Welcome to our first issue of the Northern Clinical Chronicle. We hope this will help keep those associated with NIU’s Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program connected. For current students, we’ll have news about life after graduate school, as we highlight alumni of our program. We’ll also feature one of our externship sites in each issue so you can learn more details of what happens on these placements. For alumni, we’ll share what is going on here – hopefully you’ll see some names you know as well as learn about those who have come after you were here. Overall, this will be a place where we can highlight all the exciting things going on in our program. We are proud of all that we do at NIU and want to share it with all of you.

The biggest news of the past year is the successful navigation of the APA accreditation process. We were happy to be informed last spring that we are fully accredited for the next seven years! I appreciate all the help of the faculty, students and clinical supervisors who contributed to making the site visit a success last October. APA agrees with what I have heard from many of our recent graduates – we do an excellent job in training our students to be both clinical scientists and practitioners. Thanks!

We were fortunate to have Dr. Art Jongsma, an alumnus from the first cohort of students who were in the Clinical PhD program at NIU, stop by in the summer. He met with a few of our students and shared his professional journey, which has led to his development of a series of treatment planners with Wiley, a computerized Treatment Planner, as well as a new DVD series on Evidence-Based Treatments (see story on page 4 for more details).

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Lisa Paul to our clinical faculty. Her research focuses on trauma and disclosure (see story on page 2 for more details). As you can see, her work will complement other research going on in the department and at the Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault. Please take a minute to stop by and say hello to her.

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This fall, because full staffing (i.e., nine clinical faculty positions) allows a little more flexibility in the teaching schedule, students were able to take a seminar on “Trauma: Prevalence, Outcomes and Recovery” with Dr. Michelle Lilly. We hope to be able to rotate seminar offerings through the clinical areas (i.e., family violence/trauma, anxiety, child clinical) in the coming years.

As we move forward, I hope to hear from many of you. We’d love to have an alumni update section. Also, let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions for the program. Finally, I want to thank our student volunteers, Melissa London and Andrew Sherrill, for working on this newsletter. I appreciate all the effort they put in to get this first issue off the ground. We hope you enjoy it!

Best wishes,

Laura Pittman

Program Update: Welcome Dr. Lisa Paul!

The Clinical Psychology program is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Lisa Paul to our faculty in the fall of 2012. Dr. Paul earned her M.S. and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Wyoming while working with Dr. Matt Gray. She completed her pre-doctoral internship through the Traumatic Stress track of the Charleston Consortium Psychology Internship, where she worked at both the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center (NCVC) and the Ralph H. Johnson Memorial Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Her research interests include social reactions to trauma and the disclosure of traumatic events from the perspective of the survivor as well as the disclosure recipient. At NIU, Dr. Paul plans to continue her research on the reactions and needs of informal support providers (e.g., friends) in college samples and in the community in order to develop a psychoeducation and supportive online intervention for disclosure recipients. Dr. Paul is excited to begin teaching and mentoring at NIU, stressing the pride that results from watching her students prosper. She taught the undergraduate Clinical Lab class this fall and has already begun collaborating with her first student, Sapir Sasson, on an IRB application. Dr. Paul emphasizes the importance of self-care and being active.

She enjoys running, cooking (and eating of course) and is part of a book club. As an avid runner, Dr. Paul has completed two marathons and several smaller races including the Warrior Dash – expect to see her Viking helmet in her office this year!

Attention Alumni

Please contact Laura Pittman (lpittman@niu.edu) with updated contact information and your current position. Also, if there is an interest, future issues could include personal information (e.g., birth announcements and weddings) for alumni. Please feel free to send any information you would like to share in this newsletter.
Meet the First Years!

**Jacob English** (Advisor: Alan Rosenbaum) grew up in Elgin, Illinois. He attended the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and graduated with a degree in both Applied Psychology and Philosophy in May of 2012. As an undergraduate, he worked with the Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Violence examining treatment outcomes for and developmental difficulties of children exposed to violence. This spring, at the UIC Student Research Forum, Jacob presented research highlighting the importance of behavioral modeling in classrooms as a method to increase students’ responsible bystander behaviors in instances of bullying. Current and future research interests include the dynamics and consequences of intimate partner violence (IPV) particularly regarding child exposure to IPV. For fun, Jacob enjoys road cycling, jogging, playing guitar, and writing music.

**Micah Ioffe** (Advisor: Laura Pittman) is from Toronto, Canada, and graduated from York University with a Bachelor’s degree in psychology. During her undergraduate degree, Micah completed an Honours thesis that examined the effect of parenting styles on children’s conscientiousness. After graduation, she became actively involved with the Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and Emotion Processing Lab at Ryerson University in Toronto. Micah worked with BPD clients in a study that examined emotion regulation and the effectiveness of a Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Skills Group. Her current research interests include: parenting styles, parent-child interactions, and coping skills in children and adolescents. She is also very interested in examining anxiety and emotion regulation in various family environments. Micah leads an active lifestyle, always finding time to take a yoga or Zumba Fitness class. Micah loves to travel and experience new opportunities.

