

From the Chair

Hi again.

We are now dangerously close to the end of the semester. For seniors, that means that within a few short weeks, you will be moving on to a new chapter of your lives. While that can be a bit scary, perhaps, it can also be an exciting time. The Psychology Department wishes all our seniors well as they graduate and begin whatever new adventures await. We want to let you know that the Psychology Department will have a departmental Open House on Graduation Day. It will run from 12:30 –2:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 13th. While there will be food on the first and third floors of Smullin (feel free to indulge), the members of the Psychology Department will be hanging around (as usual) on the second floor of Smullin. Please stop by, say hi and introduce your families to us!

For seniors (and all other inter-

ested Psychology majors), I want to remind you that on Tuesday, April 24th at 6:00 p.m. in Smullin 222, our senior Psychology Honors students will be giving their Honors Presentations. We have two Honors students this year: Jeff Golimowski and Lindsay Tuck. Please support these students by planning to attend their presentations. Cookies and punch will be served in addition to some very interesting research. Look for reminders which will be posted soon around Smullin.

I hope you all had a chance to attend the talks given by Jeff, Lindsay, Travis Harrison and Christina Wade on Student Scholarship Recognition Day. This was a wonderful opportunity to see how students across campus are engaged in the process of scholarship. Of course, our psychology students did ex-

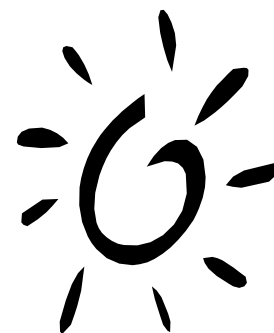
ceptionally well (even if I'm a bit biased!). Congratulations also to Beth Carlascio, a psychology junior who gave a voice performance. All in all, it was a really impressive day. While on the subject of acknowledgements, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the following individuals.

Travis Harrison was this year's recipient of the Noel Kaestner award, given to the outstanding senior Psychology student. Congratulations, Travis! Look for his name soon on the plaque in Smullin 226. Travis was also a co-recipient of the Psi Chi Service Award along with Debbie Joa for outstanding service to Psi Chi. Last but not least, congratulations to Araya Parrish, this year's recipient of the Paul Evans Award given to a senior who

(Continued on Page 2)

Mark Your Calendar

Mark your calendars for these



Have a great
Summer!!

From the Chair *(continued from page 1)*

shows the most compassion and dedication to psychology. Araya's name will also appear on a plaque soon, posted in the hall on the 2nd floor of Smullin. The Psychology Department would also like to thank Jack Palmer and Patricia Gribble for their dedicated contributions to the department this year as sabbatical replacements for Sue Koger and Mary Ann Youngren. While we are glad to welcome Sue and Mary Ann back next year, I want to thank Jack and Patricia for all they have done for the Psychology Department this year. This will be the last edition of this year's

newsletter. I am delighted that it was well-received. If you are graduating and would like to continue to receive the newsletter, please give your post-graduation address to Allisa Jones (Smullin 321), and we will be sure to send you a copy of each issue. Also, based upon a late entry to the "name the newsletter" contest, members of the Psychology faculty have voted to change the newsletter to "We've got Issues." Being psychologists, we liked the double entendre this name suggests! Congratulations to Beth Carlascio who submitted this name. She, along with Allisa Jones (since we already promised her!) will receive a \$5 Bistro Gift Certificate.

I hope this year was a good one for everybody. As always, stop by, call or email with suggestions for ways we can improve things. In the meantime, have a good end of the year and summer. We'll see most of you back here in August!

Sincerely,

Meredy Goldberg Edelson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Psychology

Congratulations to the Class of 2001

*Congratulations and best wishes to
the Psychology Class of 2001:*

*Jennifer Bellone
Lindsay Clark
Darcy Clothier
Fumi Endo
Keiko Fujikawa
Jessica Goodrich
Travis Harrison
Ann Hastain
Juan Hernandez*

"I am but one person, but I am one person. I cannot do everything, but I can do something."

Although I cannot recall the source of this quote, I find myself reflecting on it often. Countless good intentions fail to bear fruit because of what many perceive as the futility of small contributions to the solution of massive problems such as environmental degradation and world hunger. All too often, we seem to devalue the potential good we can do by writing it off as a mere "drop in the bucket" of some greater need.

Willamette University graduate David Fetherstonhaugh (WU '94) has just recently completed his doctoral thesis in cognitive psychology, exploring in more

detail the processes that underlie such judgments. His work actually builds on his Willamette senior research project. One particular judgmental bias he's explored is one he's termed the "reference class effect". As an illustration, many people might deem it worthwhile to send life-saving aid to a refugee camp if it would save 100 out of 1000 lives at risk. But his work shows that many people would change their mind if the "reference class" increased, claiming it's "not worth the trouble" to save 100 lives out of 10,000 at risk. The same 100 lives are saved, but they somehow seem like less valuable "drops in the bucket" in the face of the larger problem.

A similar yet distinctly separate problem is a bias he refers to as "diminishing mar-

ginal sensitivity." Regardless of the number of other people in the reference class, each additional victim seems to be valued less. In the refugee scenario, regardless of the total number at risk, people generally do not see 200 deaths as twice as bad as 100 deaths. The larger the tragedy, it seems, the less each additional ("marginal") life seems to be valued.

We are not necessarily aware of our tendencies to think this way, but such biases can have tremendous social impact. Current Willamette psychology majors have been exploring similar questions in studies I have supervised. Don't hesitate to contact me if this piques your curiosity and you'd like to explore such issues further!

1- 800 - Psych

Hello, Welcome to the Psychiatric Hotline.

If you are obsessive-compulsive...please press 1 repeatedly.

If you are co-dependent... please ask someone to press 2.

If you have multiple personalities...please press 3, 4, 5 and 6.

If you are paranoid-delusional...we know who you are and what you want.

Just stay on the line so we can trace the call.

If you are schizophrenic...listen carefully and a little voice will tell you which number to press.

If you are depressed...it doesn't matter which number you press. No one will answer.

Internships & Opportunities

Community Educator :

Possible position opening for Community Educator at Liberty House, a child abuse assessment center. The 9-12 month position includes stipend, health and child care benefits. Available to graduating Seniors. For more informa-

tion, please contact Candy at Liberty House 503/540-0288.

Ramapo Anchorage Camp

June 18 thru August 25, 2001. Serves children ages 4 to 16 with a wide range of

emotional and learning problems. Offers staff members a salary, room & board and travel reimbursement.

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Meredy Goldberg Edelson