

PSYCHOLOGY

UPDATE

Knowledge that will change your world

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Department
News

STUDENTS
AWARDS
&
HONORS

FACULTY
MENTIONS
&
PUBLICATIONS

DATES TO REMEMBER

**10/30: Distinguished
Alumni Event**

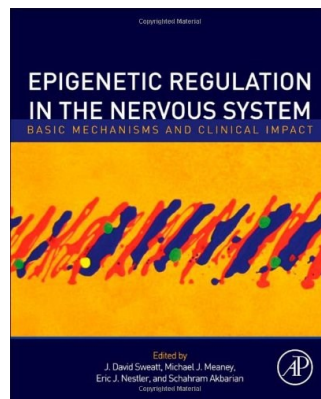
**11/2: UAB
Homecoming**

**11/25-11/29:
FALL BREAK**

The *Psychology Update* is a newsletter written for Alumni and Friends of the UAB Department of Psychology.

NEUROSCIENCE OPEN HOUSE UNVEILS ART GALLERY

The Undergraduate Neuroscience Program hosted its Fall Gathering on Saturday, September 14, in Campbell Hall 233 for current Neuroscience students, alumni, faculty, and staff in the Department of Psychology. "This is a rather special event because it serves as the 'grand opening' for the Neuroscience Art Gallery," said Undergraduate Neuroscience Program Co-Founder, Dr. Carl McFarland, Jr. (Psychology).



A neuroscience student takes a look at the painting chosen for the cover of Dr. Sweatt's book.



The 'art gallery' concept was constructed when Dr. David Sweatt, an internationally prominent neuroscientist, who serves as Chair of the Dept. of Neurobiology in the School of Medicine, Director of the McKnight Brain Institute, and Co-Founder of the Undergraduate Neuroscience Program with Dr. McFarland, donated fourteen of his paintings to the Undergraduate Neuroscience Program. The paintings are based on his recent foundational book, *Epigenetic Regulation in the Nervous System*.

Dr. Sweatt was in attendance for the event to discuss his own career path with current neuroscience students and to speak about the influence science has on his art. Following the reception, senior neuroscience majors, Katherine Patterson and Davis Haselden presented their honors thesis research.

The Neuroscience major is the only undergraduate program at UAB co-sponsored by the UAB School of Medicine.



SUMMER RECAP: Psychology travels to Sweden

This past May, Dr. Maria Hopkins took eleven UAB students to her home-town of Stockholm, Sweden to spend two weeks learning about cross-cultural perspectives in child development. Lectures were held at Stockholm University and each day they spent time observing children and child-rearing practices at various institutions, businesses, and schools in order to apply the concepts discussed in class and to analyze child rearing, education, and society's perspective of children. They also visited various historical museums in Stockholm to offer insight to the historical context of child rearing and child development. "Deciding to participate in the Study-Away program at UAB and with the Department of Psychology was easily one of the best decisions I have made in my academic career. The program was justly rewarding in cultural and educational experiences. By studying away I was able to not only take a class outside of the campus; I was able to derive a hands-on and interactive learning experience with that class," said psychology major Rion Barnes.

"The purpose of this course was designed to examine the interdependence between family, school and community and the impact culture plays on the three. The students explored the concept of culture, the differences between Scandinavian and American cultures and the implications for child development including understanding ethnic diversity, social class, customs, heritage, gender roles, values and morals," said Dr. Hopkins. The students were asked to integrate their personal experiences, knowledge of psychology, and their observations of human development with the content of this course. Sydnee Kucenski, psychology major said, "The UAB Psychology Department not only provided a great learning experience, but also provided an environment for us to develop life long friendships and memories."



UAB WELCOMES DR. CHRISTINA RODRIGUEZ, Ph.D.

The Department of Psychology is thrilled to welcome Dr. Christina Rodriguez to the Department as an Associate Professor. Dr. Rodriguez comes to UAB from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro where she has been focused on identifying innovative assessment strategies that would permit greater confidence in abuse risk assessments. She brings to the department the "Parenting Challenges with Kids (PaCK) Lab" which considers factors that promote optimal parenting in addition to parenting in more at-risk, challenging circumstances. "As part of this effort, we are studying the potential transitions in parenting beliefs and attitudes by evaluating first-time parents during pregnancy, following up with them during the first years of the baby's life, in the Following First Families (Triple-F) Study," says Dr. Rodriguez.

RESEARCH INTERESTS:

The primary emphasis of my current research program involves understanding factors that exacerbate parental risk for physical child abuse, particularly psychological distress and cognitive processes that increase the likelihood that a parent will transition from using physical discipline to harsher and ultimately abusive discipline.

