

MSPP *rapport*

Volume 5 Issue 1 Spring 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Nicholas A. Covino

A recent report by Boston's Children's Hospital and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Children estimates that 70 percent of those children in need of mental health services in Massachusetts fail to receive them. In 2000, the report of Surgeon General Satcher on Mental Health stated boldly that we already have effective psychological techniques to assist these children; what we lack is a sufficient number of professionals.

In addition to the 20 percent of children who suffer from serious emotional disturbance, many more find it challenging to concentrate on schoolwork when problems at home or with peers or in the neighborhood run through their minds. Most children, even if they are identified and referred, fail to receive treatment due to problems of transportation or access to care.

Schools have been identified as excellent locations for mental health care. The presence of school psychologists and

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May 2007 Gala to Celebrate Champions of Children and New Center for Child Development!

MSPP will celebrate its third Gala on Friday evening, May 4, from 6:00–11:00 pm at Moseley's on the Charles in Dedham.

This year proceeds from the event will benefit the Richard I. and Joan L. Freedman Center for Child Development.

"All things seem possible in May," said Edwin Way Teale, one of America's most beloved naturalists. And, new possibilities are what MSPP will celebrate on Friday, May 4, at the school's Third Annual Gala. Several hundred MSPP supporters and friends will gather to acknowledge the possibilities of and raise funds for a new center dedicated to the mental health of the nation's children—the **Richard I. and Joan L. Freedman Center for Child Development.**

Established last year through the generosity of MSPP trustee Richard (Rif) and school psychologist/counselor Joan Freedman, the center will explore new approaches for what is becoming a crisis in the availability of mental health treatment for young children.

This year's Gala master of ceremonies will be Willie Maye. Better known as "Coach" and currently a marketing specialist for the Boston Celtics, he has long been one of the most respected and colorful announcers in the Boston sports world. "Coach" Willie Maye will guide the MSPP audience through an evening of good company, good food, dancing, music, a silent auction and a special awards ceremony.



Coach Willie Maye

In keeping with the Gala's focus on children, President Nicholas Covino will present two special awards. WBZ-TV News anchor Mr. Jack Williams will receive MSPP's 2007 *Mental Health Humanitarian Award*

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for his steadfast commitment to children, best exemplified by his weekly segment “Wednesday’s Child.”



Dr. Eda Spielman

The second award—MSPP’s 2007 *Dr. Florence H. Lerner Mintz Alumni Award*—will be presented to alumna Dr. Eda Spielman, the clinical director of the Center for Early Relationship Support and faculty of the Infant-

Parent Training Institute at Jewish Family & Children’s Services. Dr. Spielman was chosen by MSPP’s alumni community for her outstanding contributions to the care of children.

The Freedmans’ Gift

“If you can reach a child and his or her family in elementary school, you can make a difference that lasts a lifetime,” says Joan Freedman, who spent 26 years in the Worcester public schools as an adjustment counselor and school psychologist.

That is why when she and husband Richard (Rif) were ready to make a special gift to MSPP, they channeled that conviction, their energy and their passion to build a center to help young children whose emotional problems limit their ability to study and achieve in school.

The Freedmans were well-acquainted with the needs of children through Joan’s work in the public schools. Her career taught them that worry about family, peer relations, acculturation and other developmental concerns will severely reduce success in school for many children. When anxiety limits a child’s attention and concentration it is impossible to learn; even a small episode can destroy an entire school year. The Freedmans also understood that schools are the best places to provide much-needed services and supports to such children.

In the Worcester Public Schools, Joan created opportunities for innovative play, therapeutic relationships and classroom interventions to help youngsters manage their emotions well enough to learn. She enlisted older children to mentor and help younger children, an approach that became known in wider circles as “Primary Project.”

One of the first goals embraced by the new center has been to replicate and expand upon *Primary Project* in the hopes of

creating interest in the concept throughout Massachusetts.

