

INPSYGHT

Newsletter for Students, Alumni, and Faculty of the Psychology Department 2003-2004 (Volume 11)
Michael Odeh, Editor

Psi Chi 2003-2004

By: KristiLynn Volkenant, Psi Chi President

Psi Chi has had a very fun and productive year, marking our 25th Anniversary as a chapter here at Creighton. We hosted two bake sales, both of which were huge successes! The annual penny wars competition was held in conjunction with the first bake sale and Dr. Leak (Fr. Leak) was victorious, so he had to dress as a priest for the day! Psi Chi participated again this year in the Adopt-a-Family program at Christmas; we had lots of fun shopping for presents and then wrapping them at the Holiday Party hosted by Dr.

Cooney and family. Wrapping up this year will be lunches with faculty, a picnic to close the year, and the annual graduation brunch-reception for seniors and their families.

Psi Chi inducted eight new members in the fall of the year and inducted eleven new members on April 15th. New officers were also inducted on that evening, so in behalf of the current officers, I would like to thank everyone for their participation. We have all enjoyed our positions and made lots of good memories.



Congratulations to the New Officers

President: Jordan Winter
Vice President: Elizabeth Hunziker
Secretary: Meredith King
Treasurer: Hilary Harper

Thank You to the Outgoing Officers

President: Kristi Volkenant
Vice President: Kristin Eisenbraun
Secretary: Julie Melone
Treasurer: Amy Goscha



Checkout the online edition of *Inpsyght* at
<http://puffin.creighton.edu/psy/>
for updates throughout the year.



THE DAHL FUND SUPPORTS UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Creighton Represents at Student Conferences

By: Michael Odeh

Creighton Psychology students have been busy this school year conducting research, planning posters, and practicing speeches in preparation for regional conferences. The Nebraska Psychological Society held its annual fall student convention on November 1, 2003 hosted by Bellevue University. Oral papers were presented by: J. D. Berg, Tara Dickey, Kristin Eisenbraun, Judy Flichtbeil, Demarcus Franks, Kelsey McCoy, and Amy Pauli. Posters were presented by: Angela Cavalieri, Kristin Eisenbraun, Billy Frederick, Valerie Gonsalves, Amy Halbur, Brandon Jewell, Shane Lamson, Diana Larson, Sara Laule, Julie Melone, Mikey Odeh, Jessica Sapp, Claire Seiwert, Zarha Snoza, Chantelle VanHook, and Kristi Volkenant.

More recently, while some Creighton students spent their spring break in the Bahamas, more dedicated students headed down to Kansas City, Missouri to attend the 2004 annual Great Plains Student Psychology Convention. The event was held at Rockhurst University and was co-sponsored by Park University. Presentations were

made by: LaQianna Boone, Caroline Crawford, Bridget Gaul, Valerie Gonsalves, Liz Heideman, Jena Hoehne, Brandon Jewell, Ashley Kniffin, Caleb Lovig, Kelsey McCoy, Rachel Medrano, Julie Melone, Angie Mooss, Liz Morell, Mikey Odeh, Claudia Potts, Michelle Ray, Hasib Sana, Jessica Sapp, Brooke Spencer, Colleen Willham, and Jordan Winter.

Creighton brought home two awards: Jordan Winter and Caleb Lovig received a second place award in the Abnormal Psychology category for their presentation, *Looney, crazy, nuts... What do you think of when you think of mental illness?*; and Claudia Potts, Liz Heideman, and Michelle Ray received a first place award for their poster, *The many personalities of sexual coercion*. Congratulations to all participants on a job well done! A special thanks goes to the Elizabeth Dahl fund and Dean Austin for their financial support. Join us next March as Creighton Psychology hosts the 25th Annual Great Plains Student Psychology Conference.

Creighton Students Visit Washington D.C.

By: Michelle Noddings

For the third year in a row, Creighton Psychology students were invited to present research at the "Posters on the Hill" conference held in Washington, D.C. and sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR). Students met with state representatives and policy makers to discuss the implications of their research and the importance of funding available to support future undergraduate research. Under the supervision of Dr. Ramie Cooney and Dr. Isabelle Cherney students presented posters of research completed over the last year.