EDUCATION:

B.S., University of Miami

Ph.D., University of Florida, Clinical Psychology

Pre-Doctoral Internship, University of Tennessee, Memphis

Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of Tennessee, Memphis

BN



behavioral neuroscience

L to R: (top to bottom)

- Megan Waite, University of Albany
- Nathaniel Harnett, Ithaca College
- Carl Stevens, UAB
- Stacie Totsch, UAB
- Elyse Cadena, University of South Florida

LDPP



lifespan developmental

L to R:

- Omar Maximo, San Diego State University
- Jinhong Guo, East China Normal University
- Bethany Stenger, UAB

not pictured: Pinar Centinkaya

WELCOME

NEW GRAD STUDENTS

M/C

medical/clinical

L to R: (top to bottom)

- Ali Cutillo, Stonehill College
- Lauren Bolden, Austin College
- Samantha Henry, University of Connecticut
- Julia Fleming, Centre College
- Brent Womble, Texas Christian University
- Anjali Gowda, Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro
- Mary Lynch, St. Ambrose University
- Lindsey Elliott, College of William and Mary
- Lindsey Niccolai, Ball State University



From the Graduate Programs Office

Orientation

The department welcomed 18 new graduate students on Aug. 22 for orientation across all three programs.

New students took care of business while getting acquainted with campus and the graduate department. A luncheon was held in the Green and Gold Room of the Bartow Arena where current graduate students and directors took a break to get to know some new faces and to discuss their plans for the semester.

Hailey Bulls

has been awarded a \$2,000 research scholarship for her proposal, "Ethnic Differences in Endogenous Pain Modulation Across the Adult Lifespan," by the **UAB Center for Aging**. Upon completion of the project, Bulls will submit a final report to the Director of the Gerontology Education Program and present her results as part of the Center for Aging and Birmingham/Atlanta VA GRECC Scientific Seminar Series. Bulls is currently working with Dr. Burel Goodin, Psychology and Dr. Larry Bradley, Rheumatology.

Chelsey Sterling

alongside **Dr. Edward Taub** and **Dr. Gitendra Uswatte**, has received much attention for her CI Therapy research which has demonstrated an increase in grey matter in the brains of children with cerebral palsy. "The findings, published online April 22, 2013 in [Pediatrics](#), are the first to show that structural remodeling of the brain occurs during rehabilitation in a pediatric population," according to the UAB press release. The findings were also published by *AI.com* and *News-Medical.net*.

Jiabin Shen

was named a 2013 **Sparkman Fellow**. Thirty-five applications were received representing seventeen departments and seven degrees. Of the thirty-five, twenty students were selected as 2013 Sparkman Fellows. The 2013 Sparkman Fellows have an average GPA of 3.91 and represent programs from across campus. All applicants were scored on the following criteria: academic strength, quality of essays, international experience, and participation in research or practice endeavors. Shen is currently working with Dr. David Schwebel.

2013-2014 PGSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Joseph Griffis
Christina Jagielski
Meredith Henry
Eva Trinh
Jilian Nieman
Thomas Deramus

2013-2014 CLINICAL INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS

BLOCK, CADY
UNIV OF OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCI CTR
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK
OU MEDICAL CENTER - NEUROPSYCH

MCCALLA, MARJORIE
U N.CAROLINA-CHAPEL HILL-PSYCH
CHAPEL HILL, NC
TEACCH

REYNOLDS, NINA
CINCINNATI CHLD HOSP/O'GRADY RES
CINCINNATI, OH
BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE

RICKARDS, TYLER
VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
PALO ALTO, CA
CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

STERLING, CHELSEY
CHILDREN'S HOSP OF PHILADELPHIA
PHILADELPHIA, PA
PEDIATRIC NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

WADSWORTH, HEATHER
CHILDREN'S HOSP OF PHILADELPHIA
PHILADELPHIA, PA
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

NEUROSCIENCE

Ameen Barghi

was awarded the prestigious **Goldwater Scholarship** in late March. "This scholarship is the premier undergraduate award of this type," said Dr. Carl McFarland, Co-Director of the UAB Neuroscience Program. Barghi, a Sophomore, is also member of the Science and Technology Honors Program, the Early Medical Student Admissions Program, and already has several publications in scientific journals based on his work with **Dr. Taub** who also serves as his research mentor.

