

MSPPP *rapport*

AUGUST 2004

President's Message

Character, Culture & Community

A friend of mine told me about the great sadness felt by the Town of Sharon with the death of Fr. Robert Bulloch. Somewhat surprising is the fact that the mourners were not the few Catholics who lived in the town, but people of all faiths. Sharon residents laud his work as a community organizer and one who drew disparate people together to create programs for the youth, the elderly and the disadvantaged. An area Rabbi called him a "giant" and praised his commitment to understanding the link that unites people of faith. In these days of Dennis Kozlowski (Tyco), Kenneth Lay (Enron) and self-centered people, it is important to note how an individual or a small group can have a positive impact on a community. At a time when the Abu Ghraib prison horrors teach us that poorly constructed environments can bring down even the best developed personalities, individuals and institutions must pay close attention to the cultures that they create and labor to create environments that are generative.

MSPP's mission is to meet the mental health needs of the community by training the highest quality providers. We fulfill this mission by offering *Continuing Education* for practicing professionals and Doctoral training for those who will treat children, the disadvantaged and persons of means who suffer from psychological distress. The school develops new programs as the needs of the community present them. Thus, we are about to create a new MA/CAGS program in *School Psychology* to provide graduates who can deliver mental health counseling, consultation and educational testing to the places where children spend their days. Our *MS Clinical Psychopharmacology* program is accepting post-doctoral psychologists who wish to expand their practices to provide consultation and integrative mental health treatment to prescribers in primary care and pediatrics who want to better serve their patients. In an effort to train culturally and language competent psychologists to serve the growing Latino population, MSPP is exploring the creation of a *Spanish Language and Culture* track in the clinical program.

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MSPP Launches Unique School Psychology Program

A national shortage of school psychologists and a growing crisis in mental health needs and services for children in general has motivated MSPP to launch a unique School Psychology Program in the fall of 2005. MSPP leaders say the new program, which will begin accepting application this fall, will emphasize an expansion of the role of school psychologists.



Bob Lichtenstein, PhD

"While we still want this new generation of school psychologists to be experts in evaluating cognitive abilities and identifying educational needs, we also want to prepare them to help children, parents, principals and teachers deal with the pressing issues facing kids in today's world and educational systems," says Stanley Berman, PhD, the new dean of special programs at MSPP, who will oversee the development of the program with a new director of program development, Bob Lichtenstein, PhD. (See article on page 2)

According to Berman, in addition to facing the usual developmental struggles, children today are dealing with concerns about bullying, violence, family trauma, divorce, and world events that rock their sense of security and confidence on a daily basis.

In 1999, the Surgeon General issued a report that exposed an enormous shortage in mental health professionals trained to respond to a growing crisis in the mental health of the nation's children.

The shortage involves doctoral level psychologists and psychiatrists, and also master's level school psychologists, says Lichtenstein, who has worked as a school psychologist in a number of states and currently is a consultant for the Connecticut Department of Education. "There are a limited number of programs that train school psychologists and their enrollment is not increasing to meet the growing demand," says Lichtenstein who sees school psychology as an important and rewarding profession.

"Children spend most of their time in schools, and that is where a skilled mental health practitioner and facilitator can have a real impact," says Berman, who believes the new MSPP program will offer students more intense clinical training than traditional school psychology programs.

"We want to equip these professionals with the skills to provide behavioral and mental health consultation to all those involved in the life of a child—teachers, administrators, and parents. And, we want

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From the Development Director's Office

MSPP is blessed with a number of psychologists who comprise our staff, administration and board. They are all exceptional people who do much to advance the field and provide the compassionate and high quality education which is the hallmark of all of our degrees and programs. However, when it comes to articulating the importance of mental health in our lives, communities and society, Peter Berenson, a man with a public accounting background, stands tall among them. I find that intriguing.

Peter was born and raised in the Boston area. He went to Northeastern University and benefited from a professional learning model similar to that of MSPP—rigorous academic study combined with field experience. So you can imagine he was fully immersed in accounting by the time he graduated. He soon became a CPA and a partner at Forman, Itzkowitz, Berenson & LaGrecia.

Peter also sought ways to “give back.” He began working on boards: Very Special Arts, his synagogue and the Newton Historical Society. And then, through a conversation between one of his clients and one of MSPP’s founders, Peter was identified as a person to add “professional” diversity to our Board of Trustees.

Peter knew immediately that he wanted to work with MSPP and Nick Covino. He soon volunteered to be Development Committee chair. After all, “just as psychology is a lifeline to people’s lives, money is an organization’s lifeline.”

Our development efforts are beginning to succeed. In the last two years, donors have doubled and contributions are up exponentially. Peter refuses to take any responsibility for the success: “Many people have worked to create a new beginning—an environment in which people want to belong and give to MSPP.”

And why do people want to give to MSPP? The first reason is the quality and inspiration of our leaders, staff, and educators. Additionally, our students’ psychological insights change peoples’ lives as they are learning. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, MSPP reaches out to many underserved communities. “This work deeply touches people and enhances their world as well as that of our students and faculty. I’m proud to be a part of that,” says Peter.

