

MSPP *rapport*

Volume 4 Issue 1 Spring 2006

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



!Saludos muy cordiales!

This September marks the start of our Lucero Latino Mental Health Training Program at MSPP. The result of

Nicholas A. Covino

more than a year of creative work by community psychologists, MSPP faculty and students, this program will bring language and culturally competent psychologists to treat our growing Spanish-speaking community.

In the following pages, you will meet the distinguished recipients of the MSPP Mental Health Humanitarian, Community Service and Training, and Florence Mintz Alumni Awards who will be recognized at our Annual Gala. These awardees have made singular contributions to the quality of life and mental health care over the course of many years... and they continue to do so actively and generously. When current events present tales of individual greed and corporate exploitation, the work and the lives of Hortensia, Paul, Brooke and Lisa serve as a striking counterpoint. These are the people who "create community" by making time to address the needs of others

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MSPP *inside*

- *Community Service & Training Award goes to the Lipsitts*
- *Alumna Profile—Jeff Sonnega*
- *Hortensia Amaro receives MSPP's Mental Health Humanitarian Award*
- *Lisa Gurland—Winner of Florence K. Lerman Mintz Alumni Award*

Celebrate! Celebrate! Dance to the Music!

MSPP will celebrate its second Gala on Friday evening, May 12, from 6:00–11:00 pm at Moseley's on the Charles in Dedham. This year proceeds from the event will benefit the Latino Mental Health Training Program.

Under the auspices of the **Dr. Cynthia Lucero Center** at MSPP, the *Latino Mental Health Training Program* has attracted a number of talented students for the program, which debuts in September of this year. However, in order to attract an economically diverse student group, it is essential to raise funds for student scholarships. The Gala provides that fund-raising opportunity with dinner, music, dancing, a silent auction and special award presentations.

The evening will feature a brief presentation of awards, including the *Mental Health Humanitarian Award* to Dr. Hortensia Amaro; the *Community Service and Training Award* to Dr. Paul D. and Mrs. Brooke K. Lipsitt; and the *Florence K. Lerman Mintz Alumni Award* to MSPP alumna Dr. Lisa Gurland. (Please see the profiles of honorees).



Jorge Quiroga

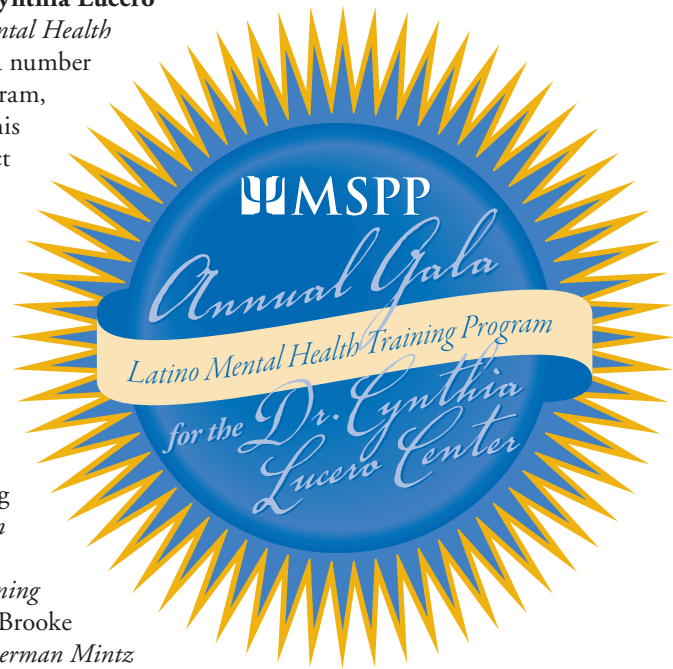
Master of ceremonies and award-winning WCVB Boston broadcast reporter, Jorge Quiroga, will contribute to the Gala event with wit and charm and an enormous, ongoing commitment to the Latino community.

Quiroga, a native of Bogota, Columbia, was recruited to WCVB 32 years ago to inaugurate and produce the station's first Hispanic-oriented program AQUI. Jorge was also involved in the station's move to provide Spanish-language captions for its news programs.

Quiroga began his broadcasting career at WBZ-TV in Boston as an actor and writer for *Que Pasa*, a program for Boston's Spanish-speaking children.