**Lindsay Miller** (Advisor: David Valentiner) is from Cheyenne, Wyoming. At the University of Wyoming, she earned degrees in psychology and Spanish. As an undergraduate, Lindsay worked in the Anxiety Laboratory and assisted with research projects focusing mainly on anxiety and exposure. Her undergraduate honors thesis looked at the media’s presentation of exposure and the beliefs of the public about exposure; she presented the preliminary results of this at ABCT in November. In addition, Lindsay loves to travel and recently returned from a trip to South Africa.

**Arielle Rogers** (Advisor: Kevin Wu) grew up in Westchester County, New York and received her Bachelor of Arts in psychology and communication from Muhlenberg College. After graduation, she worked at the University of Miami, where she assisted in research examining obsessive-compulsive disorder and hoarding disorder. After her time at UM, she worked as a research assistant at Weill Cornell Medical College where she assisted in various studies examining biomedical treatments for depression in older adults. Arielle’s primary research interests are in the broad area of obsessive-compulsive and related disorders, particularly hoarding disorder and OCD. Outside of psychology, she enjoys cooking, traveling, live music, watersports and wildlife.

**Sapir Sasson** (Advisor: Lisa Paul) is from Kfar Saba, Israel. She earned a Bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As an undergraduate, she worked in the Adolescent Development Lab researching gender differences in depression and she completed a Senior Honors Thesis on predictors of disordered eating. While at UW-Madison, she also worked for an organization dedicated to primary prevention of sexual assault and dating violence. Sapir is currently a member of Dr. Lisa Paul’s research lab. She is interested in predictors of sexual assault disclosures, as well as correlates of victim-blaming attitudes and rape myth acceptance among victims and disclosure recipients. In her free time, Sapir enjoys playing tennis, reading, and spending time with her family and friends.

**Antonia Seligowski** (Advisor: Holly Orcutt) is from Boston, Massachusetts. She graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Boston University in 2007. Since then, she has been a Research Assistant at UMASS Medical School in Worcester, MA, and most recently at the National Center for PTSD in Boston, MA. At the National Center, she has been involved in several studies, including an examination of Mindfulness training for veterans with PTSD, and the validation of a measure which assesses late-onset stress symptoms in older combat veterans. Antonia is interested in risk factors for the development and maintenance of PTSD, and how experiential avoidance and emotion regulation are associated with these processes. She is also an avid ballroom dancer and likes to participate in ballroom competitions.

**Erin Shishilla** (Advisor: David Bridgett) grew up in Medina, MN. She graduated from St. Olaf College with a B.A. in Psychology and Biology and concentration in Neuroscience. Following graduation, she spent two years as a full-time research assistant at the University of Maryland working with Dr. Nathan Fox investigating early temperamental predictors of childhood psychopathology. In her free time, Erin enjoys whipping up new Pinterest recipes, running, biking, swimming, and spending time in the great outdoors.
After completing his dissertation, Dr. Jongsma became fully immersed in clinical work at a number of agencies in Grand Rapids, Michigan, including Pine Rest Christian Hospital, and later, consulting to The Salvation Army.

While working at The Salvation Army in the early 1990s, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization reported that the treatment plans developed by the addiction counselors were inadequate in terms of clarity of content, organization, and behaviorally based treatment objectives. He partnered with the clinical director to offer the counselors a menu to select from of carefully worded, behaviorally based objectives paired with clear, concise, best-practice therapeutic interventions for a variety of common presenting problems. The counselors loved the customizable material as it made their task of treatment plan writing so much easier and the program review agencies were pleased with the much improved quality of the treatment plans. Eventually, these menu items evolved into Dr. Jongsma’s first published book: *The Complete Adult Psychotherapy Treatment Planner*.

As Dr. Jongsma began publishing his treatment planner series, the movement toward evidence-based practice (EBP) was gaining acceptance in the psychology community. Reflecting upon this, Dr. Jongsma agreed that even he had somewhat lost touch with clinical research and knew little of the growing evidence-based practice movement, particularly in regards to treatment planning. Suspecting the disconnect between research and practice was a growing concern for many clinicians, Dr. Jongsma was inspired to not only dedicate himself to the consumption of the best available empirical evidence but to begin to include within his treatment planners objectives and interventions that were consistent with evidence-based research results. His vision was to standardize treatment planning by providing clinicians with easy access to comprehensive, but concise summaries of empirical evidence as it can be expressed in plan language. He partnered with Dr. Timothy Bruce, a scientist-practitioner of the highest order (professor at University of Illinois Medical School), who was well acquainted with the latest research literature on EBP. His series of Treatment Planners has now grown to 33 books alongside 15 Homework Planners and 7 Progress Notes Planners. In addition, Dr. Jongsma developed TheraScribe, a point-and-click software product in which treatment planning content modules directly tied to the published books can be imported. The user can quickly and easily create a treatment plan using the software and save it electronically or print it out for a patient record. The software also allows for creating and storing progress notes and homework assignments using PracticePlanner content. Most recently, Dr. Jongsma has co-authored a continuing education DVD series that offers research literature reviews as well as demonstration vignettes of the use of EBT interventions in actual practice.