The projects presented were: *Computer games and their effects on math and science* by Tara Dickey and Judy Flichtbeil sponsored by Dr. Cherney, *Getting ahead: Does faith-based education give children an advantage?* by Michelle Noddings, Angela Cavalieri and Zahra Snoza sponsored by Dr. Cooney and *Children at risk for academic failure: What factors promote success?* by KristiLynn Volkenant, Angela Mooss and Amy Halbur sponsored by Dr. Cooney.

Meet Dr. Stephen Jefferson

By: Meredith King

Students who are familiar with Dr. Stephen Jefferson, also affectionately known as “Dr. J”, describe him as “articulate, knowledgeable, and always willing to listen to student’s ideas and opinions.” Those who are not yet acquainted with Dr. Jefferson will have the chance to meet him in classes such as Multicultural Psychology, Research Methods, and Introduction to Psychology, which he will teach next fall.

Dr. Jefferson’s current research interests were heavily influenced by his educational background. He earned his bachelor’s degree from a small HBC (historically Black college) at Florida A&M University, followed by his Master’s degree and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Michigan State University. Presently, Dr. Jefferson’s research focuses on African American’s attitudes about their own racial identity, and how those attitudes can influence their perception of ambiguously racist situations. With the help of two undergraduate students, he is also working on a project to assess how observers evaluate members of socially

marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, gay men, and lesbians. In the future, Dr. Jefferson would like to use this knowledge to develop a course in the psychology of prejudice.

When Dr. Jefferson is not grading Introductory Psychology papers or updating research statistics, he can be found taking in the sights of the Old Market or reading a good book. Playstation2 buffs will be pleased to learn that Dr. Jefferson enjoys video games such as Tekken II, Matrix, and Abe’s Oddworld among other science fiction interests. He appreciates the nice cost of living in Omaha, but emphasizes it was really the friendliness of the Creighton faculty that attracted him.



Dr. Jefferson credits his parents with putting him and his brother through undergraduate education and being mentors throughout his life. Any student looking for guidance through psychology courses or college life in general should seek their inspiration from a fantastic member of the Psychology Department, Dr. Jefferson.

Taunya Plater Wins “Rookie of the Year”



Taunya Plater joined the Psychology Department in March 2003 as the Administrative Assistant. She adapted quickly and mastered the demands of the hectic department needs. She is well respected by faculty, students, and her peers. This March, Creighton’s Staff Advisory Council awarded Taunya with the 2004 “Rookie of the Year” award, based on nominations from the department. One faculty member described Taunya as “Kind, intelligent, efficient, reliable, honest, and trustworthy.” The entire department is thrilled to have Taunya around, and knows that Taunya is most deserving of this award. Congratulations Taunya!

Dr. Finken Receives Excellence in Teaching Award

By: Lindsay Eggers

After teaching at Creighton and positively impacting students for eight years, Dr. Laura Lei Finken has received recognition for her accomplishments. Dr. Finken was recently awarded the prestigious 2004 College of Arts and Sciences Award for Professional Excellence in Teaching.

A committee of former award winners reviewed the letters of recommendation written by other members of the psychology department and nominated Dr. Finken to receive the award. After the committee made their recommendation, Dean Tim Austin made the final selection for Dr. Finken to be the award recipient.

When the dean's office contacted Dr. Finken and informed her she had received the award, she said she felt very honored. During her remarks at the awards luncheon, she commented

that receiving the award also made her feel "embarrassed because I know of many other people, in my department alone, who deserve such recognition."



Through out her years at Creighton, Dr. Finken has continually employed the Jesuit value of care for the individual in her classes and in every interaction with students, as she sees each student as an "individual worthy of attention and respect." The students who have class with her or simply interact with her through the psychology department recognize her

dedication and enthusiasm to both the academic and personal side of teaching. As senior psychology student, Laura Pfeiffer, stated, "Dr. Finken is an outstanding professor who is more than deserving of the recognition she has received."