Here is how the MSPP version of *Primary Project* works. Children at risk of, but not experiencing, social-emotional or school adjustment problems meet weekly for 12 weeks or more with a child associate (CA)—either an MSPP student or a high school student trained in collaboration with MSPP faculty and students. Each week, the child and CA will engage in an individual child-led expressive play session. MSPP graduate students also act as *Primary Project* coordinators, under the guidance of the MSPP faculty.

According to Dr. Bob Lichtenstein, the director of the Freedman Center, *Primary Project* has proven to be an invaluable, cost-effective service for elementary school children. The use of high school students as CAs—



Richard I. and Joan L. Freedman

a unique aspect of the MSPP program—is expected to build their interpersonal skills and self-esteem, and encourage them to pursue higher education and careers in the helping professions. “In addition, the program gives MSPP graduate students a chance to provide preventive mental health services in a school setting, which we hope will inspire them to incorporate this type of practice into their professional repertoire,” says Dr. Lichtenstein.

The Freedmans recognize that, even with mounting support for school-based mental health programs, school systems need to be educated and encouraged to allocate sufficient funds for mental health services. The Center is already collaborating with advocates for children (e.g., Newton’s Project

INTERFACE) to provide in-service training, public testimony, legislative action and education to accelerate necessary changes.

Says President Nicholas Covino “We are profoundly grateful to Joan and Rif for their generosity, enthusiasm and vision for this program. Our long-term hope is to make this a model program for the state and the country.”

Jack Williams

The Host of “Wednesday’s Child,” WBZ-TV



Jack Williams

News anchor Jack Williams has been widely recognized for his reporting skills and for his commitment to the community. A journalist since 1968, Mr. Williams has received four Emmy Awards including the Governor’s Award

from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, recognizing his career accomplishments.

Since 1981, Mr. Williams’ weekly segment “Wednesday’s Child” has been instrumental in finding loving, permanent homes for more than 525 special needs children. He has also been responsible for raising more than five million dollars in support of special needs adoption.

President William Clinton presented him with the first “Adoption Excellence Award,” and he also received a “Presidential Citation” from Ronald Reagan for “Wednesday’s Child.” The American Academy of Pediatrics, Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, Boston University Law School, Friends of the Retarded, Boston Catholic Archdiocese, Massachusetts School Counselors Association, Massachusetts Psychological Association, Protestant Social Services Bureau, B’Nai B’rith, Jewish Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are among the organizations that have recognized his extraordinary generosity and exceptional commitment to children.

“The awards committee immediately expressed their delight and approval when Mr. Williams’ name was offered for the Mental Health Humanitarian Award. He is a familiar figure, and all of us have admired his commitment to children. Mr. Williams honors us in being present at our Gala to accept this award,” says Dr. Covino.

For more information and to obtain Gala tickets, go to www.mspp.edu. 

New Master's in Counseling Psychology will help meet need for community mental health professionals



Dr. Modesto Jesus Hevia

To help meet society's increasing need for accessible, highly trained mental health professionals at all levels, MSPP is now offering a **Master's of Arts in Counseling Psychology**. Designed to provide high-quality training at the master's level, the principal aim of the program is to graduate qualified professionals who can function in a variety of settings and will help address some of the gaps in the current mental health care system.

"There are many therapeutic situations in which a Master's level professional can provide appropriate and high-quality care," says President Nicholas Covino. MSPP's Counseling Psychology program is the first of its kind to offer concentration tracks in Child and Family Counseling; Substance Abuse and Trauma; Community Mental Health; and Spirituality and Mental Health—areas that could use an infusion of well-trained providers.

Recent studies have shown an enormous imbalance between the number of children with mental health issues and available providers (see President's Message on page one). "With the limited treatment occurring in medical settings and diverse communities, there is a critical need for new providers and new delivery systems to reach these children," says Dr. Covino, who adds: "Likewise, there is a significant shortage of mental health professionals to provide substance abuse treatment and to work competently with those for whom spirituality is a central element in their mental life."

Says Dr. Modesto Hevia, the new director of the program, "With this program, MSPP has created a curriculum that will promote and nurture the development of front-line mental health professionals

whose skills and accessibility should be warmly welcomed by a community in great need." Dr. Hevia, most recently the director of the Counseling Center at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, adds "The program will follow MSPP's hallmark tradition of integrating rigorous classroom work with expert field supervision."

