican and first woman to serve on this prestigious committee.

Media Coverage for Dr. Thompson:
- Groundbreaking Medical Findings at Ponce Research Institute
- Interview at Pharmaboardroom.com
- Ponce Health Sciences University
Psychology Department News

We have lots of wonderful news to share this year.

Professor Chris Larson received a new R01 Grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health for her new study "Acute Predictors Of Long-Term Post-Trauma Outcomes In Youth Victims Of Violence"

Distinguished Professor Karyn Frick was voted President-elect of the Pavlovian Society, which is devoted to researching learning and memory. Milwaukee will host the Pavlovian Society annual meeting in 2022. Karyn also edited a book on estrogens and memory through Oxford University Press.

Four Psychology Faculty were recognized at the UWM Annual Fall Awards Ceremony. Hobart Davies: UWM Faculty Distinguished University Service Award, Ryan Shorey: UWM Foundation Research Award, Chris Larson: UWM Foundation Senior Faculty Research Award, Kristin Smith: UWM Academic Staff Outstanding Teaching Award
Distinguished Professor Fred Helmstetter has also been recognized for his 30 years of work at UWM.

**Toward an Antiracist Campus: Action Grant**

UWM Psychology was awarded a grant from the UWM Office of Research to support departmental diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. The grant, titled "A Shift in Culture: Sustainable Actions Towards Cultivating an Anti-Racist Psychology Department on UWM's Campus", was written by graduate students Haley Kolp, Greta Minor, Sara Pardej, and Chandler Zolliecoffer, along with Professors Bonnie Klein-Tasman and Krista Lisdahl.
Multicultural Scholars Collaborative and Fellowship

Another grant was awarded to develop support systems for a more diverse graduate student body and includes UWM Psychology graduate student Paulina Lim on the team.

Dr. Caitlin Bowman will be joining our department in Spring 2021!

Dr. Bowman focuses on two important facets of memory and how they change with advanced age: 1) the ability to remember specific past events and 2) the ability to link across related experiences to form new knowledge. While it is well established that memory specificity declines with age, less is known about how age affects the formation of new knowledge. To understand these human memory functions, she uses a combination of behavioral tasks, computational modeling, and fMRI brain imaging techniques.

Dr. Bowman’s ultimate goal is to understand the basic cognitive and neural mechanisms of memory and age-related declines in memory, and to find ways to support new learning and flexible decision-making in people across the lifespan.

Caitlin Bowman
Ph.D, The Pennsylvania State University, 2015
Dr. Arun Asok will be joining our department in Spring 2021!

Dr. Asok focuses on identifying how the neural networks of learned and innate fear overlap, differ, and interact. He is particularly interested in how hard-wired brain circuits and dynamic molecular networks control defensive behaviors in laboratory animals. In pursuit of these interests, Dr. Asok uses a number of cutting-edge techniques in animal behavior, closed-loop optogenetics, next-generation gene sequencing, CRISPR-Cas gene editing, in vivo calcium imaging, and network computational approaches. The overarching translational goal of our work is to identify how fear, anxiety, and trauma-related mental-health disorders emerge and persist across time.

Asok’s UWM Faculty Profile
Asok Laboratory

Arun Asok
Ph.D., University of Delaware, 2016
Professor Dave Osmon retired in August 2020
Dr. Osmon served on the faculty for 41 years, and he completed the "career service heavy lift" of 8 years as Director of Clinical Training and 6 years as Psychology Department Chair.

Dr. Osmon's research and teaching brought clinical neuropsychology to the Department, and set the stage for the national reputation for excellence in this area that we have now long enjoyed. The Learning Disabilities Clinic that he established in the Psychology Clinic was our first Specialty Clinic to integrate research with cutting edge service delivery, again a model we have built off of for years. The Learning Disability Clinic provided excellent services at a very reasonable cost, and synergized benefits for UWM students, graduate student trainees, and research. The campus has long taken this contribution for granted, and is, frankly, in for a rude awakening.

Please take a moment to join us in wishing Dr. Osmon all the best for his retirement!

