



School Psychology Newsletter

Award Winners

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Students in our program were honored at the Department Spring Celebration held on Thursday, May 8, 2014.

Second year student, Mandy VanDyke, received the Outstanding Graduate Student in Service Award. Second year student, Caitlin Reddy, received the Outstanding Graduate Student in Teaching Award for her excellent dedication to her students' academic success in statistics. Second year student, Krista Gieske Smith, was awarded the Tina Kauten Memorial Service Award. Interns Hannah Smith and Jason Kohl received the Outstanding Scholarship Award for progress in research.

The program awarded Shenandoah Child Development Clinic the Community Partnership Award for their support of student training in assessment and evaluation.

JMU was proud to host the return of all of the interns who received a special recognition at the ceremony before walking in cap and gown at the graduation ceremony that followed on Friday morning. The interns are thrilled by their achievements and are all ready to begin their careers.

Faculty member, Debi Kipps-Vaughn, was honored at the All Together One Awards Community Gathering on April 15, 2014. She received An All Together One award for her impact on the community, inspiring others, attitude of caring, humility, and kindness, dedication to learning and collaboration. Congratulations, Debi!



NASP Convention 2014: Washington, D.C.

The National Association of School Psychology held its annual conference February 18-21, 2014 in Washington, D.C. This week long conference was filled with many sessions, poster presentations, ceremonies, and fun social events. The JMU program organized a social gathering on Thursday evening for current students, interns, faculty members, and practicing school psychologists who attended JMU to meet and mingle. Of the practicing school psychologists, there were graduates from at least 20 years ago who were able catch up and share their experiences.

With the conference being so close to JMU, most students, interns, and faculty were able to attend. First and second year graduate students were able to experience their first national conference and be surrounded by so many intelligent and influential members in the field of School Psychology.

"NASP was an overall great experience, but it was very overwhelming! I had a hard time choosing what I wanted to go to in such a short amount of time." – Sammy Silver (1st year student)

"NASP inspired me and reminded me of how much I love this profession. It was wonderful to meet people from all over who shared the same passion as I do." – Mandy VanDyke (2nd year student)

"It was nice to be surrounded by so many school psychologists. I really enjoyed the mindfulness mini-skills workshop. I learned

a lot of practical skills that I will someday use in my practice." – Nahal Khalatbari (1st year student)

Second year student, Joe Sims, was awarded the Wayne Gressant Memorial Minority Scholarship Award and was recognized for this accomplishment at this year's conference. Joe enjoyed meeting his fellow recipients, attending special events of recognition, and learning how important it is to bring diversity to the field of School Psychology. "I was able to meet with the president of NASP, the scholarship program committee, and previous recipients to be initiated as a scholar. I'll remember these moments for the rest of my life!"



Due to the attention the School Psychology program has received for having multiple recipients of the Minority Scholarship Award in recent years, a short article was posted to JMU's School Psychology home page. This article was written to highlight the Cultural Competency Practitioner Initiative of the program and how it prepares students for careers in School Psychology.



ASIST Training

First year students attended the 2-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) workshop on April 3rd and 4th, 2014. They were originally going to attend this training in February, but due to one of the many snow days we have had this semester (six total and one two-hour delay), the training was postponed until April. Students enjoyed the training, even though it was a difficult topic matter and two intensive days of training. They found the training to be practical and reported that the ASIST model is very comprehensive. Students feel competent and comfortable to use the model.

Upcoming Spring Workshop

“Nondiscriminatory Assessments of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students” Sam Ortiz, PhD

This 2-day workshop presented by Dr. Sam Ortiz will focus on the increasing diversity of U.S. public schools, educational services for dual-language learners, understanding first and second language acquisition, generational effects in language development, history of immigrant achievement, parallel processes in development, and language development. Also, legal compliance in assessment of diverse children and a framework for comprehensive nondiscriminatory assessment will be reviewed. The second half of the workshop will cover bilingual assessment versus assessment of bilinguals, use of interpreters in assessment, current research in support of the Culture-Language Test Classifications (C-LTC) and Interpretive Matrix (C-LIM), examples of test-specific classification matrices, and case study illustrations of nondiscriminatory interpretation with the C-LIM. The dates of the workshop are May 29th and May 30th and will be held in the Montpelier Room here at JMU. By attending, 13 hours of Continuing Education Units can be earned through NASP. Registration information can be found at <https://commerce.cashnet.com/nacls>.

Practicum Supervisors Meeting

Practicum Supervisors met on January 17, 2014 for the annual Practicum Supervisor’s meeting and luncheon in Blue Ridge Hall. The topic for the meeting this year focused on Family-School Collaboration Services. The School Psychology program values the contributions of the supervisors and acknowledges them as a critical aspect of the training program. During the meeting, there was rich discussion about current practices for family-school collaborations. Several discussion points centered on consideration for enhancing practicum students’ involvement with families through follow-up contact with families after assessment, follow-up calls for counseling cases, and attending FAPT meetings. These ideas, as well as others, will be considered for future practicum experiences as a means of increasing opportunities to work with families and foster collaborations with schools. Supervisors shared great ideas on this topic and the lunch and fellowship was wonderful!



