

Liaison

A Periodic Newsletter for Psy.D. and M.A.
Psychology Programs at Wheaton College

Spring/Summer 2006

Introducing *Liaison*

This is the third publication of *Liaison* and is designed for alumni and friends of graduate psychology programs at Wheaton College including doctoral and master's level curriculums.

Facts

- The Psy.D. program in clinical psychology was established in 1993 and has been continuously accredited by the American Psychological Association since 1998. This five-year program admits some 18-20 students annually.
- The M.A. program in clinical psychology, a two-year program, was established in 1977 and admits approximately 30 students each year.
- Four years ago, an additional master's degree was added in Counseling Ministries, a one-year degree for individuals who primarily work through churches or mission agencies.



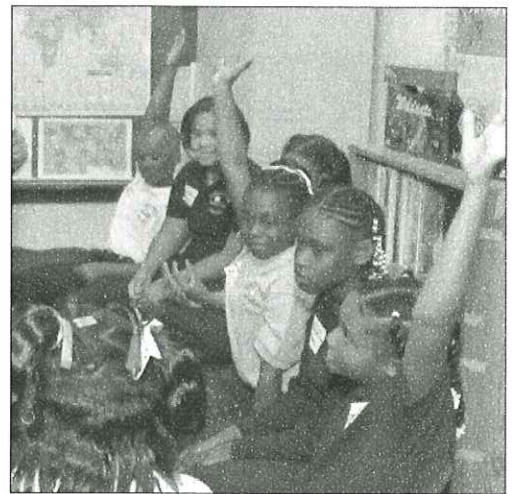
Wheaton College

For Christ and His Kingdom

Graduate Psychology Serving the Underserved

Because part of the mission of the graduate psychology programs is to empower students to serve underserved populations, special training opportunities have been created in neighborhoods where few psychological services exist. Some of these populations of focus include ethnic minorities, homeless individuals, children, older adults, low socio-economic populations, individuals with severe mental illness, and rural communities. One such training opportunity was initiated by Dr. Sally Schwer Canning, a core Psy.D. faculty member at Wheaton College, who teaches community psychology and child treatment.

In 1999, Dr. Canning began a training program at Circle Rock Preparatory School (CRPS), a faith-based elementary school, established jointly through Rock Church and Circle Urban Ministries, serving the far west side Chicago community of Austin. In Austin, 32% of the households are below



Learning in action at CRPS.

the poverty line and 52% of the households have annual incomes below \$25,000. Fully one-third of the residents 25 years and older have not completed high school. The ethnic makeup of this community is 94% African American. With 117,000 residents, Austin makes many of Chicago's surrounding suburban townships look small in comparison.

CRPS educates over 200 students in thirteen K4 through eighth grade classrooms. Self-identified as a "Kingdom School," CRPS trains students to "walk like, talk like, and act like Jesus." The rigorous academic curriculum

includes a technology component that rivals any found in the Chicago area. The school has been a recipient of a three-year Gates Foundation school improvement grant and other funding, enabling the development of high quality individual and group mentoring programs in the middle school.

As a member of the Rock Church community, Dr. Canning was aware of the need for psychological services in the elementary school and initiated conversations between Wheaton College and CRPS to form a collaborative approach of providing psychological services through graduate psychology students. Based on a competency model, the program came to be called P.A.S.S., short for Providing Assistance for School Success. P.A.S.S. is staffed each year by a fourth year doctoral student; this year's clerk is Andrea Pauley, an experienced child clinician. The psychology service has an excellent reputation in the school, and is seen as a valuable part of the educational environment. As a result, the school obtained enough funding two years ago to hire a three-day-a-week clinician, Wheaton Master's graduate Leanna Gudell.

