Hello alumni and friends! It's hard to believe we have another academic year behind us and we are now in the midst of summer. This academic year, like the last one, brought new budget cutting challenges and we must look forward to a climate in which all of us are expected to “do more with less.” Our priority is to ensure that our students continue to be treated to the highest quality educational experience even though funding to the department has been cut quite severely.

I must confess that our flexibility in being able to provide the type of enriching opportunities we would most like to provide is being adversely affected by the ongoing budget cuts. As such, in a shameless request for your support, I would like to ask that you consider making a donation to the department. Over the years we have deeply appreciated the support of a great many loyal donors and I hope that if you have not been able to donate to the department in the past, you will find a way to do so this year. And, of course, we hope that those who have generously donated in the past will continue to do so.

Despite the cloud of budget cuts, we have continued in our award winning ways – in the classroom and in our science. For example, Bryan Hendricks was named to the “Best 300 Professors” list in a guidebook compiled by The Princeton Review and Ratemyprofessor.com. The Graduate School awarded Maryellen MacDonald a WARF Named Professorship, Tim Rogers a Romnes Faculty Fellowship, and Kristen Shutts a Vilas Associates Award. I was also honored to have been awarded the Leon Epstein Faculty Fellowship by the College and the Scientific Impact Award from the Society of Experimental Social Psychology (see page 2). Our gradate students continue to shine (see page 8) and several of our undergraduates received Hilldale Undergraduate – Faculty Fellowships.

Though often with noses to the grindstone, we also took time out to build community among our faculty, staff, and students outside the walls of Brogden Hall. Graduate student Daniel Bradford organized a friendly soccer match and Professor John Curtin got many of us out for the Moving for Mental Health 5K. More than 60 undergraduates mingled with 30 alumni at our largest gathering to date of our Student-Alumni Dinner. Our students have been deeply grateful to all of our alumni who have been willing to share their career insights and experiences. And the alumni similarly reported the dinner to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

We continue to have reason for excitement in the department but let me end this update where I started. The budget cuts have hit us very hard and we are increasingly dependent on our alumni and friends for support to keep even our basic activities viable. We hope that you will be able to join our fundraising family – no amount is too small and any amount is deeply appreciated. Until the next time, On Wisconsin!
**Devine Makes An Impact**

The Society of Experimental and Social Psychology honored Professor Trish Devine with the 2011 Scientific Impact Award. This distinction recognizes the author(s) of a specific article or chapter offering a theoretical, empirical, and/or methodological contribution that has proven highly influential over the last 25 years.

Devine was recognized for her 1989 article, “Stereotypes and prejudice: Their automatic and controlled components.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56*, 5-18.

In the years preceding Devine’s initial publication in this area, there were very few articles published on stereotyping and prejudice. Graduate students together, Mahzarin Banaji (now Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Psychology at Harvard University), recalls the timing and circumstance of Devine’s dissertation idea, “it is fair to say what we now know to be such well established facts about dissociations between conscious and unconscious feelings were at the time, hard to imagine--let alone about race--because they involved spaces of the mind into which experiments hadn’t fully been ushered. What I can say with certainty was that I had no idea that my remarkable friend was about to make a breakthrough that would open up a gate to theorizing and experimentation about the doubly dark side of the mind.”

Throughout her career, Devine has become widely known and highly regarded for her groundbreaking research and innovative theoretical analyses of the psychology of intergroup prejudice. Her research reflects a rare confluence of classic questions about the nature of prejudice with imaginative applications of modern theories and methodologies. Her research has brought vitality to the study of stereotyping and prejudice. Banaji comments, “She excavated for us to see, a new layer of understanding about human social groups and our representations of them. Representations that were hidden from the usual ways of knowing.”

In the decades following the initial publication of her article, the number of articles addressing these issues skyrocketed, and research activity on the nature of stereotypes, prejudice, and intergroup relations remains at the forefront of the agenda of many social psychologists. “Today as a science we know a whole lot more about the nonconscious ways we think about social groups, and race in particular. After Trish’s studies, I myself, joined the crew to figure it out. Truth be told, it was impossible to do anything but. That’s the impact Trish had.” says Banaji.

Much of this work directly addresses issues stemming from Devine’s specific research, but the effect has been much broader. Devine challenged the field to address these pressing issues of enduring social significance and her work has been agenda setting for the field. Indeed, her impact has been truly extraordinary.

**Jones Receives Award for Teaching Excellence**

Melanie Jones has been named as the recipient of the Department’s Excellence in Teaching Award. As a frequent teaching collaborator with Jones, Professor Jenny Saffran comments, “It has been a privilege to teach alongside Melanie Jones. In both her large lecture teaching and her one-on-one work with students, she is a true innovator, always looking for ways to help her students experience psychology more deeply. I’ve learned a lot from her about how to engage my students, and I’m thrilled that she has received our department teaching award this year.”