Kristin Ford

won 1st place at the **UAB Poster Expo** held April 26 for her poster titled "A Novel Evaluation of Daytime Vigilance in Patients with Parkinson's Disease Using a Virtual Reality Street-Crossing Task." Ford is a Neuroscience major who for the past two years has worked under the mentorship of Dr. Amy Amara, MD, Ph.D. (Department of Neurology, Movement Disorders Division). The UAB Exposition is an opportunity for undergraduate students to present their research, cultural, or academic experiences via a poster or oral presentation. Presentations are judged by professors and graduate students both within and outside the field of study of each student, making it important to be able to present to a variety of audiences. More than 160 posters were entered in the competition.

Below: Ford explains her research to audience member at UAB Poster Expo



FACT:

40

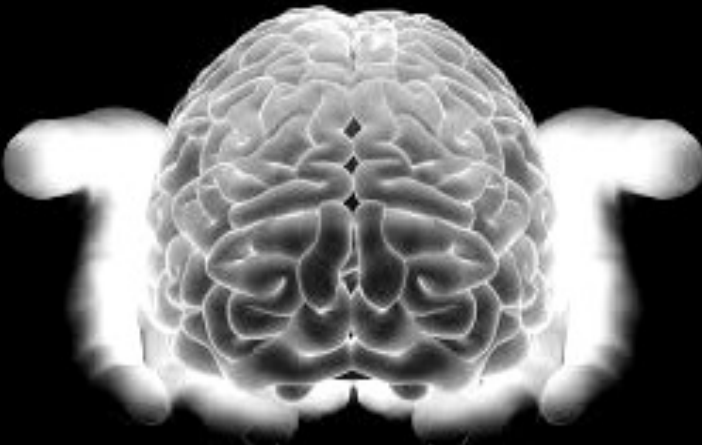
The Neuroscience Program welcomes **40** new students for the 2013-2014 academic year. This is the largest class to date for the program.

Each Neuroscience major is an honors student. The average ACT score of majors is a **32** (98th percentile).

32

4.2

The average GPA of an incoming Freshman to the Neuroscience Program is a **4.20/4.0**.



IN THE NEWS:

Dr. Laura Stoppelbein

from UAB press release by Kevin Storr

Laura Stoppelbein, Ph.D., associate professor in the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Psychology, has been named division director of Outpatient Services at **Glenwood Autism & Behavioral Health Center**.



Stoppelbein's new role includes supervising and coordinating outpatient clinical services performed by psychologists and psychiatrists, as well as speech and occupational therapists at Glenwood. Glenwood provides clinical services to children and adolescents who experience a wide range of mental health problems including autism spectrum disorders (ASD), as well as ADHD, anxiety, depression, and oppositional behaviors.

At UAB, Stoppelbein will continue to supervise graduate and undergraduate students in clinical and research practica, as well as supervise their research activities at Glenwood. She was hired as a joint faculty member in 2011 through a partnership between UAB and Glenwood.

Dr. Rajesh Kana

represented psychology alongside three fellow CAS faculty members who were funded under the **CAS Interdisciplinary Team Program** in 2012 for the "Interdisciplinary Team Presentations," held April 16. "The Interdisciplinary Presentations," serve as mid-year progress presentations for the program and provide details on the exciting interdisciplinary research by the faculty and new partnerships with other schools being supported by the UAB College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Kana's presentation was entitled, "An MR Spectroscopy Examination of Brain Metabolites in Autism."

Dr. Gitendra Uswatte

was recently named President of the **Rehabilitation Psychology Section, APA Division 22**. Dr. Uswatte has been an active member of the Division since 1998. He chaired the Diversity Committee for several years, served as Member-at-Large to the Executive Board from 2008-2010, and is a Consulting Editor for the Division's journal, *Rehabilitation Psychology*. Dr. Uswatte received the Mitchell Rosenthal Early Career Research Award from the Division in 2008 and was made a Fellow in 2011. The election for President, which took place last spring, was by vote of all members of the Division. Dr. Uswatte will serve as President-elect this academic year, and President in 2014-2015. The Division of Rehabilitation Psychology of the American Psychological Association was founded in 1958, and now has over 1000 clinicians, educators, and researchers across the country and globe as members.

Dr. Burel Goodin

from UAB News, story by Kevin Storr

Dr. Goodin's anticipated pain research has received attention for his work on how a person's level of optimism indirectly affected how much pain participants reported. The study involved participants suffering from osteoarthritic (OA) disease and was recently published online in *The Journal of Pain*.

"Past research has shown that optimists rate their pain as less severe, but it could not adequately explain why this occurred," said Burel Goodin, Ph.D., primary investigator of the study and director of the UAB Biobehavioral Pain Research Lab. "We found that optimism indirectly affects pain reports through pain catastrophizing, an exaggerated negative response to actual anticipated pain."