Read more about Dave Osmon’s work
Hanna Yousuf is a PhD candidate in neuroscience. Her work, conducted in the lab of Dr. James Moyer, studies sex differences in a rat model of fear learning. She was awarded an Advanced Opportunity Fellowship this year and has 3 first-author publications during her time at UWM. After graduation, she will be starting a postdoctoral fellowship at Yale to study sex differences in addictive behaviors. Her recent paper, “Heterogeneity of neuronal firing type and morphology in retrosplenial cortex of male F344 rats”, was published in the Journal of Neurophysiology.

Tessa Miskimen graduated with a degree in Psychology and conducted excellent research with Dr. Deborah Hannula’s lab during her time at UWM. She is a recipient of the Senior Excellence in Research Award, which supports senior students conducting a research project. Her project examined the effects of fear conditioning on eye movements. As tracking eye movement is an indirect way to observe attention and memory, Tessa’s project has helped the lab understand what happens in the brain during fear conditioning. Her findings may be used to develop future experiments on brain activity during fear conditioning. She is pursuing a Masters of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Marquette University.
Trainee Spotlights

**Salahadin Lotfi** is an experimental PhD student advised by Dr. Hanjoo Lee. Sala is a recipient of the 2020 UWM Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship and the 2019 UWM Graduate Student Excellence Fellowship. He received travel awards to present his research at the Society for Research in Psychopathology and the Wisconsin Symposium on Emotion in 2019. He completed his dissertation work in fall 2020. He provokes anxious states by delivering a mild electric stimulation then uses cutting-edge EEG techniques to record brain activity while participants complete attention tasks. Sala hopes his work will lead to better diagnosis and treatment of anxiety disorders.

**Alexander Wallace** is a clinical psychology PhD student advised by Dr. Krista Lisdahl. Alex is a recipient of the 2019 UWM Graduate Student Excellence Fellowship and 2020 Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship. His paper, “Impact of two-weeks of monitored abstinence on cognition in adolescent and young adult cannabis users”, was recently published in Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society. In the next year he plans to pursue a clinical internship focused on neurodevelopment across the lifespan. Alex wants to continue as a researcher and work towards becoming a board-certified clinician, and he plans to pursue a postdoctoral fellowship to meet both of these goals. Ultimately, he hopes to work within a psychology department or at an academic medical center.
Yael Greenberg is a recent UWM graduate who was involved in undergraduate research in the laboratory of Dr. Rodney Swain. Her project helped validate a rat model, the Spontaneously Hypertensive Rat (SHR), for use in studying ADHD. Although SHR rats were bred to study hypertension, they also display three behavioral traits: hyperactivity, inattention, and impulsivity, making them a viable model for studying the neurobiology of ADHD. This ongoing project may give researchers insight into the neural origins of ADHD. In addition to her research, Yael also worked in early childhood education and was awarded a Student Excellence Award as a teacher at the Children’s Learning Center on campus. She is working to pursue a PsyD program.

Sarah Lehman worked in Dr. Lisdahl’s psychology BraIN-lab starting as an undergraduate student. Dr. Lisdahl and the BraIN-lab at UWM are one of 21 sites across the United States working on the Adolescent Brain and Cognitive Development (ABCD) study. This is a longitudinal study focusing on the development of the brain in adolescents and young adults. Sarah was accepted into the PhD in Clinical Science in Child and Adolescent Psychology program at Florida International University for Fall 2020.

Sarah said she is very grateful and fortunate to have gained experiences that pushed her towards a career that she is thrilled to be pursuing.
Congratulations! New Graduates (M.S.) in 2020

Lindsey Hieber: “Prolonged Distress in Residents Exposed to a Technological Disaster” Major Professor: Fleming

Haley Kolp: “Simultaneous Marijuana and Alcohol Use and Intimate Partner Violence Perpetration in College Students” Major Professor: Shorey

Paulina Lim: “Predictors of Parent Stress and Internalizing Symptoms using the Multidimensional Feeding Questionnaire: An Exploratory Structural Equation Modeling Approach” Major Professor: Davies

Greta Minor: “Flexibility of a Conditioned Response: Exploring the Limits of Attentional Capture by Fear” Major Professor: Hannula

Elizabeth Parisi: “Neural Substrates of Active Avoidance and its Impact on Fear Extinction” Major Professor: Larson