Amanda Oleson, a student in two of Melanie’s classes, adds, “Melanie’s integrated style of teaching made the course material accessible to a variety of learners, and she continuously engaged the class using many teaching methods. I never missed lecture because I enjoyed the presentation of the material and the class participation that she utilized (which, a lot of professors do not do in a large lecture). By allowing students time to ask questions and participate, learning became a fun and interactive adventure.”
MEET THE FACULTY: BAS ROKERS

When conducting a conversation over a bad telephone line or driving in fog, we continuously fill in missing or noisy information. Although we are convinced that we have direct access to the world through our senses, psychological research has proven time and again how badly we can get it wrong. Eyewitness testimony can be highly unreliable, and when presented with a visual illusion we cannot ‘unsee’ the illusion, even when we know our senses are being fooled.

The reason that we remain so convinced of the accuracy of sensory information in our daily lives, is that the brain generally manages to get it right in spite of these distortions. By using prior experience and “best guesses” our nervous system fills in the missing sensory input without us even noticing.

My research focuses on motion perception in the visual system in part because it is one of the best-understood mechanisms of sensory processing. While motion occurs in a three-dimensional world, the image received by the retina is a two-dimensional projection of that world, lacking an explicit signal or representation of depth. Recovering such depth information is thus an exclusively neural process that starts with the visual input to the two eyes and often ends with the successful interception of a target by an observer.

My graduate students and postdocs have started up a number of projects since my arrival in Madison. One project investigates why normal observers differ in their reliance on certain cues to 3D motion. We hypothesize that this reliance might be related to individual differences in the efficacy of two different neural pathways. Training individuals with impaired vision to increasingly rely on one of these pathways might retain their ability to process visual motion information.

A second project asks how we are able to base successful behavior on biased (incorrect) visual percepts. In foggy conditions, an observer will consistently report that a visual target moves much more sideways than it really does. We are investigating why such biased perception does not seem to lead to biased behavior. When the observer is asked to intercept the target (rather than report its motion direction), she will move her hand to the correct position. This project may help us understand the cause of visuo-motor deficits.

To learn more about visual perception, and watch me demonstrate some of these motion and depth illusions, visit National Geographic’s ‘Brain Games’ series at: http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/channel/brain-games/.

Follow Us on Facebook

Are you on Facebook? Become a fan of the UW–Madison Department of Psychology for updates on events and announcements!
John Tauer (Ph.D., '00) has always been fascinated by what motivates people. Stemming from his own involvement in sports, he was puzzled by the variability he saw in people’s levels of motivation. "Although I was never the most talented player, I worked hard and I think that led me to question why some other, more talented players, were not similarly motivated," says John.

After success as an undergraduate student-athlete at the University of St. Thomas (where he is a member of the Athletic Hall of Fame), John chose to pursue his graduate studies in Social Psychology in the area of intrinsic motivation. "Judy Harackiewicz is one of the leading researchers in the world when it comes to intrinsic motivation. The opportunity to work with her and study factors that affect motivation was the top reason I chose UW. I was blessed to have such a wonderful mentor who continues to be a source of wisdom and friendship to this day."

John received his Ph.D. in 2000 and returned to the University of St. Thomas as a Professor of Psychology and Assistant Coach for their Division III men’s basketball team and in 2011, John accepted the position of Head Coach. Through his extensive work with student-athletes and running youth basketball camps for the past 18 years, he has studied motivation in thousands of young basketball players. His research has examined how factors such as competition, cooperation, and goals affect intrinsic motivation. In particular, the past several years his research team has explored how parental involvement affects young athletes' motivation. "WOSP's (Well-Intentioned, Overinvolved Sports Parents) mean well but oftentimes their desire to help their children interferes with the noble goals of youth sports that include character development, persistence in the face of difficulty, handling adversity, and conflict negotiation. I am working on finishing a book on youth sports, parental involvement, and motivation in young athletes."

As a coach and professor, John sees firsthand the application of intrinsic motivation. Not only does his research inform his own teaching and coaching, but they also provide a wealth of ideas for his continued research. “We all hope for intrinsically motivated students and athletes. Our student-athletes do not receive athletic scholarships, and the NCAA does not allow us to work with them during the offseason. As a result, it puts a premium on both recruiting intrinsically motivated individuals as well as creating an environment within our program where players participate because they love the sport of basketball and they care about their teammates.”

Understanding his student-athletes’ underlying motivation helps John create a cohesive team. His definition of a successful player combines talent, passion for achieving excellence, pride in the success of the team over the individual, and working with purpose. John believes these qualities lead them to be productive graduates, ready to contribute to their communities. “Our work on intrinsic motivation informs and influences everything from who we recruit to how we communicate with players to how we work to build positive team dynamics based on social psychological research.”