"One of the most pressing needs in the Latino community is education," states Quiroga, "Hispanic teens still have the highest dropout rate in the state. There is no question that our mental health as Latinos—migrating, evolving and assimilating into the American culture—is deeply intertwined with our progress in education, our participating in the

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And the Community Service and Training Award goes to Paul D. Lipsitt, LLB, PhD, and Brooke K. Lipsitt

"A happy marriage is a long conversation which always seems too short," novelist Andre Maurois once wrote. A long and happy conversation, it seems, is what Paul and Brooke Lipsitt have been having for the past 35 years. And, it is this "conversation," they say, that has been the foundation for their lives—lives that have been dedicated to serving the community.

This year, MSPP has chosen to honor the couple for their life-long commitment with its annual *Community Service and Training Award*.

"If you were to ask anyone who knows us, they would say that we are the kind of people who want to help, but never want to put ourselves in front of the issues we hold dear," says Brooke.

It is just this kind of modesty that inspired President Covino and MSPP to honor the Lipsitts. "As individuals and as a couple they are unsung heroes," he says.

Over the years, the Lipsitts have been passionate advocates for social justice issues, ranging from civil rights to affordable housing to nuclear disarmament. They have marched together against unjust wars, both in the U.S. and abroad, campaigned for political candidates, and stood up for the underserved and their heart-felt beliefs.

They have also made individual contributions, always supported by each other and their "ongoing conversation." "We work in very different worlds," says Paul, an attorney and a psychologist, who is also a member of the MSPP Board. "But we appreciate and support each other in those separate worlds."

Brooke, a politician, most recently the president of the Newton Board of Aldermen, remembers many late nights when she woke Paul to ask his advice on handling disagreements and building consensus among the aldermen. "He would always have an answer for me in the morning," she says. Paul, in turn, sought Brooke's input and wisdom on his research papers and legal and psychology articles before submitting them.

In his world, Paul has combined law and psychology credentials and skills to increase understanding of the special needs of the mentally ill and children in the criminal justice system and has fought to change the laws to meet those needs.

"It used to be that people who were found incompetent to stand trial were sent to Bridgewater State Hospital and stayed there

in 'legal limbo,' often for life," he says. "They lost their civil rights." Inspired by the civil rights and civil liberties movements of the times, Paul and a group of colleagues took up the cause of the incarcerated mentally ill. And their research and advocacy were instrumental in changing the laws to ensure that the civil rights of these disadvantaged people are respected.

This work and other contributions to forensic psychology have earned Paul numerous awards, including the Ezra V. Saul Award of the Massachusetts Psychological Association for Outstanding Contribution to Psychology as a Science and Profession, and the Award for Distinguished Contributions to Forensic Psychology from the American Academy of Forensic Psychology.



Dr. Paul D. and Mrs. Brooke K. Lipsitt

During his career, Paul has been Research Director in Law and Psychology at the Law-Medicine Institute at Boston University and at the Laboratory of Community Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. He also served as regional director for legal medicine and as court clinic director at the Mass. Department of Mental Health. Today, he is a clinical associate and supervisor at the Boston University Behavioral Medicine Clinic, where he has supervised many MSPP students over the past 21 years.

Beyond his official appointments, Paul has devoted much of his free time to boards of community organizations. For instance,

for many years, he played a key role on the Board of Directors and currently on the Board of Advocacy for Bay Cove Human Services Inc., which serves Latino, Asian and other underserved populations throughout Greater Boston.

In her world, Brooke, who was educated in international relations at Pembroke College and Brown University, has taken her concern for those in need to her work in the public arena, particularly to her 12 years as a member of and six years as president of the Newton Board of Aldermen. While a tireless advocate for issues that matter to the City and its citizens—public transit, education, the environment, and civil liberties—Brooke was known as someone who never sacrificed her principles to achieve political ends. Her work ethic and ability to bring colleagues with widely divergent points of view to consensus has served as a model for her successors.

While her advocacy and volunteerism span affordable housing to domestic violence, her causes have also included the Newton Historical Society and Newton Symphony Orchestra. She has and continues to serve on and contribute to boards of such organizations as Mass Equality and the Democratic City Committee. She has served as president of Newton Action for Nuclear Disarmament and as a board member of Newton Communications Access Corporation. And the list goes on...

Brooke, who, in her early career worked as a secretary, a research director, and a marketing manager at various companies, including an affiliate of the Gillette Corporation, says of her professional affiliation: "I am a 'politician,' By that I mean I am someone who brings people together to make things happen." And she does—both as the frequent "mistress of ceremonies" for Newton events and for any cause for the benefit of people to which she turns her attention.

