Standing Up for Kids

Doctoral Student a National Leader in Initiative to Help Homeless Youth

Eddy Ameen came to the School of Education in 2007 to pursue a doctorate in counseling psychology. While studying how to help individuals lead better lives, the former Massachusetts resident decided to make a broader contribution to society by helping Miami’s homeless youth.

“I thought this was a great opportunity to get involved in a volunteer cause,” said Ameen, who leads StandUp for Kids Miami, and is on track to receive his Ph.D. in December. “The School of Education has an activist focus and understands the importance of being engaged in the community.”

Five APA Awards for EPS Faculty

Four faculty members in the School’s Department of Educational and Psychological Studies were honored recently with five national awards for leadership and social justice. From left are Scot Evans, who received the Service Award from the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Society for Community Research and Action (Division 27); Guerda Nicolas, who was recognized as an “Emerging Leader for Women in Psychology” by the APA’s Committee on Women in Psychology; Dean Isaac Prilleltensky, who received the APA “Community Practitioner Award” and a second APA award for theory and research in community psychology (both Division 27); and Etiony Aldarondo, who received the 2011 Social Justice Award given by the APA’s Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17).
Standing Up for Kids  
(from page 1)

Dean Isaac Prilleltensky, who is on Ameen’s dissertation committee, and his faculty advisor, Dr. Etiony Aldarondo, attended a recent fundraiser for the nationwide nonprofit organization. “They have helped steer me to asking the bigger questions about our society,” Ameen said. “Having an understanding of the research has allowed me to become a subject matter expert who can suggest policy changes based on solid evidence.”

In June, Ameen spent several days in Washington, D.C., speaking to U.S. congressmen about issues of poverty around the world. “The largest take-home message is that we all have the ability to access our politicians,” he said in an online message. 

http://www.standupforkids.org/local/florida/miami/archive.html

“We can speak to them – in person – about issues that affect us and those that affect the disenfranchised who’ve lost their own voices.”

Ameen first became aware of the extent of the nation’s homeless problem in his freshman year at Boston College, when a teacher mentioned that nine was the average age of a homeless person.

Soon after coming to the University of Miami, Ameen became a street outreach counselor for StandUp For Kids, whose mission is to find, stabilize and help homeless and street kids improve their lives. At that time there were only a handful of volunteers in the Miami office. Ameen began spending more time helping the nearly 3,000 homeless young people in the Miami area, talking with them about the services they needed, recruiting more volunteers, and developing community partnerships. Eventually he became the executive director for StandUp for Kids’ Miami office, while pursuing his doctorate.

“I want to thank the School of Education for allowing me to be both an activist and a student,” Ameen said. “The University of Miami provided me with a perfect setting to learn new skills and see the parallels between theory, practice, and activism.”
Building Capacity

Today, our political leaders pay a great deal of attention to infrastructure issues. Certainly, there’s no denying that our nation’s roads, bridges, pipelines, and utilities need a higher level of investment.

But, we believe there’s an even more important investment we need to make: building more capacity in our society’s educational and social systems. That holds the key to better health, well-being, and prosperity on many levels – personal, family and community.

By training new teachers, counselors, sports administrators, athletic trainers, exercise physiologists, researchers, and other professionals, our school is helping to meet that need. We are also staunch advocates for children, striving to instill a love of learning and to provide the right level of emotional support and guidance.

In keeping with our desire to build capacity, we host summer professional development institutes for our public school teachers, giving them new insights and fresh ideas to take back to the classroom. We also reach out to organizations on the national and international level, such as Teach For America and The Haiti Project.

This issue of our newsletter covers a number of those capacity-building initiatives that multiply our school’s impact on society.

Finally, I am pleased to report that our school has achieved excellent rankings from Academic Analytics, which analyzes faculty productivity at colleges and universities across the country. Our faculty members continue to receive awards and recognition for their work as well.

In all these ways, our school is a catalyst, building momentum for positive change and social justice, locally, nationally, and globally. We welcome your support in the pursuit of our mission.

Dean Isaac Prilleltensky
Erwin and Barbara Mautner Chair in Community Well-Being

The School of Education ranks within the top 10 in the country in Curriculum and Instruction, and within the top 20 in the nation in Research and Measurement and in Counseling Psychology, according to Academic Analytics FSP data as of September 19, 2011.

‘Thanks for Your Support!’

