

School Psychology Newsletter

Spring 2017

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Thank You, Patti!



With grateful hearts for her extensive contributions, we announce that Dr. Patricia "Patti" J. Warner is retiring from James Madison University and the School Psychology Program. During her more than 25 wonderful years of service she has mentored over 270 school psychology graduate students, published more than 45 publications, visited dozens of interns around the country, and touched the lives of everybody in the Graduate Psychology Department. Patti is warm, caring, thoughtful, generous with her time, and an inspiration to students and faculty alike.

Before joining JMU as a faculty member in 1990, Patti worked in a variety of psychological and mental health positions in hospitals, schools and private practice. In addition to her duties at JMU, Patti has also served as a clinical supervisor consultant at Shenandoah Valley Child Development Center and worked at Valley Diagnostic and Assessment Services as a clinical psychologist.



During her time as a faculty member, Patti has maintained her license as a Clinical Psychologist as well as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist. Patti has represented JMU at the Commonwealth level through her leadership with the Virginia Academy of School Psychologists (VASP). Her VASP positions include serving as an Executive Board Member, Program Chair for Conventions, President-Elect, President and Past-President. For the past 14 years, she has served as our JMU liaison to the VASP Executive Board. Nationally, Patti has been active with both the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Throughout her career, Patti has engaged in scholarship that has focused on improving school climate and addressing the needs of students. Her scholarly work has included an examination of cultural competency in the schools, ethics and diversity within schools, the social and emotional needs of gifted children, and the needs of children in foster care. Most recently, Patti was recruited by the Virginia Department of Education to write the new "Cognitive Test Guide for School Psychologists." Throughout her career, Patti has served as a champion for women and children. She has worked tirelessly at both the individual and systems-level to promote change to enhance the welfare of families.

Please join us in celebrating Patti's retirement and years of service on June 4, 2017 from 4:30 until 7:30 at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel & Conference Center in Staunton, VA. The inclusive cost will be \$40 per person. Contact Dr. Ashton Trice (tricead@jmu.edu) to make reservations. The School Psychology Program has established the Patti Warner Award in Patti's honor to recognize future leaders in school psychology. Winners of the award will be granted tuition assistance to help cover the costs of summer tuition. Please consider making a donation to the Patti Warner Award fund via [this link](#). When making a donation please specify that you would like the gift to be put towards The Patti Warner Award in the special instructions box.

While we will certainly miss Patti in the hallways of Johnston, we wish her joy and happiness as she moves forward with retirement! We love you, Patti!



New Faculty Member

We are excited to welcome Tiffany Hornsby as a full time Assistant Professor in the School Psychology Program! Tiffany is completing her doctoral degree at Oklahoma State University and is currently a School Psychology Resident with the Harrisonburg City Schools. Some of her research interests include evidence-based practice in schools and community settings; assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse populations; procedural integrity; professional issues in school psychology; behavioral skills training and staff development; multi-tiered systems of supports; measures of preschool quality; reading achievement. We look forward to welcoming Tiffany into our school psychology family in the fall!

Award Winners

Students in our program were honored at the Department Spring Celebration held on Thursday, May 4, 2017.

Second year student, Arsenio Moss, received the Outstanding Graduate Student in Service Award. Second year student, Alexis Morse, received the Outstanding Graduate Student in Teaching Award for her commitment and dedication to the Centennial Scholar's Program. Second year student Rachel Larkin received the O. Ashton Trice Scholarship Award for her educational excellence. First year student, Sarah Stout, received the Jonathan Davis Memorial Scholarship for her interest in suicide prevention research. Second year student, Kaitlynn Carter, was awarded the Tina Kauten Memorial Service Award. Intern Mandi Simmers received the Outstanding Graduate Research Award for contributions to research while on internship.

The program awarded Ms. Suzanne Blackwell, an English teacher at Fort Defiance High School in Augusta County, the Community Partnership Award for her genuine concern and advocacy efforts for promoting literacy of all adolescents and her deep understanding of the power of caring relationships with students. This is the second year that first year students in the School Psychology Program have volunteered to read one-on-one with 9th grade students at Fort Defiance who are reading below grade level.

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 Thursday evening. The interns are thrilled by their achievements and are all ready to begin their careers.

Congratulations to all on your accomplishments and achievements!



Annual Symposium in Research and Practice

The Department of Graduate Psychology held its annual research symposium on April 21, 2017. This daylong event offered a forum for students from across the department to share their developing areas of expertise. The day started off with a Keynote Address from Dr. Elena Savina who was honored at the Graduate Psychology's Distinguished Scholar. Her presentation, "The Future of Our Children: Bridging Global and Prosocial Education in the Journey around the World Curriculum" focused on the development of a global education curriculum to promote prosocial behaviors in children.