(continued on page 5)
During John’s tenure coaching basketball as both an assistant and as head coach, his team has won nine of eleven MIAC Championships (including a run of seven consecutive championships) and his last season as assistant coach was capped by the 2011 NCAA Division III Championship. This past season (his first as head coach), after losing their top six players from their national championship team, he led his team to the conference championship, the conference playoff championship, and advanced to the 2nd round of the NCAA tournament before falling to eventual national champion UW-Whitewater.

As one would expect of a researcher studying intrinsic motivation, winning is certainly not everything for John Tauer, “More important than trophies or awards is the development of our student-athletes as scholars, players, and people. One of the biggest compliments I have ever received came from the mother of a player moments after we had won the national championship. With tears in her eyes, she thanked me not for my part in the team’s championship but for helping her son develop and mature as a person so much in the past three years. Those are the types of moments for a coach or professor that are more meaningful than any victory.”

Indeed, John’s dedication as a professor and coach extends far beyond awards, publications, and another check in the win column. The evidence is clear in the respect and admiration of his student-athletes. Senior Co-Captain, John Nance says, “Coach Tauer always finds a way to pull something positive out of any situation, good or bad. He helps me see the bigger picture in life, not only with basketball but with other obstacles I come across.” Fellow Co-Captain, Tommy Hannon, sums it up, “Coach Tauer does more than just coach us the X’s and O’s of basketball. He has the ability to motivate us like no other coach I have ever played for, tying together his knowledge of psychology and basketball. What makes Coach Tauer special is he knows how to motivate each player in a different way that will relate directly to the player. We all have different things that motivate us and Coach knows how to reach each player individually. He is more than just a basketball coach, he has taught us to be better people and I would not be where I am today without the guidance of Coach Tauer.”

To learn more about Professor/Coach Tauer: [www.johnnytauerbasketball.com](http://www.johnnytauerbasketball.com).

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**WHAT ARE YOU READING SUMMER?**

Check out the latest book by one of our Psychology alumnae, Adrienne Yorinks (B.S., ’77), *Hummingbirds: Facts and Folklore from the Americas*. Coauthored with Jeanette Larson, her book brings together hummingbird facts and folktales of people throughout the Americas. Adrienne’s artistic talents are also highlighted with 39 original works of textile art celebrating the beauty of the hummingbird.

In addition to her B.S. in Psychology, Adrienne also holds a master’s degree in Dance Choreography and Dance Therapy from New York University. You can learn more about Adrienne’s work through her website: [adrienneyorinks.com](http://adrienneyorinks.com).

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**ALUMNI REFLECTIONS**

We greatly enjoy hearing from you following the release of a new edition of *The Update*.

“Just a note of appreciation from an alum who enjoys the newsletter. I was an astrophysics major until I wandered into Harry Harlow’s Gen Psych class and that experience changed my life. I still use one or two of my best Harlow stories in class. Having Harlow, Steve Suomi, Len Berkowitz, Fred Mote, etc as professors was an enlightening experience.”

George Spilich (B.A., ’74) is the John Toll Professor of Psychology at Washington College
Popular television shows such as *Law and Order*, *Criminal Minds*, and *C.S.I.*, have led to considerable interest in the field of Forensic Psychology, particularly among our psychology students. Given such interest in the field among our majors and the expertise in the area among several of our faculty, Psychology students were treated to an exciting opportunity to participate in a Forensic Psychology Information Session.

Led by Dr. Joseph Newman (Professor of Clinical Psychology who studies disinhibition syndromes such as psychopathy and conduct disorder), Dr. Gregory Van Rybroek (Director of Mendota Mental Health Institute and teaches classes on legal psychology), and Dr. Patricia Coffey (Clinical Psychologist specializing in sexual offenders, who regularly teaches classes on the psychology of criminal behavior), a group of twenty students engaged in an open-ended discussion of both applied and research-based opportunities in Forensic Psychology.

The event was created with the goal in mind of offering a “non-traditional”, more flexible information session. The event was limited in size to foster a comfortable and interactive environment for conversation. Professors Newman, Van Rybroek and Coffey began with brief introductions of their educational and career paths. Professor Coffey presented in her area of expertise by providing a fascinating overview of sex offender laws, assessments for risk to reoffend and a brief overview of a career in Forensic Psychology (e.g. pros & cons, job outlook).

Throughout the session, professors’ advice for students came back to a recurring theme: no matter what career you choose, make sure it is something you love. They were adamant that the greatest success you can achieve and the greatest contribution to society that you can make will come from following your passion. Certainly great advice for all of our students in attendance.