Goodin, with a team of researchers from UAB and the University of Florida, studied 140 people between 45 and 85 years of age suffering from knee OA. The investigators used quantitative sensory testing, an approach to pain sensitivity assessment that consists of measuring subjects' responses to various standardized methods of painful stimulation, such as heat and pressure. The study showed that knee OA patients who demonstrated the greatest levels of optimism tended to engage in less pain catastrophizing in anticipation of a painful stimulus. In turn, less pain catastrophizing predicted less severe pain reports in response to quantitative sensory testing.



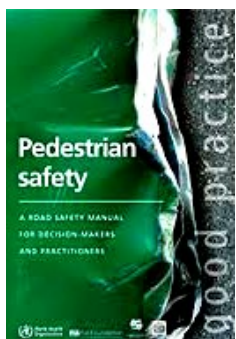
"If we can actually target optimism and steer people towards that disposition, then we might be able to improve their outlook on future pain, and they might be more compliant with doctor's orders or adhere to their treatments," said Goodin.

IN THE NEWS: continued

Dr. David Schwebel

served as a first author in the recently published manual, "Pedestrian Safety: A Road Safety Manual for Decision-makers and Practitioners." The manual was jointly developed by WHO, the FIA Foundation, the Global Road Safety Partnership and the World Bank, along with many experts from around the world who provided practical information on how to plan, implement, and evaluate a pedestrian safety program. According to an article published by The Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), "Each year, more than 270,000

pedestrians lose their lives on the world's roads, while millions are left with injuries or permanent disabilities." The GRSP goes on to describe the aim of the manual, "The manual equips the reader with necessary information on: the magnitude of pedestrian death and injury; key risk factors; how to assess the pedestrian safety situation in a country or area and prepare an action plan; and how to select, design, implement and evaluate effective interventions." The manual is designed for a multidisciplinary audience including engineers, planners, police, public health professionals, and educators who can implement these pedestrian safety measures in settings worldwide. To access the manual, please visit: http://www.grsproadsafety.org/sites/grsp.drupalgardens.com/files/201304/PedestrianSafety_eng.pdf.



Retirements

Dr. Jesse B. Milby



The Department of Psychology, colleagues, friends and family congratulate Professor Jesse B. Milby, Ph.D. who has been bestowed the rank of Professor Emeritus in the UAB Department of Psychology following his recent retirement. Dr. Jesse Milby earned his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Alabama in 1968.

He earned clinical psychology's highest competence credential,

ABPP, from the American Board of Professional Psychology in 1977. He completed postdoctoral training at the University of London Institute for Psychiatry and the Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute in 1977-1978, and at Johns Hopkins University Medical School at the Center for Learning and Health and the Behavioral Psychopharmacology Research Unit, in the Department of Psychiatry as Visiting Professor, in 2004-2005.

Dr. Jesse B. Milby is Professor in the School of Medicine, Division of Preventive Medicine, Psychiatry, and in the School of Public Health's Department of Health Behavior. A diplomat in clinical psychology, he has published in psychopharmacology, including animal models, and extensively in substance abuse assessment and treatment methods, and behavioral psychotherapy. In January of 2000, he became the Director of the Medical Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program. Dr. Milby plans to continue publishing and intends to remain being seen around Campbell Hall!

Dr. Alan Randich



Professor Alan Randich announced his retirement on June 1, 2013. Dr. Alan Randich earned his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology (with distinction) from Dalhousie University in 1978. He completed postdoctoral training at Yale University in 1979.

Dr. Alan Randich is Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of

Psychology and Secondary Professor in the Department of Neurobiology.

During the last decade, Dr. Randich has devoted his attention to the study of basic mechanisms of pain and pain modulation. His research examines how early-in-life experiences with inflammation of the bladder may predispose an individual to later-in-life painful bladder disorders like interstitial cystitis. This research activity has had a substantial impact in terms of treating patients, employing graduate students as research assistants, and supporting younger faculty, fellows, and staff. During his long career in research, Dr. Randich has published over 100 scientific papers in the best scientific journals. In January of 1998, he became the Director of the Behavioral Neuroscience Doctoral Program and since then has helped increase its recruitment of talented foreign and minority students, raised its minimum assistantship stipends, and is viewed as an outstanding mentor by his students.

ALUMNI
WE
WANT
TO HEAR
FROM YOU

We would love to hear about your professional and personal achievements. For placement in our magazine, please send an email to Invard@uab.edu.

Thank you to those who contributed information for this edition of the UAB Psychology Update. Please share this update with colleagues and friends.

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executive editor **Karlene Ball, Ph.D.**
editor **Mary Frances Thetford, M.Ed.**
writer and design **Lauren Vardaman**
contributing writer **Kevin Storr**

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