Technical assistance from the School of Education’s Dunsbaugh-Dalton Community and Educational Well-Being Research Center (CEW) played a key role in winning a grant for the WalkSafe program of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis in the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Anabel Anon, project coordinator, said that Randall Penfield, professor, Department of Educational and Psychological Studies (EPS) provided assistance with sample size calculations for the grant proposal. The CEW has established a statistical help desk for researchers in the university community. Penfield also serves as the Associate Director of the CEW. “I wanted to let you know that we were awarded the funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation,” said Anon. “We have written a consultant position for statistical purposes, so we’d be delighted to have your help for the program.”

The University of Miami has jumped to No. 38 in the U.S. News & World Report 2012 “Best Colleges” rankings, up from No. 47 last year.
Teachers Polish Their Language Arts Skills At School’s Summer Writing Institute

Miami-Dade County Public School (MDCPS) teachers Marco Miranda and Kirsten Yeager polished their language arts skills this summer and learned new lessons to apply in the classroom at the School of Education’s Eveleen Lorton and Zelda Glazer Writing Institute.

“I really appreciated the opportunity to learn writing skills from master teachers,” said Miranda, an 8th grade teacher at Jorge Mas Canosa Middle School. “It’s a very positive atmosphere at the institute.”

Yeager, a language arts teacher at Vineland K-8 School said, “This will really help me engage the kids. I’m looking forward to trying some new things this year.”

For the 28th year in a row, the school held a two-week summer writing institute designed to nurture creative ideas, provide curriculum suggestions, and build professional skills. “We have a great group of teachers every year and we really appreciate the support of MDCPS,” said Mary Avalos, professor of Teaching and Learning, who co-directed the 2011 institute with Joanie Cobo, MDCPS. The program was held at Terra Environmental Research Institute in Kendall.

More than 150 teachers and administrators attended a wrap-up breakfast on July 1 at Jungle Island — many wearing special hats for the occasion. “No matter how many things change in education, this institute goes on,” said Marilyn Neff, associate dean, School of Education. “I hope that 28 years from now, there will be a group of teachers here in Miami-Dade celebrating the inspiration sparked by this writing institute.”

Miami-Dade Superintendent of Schools Alberto M. Carvalho emphasized the importance of education for the future of the country, and expressed his strong support for the annual writing institute. “It provides an opportunity for you as teachers to recharge your batteries and reinvent yourself in a collegial environment,” he said. “No matter how tough the economy may get, I am committed to supporting the writing institute as long as I am here.”

Carvalho added that students today need “dream-makers” in the classroom who can help students imagine and create a better tomorrow. “I believe in the miracle that happens when you stand in front of a child,” he said. “Together, I believe we can change the world, one child at a time.”

Summing up her experience, Gayle Gun, a teacher at Snapper Creek Elementary, said in a letter to Dean Isaac Prillentensky, “If you took all the lessons learned from all of the learned and wise guest presenters, and added more than a sprinkling of instruction from the fabulous institute faculty, you may well understand the extent of our training and the depths of my gratitude. It seems inevitable to me that my future students will reap the benefits of this fantastic learning experience. Thank you for your part in making this happen.”
For Deborah Zacharias, a music teacher at Jane S. Roberts K-8 Center, the University of Miami Holocaust Teacher Institute this summer provided fresh material for her classroom and an unexpected link with today’s issues. “Bullying is such an influence on many kids’ lives,” she said. “There are certainly connections that we can draw between Hitler’s behavior and the bullying that occurs in the schools.”

Zacharias also discovered “Brundibár,” a children’s opera by Jewish composer Hans Krása that was originally performed in the Theresienstadt concentration camp in Czechoslovakia. “I got the CD and will go over the music in my classes this year,” she said. “It’s amazing to think that the children would still sing in such an opera in the death camps.”

Approximately 50 teachers took part in the tenth annual summer institute, which was led by Dr. Miriam Klein Kassenoff, institute director and district education specialist, Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Dr. Michael Berenbaum, founding project director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., provided teachers with a historical overview of the Holocaust. He noted that in the 1930s the Jews in Germany had mixed reactions to Hitler’s growing persecution of their communities. “Some turned inward, while others turned to Zionism and went to Palestine. Many families went to more liberal European nations like Holland, not realizing that Hitler would invade them.”

He added that Jews were not the only targets of the Nazis. Other victims included political dissidents, trade unionists, gypsies, the handicapped, and male homosexuals, who were regarded as an “embarrassment to the notion of a great Aryan race,” Berenbaum said. “The only ‘voluntary’ victims of the Holocaust were Jehovah’s Witnesses, because they wouldn’t swear allegiance to the state. But if they renounced their religion, they could leave the concentration camp.”