"We will train our students with our customary academic and clinical rigor and with sensitivity to the needs of the diverse communities they aspire to serve. This is a challenging enterprise, but I am confident that as with MSPP's other training programs, the results of our efforts will ultimately speak for themselves."

This new counseling psychology program, approved last fall by the state's Board of Higher Education, should appeal to human services professionals wishing to re-specialize or enhance skills and to new college graduates seeking this level of training. The two-year, six-semester credit program will prepare students to be Licensed Mental Health Counselors and will offer them the opportunity to concentrate their interests in a number of areas where accessibility to providers has become an increasingly urgent issue.

High-need populations should benefit the most from this new program, according to the program's creators, Dr. Bob Lichtenstein and Dr. Stanley Berman, who envision its graduates having an important impact in community mental health centers, residential programs, hospitals, substance abuse programs, colleges, government agencies, elder care facilities, and faith communities.

The MA Counseling faculty will consist of professional psychologists who have extensive experience as practitioners and as graduate level instructors.

For additional information on the *Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology*, please go to www.mspp.edu. ▶

Latino Mental Health Training Program Received Outstanding Support in 2006

MSPP's **Dr. Cynthia Lucero Latino Mental Health Training Program** has received a \$91,000 shot in the arm. Funds from three successful events made up most of the total, which will benefit the unique program, launched in fall 2005. MSPP's Gala contributed more than \$56,000; the Fifth Annual Lucero Run added another \$11,000; a gift from an anonymous donor of \$15,000 contributed; and a 100-mile run by Rick Muhr, Dr. Cynthia Lucero's friend and running coach, brought another \$6,000 to the center.

These proceeds are earmarked to fund scholarships and program support for students who will immerse themselves in Spanish language and culture and develop skills to care for a rapidly growing Latino community. About a dozen MSPP students have begun coursework and will have cultural and language immersion experiences this summer to prepare them for this special concentration.

"We are really gratified by this response to our efforts to make the training of culturally sensitive and competent psychologists a priority," says Dr. Amaro Laria, who is the director of the *Lucero Latino Mental Health Training Program*.

The *Latino Mental Health Training Program* is the first in New England to focus on the mental health needs of Spanish speakers. It is also the first program nationally to make Spanish language fluency a mandatory aspect of the curriculum.

The May 12th Gala was a night filled with music, dance, poetry and gratitude to individuals who had contributed to the school, the profession and the community. WCVB—TV award-winning reporter, Jorge Quiroga, orchestrated the evening that honored Dr. Hortensia Amaro with the *Mental Health Humanitarian Award*; Dr. Paul D. and

Mrs. Brooke K. Lipsitt with the *Community Service and Training Award*; and Dr. Lisa Gurland with the *Dr. Florence H. Lerner Mintz Award*. He also oversaw a Silent Auction and a night of great food and dancing.

West Roxbury resident Christopher Hussey won this year's *Annual Dr. Cynthia Lucero 5K Run/Walk*. He was joined by 122 other walkers and runners for the race, a barbecue and a day of family fun. Dr. Cynthia Lucero's family also joined the race, and the festivities along with the young girl who had received Dr. Lucero's heart five years ago.

Inspiration for last year's MSPP Gala, the yearly race and the *Lucero Latino Mental Health Program* and Muhr's 100-mile event, comes from Dr. Lucero, a graduate of MSPP from Ecuador, who collapsed and later died running the 2002 Boston Marathon. Her career had focused on the needs of Spanish speakers.

For additional information about the *Latino Mental Health Training Program* or to make a contribution, go to www.mspp.edu. ▶

For the Kellys—MSPP is a Family Affair

Psychologists Laurence and Cheryl Kelly can now be seen entering the MSPP classroom to advance their practices in one more level of specialty: Psychopharmacology.