P.A.S.S. aims to be well integrated into the school's overall mission, functioning as an integral part of providing high-quality, faith-based education to the future leaders of the distressed community. P.A.S.S. emphasizes a comprehensive, strength-based approach

in which cultural relevance, consistency with the Kingdom values of the school, and empirical support for the effectiveness of interventions are prioritized. P.A.S.S. offers a full spectrum of psychological services including prevention, promotion, consultation, assessment, and intervention. In addition, these services are provided at various levels including school, classroom, staff, student,

and family. Embedded in a high-demand, multidisciplinary, school context, P.A.S.S. personnel take a "quick and dirty" approach to assessment and consultation, seeking to provide fast turnarounds and educationally relevant recommendations. Commonly seen presenting problems include academic, mood and/or behavioral difficulties, loss, trauma, and family conflict. Evidence-based group interventions targeting depression and homework difficulties are typically offered during the school year. P.A.S.S. personnel train CRPS staff in empirically-supported school-wide social competence promotion programs: I Can Problem Solve (Spivak & Shure) in the elementary grades; and Social Decision Making/Social Problem Solving for Middle

School Students (Elias) in the upper grades. Other P.A.S.S. services include staff training and school-level program development projects (past examples include development of a student tracking procedure, a school-wide crisis intervention plan, and a threat assessment and response structure).

Student Perspective

Being at CRPS as the P.A.S.S. clerk has been a wonderful learning experience. Working in a complex school setting, I am learning to balance developing relationships with my coworkers and the professional responsibilities of being a clinician for those coworkers and the students they serve. As a Caucasian individual working in a predominantly African American setting, CRPS has given me the unique opportunity of experiencing the rich cultural and spiritual heritage that the teachers and students bring to the school.

— Andi Pauley, M.A.

Alumni Profile: Serving Children

One of the strongest features of the M.A. Clinical Psychology program is that it equips students for service to underserved populations. In the fall after graduation, I began work in a clinic in Chicago that provides counseling to children who are sexual abuse survivors. Our center uses a client-centered framework and clinical staff can use various therapeutic interventions including play therapy. It is a huge task to manage a caseload of at least 10 children and some caretakers who are either in crisis or still experiencing its effects. When people ask me what I do, I can expect either of two responses. With widened eyes, they will either say something like, "Wow, your work is so needed," or they will kindly switch to another topic, "Have you had enough of this weather?" Both types of responses rightfully suggest that my work is rather serious and complex. It is also very necessary. Although it can be challenging, I see it as an opportunity to be a part of God's redemptive process in the lives of children and their families. I am reminded of what the Scriptures say about children. Psalms 127:3 describes them as a gift and a reward from the Lord (NLT). Through counseling them, I bear witness to their joys and concerns and I grow in understanding of God's care for us as His children. These are two of God's gifts to me in this profession. —Rosalyn A. Bates, M.A., LPC



Rosalyn A. Bates, M.A., LPC

Alumni Profile: Serving Latino Families and Churches

Recent Psy.D. graduate, Dr. Alicia LaHoz, is continuing her work with the underserved at Meier Clinic in Wheaton where she works with Latino families. Responding to a need for psychological resources in Spanish, Alicia recently wrote a resource book for pastors entitled, *Los Problemas: Una Oportunidad para Crecer (Problems: An Opportunity to Grow)*. The workbook accompanies a thirty-hour marital enrichment training program to help clergy facilitate marriage educational groups, seminars, and workshops in their own church communities. The workbook includes topics such as a biblical model of marriage, general concepts of family systems, forgiveness, communication, conflict resolution, maintaining friendships in the marriage, domestic violence, and also has practical resources that pastors could use with their congregations to foster healthy marriages.



Alicia LaHoz, Psy.D.

Announcements

- Special thanks to Dr. Mark McMinn who has served 13 years at Wheaton College in various roles including Psychology Chair, Psy.D. Director, and Rech Chair. He will be leaving this summer to take a faculty appointment at George Fox University in Oregon where he grew up and considers home.
- The annual Scandrette lecture will take place on March 30 at 4:00 p.m. Dr. Walter C. Wright, Jr. will be speaking on the importance of mentorship.
- The Center for Rural Psychology's annual "Hog Roast and Friendraiser" will take place Saturday, April 1st. For more details go to: www.ruralpsych.org.
- Congratulations to Derek McNeil, Carlos Pozzi, Bill Struthers, Terri Watson, and Bob Watson who each received tenure this year.

Alumni and faculty of the Wheaton College Department of Graduate Psychology are invited to send in announcements to share with others who receive this newsletter. We also welcome your suggestions. For more information, contact the Graduate Psychology Program Administrator, Tracy Lee, at tracy.w.lee@wheaton.edu.

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