The event was extremely well-received by students. Wylisa McIntosh said, “This event gave an experience I know I would have not been able to have in the classroom.” Brittany Miller, adds, “I found the [event] to be extremely beneficial because it provided me with great insight on the field from three experienced professionals. We were encouraged to find something we were passionate about and pursue it!” Student Jordyn Rasmussen agreed, “It made me comfortable to know they really didn’t have a destination getting out of school. They each had varied paths but all ended up in a place that they’re passionate about being in.”

Professor Coffey also weighed in, saying “It was inspiring to see so many students motivated to learn about Forensic Psychology. The department looks forward to offering more events that bring together faculty and students, allowing them the opportunity to discuss and learn more about their specific interests within Psychology.”
GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: JAMIE HANSON

What happens during the transition from childhood to adolescence? Is it just storm-and-stress from start-to-finish? What happens if a child begins life or develops in stressful environments where abuse, neglect, or extreme poverty occurs? Can studying “the adolescent brain” aid in understanding why peers are so important, why adolescents often make risky decisions, and why children who suffer early life stress often have more troubles as adolescents and adults? These questions are at the heart of my research in my graduate work with Drs. Richard Davidson and Seth Pollak.

After working in mental health, researching schizophrenia and right-hemisphere language functioning, and inducing sad moods in adults while they were in an MRI scanner, I began graduate school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Individual Graduate Major Program. I chose Madison because of its rich interdisciplinary nature, a needed component of my research that aims to blend developmental psychopathology, affective neuroscience, and public policy. I hope by combining all of these ideas that I can aid in understanding how early adversity may affect the brain and behavior, putting some children and adolescents at risk for many negative outcomes and poorer mental health.

When I started graduate training, I designed and collected data for a large study examining the effects of early adversity on the adolescent brain that involved neuroimaging as well as hormonal, genetic, and neuropsychological assessments. Through this project, our group found that adolescents who have been victims of physical abuse had smaller prefrontal cortex volumes, specifically in a region called the orbitofrontal cortex, when compared to non-maltreated adolescents. The prefrontal cortex is a brain area involved with the regulation of behavior and emotion, along with more complex cognitive processes. In our study, changes in this orbitofrontal region also correlated with parents’ and adolescents’ reports of behavior problems. This research was recently published in the Journal of Neuroscience. In more recent work, we found that lifetime exposure to stress in children without a history of maltreatment affected brain morphometry and executive functioning during adolescence. This research suggests that changes in the structure of prefrontal cortex PFC may serve as a mediating mechanism through which greater stress exposure engenders decrements in cognitive functioning. This research is currently in press, also at the Journal of Neuroscience.

In addition to these projects, I am also currently working with a group of economists, epidemiologists, and psychologists to examine the effects of poverty on brain development. This study is a collaboration between Dr. Barbara Wolfe in the department of Economics at Madison and Seth Pollak in Psychology. By analyzing nearly 350 MRI scans from children and adolescents, we found that socioeconomic status was associated with the size of the hippocampus, a brain region involved with memory and also stress-regulation. Children from less affluent households had smaller hippocampi. Interestingly, this result fits with a number of previous research studies in rodents that finds stress and environmental enrichment affected aspects of the hippocampus.

More recently, I have begun collecting neuroimaging data for my dissertation. For this final project of my graduate career, I am examining brain-behavior processes in adolescents at risk for substance use and abuse. To date, a large corpus of research has found strong associations between early adversity and later substance abuse. Little work has, however, examined the mechanisms that contribute to this vulnerability. Through a myriad of experimental tasks and methods, I aim to assay reward and decision-making processing to more intricately probe potential neurobiological vulnerability for substance abuse conveyed by early stress.
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS!

National Science Foundation Fellowships:
Rista Plate, Christine Potter, and Rachel Salk

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Dissertation Grants:
Jennifer Morozink and Chris Rozek have been awarded.

Graduate Student Peer Mentor Awards:
Arielle Baskin-Simmers, Will Cox, and Andrew Young

OUR NEW PH.D. RECIPIENTS:
Elizabeth Becker • Melissa Brandon • Rebecca Gloria • Heather Jessen • Sabra Katz-Wise • Deborah Kerr • Brooke Schmeichel • Matthew Vendlinski • Jon Willits.

CORRECTION
The online version of our last edition correctly identified our graduate student as Jennifer Morozink. Unfortunately, when we transferred the article to print, she was misidentified. We extend our sincerest apologies to Jennifer for the error.

DISCOVER HOW YOU CAN HELP

We have a long history of excellence in teaching and research in this department. To maintain this high standard we need support from our alumni and friends. Donations in any amount are greatly appreciated and go directly to supporting our students, faculty, and programs. If you would like, you may designate your gift to one of the following areas (please check one):

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