Incoming Students

We are proud and excited to welcome ten new students to the JMU School Psychology community this fall. These students come from diverse backgrounds and all have valuable experiences and knowledge to offer. New students are: Priya Saxena (Virginia Tech), Mandi Shiflett (JMU), Denton Warburton (Otterbein University), Michelle Whitham (University of Denver), Spencer Brookbank (Virginia Tech), Arsenio Moss (Harding University), Steven Powell (Hood College), Elizabeth Coalter (George Mason University), Ginger Wayland (JMU), and Breonna Davis (Southern Illinois University). Congratulations to the incoming class!

Service Projects

Most of the service projects are initiatives that the students and faculty of the School Psychology Program continues to dedicate their time to year in and year out. These opportunities are presented during the first year in the program and participation is usually carried on into the second year. Students are encouraged to find and share new project ideas that interest them to add to the available opportunities. Because of these efforts, the School Psychology Program is able to support organizations in the community each year.

Backpack Program

Several first year students have been getting together to help out children around the community who are in need. There are various drop boxes for food around campus and once a month the students take this food over to a local church, where they have gathered food donations as well. The students stuff backpacks full of food for children whose families may not have the financial means to provide enough food for their kids throughout the weekend. This program is a great way for our students to bond while providing a necessary service that ensures the health and success of children and their families.

5K Run/Walk for Autism

The Shenandoah Valley Autism Partnership puts on an annual 5K run and walk to raise money for research and support of families with children who have Autism Spectrum Disorder. This year the event was held on April 5, 2014. It was a blustery, yet sunny day, and our program was well represented with first years, second years, an intern, and faculty members in attendance. The day started with touching speeches given by individuals who had siblings with Autism Spectrum Disorder, raffles, and refreshments. The 5K started and ended at the EMU commons and there was an incredible turn out. Members of the community and students from other universities joined us on the walk/run and it was very powerful to see so many individuals passionate for this important cause.



Walk for Hope

The third annual Walk for Hope was held on March 29, 2014. Students from our program were joined by other JMU students, as well as students from EMU, Bridgewater College, and Blue Ridge Community College, each wearing Walk for Hope t-shirts in their respective school colors. This event is put on to honor those who have been lost to suicide and to raise awareness of this ever-growing issue. This year, the walk started at Memorial Hall and ended at the EMU commons. Following the walk, individuals who had been impacted by suicide spoke out about their experience, how they have found hope, and offered words of encouragement for others.

Project Read

Project Read has had another year of awesome participation from the School Psychology Program as well as other students who attend JMU and dedicated members in the community. Beginning at 8:10 and going until 8:35, volunteer readers have the opportunity to bring the excitement of reading to K-3 students before school starts. Literacy Co-Chairs, Fred Fox and Keston Fulcher, work hard to continue develop of the program and ensure students are being exposed to a variety of books at any of the five elementary schools that are served in Harrisonburg City.

Take Back The Night

Several of our students helped coordinate and attended the annual Take Back The Night event put on by JMU's Campus Assault Response. This powerful event was held on the night of April 1, 2014 to raise awareness about sexual assault. The night began with poetry, acapella, and musical performances. The keynote speaker was Katie Hnida, who was the first woman to play and score points in a NCAA Division I football game. She spoke about her experience in this position and also about the sexual



assault she experienced while at the University of Colorado. After Katie's speech, the lights were dimmed and students in the audience were encouraged to anonymously come forward and share their experiences with sexual assault. The night culminated with a candlelit walk around to campus. Trained Campus Assault Response members were available for any students needing help. The event was very powerful, not only in allowing students to speak out and "break the silence" but also in raising awareness about the rape culture and victim blaming that takes place in our society.



ColorBlast 5k and Daisy Dash

The Morrison-Bruce Center’s ColorBlast 5k was held on April 26th, 2014 to promote physical activity of girls and women. The 5k and Daisy Dash took place on JMU’s campus where colored powder was thrown on participants at every kilometer of the course, and then blasted on everyone at the finish line! After finishing, games such as corn hole and frisbee were played before a ColorBlast Raffle took place. This event is in its third year and over 700 people showed up to take part in these exciting activities to promote physical health.



Support Future School Psychologists

To support the School Psychology Program and the training of our students, consider making a contribution to the JMU Foundation specifying Account Number 14789. We value your continued support in maintaining our educational excellence by providing funds that go

towards testing and materials for student research. Contributions can also be made specifically to the O. Ashton Trice Scholarship. Please refer to Account Number 1002149.

Please keep in mind, many Graduate Assistantships no longer cover the full 12 credits per semester or any of summer tuition.

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Check out the JMU School Psychology Website at:
<http://psyc.jmu.edu/school/>

Did we miss someone? Please send us **e-addresses** of colleagues who did not receive our newsletter.