Newly arrived at MSPP, son Laurence, Jr., is beginning a career in clinical psychology, while, a second son, Sean, is president of his class at the University of New Hampshire. Both boys grew up attending American Psychological Association seminars with their parents, with coloring books in hand, although the Kelly parents confide they continue to maintain a balanced conversation around the dinner table and keep professional talk at a minimum.

Sharing her personal life experiences, Cheryl Kelly, EdD, says she faced a tragic family death in 1976, which changed her life from teaching to psychology. "The biggest changes come from adversity in life, and making some good come from it," she comments.

Now working on her third master's degree, this time in psychopharmacology, Cheryl spends 60 percent of her professional time as a school psychologist and has carried out a private practice in women's and couples counseling over an 18-year period. In addition, as the New Hampshire representative in the American Psychological Association, Cheryl coordinates statewide community outreach to create awareness of psychological mental health, not illness, and works



Laurence Kelly Jr.; Laurence Kelly, EdD, and Cheryl Kelly, EdD

diligently on State legislation to bring about licensure for psychopharmacology.

"I see it as a specialty for psychologists, and for me it's been a partnership with primary care physicians and pediatricians. The younger doctors especially refer to me as a specialist in that area," she says.

Cheryl further explains she has experienced some negativity from psychiatrists and the more "traditional psychologists" regarding her stance for prescription licensure for psychologists, but finds she is educating her colleagues, as well as the community.

Laurence Kelly, EdD, a school psychologist, also specializes in treating alcohol and drug-abuse patients who are referred to him from

a state-wide New Hampshire program on drunken driving. He also treats gambling addiction, and he notes that gambling addiction is common in New Hampshire because of the state-run lottery.

Also noting that there is more Ritalin prescribed in New Hampshire than any other state, he says that knowledge of psychopharmacology has given Laurence the ability to monitor medications prescribed to his patients and offer psychotropic medication suggestions to their primary care physicians.

"You know," he says, "each day its more un to practice; it's the best job and challenge in the world." ■

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mental health providers exponentially increases health care access while providing a needed educational intervention to improve their academic success. Many innovative programs in the tradition of the Primary Project are able to help children to manage their emotions well enough to learn. The newly established **Richard I. and Joan L. Freedman Center for Child Development** at MSPP has brought such a program to Boston under the direction of Dr. Bob Lichtenstein. This Center is already partnering with Newton's Project INTERFACE to bring mental health training to teachers and finding avenues for advocacy and public education in support of school-based mental health services. For mental health services to become more accessible to children and their families, schools need to play a prominent role.

Gifts such as the Freedmans' to MSPP equip our students with the necessary resources to develop into highly skilled professionals while, at the same time, creating opportunities for social change. Our school and these children are grateful for their vision.

Nicholas Covino, PsyD
President

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.

Cultural, Biological & Psychological Underpinnings of Spirituality

Saturday, May 5, 2007 from 8:45 am – 5:00 pm

Keynote Addresses by George Vaillant, MD & Gregory Fricchione, MD
With Discussants David Arond, MD, Terry Bard, PhD, Nancy Kehoe, PhD, Rick Leskowitz, MD, John Levine, PhD, MD, and Laurel Wainwright, PhD
6 CE Credits, \$135

New Thoughts About Brain Health

Saturday, May 19, 2007 from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Speakers Paul Nussbaum, PhD, James Greenblatt, MD, Nancy Emerson Lombardo, PhD, and Hilary Bender, PhD, ThD
6 CE Credits, \$110 with lunch (Groups of 4 or more are \$90 each)

Recent Updates on the Treatment of Anxiety Disorders in Adults, Adolescents and Children

Friday, June 8, 2007, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Keynote Addresses by David H. Barlow, PhD, Stefan Hofmann, PhD and Donna Pincus, PhD
6 CE Credits, \$175

Making a difference for Katrina victims

President John F. Kennedy once said, “One person can make a difference, and every person should try.” For the MSPP faculty and students who made their way to Louisiana and Mississippi last year, Kennedy’s words have renewed meaning. Immersed in the world of Katrina survivors, these members of the MSPP community learned that they could make a difference in only a few days or weeks. And they were very glad they “tried.”