The Lipsitts also believe that one of their greatest legacies to the community has been their daughter, Sarah, who has a master's degree in early childhood education and is teaching pre-school children in the Newton public schools. She has inherited community spirit from her parents. While in high school, Sarah served as a student representative to the School Committee and, in college, she was a rape awareness educator and president of the judicial board. ▶

Hortensia Amaro is Mental Health Humanitarian of the Year



Dr. Hortensia Amaro

Dr. Hortensia Amaro was recently named by the Hispanic Business Journal as one of the top 100 most influential Hispanics in the United States. This year MSPP has given her its Mental Health Humanitarian Award.

A Distinguished Professor at Bouve College of Health Sciences and director of the Institute on Urban Health Research at Northeastern University, Dr. Amaro has been applauded as a link among the worlds of public health, mental health and education, as well as an

educator and advocate for those often disenfranchised.

While her research focus has included substance use among adolescent girls, HIV/AIDS prevention, and drug abuse treatment among Latina and African American women, a unique feature of Dr. Amaro's contributions has been her ability to transform research projects into all-important community-based services sustainable far beyond the research funding years.

The first study by Dr. Amaro as a principal investigator was funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse in the mid 80s when the AIDS epidemic was breaking out among women. It was one of the first street and community outreach grants reaching out to pregnant women who were injection drug users.

According to Dr. Amaro, "Following a second grant, the project ultimately became an outpatient treatment facility after I approached the Boston Public Health Commission Director and said, 'Look, you are funding other activities to reach out to pregnant women at high risk of bad pregnancy outcomes, and here we have a project where

we have been able to demonstrate these women are very high risk and have good pregnancy outcomes when they go through our program.'

"It worked", she continues, "so I have always placed, and continue to do so, a number of my intervention projects primarily in the city health department and other community based agencies because I know when grant funding ends, if they are based in the university, there is no chance of transferring them elsewhere to continue as a community service."

In her many years as a psychologist with a focus on research and developing and testing interventions, Dr. Amaro credits women in recovery who have participated in her clinical research programs as a catalyst for her research ideas. She also draws on her personal life experience as a Cuban child who immigrated to the United States with her parents, growing up poor in Los Angeles, and working as a waitress while attending a junior college, part-time. More recently, she used her own yoga practice as an impetus to develop a service-research project that introduces mindfulness-based yoga and meditation techniques and development of spirituality to women in four Boston-based women's substance abuse treatment facilities.

In the 24 years since Dr. Amaro received her doctoral degree in psychology, her professional contributions have been recognized by innumerable professional and government organizations, including selection as a Distinguished Visiting Professor in Women's Health at Ben Gurion University in Israel where she lectured and consulted on substance abuse treatment.

Although totally committed to her profession and "clients," Dr. Amaro says that striking a balance between work and other parts of her life is essential for a healthy life. She does this by connecting to nature through kayaking and gardening, fostering a healthy body and mind with the practice and teaching of yoga, and sharing time with family and friends. ▶

Lisa Gurland is Winner of the Florence Mintz Award 2006

Lisa Gurland, RN, PsyD, is the winner of the 2006 *Florence K. Lerman Mintz Alumni Award* for her outstanding services in the field of psychology. Established in May 2001 by Samuel E. Mintz and his family, the award is given in memory of **Florence H. Lerman Mintz**, a 1989 MSPP alumna.

Of the award, Dr. Gurland says: "I am thrilled to receive the Mintz award. I enjoyed every minute of my time at MSPP. It was more than an educational opportunity for me; it was an experience that shaped my profession, my understanding of human interactions, and my way of being in the world. I left MSPP in 1985 a very different person than when I entered in September 1981."

For Dr. Gurland, the award is further evidence that she is on the right track, and has, as she said in an earlier interview this year, reached her professional pinnacle. "I am doing more with my career than I ever imagined possible," she said.

Dr. Gurland is currently the director of Behavioral Health Planning and Development

in the Communicable Disease Bureau at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. In that role, her focus is disaster preparedness.

"Disaster preparedness is about developing relationships between individuals within communities and agencies—health care institutions, state agencies, first responder networks, and community programs. We can't learn from each other or work together if we don't know each other. Helping to create connections is very much a part of what I do."

In the past few years, Dr. Gurland has been part of a team that provided a response to a variety of emergency events. Though each situation is different, we have been learning how to meet the behavioral health needs of people who are traumatized on many levels. We are also learning how to take care of each other as providers. It is a necessary and complicated task."

While disaster preparedness is her current focus, over the past two decades her work has taken her to community health centers as a clinician, supervisor and board member, and

she has worked in long-term care programs for people with chronic mental illness and substance abuse problems. At the Department of Public Health, her work in the Communicable Disease Bureau has included HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and sexually transmitted diseases. She has also been a teacher and an organizational psychologist in a variety of settings,

Coming to MSPP as a psychiatric nurse, and graduating in 1985, Dr. Gurland feels MSPP made a tremendous difference in grounding her in theory, practice and life lessons.