In July 2012, Dr. Jongsma visited NIU for the first time since 1972 and discussed his successful career with a handful of current students. Generously, Dr. Jongsma donated to NIU’s Psychological Services Center copies of this DVD series, PracticePlanner books, and a copy of TheraScribe. For further information on Dr. Jongsma and his treatment planning materials, visit http://jongsma.com.
Lab Highlight:
The Emotion Regulation & Temperament Lab

Dr. David J. Bridgett, in collaboration with Dr. Linda C. Mayes at Yale University, was recently awarded a R21 from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development for exploratory work to, in part, develop a new method to examine parent-infant interactions. Research within Dr. Bridgett’s lab focuses on contributors to the development of children’s emotion regulation, including parental influences, parent-child interactions and other environmental factors. The aim of the NIH funded project is to evaluate the importance of maternal self-regulation for parenting behaviors that support infant and child development. Infants rely on caregivers for assistance with self-regulation when distressed because their self-regulatory mechanisms are rudimentary, and just beginning to undergo significant development; however, this topic is difficult to study under circumstances wherein infants remain distressed for significant periods of time, something which many parents may experience. Using a novel, experimental life-like infant simulator, the ERT lab is able to examine the effects of maternal self-regulation on specific parenting behaviors that are used while attempting to calm an extremely distressed “infant.” In a second visit to the lab, mothers attend a session with their own infant, and infant responses to mild stressors, emotional expressions, and parent-infant interactions are examined. The visits to the lab funded by the NIH grant are but two of a total of 10 visits that participants attend as a part of a larger longitudinal study.

Dr. Bridgett stresses the team effort involved in recruiting, scheduling, collecting data from participants, and then processing the data. The ERT Lab “Army” includes 30 lab members who spend twenty to thirty hours training to work with participants, with data collection not uncommonly occurring every day of the week. By the end of the study, the sample will consist of approximately 185 participants. This study should shed new light on early risk factors for later emerging psychopathology, provide new insights into early developmental mechanisms of emotion and self-regulation, and potentially provide new targets for early interventions.

Bowl-A-Rama!

For each of the last three years, the clinical faculty, spearheaded by Dr. David Valentiner, has organized a bowling competition between the clinical program’s three core research areas: child, anxiety, and family violence. Listed below are the first three champions of our annual “Bowl-A-Rama.” Is it too early to call it a dynasty?

2010: Family Violence Team
2011: Family Violence Team
2012: Family Violence Team
The Autism Program of Illinois (TAP) at Kreider Services, Inc. is a part of a larger TAP Service Network that provides Autism assessment and support services throughout the state of Illinois. Each TAP site offers local programs and services based upon best practice standards and current research. The extern’s main role at the Kreider’s TAP is to provide assessment and diagnostic services to children and adolescents up to the age of 18 years, for whom an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may be suspected. As part of the assessment procedure, externs administer a battery of measures that include psychoeducational assessments (intelligence and achievement), as well as assessments that are more specific to ASDs, including parent-report measures and semi-structured diagnostic instruments. In addition to the psychology portion of the evaluation, a speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist also conduct assessments, all of which are included together in a comprehensive diagnostic report.

A major contribution of the training at Kreider is working as part of a larger, multidisciplinary team. While each team member is involved in writing up their respective part of the report, the psychology extern takes on the task of putting the pieces together in a single diagnostic report. This is a great chance to gain exposure to disciplines that child clinical psychologists will likely be involved with in real-world practices.

A major task at this externship site is to work alongside a speech and language pathologist and an occupational therapist to make differential diagnoses. The final comprehensive diagnostic report (and, thus, diagnoses) is developed in collaboration with the speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist. This can be very difficult, as children with general speech and language delays, poor social skills, anxiety, and a host of other difficulties are often suspected of having an ASD. This externship provides an excellent clinical training experience in child and adolescent assessment.
Huskies in the News

Michelle Lilly was featured in the news last spring for her research with former NIU student Heather Pierce that focused on the distress experienced by 9-1-1 emergency dispatchers. The findings were published in the Journal of Traumatic Stress. Use the following links for the Huffington Post ABC News articles that were picked up by various news outlets including NPR and CBS Chicago:


In 2011, the implications of Holly Orcutt’s work in the NIU Trauma Study (NTS) were recognized in the news. The NTS participants provided data, including saliva samples for genetic analyses, before and after the mass shooting that occurred at NIU on February 14, 2008. Use the following links for the Associated Press story that was picked up by several news outlets including the Chicago Tribune, and a WebMD article:


Angela Grippo, Associate Faculty of the program, was received the Award for Distinguished Early Career Scientific Contribution to Psychology by the American Psychological Association in August, 2012. Use the following link for the NIU article:


Student Awards, Fellowships, and Internship/Postdoctoral Placements

**Fellowships and Awards**
- Derrecka Butler: Jeffrey Lunsford Fellowship
- Melissa London: Jeffrey Lunsford Fellowship
- Regina Hiraoka: Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault Research Fellowship
- Nicole Lopez: Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault Research Fellowship
- Andrew M. Sherrill: Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault Research Fellowship
- Christine Valdez: Outstanding Graduate Student in the Psychology

**Internship Placements**
- Joe Bardeen: University of Mississippi Medical Center/Jackson VA, Jackson, MS
- Stephanie Lonsway: University of Michigan/Human Adjustment, Ann Arbor, MI
- Nicole Wyngarden: Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Service, Grand Rapids, MI

**Postdoctoral Placements (2012 graduates)**
- Gina (Cortesi) Raza: Postdoctoral fellowship at the Salem VA
- Shawn Cater: Postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Central Florida
- Rachael Katz: Postdoctoral fellowship at the Children’s Medical Center of Dallas
- Katherine (Stephenson) Harris: Postdoctoral fellowship at the Ann Arbor VA
- Tom Fergus: Assistant Professor at Baylor University
- Ruthie Varkovitzky: Postdoctoral fellowship at the Albuquerque VA
- Tracii Kunkel: Post-Graduate Psychology Resident at the Daytona Beach VA Veteran Wellness Center


**Theses:**

Christine Valdez: “Gender Role, Thought Control Strategies and Posttraumatic Stress in Individuals Exposed to Trauma” (Aug 2011; Chair: Michelle Lilly)

Stephanie Orbon: “Impulsivity and Obsessive Compulsive Symptoms” (Dec 2011; Chair: Kevin Wu)

Bethany Quinn: “Stress and Depressive Symptoms in Early Adolescence” (Dec 2011; Chair: Laura Pittman)

Kyle Murdock: “Affect, Self-Efficacy, & Parenting Behavior” (March 2012; Chair: Chris Lovejoy)

Kate Oddi: “Perceived Parenting and College Student Sensitivity to Infant Distress Cues” (March 2012; Chair: David Bridgett)

Ross Knoll: “Superstitious & Reassurance-seeking Behaviors in Test Anxiety: Revising Cognitive-Behavioral Models of Test Anxiety” (May 2012; Chair David Valentiner)

Susan Hannan: “Emotion Regulation as a Potential Mediator Between Reinforcement Sensitivity and Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms” (May 2012; Chair: Holly Orcutt)

Lynsey Miron: “A Comparison of Self-Compassion and Mindfulness in Predicting Psychological Distress, Health Status, and Well-Being” (May 2012; Chair: Holly Orcutt)

Brenda Remington: “Thought-Action Fusion: Specificity to Obsessive-Compulsive Symptoms” (June 2012; Chair: Kevin Wu)

**Dissertations:**

Stephanie Lonsway: “The Relationship Between Safety Behaviors and Social Anxiety in a Clinical Sample” (May 2012; Chair: David Valentiner)

Rachel Katz: “The Quality of Mastery Motivation Behaviors: Validation of an Observational Rating Scale” (June 2012; Chair: Chris Lovejoy)

Joseph Bardeen: “Attentional Control, Attentional Threat Bias and Posttraumatic Stress Symptomatology” (June 2012; Chair: Holly Orcutt)

Shawn Carter: “Further Examination of the Cognitive Conceptualizations of the Social Phobia Subtypes and Avoidant Personality Disorder” (July 2012; Chair: Kevin Wu)

Tracii Kunkel: “Autonomic, Dysregulation in Children of Domestic Violence: Impact of Experiencing or Witnessing, and Implications for Future Perpetration” (July, 2012, Chair: Alan Rosenbaum)

Allison Smith: “Developmental Changes in Adolescent Attributions and Conflict in Close Relationships” (August, 2011; Co-chairs: Chris Lovejoy & Greg Waas)

Mandy Kumpula: “Motivations for Sex and Sexual Behavior Among Female College Students: An Even-Level Analysis” (August, 2011; Chair: Holly Orcutt)

Katherine (Stephenson) Harris: “The Consequences of Positive Evaluation in Social Anxiety” (August, 2011; Chair: David Valentiner)

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