And we’re very proud that Peter Berenson is part of MSPP. ▶

Lichtenstein to Lead Development of School Psychology Program at MSPP

A national expert in school psychology and learning disabilities, Bob Lichtenstein, PhD, brings a wealth of clinical, research, school-based and teaching experience to his new position as director of program development for MSPP’s new School Psychology Program. (See article on page 1)

In his new role, Lichtenstein will work with MSPP faculty and senior administrators to design the curriculum, arrange for field placements, recruit expert faculty and begin the process of admitting students to the program.

A licensed psychologist and nationally certified school psychologist, Lichtenstein has worked as a school psychologist in Minnesota, Delaware and Massachusetts and served as supervisor of psychological services for the New Haven Public Schools.

His prior experience also includes coordinating the School Psychology Program at the University of Delaware and directing training programs at the Medical-Educational Evaluation Center at North Shore Children’s Hospital in Salem, Massachusetts.

Since 1994, Lichtenstein has served as the Connecticut State Department of Education’s Consultant for School Psychology and School Social Work. In this capacity, he provides technical assistance to school personnel and parents, coordinates professional development for school psychologists and school social workers, manages several projects and develops guidelines and policies.

In collaboration with the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists, he managed the 2004 publication of the state’s *Guidelines for the Practice of School Psychology*, already a national model of a comprehensive, innovative approach to working in schools.

For the past three years, Lichtenstein has represented the National Association of School Psychologists on the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities and the Learning Disabilities Roundtable. He also serves on the Professional Advisory Board of the National Center for Learning Disabilities. ▶

MSPP Seeks Advisors to Shape Future Programs and Meet Community Needs

In the coming school year, MSPP will invite policy makers, educators, and other community leaders to a series of dinner workshops and discussions about current and future community mental health needs.

“Our hope is that these dinner conversations will help us shape our curriculum and public service

agenda for the future and introduce us to individuals who might become long-term advisors to the school,” says Nicholas Covino, PsyD, MSPP president, who adds that another goal of the series could be the creation of a report or paper that might be useful to the larger mental health community.

Details on the series will be available in future issues of *Rapport* and on the MSPP website beginning in the fall. Interested parties are welcome to write to Dr. Covino at president@mspp.edu. ▶

New Dean of Special Programs



Stanley Berman, PhD

Stanley Berman, PhD, has been named Dean of Special Programs at MSPP.

In his newly created position, Berman will oversee educational offerings at MSPP outside of its doctor of psychology program. His responsibilities include supervising the continuing growth and development of the Master of Science program in Clinical

Psychopharmacology, overseeing the new Master of Arts program in School Psychology, Continuing Education; Certificate programs at the Institute for

Organizational Consulting Psychology, and the Center for Mental Health and Aging along with initiatives in Forensic Psychology and Divorce Mediation.

A faculty member of MSPP since 1987, Berman co-founded MSPP's Institute for Clinical Health Psychology and its Master of Science in Clinical Psychopharmacology program, which he directs.

Prior to joining MSPP, Berman was a staff psychologist at Boston's Children's Hospital and the Jimmy Fund of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, where he was director of training in psychology. His long-term professional interests have been in health psychology, and particularly in pediatrics and family systems issues, as well as child and adolescent psychology. ▶

New Professional Executive Coaching Certificate Program is One of First of Its Kind in United States

"The wonderful thing about executive coaching is that over a period of months you not only can have an impact on individual leaders, how they lead and the progress of their careers, you can also impact business results, customer service and the job satisfaction of employees," says Lew Stern, PhD, who is heading up MSPP's new Professional Executive Coaching Certificate Program.

Now accepting applications for January 2005, it is one of the first "professional" executive coaching certificate programs in the country and will go beyond most existing coaching programs by offering significant training in psychology, business, organization development, and coaching principles and skills. The program will be inaugurated at a Conference on Professional Executive Coaching on October 15.

Executive coaches specialize in working one-on-one with leaders or potential leaders in organizations to enhance leadership ability and style as well as accomplish key organizational objectives.

"To be an effective executive coach, you need to be more than a good listener or counselor, skills which are often the only focus of many current training programs for coaches," says Stern, "Because of the enormous responsibility they hold, coaches need not only a deep understanding of psychological principles and human motivation, but also significant competency in leadership development and a facility with business practices, models and market factors."

As president of Stern Consulting, Stern should know. A leader in executive coaching and an organizational development consultant, he is also chairman of the Executive Coaching Forum, co-founder

and past president of the New England Society for Applied Psychology, and on the Steering Committee and faculty for MSPP's Institute for Organizational Consulting Psychology.

The certificate program will be designed for professionals in human resources, business consulting and psychology and other mental health professions wishing to expand their skills in executive coaching or transition to new careers.

"We believe this program will give students a solid foundation for engaging in what can be extremely rewarding work," says Stern, who is enlisting many of Boston's most experienced leaders in executive coaching and organizational consulting as faculty and to serve as master coaches and supervisors for required practica.

This certificate program, along with the three other certificate programs offered by the Institute for Organizational Consulting Psychology, can be completed in one to two years, part-time, with classes conveniently scheduled for working professionals.