"I am convinced," she adds, "that I owe most of my success to the broader lessons of MSPP. They are:

- Understanding oneself is a prerequisite to understanding others
- Working in concert with others (peers, clients, administrators) is the road to meaningful gains in society
- Growth is a continuous process and requires a willingness to embrace the difficult work of change." ▶

Ten years ago I walked into prison....



Dr. Jeff Sonnega

“Ten years ago today, I walked into prison,” says Dr. Jeff Sonnega, staff psychologist with the Federal Bureau of Prisons at the Federal Medical Center at Devens, located in Ayer, MA. It is the only medical center to take mental health inmates in the Northeast region.

Of enormous benefit to Sonnega in his treatment of eight to ten patients a day is knowledge gained as a recipient of an MS degree in Clinical Psychopharmacology at MSPP.

“I know I’m a better clinician and asset as a medical professional on a medical team because we are treating the whole person, body and mind,” states Sonnega. “While I do not prescribe, I make diagnostic and treatment recommendations, and it is my psychopharmacology knowledge that has helped me spot inappropriate medication and dosages.

“Regarding prescribing, between 70 to 80 percent of psychotropic prescriptions given to mental health patients are not given by psychiatrists, but by general practitioners and nurse practitioners who have not had the time to gain specific knowledge on mental health treatments.”

According to Sonnega, psychopharmacology rounds out critical professional knowledge for the psychologist who needs the medical training, as well as for nurse practitioners who benefit from psychology awareness.

The only Clinical Psychopharmacology Program in New England is at MSPP, and it is the only program to include nurse practitioners. MSPP is currently enrolling its sixth class.

“Since the majority of psychology patients are on psychotropic agents—an important component of treatment—psychopharmacology students gain a greater, more sophisticated understanding of the medicines,” explains Dr. Stanley Berman, Director of the Master of Science in Clinical Psychopharmacology Program and Dean of Programs of Advanced Graduate Study at MSPP.

Proudly, Sonnega has passed his PEP (Psychopharmacology Examination for Psychologists), which will allow him to prescribe in states accepting the examination, currently New Mexico and Louisiana. It is hoped eventually other states will follow suit by passage through their respective legislators, but in some states turf battles exist between psychiatrists and psychologists regarding the right to prescribe, which slows prescribing opportunities.

Nevertheless, Sonnega feels no remorse. “I have been very fortunate to work with a chief psychiatrist who asks for my professional psychopharmacological recommendations on patients. My responsibilities have also broadened to include overseeing medical compliance, which insures patients take their medications. There is a taint on mental illness in a male prison. It is not a macho thing to take meds. Also due to side effects of some medications—which can slow alertness—many inmates are concerned about protecting themselves and survival.”

“I’ve learned so much,” states Sonnega, “I can now better understand what was once thought to be a mental problem, when through laboratory tests I find there is basically a medical reason for a patient’s behavior.”

Psychopharmacology has opened new opportunities for psychologist Jeff Sonnega.

He is planning to join the pharmaceutical industry working on clinical trials and monitoring side effects of new agents. ▶

GALA continued from page 1.

work force, and a sense of insecurity felt by so many who live in crime-ridden neighborhoods.”

The Latino Mental Health Training Program is one of the first in the country designed—through immersion in Spanish language and cultures—to train Latino and non-Latino psychologists to care for underserved Latino communities. The program also supplements the training of Latino psychologists educated outside the country for eligibility for licensure and practice in the U.S.

According to MSPP President, Nicholas Covino, “The Latino program is a pioneer in our field, and we seek scholarship support to attract the diverse student body who will most benefit from the training.” ▶

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and committing themselves to social change. Congratulations and thank you for your excellent work and for your example.

The theme of our Annual Gala is: “Meeting the Need. Making a Difference.” Last year, we had a strong turn out of 425 and we are already half way to that number in advanced reservations. This Lucero Latino Mental Health Training Program will allow native speakers and those with intermediate fluency to increase their knowledge of Latin cultures and the Spanish language through cultural immersion programs, while they study clinical psychology. Clinical Seminar II will be offered in Spanish to increase awareness of the metaphors and language of mental health; an additional course and electives, field placements in sites serving Latino patients and doctoral projects devoted to this area complete the curriculum. MSPP is the only school in the country with such a comprehensive program

and we hope that it will become a model to extend multicultural mental health training at the school. When less than two percent of mental health providers can deliver competent care to the Latino population, this program “Meets a need.”