Chandler Zolliecoffer: “Stereotype Threat: Searching for a Double Dissociation of Race-Based Effects and an Explanatory Mechanism” Major Professor: Osmon

Hanna Johnson: “Rest Day Stress in Runners” Major Professor: Fleming

Elisabeth (Kate) Webb: “Shaped by the Environment: The Influence of Childhood Trauma Exposure, Individual Socioeconomic Position, and Neighborhood Disadvantage on Brain Morphology” Major Professor: Larson

Devyani Gore: “The Role of Ethnic Identity, Perceived Cultural Distance and Social Network Composition in Predicting Acculturative Stress Among Indian International Students in the U.S.” Major Professor: Fleming
Congratulations! New Graduates (M.S.) in 2020

Karen Floan: “Effects of Values-Based Affirmation About Pets on Physiological and Emotional Arousal” Major Professor: Fleming

Sara Pardej: “A Psychometric Evaluation of Computerized Attention Measures in Young Children with Neurofibromatosis Type 1” Major Professor: Klein-Tasman

Yanzhou Lu: “Associations Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and Negative Sleep Health Among Young Adults” Major Professor: Davies

Miranda Schwabe: "Inactivation of Nucleus Reuniens Impairs Spatial Memory in Mice" Major Professor: Frick

Congratulations! New Graduates (Ph.D.) in 2020

Alese Nelson: “The Effects of Instagram User Weight and Health Orientation on Perceptions of Food Posts” Major Professor: Fleming

Allison Nickel: “Attention Capture by Episodic Long-Term Memories: Evidence from Eye Movement Data” Major Professor: Hannula

Brianna Yund: “Factors Contributing to Executive Functioning in Children with Neurofibromatosis Type 1” Major Professor: Klein-Tasman

Gregory Berlin: “Utilizing Cognitive Assessment to Predict Exposure and Response Prevention Treatment Response” Major Professor: Lee

Kenneth Bennett: “Response to Uncertain Threat in Acute Trauma Survivors” Major Professor: Larson

Joshua Hoelter: “The Effects of Long-Term Memory Prioritization on Attention During Visual Search” Major Professor: Hannula
Congratulations! New Graduates (Ph.D.) in 2020

Vanessa Ehlers: “Molecular and Physiological Plasticity in Ventral Hippocampus Following Associative Fear Learning” Major Professor: Moyer

Eva Igler: “Medical Provider Reactions to an Adolescent Chronic Pain Complaint and a Dismissive Interaction” Major Professor: Davies

Kyle Jennette: “The Association of Aerobic Fitness with Resting State Functional Connectivity and Verbal Memory in Young Adults” Major Professor: Lisdahl

Carissa Weis: “Data-Driven Approach to Dynamic Resting State Functional Connectivity in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder” Major Professor: Larson

Gregor Nathanael Schwarz: “Stability and Predictive Value of Intellectual Functioning in Neurofibromatosis Type 1 Beginning in the Preschool Years” Major Professor: Klein-Tasman

Taylor Davine: “Treatment Predictors of Dialectical Behavior Therapy Among Adolescent Females in Residential Care” Major Professor: Lee

Salahadin Lotfi: “Proactive and Reactive Cognitive Control under Threat of Unpredictable Shock: A Combined EEG and Eye-tracking Study” Major Professor: Lee

Morgan Stevenson: “The Role of Cerebellar Structural Plasticity and Astrocytic Activity in Motorskill Learning” Major Professor: Swain

Michelle Kassel: “The Impact of Task Load on Neural Entrainment to Attended Speech: A Dual-Task Magnetoencephalography (MEG) Paradigm” Major Professor: Osmon
Undergraduate SURF Projects – Summer 2020

The Support for Undergraduate Research Fellows (SURF) program at UWM provides monetary support to students completing research projects in collaboration with a faculty mentor. Several students were awarded SURF funding to conduct research with Psychology Faculty in Summer 2020:

**Marie Enderle** working with Bonita Klein-Tasman: “Contributions of Adaptive Functioning and Executive Functioning to Quality of Life Among Young Children with Neurofibromatosis Type 1”