For more information about the Professional Executive Coaching Certificate Program, contact its Director, Dr. Lew Stern, at lstern@mspp.edu or 617-327-6777 x272. ▶

Save the Date

Conference on Professional Executive Coaching

October 15, 2004

For information, call 617-327-6777 or visit www.mspp.edu/ocp

School Psychology cont'd from page 1.

them to be able to provide individual and family counseling when appropriate and to triage with other specialists when needed."

Lichtenstein is looking forward to the prospect of creating a school psychology program from scratch. "Given the clinical expertise of the MSPP faculty and the opportunity to design a program that is responsive to current needs. I expect this to be an exciting and unique program."

MSPP's new program is a specialist's level (that is, a three-year certificate of graduate study, including a full year internship) designed to meet accreditation standards of the National Association of School Psychology.

As with other MSPP programs, the School Psychology Program will integrate strong practical experience with excellent academic training. Students will spend a good portion of their time on-site in schools, with supervision from MSPP faculty and on-site experts. ▶

Profiles in Psychopharmacology

One year ago, psychologists Drs. Jeff Sonnega and Jonathan Freedman returned to their mental health practices after graduating from MSPP with an MS in Clinical Psychopharmacology.

Now, a year later, there is a difference in their practices. “Psychopharmacological knowledge has allowed me to speak the language of medical doctors, especially regarding medications and dosages,” says Sonnega. “I interview patients, offer diagnoses, and know I’m an asset as a medical professional on a medical team.” Says Freedman, “It has allowed me to understand the effects of the medications my clients are on, the medications they should be on, and the medications they should be off.”

A staff psychologist with the Federal Bureau of Prisons at the Federal Medical Center at Devens in Ayer, Massachusetts, Sonnega treats inmates from the entire Northeast. This new center employs a large staff of psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers.

“Teamwork among the professionals is very strong,” says Sonnega. “We protect each other in this prison environment.” Sonnega gives much credit for the tight teamwork to the chief psychiatrist, who is the prescribing physician and who frequently asks for and is very willing to receive psychopharmacological recommendations from him.

“MSPP Psychopharmacology graduates are now serving as active team members in a variety of settings,” according to Program Director, Stanley

Berman, PhD. “From a hospital in central Maine, to a multi-disciplinary private practice in central Massachusetts, to child and geriatric practices on the South Shore of Massachusetts.”

For two years, Freedman frequently drove eight hours from Caribou, Maine to attend MSPP. After graduation, Freedman continued with his general practice in rural Maine, where he works with all ages and offers a specialty in forensic assessments, plus a treatment program for sexual offenders.

Early in his professional career in Washington, D.C. and New York City, Freedman worked with “delinquent kids,” followed by a move to Caribou, Maine because he desired space and missed New England winters.

“I’ve practiced up here now for 23 years. I don’t think that rural mental health has any more challenges or needs than urban areas. The kids here all have guns, but they shoot deer and partridge, not each other. They drive their vehicles real fast while drinking, but they are mainly trail bikes, four-wheelers, and snow sleds, so they have less risk of hurting themselves or others.”

Freedman has long been interested in the advantages of psychopharmacology for patients. “I explain to psychologists inquiring about my interest that this is as much about behavioral health and behavioral medicine as it is psychopharmacology. Knowing the elements of psychopharmacology is knowing the biological basis of behavior,” he says. ▶

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Every year, MSPP doctoral students provide more than 160,000 hours of clinical work in community settings that have experienced significant reductions in mental health service. Thanks to the generosity of an Anonymous Donor and the work of many others, the *Community Service and Training Programs* have created partnerships between MSPP and community agencies such as the Joseph Smith House, Entre Familia and West Roxbury High School. In each of these settings students are led by faculty members who bring mental health and consultation skills to create programs where little exists and work with indigenous staff to develop research and services to improve the mental health of those in need.

The MSPP culture of service, personal growth and learning is, itself, served by a community. Our Student Coordinating Committee develops programs to serve the school and dozens more students, Trustees and volunteers create additional social and learning events. Our alums teach, supervise and work on Admissions and our professional staff and faculty are oft cited by accrediting bodies for their generosity and availability. Over the past two years, MSPP has been gifted by a significant rise in donors and several organized groups of benefactors includ-

ing those who steward the *Marge Stam Fund*, *The Dr. Cynthia Lucero Center* and the *Dr. Leon O. Brenner Assessment Center*. All tolled, these patrons have exponentially increased funding for scholarships, community work and new programs.

MSPP is about to celebrate its 30th year as an academic institution. Our Community Service and Training programs have become vehicles to bring scholars, students and service providers together. Our new curricular offerings guarantee that there will be appropriately trained professionals available to meet the mental health needs of our society. Our CE programs keep a wide variety of professionals current.

In this brochure, you will find an envelope that I hope you will use to make a contribution to MSPP, our students and our work. If you have received something of value from MSPP, please invest in our community. If you value the educational developments and caring for community that exist at MSPP, please help us to continue this work. Please, make an investment in our community so that we can continue to invest in yours. ▶

Nicholas A. Covino, PsyD, President