To recruit an economically diverse student body for this program, we need the financial help of our community. An envelope is provided within this issue of Rapport. Please use it to support this very important program and “Make a Difference.”

Last year’s Gala was a striking success and great fun; you will want to be there for this year’s event. See you on May 12th.

Nicholas A. Covino, PsyD
President

Summer in the City

A convenient, enjoyable way to expand professional skills

Last summer MSPP launched an innovative weeklong continuing education program designed to enhance the knowledge and skill base of busy professionals. "Summer in the City" exceeded all expectations and was so well received by participants that the school has decided to offer the program annually.

This year's "Summer in the City" roster includes courses in health psychology, child psychology, psychoeducational assessments, and spirituality and mental health. Building on MSPP's rapidly growing curriculum for business professionals, a leadership development course will be offered for mid to upper level corporate and non-profit executives.

Participants register for one course and attend classes each morning from July 24 to July 28. Afternoons are free, allowing participants to keep up with professional responsibilities while undertaking the intensive course of their choice.

Dr. Stanley Berman, a longtime member of the MSPP faculty, dean of Advanced Graduate Study, and one of the instructors of the health psychology offering, says, "We designed the program to provide intensive learning experiences that were also convenient. By compressing the program to five weekdays, local professionals can take advantage of the courses with some rescheduling, while professionals from out of town can study in the mornings and enjoy some vacation time with their families in the afternoon.

"In addition to the convenience," he continues, "these are courses of the highest educational quality. Each one has its own schedule, assignments, and reading requirements, just like any other MSPP doctoral-level class."

Continuing education credits are available for clinical psychologists and other mental health professionals, such as school psychologists, counselors, and social workers. Detailed information about each course is available by visiting www.mspp.edu or by calling Dean Abby at (617) 327-6777. ▶

Mornings, Monday–Friday July 24–28, 2006

Continuing education credits are available for:

Integrating Behavioral Medicine into Your Clinical Practice

Effective Treatment Interventions in Child Psychology

Advanced Psychoeducational Assessment *MSPP academic credit is available for this course*

Spiritual Resources in Mental Health

Institute in Senior Leadership Development *This course meets mornings July 17–21*

Registration/more information available at www.mspp.edu.

Upcoming Events

Be sure to go to www.mspp.edu or call **617-327-6777** to learn more about the following events coming up this spring and summer:

Assessment of Bilingual Students: Best Practices, Key Concepts And Critical Issues.

Saturday, April 29, 2006 from
9:30 am–12:30 pm at MSPP.

Parenting Coordination: Working With High Conflict Families.

Friday & Saturday, May 5-6, 2006 from
8:30 am–4:15 pm at the Hilton
Boston/Dedham.

The Ingredients Of Positive Mental Health And Aging.

Keynote address by: H. Rick Moody, PhD,
Author, *The Five Stages of the Soul*.
Saturday, May 20, 2006 from
8:30 am–4:30 pm at MSPP.

Save the Date!

Annual Alumni Conference June 9, 2006

FREE CE Credits!

Alumni Networking Breakfast: 7:30–9:00 am

Presentation: 9:00 am–12:00 pm

The Power of Mindsets: Nurturing Resilience in Others and Ourselves, fea- turing Dr. Robert Brooks

At this conference, Dr. Brooks will outline a strength-based approach for working with both youth and adults in a variety of settings (e.g., outpatient therapy; residential; inpatient; schools; homes). As a central focus he will articulate the characteristics of a "resilient mindset" and describe strategies for nurturing this mindset in others. He will also review a framework to assist clinicians to become increasingly "stress hardy" in order to avoid disillusionment and burnout. Many case examples will be used.

For more information, call **617-327-6777** or email mevans@mspp.edu

Wanted...

MSPP Seeks Psychologist for Assessments

MSPP seeks fee-for-service psychologist to conduct assessments on an as-needed basis for the **Leon O. Brenner Center** located at MSPP. The Center maintains training and education as central to its operation, providing a unique opportunity to participate in academic activities and collaborate with other alumni/ae and faculty. The fee-for-service psychologist will receive between 1-3 assignments for assessments per month. All services can be provided at MSPP or in the psychologist's office. Interested persons should submit a brief letter of interest and CV to Ms. Ellie Ward at MSPP, 221 Rivermoor St., Boston, MA, or through email at eward@mspp.edu.





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*Join us for
MSPP's Annual
Gala for the
Dr. Cynthia
Lucero Center*

*Latino Mental
Health Training
Program*

Friday, May 12, 2006

*6:00–11:00 pm
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