On three separate occasions, MSPP faculty and students journeyed to hurricane-ravaged areas to offer skills, support and hope. In July, seven students and two faculty made their way to Biloxi and Gulfport, Mississippi, to work in hospital and clinic settings as part of a directed study. For a week in August, a student-led volunteer group lent a hand at a FEMA trailer park in Louisiana. And, in October, a faculty member spent a week supporting animal rescuers and caretakers.

“Our hope,” says Dr. Jean Bellows, faculty member and trauma expert, “is that these experiences will give students a deeper understanding of how they as clinicians and human beings can contribute in the wake of natural and other disasters that cause severe trauma.” Dr. Bellows adds that MSPP’s Katrina Committee, formed shortly after the hurricane struck, sees these trips as potential models for ongoing practicum experiences closer to home.

The first trip, supported by a grant from IBM, was a directed study project. Accompanied by Dr. Bellows and alumnus and trauma specialist Dr. Kevin Becker, students gave supportive counseling and relaxation training to hospital staff; created a pamphlet integrating HIV, trauma, and mental health issues for patients and families; assessed the mental health status of patients in clinic waiting rooms; and developed a database of all mental health providers left in the area. All this in one week!

“We learned that there is a largely unmet need for mental health services. Many mental health professionals have left the area, businesses

were wiped out by the storm, and the few mental health providers who remain are overworked,” says student Diane Schoeller who spent the week in clinic waiting rooms talking to patients.

“We initially felt overwhelmed by this need, being only nine people. I think we figured out by the end, however, that although we were a small group, we could make a significant difference. Together we did the same in our one week that one person could do in nine,” she says.

The second group spent a week preparing children in a Louisiana trailer park to return to what, in many cases, were new schools. Tasks ranged from informing authorities of lost birth certificates to taking kids to school to get them registered and giving parents emotional support.

The July group received a two-day “critical incidence debriefing” training and certification from the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. Dr. Bellows provided day-long disaster intervention training for the Louisiana volunteers. “The goal of disaster intervention is to provide three essential things to survivors—safety, predictability, and control,” she says.

Dr. Bellows went back to Mississippi by herself in October and offered her services to the Humane Society staff, which, having rescued and cared for thousands of animals, were facing emotional burnout. During her week there, she did needs assessments, self-care trainings, and individual therapy.

Students and faculty alike plan to return to Katrina-affected areas next summer to continue the work they began.

“Experience is really the most powerful teacher,” says Dr. Covino, who is working with Dr. Bellows to make these kinds of experience available each summer. “The affective change that accompanies living and working as part of a community is very different from that which follows coursework in cultural differences,” says Dr. Covino. ▶

PsyD Entering Class Statistics 2000-2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total Applications	134	182	135	244	298	335	375
% Offers Made/Applications	47	43	59	36	30	27	31
% Yield	43	56	56	66	54	51	62
% MA/Out of State	56/44	58/42	62/38	63/37	62/38	60/40	54/46
Age Median Score	31	28	27	27	24	26	25
GRE Verbal Median	460	520	560	540	550	570	560
Quantitative Median	620	570	565	625	620	615	650
Underrepresented Minorities	2	8	8	10	10	6	9
% Earned Masters	37	38	51	39	22	37	41

Notes: While the average age of the students in the PsyD program has declined, the GRE scores of this group have increased significantly. The rise in the number of applicants to the program has allowed much greater selectivity for the Admissions Committee. Self-identified minorities are still underrepresented, but it is hoped that the *Lucero Latino Mental Health Program* will improve this.

Website Updates

The MSPP website now hosts an Alumnae/i Public Referral Listing. Please check your listing at www.mspp.edu/alumni. If you would like something changed in your profile, or would like to be added to the service, please contact Liz Healy at liz_healy@mspp.edu. ▶

We now take donations online. If you would like to give back to MSPP, you can do so on a secure portion of the MSPP Giving website. Go to www.mspp.edu/giving and click the “donate now” button. ▶



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