The morning continued with oral presentations from the returning interns. Following a catered lunch for presenters, the sharing of research continued into the afternoon. First and second year students were in attendance throughout the day and gained wonderful insight and tips for structuring their own research. Topics presented on by our interns included:

- Breonna Davis: *Views Toward Mental Health: An Adolescent's Perspective*
- Ginger Wayland: *Fostering Hope in Alternative Education Students Through Goal Setting*
- Mandi Simmers: *Addressing the Needs of Public School Students With Emotional Disabilities*
- Michelle Whitham: *Differences By State in Learning Disability Identification*
- Denton Warburton: *Lego Therapy: Improving Social Competency for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*
- Elizabeth Coalter: *Children's Understanding of the Definition of Kindness*
- Spencer Brookbank: *Building Self-Advocacy Skills in Students with Specific Learning Disability*
- Steven Powell: *Fonts and Fifth Graders: An Examination of a Specialized Typeface*

NASP Convention 2017: San Antonio, TX

The National Association of School Psychologist held its annual convention February 21-24, 2017 in San Antonio, Texas. School Psychology Program alumni and current Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. student, Nick Curtis presented alongside Dr. Tammy Gilligan their work entitled “Cultural Competence in School Psychology: How to Demonstrate Effective Curricula”. Additionally, current interns Steven Powell and Denton Warburton presented their thesis research in a poster presentation entitled: “Font Fails to Improve Reading on Assessment Tasks”. Current students are excited about the prospect of attending next year’s conference in Chicago, IL!



VASP 2017 Spring Conference

“Collaborative & Proactive Solutions” Ross W. Greene, Ph.D.

The Virginia Academy of School Psychologist held its spring conference in Richmond, VA on March 10, 2017. Faculty, current students, interns, and alumni attended a workshop presentation by Dr. Ross Greene. The workshop centered on Dr. Greene’s empirically supported Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model, an innovative approach to intervening with behaviorally challenging children. The first half of the workshop covered the differences between the underpinnings of the CPS model and current behavior modification strategies, as well as how to identify and assess the cognitive skills and unsolved problems that precipitate challenging behavior. The second half of the workshop covered how to effectively implement the CPS model in schools.

“Paper Tigers” Movie Night with School Counseling

On March 16, 2017 students and faculty from the School Psychology and School Counseling programs joined together to watch the movie “Paper Tigers”. The movie focused on the lives of staff and students of Lincoln Alternative High School in Walla Walla, Washington, where the majority of students had behavior challenges and poor academic performances. It documented the journey the school went through in its attitude to discipline after staff learned about the studies on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), moving away from using traditional punitive punishments with students to more trauma-informed approaches. After the



movie, attendees discussed the importance of recognizing adverse childhood experiences, and implementing trauma-informed discipline approaches in schools in our community.

A Visit to the Lavender Farm



In celebration of the accomplishments of the year, second year students and Dr. Gilligan visited the White Oak Lavender Farm in Harrisonburg to experience the relaxing and healing properties of lavender. The students learned about the wonderful and natural health benefits of lavender while discussing the importance of proper self-care and mindfulness. The day included a walk through the farm's labyrinth, visiting with the many farm

animals, and a guided tour of the property from owner, Julie Haushalter.

Incoming Students

We are excited to welcome nine new students into the new cohort! All the students are more than eager to begin the graduate program here at JMU. The new students include: Stacy Davidson (JMU), Jaqueline Billy (JMU), Aleksa Putnam (Virginia Tech), Katelin Pletcher (Shenandoah University), Jessica Williams (JMU), Sarah Lanyi (Florida State University), Kaylor Duncan (JMU), Michelle Hayes (JMU), Victoria Bunting (West Chester University), and Carleigh Furhrman (JMU). Congratulations to the incoming class!

Service Projects

JMU students and faculty have enjoyed many hours volunteering with the Harrisonburg community! A staple of the program, working with schools and the community prove to be an enriching and positive experience for all involved.

Project Read

First and second year students have been volunteering with Harrisonburg City Schools through Project Read. 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 Chair 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.

Partnership with Fort Defiance High School

Four first year students have been working closely with high school students at Fort Defiance High School in Augusta County. These high school students have been identified to be reading below grade level with some as low as a third grade reading level. For about 45 minutes once a week, first year students work with the students to build their vocabulary and enhance their reading fluency and comprehension. All participants eagerly wait for their weekly meeting and thoroughly enjoy the experience.

5K Run/Walk for Autism

The Shenandoah Valley Autism Partnership put on Harrisonburg's Ninth Annual 5K Run/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 14, 2017. It was a beautiful sunny day, and our program was well represented with first years, second years, and a faculty member 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.

Summer Statistics “Boot Camp”

Back by popular demand, there will be a statistics boot camp offered for incoming first year students to help them prepare for the fall statistics course. The boot camp will be led by Graduate Psychology faculty member, Dr. Jeanne Horst. Current first year students who attended the boot camp last summer raved about the content covered and how well prepared they felt going into the fall semester. The dates of the boot camp are August 22, 23, and 24, 2017. For more information contact Dr. Horst (horstsj@jmu.edu).

Program Video!

It's here! Take a look at the fantastic informational video about the School Psychology Program, featuring faculty, current students, interns, and program alumni. The video can be viewed via the program home page or this [link](#).



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 professional development and materials for student research. Contributions can also be made specifically to the O. Ashton Trice Scholarship which awards summer tuition support. 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.

Please mail checks to:

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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-mail addresses** of colleagues who did not receive our newsletter.