**Ciera Oglesby** working with James Moyer: “Analyzing Structure-Function Relationships in the Brain using a Combination of Patch-Clamp Neurophysiological Recordings from Neurons and Subsequent 3D Reconstructions of Those Cells”

**Natalia Sotelo** working with Krista Lisdahl: “Alcohol and Marijuana Use Predicting Hippocampal Volume”

**Elle Paveglio** working with Hobart Davies: “Applications of Psychological Safety in the Context of the Medical Team”

**Grace Feucht** working with James Moyer: “Neurobiological Analyses of Developmental and Learning-Related Changes in Retrosplenial Cortex”

**Mohammad Khokhar** working with Adam Greenberg: “Correlations between Daily Fluctuations of Attention and Anxiety”

**Sophia Salas** working with Bonita Klein-Tasman: “Neural Correlates of Attention in Children with Neurofibromatosis Type 1”

**Sana Shakir** working with Adam Greenberg: “Characterization of Odorants for Use in Measuring Olfactory Attention”

**Miranda Massman** working with James Moyer: “Neurobiological Analyses of the Role of Calcium Binding Proteins in Neuroprotection”

**Connor Lynch** working with Hobart Davies: “Parent-Child Interactions around Feeding”
Recent Research Publications


Brooke Dulka, postdoctoral fellow in Fred Helmstetter's lab, interviewed about her scientific writing experience at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Ben Katz and Chandler Zolliecoffer, doctoral students in Clinical Psychology, wrote an article for PCSAS News about Diversity and Inclusion efforts at UWM

Clinical doctoral student Abel Mathew's research on treatment development for skin picking featured in UWM News

Professor Chris Larson interviewed about her new research on WUWM

Professor Krista Lisdahl and her advisee Ryan Sullivan interviewed about the ABCD study on WUWM. Professor Krista Lisdahl was also featured on numerous articles on CBD, including espn.com, and bestlifeonline.
Distinguished Professor Karyn Frick was featured on mystateline.com for her collaborative research on drug to prevent dementia in women

Associate Professor Shawn Cahill commented on increasing rates of suicide amid COVID-19 on Fox6 News

Professor W. Hobart Davies commented on Telemedicine during COVID-19 Pandemic on Wisconsin Public Radio

Clinical Professor Stacey Nye interviewed about eating disorders on WUWM
Our Department Staff

Nicole Schueler (Academic Department Manager). Nicole administers the business operations for the department. nlj@uwm.edu / 414-229-6397

Anna Morehouse (University Service Associate 2). Anna provides undergraduate programs support and general administrative support for the department. Que@uwm.edu / 414-229-4746

Paul Aceto (University Service Associate 2). Paul provides travel and human resources support for the department. acetop@uwm.edu / 414-229-7228.

Patrick Reilly (Electronics Research Technician-Senior). Patrick is responsible for the design, construction and testing of specialized components and computer/software systems to support research and teaching in the Department of Psychology. Reillyp@uwm.edu / 414-229-5330.

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Hello, my name is Rodney Swain and I am the Chair of the UWM Psychology Alumni Committee. I hope that you’ve enjoyed this Fall 2020 issue of the UWM Psychology Newsletter. We are extremely proud of our department and the accomplishments of our students and faculty. We recognize that our alumni are our legacy. Our success is measured in great part by your success. We are eager to stay in touch with you.

Please drop me (rswain@uwm.edu) a note from time to time to let me know of your accomplishments (new job, awards, or other accolades). We would be extraordinarily pleased to include them in future editions of this newsletter.

We also hope that you might consider lending your knowledge and expertise to the betterment of our current students by participating in discussion, professional development, or networking panels with our students. If you are interested in being part of such efforts, you can email me (rswain@uwm.edu) or Professor Deborah Hannula (hannula@uwm.edu) to begin a discussion of how you might become involved.
Give to Psychology

We appreciate that times are tough for many but if you are in a position to consider a gift to Psychology, please know that a gift of any size makes a difference. All UWM Panthers are impacted by your generosity: our students and their families, our loyal faculty and staff, and our alumni near and far.

Please make a gift to Psychology today at give.uwm.edu or click the button below and designate your gift to the following fund:

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