Berenbaum also told a little-known story about the aftermath of Kristallnacht, the burning of Jewish synagogues and stores on November 9-10, 1938. Two days later, Nazi officials met with leaders of German insurance companies. “The burned buildings were all insured,” he said. “The insurance companies discussed paying the claims to keep getting business, but the Nazis didn’t want those losses passed on to other Germans. So they came up with a solution that the insurers would pay for the damage, but Jews were not allowed to file a claim. So the only people who collected were the owners who lived abroad.”

“Jews were not the only targets of the Nazis. Other victims included political dissidents, trade unionists, gypsies, the handicapped, and male homosexuals, who were regarded as an “embarrassment to the notion of a great Aryan race.”

– Dr. Michael Berenbaum

The School of Education sponsored the institute in cooperation with The Jack and Harriet Rosenfeld Foundation Program in Jewish Education; Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Division of Social Sciences and Life Skills; and WLRN Public Radio and Television for South Florida.
Girls Celebrate Life at YES Camp

From fitness activities and making crafts to performing in a talent show, the Youth Empowerment Summer (YES) Camp provided an important learning experience for girls ages 6 to 14. Community agency Urgent, Inc., in partnership with the School of Education, organized the annual summer camp program, according to Emily Gunter and Shedia Nelson, the camp managers. “The University of Miami campus offers all the best of Miami in one place,” Gunter said. “It’s a great program for the girls.” Other supporters of YES Camp included The Children’s Trust, Miami-Dade County, City of Miami, Woman’s Fund of Miami-Dade County, the University of Miami Governmental Affairs program, and the School of Communication.
Students THINK Healthy Thoughts!

A multiphase research program for high school students is paying off in better health. Participants in the summer Translational Health in Nutrition and Kinesiology (THINK) program hosted by the Department of Kinesiology and Sport Sciences (KIN) are doing well by several measures.

“We looked at the 2010 program participants and found significant improvements in aerobic fitness, muscular-skeleton strength, and endurance,” said Arlette Perry, professor and KIN chair. “We tested them again in December, and found they were still above baseline. We think it is the combination of elements that has helped them maintain their improvements.”

This summer, Liz Skidmore, who recently completed her doctoral program, and Chantis Mantilla, a master’s degree student, helped manage the THINK program, which involved about 100 students in physical fitness activities, nutrition education, and discussions on attitudes toward exercise. About 18 high school volunteers, who had been through the program before, came back to help with the current students.

“We want to educate them in a way that they can apply to their own health and fitness,” said Skidmore. “They learn about fun, healthy things they can do in their everyday lives, as well as the science behind the concepts.”

Having an educational component as well as fitness and nutrition is critical, added Perry, noting that many of the department’s faculty members teach aspects of health and well-being to the KIN participants. “This program, which has been funded by The Children’s Trust for three years, really works,” said Perry. “We want to expand it and are exploring options for next summer.”
High School Students are ‘Upward Bound’

About 75 Miami-Dade high school students spent the summer learning about careers and polishing their skills in Upward Bound, a six-week residential program hosted by the School of Education.

“The goal of our program is to get students through high school and into college and graduate school,” said Marie K. Grimes-Davis, director, Trio-Upward Bound Scholars Program. “Our studies show that we have great outcomes.”

For more than 40 years, the national Upward Bound program has been providing support to high school students from ages 14 to 18. When the students enter college, the Trio Program provides continuing support for another two years. This summer the students went to Pensacola in July for the Upward Bound Olympics, competing in debate, sports, and other activities. “We are very proud of how well our students are doing,” said Grimes-Davis.

That includes Nykeah Cohen, a 2002 Upward Bound program graduate, who is now a student at the University of Miami School of Law. She received a $10,000 scholarship from the law firm of Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton, which is awarded to one minority law student who has completed the Litigation Skills program and has expressed an interest in trial advocacy. Cohen was also recognized with the Thomas Ewald Memorial Award, which is given each semester to the student in Litigation Skills I who best exemplifies a devotion to high standards and ethical conduct.
The School of Education honored the following students at the Dean’s Awards Ceremony on May 11.

**School of Education Award for Scholarship**

- Michael Weisleder
  Kinesiology and Sport Sciences

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Award for Scholarship Studies**

- Delia Prieto

**Department of Teaching and Learning TAL Award for Scholarship**

- Jennifer Olesiewicz

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies**

- Carolyn Garwood
  Award for Service
- Rachel Becker
  Educational and Psychological Studies

**Department of Kinesiology and Sport Sciences**

- Outstanding Master's Student Award in Counseling Psychology
  Emily Lovern

- Outstanding Master's Student Award in Exercise Physiology
  Emma Steppe

- Dr. Harry Mallios Award for the Outstanding Master's Student in Sport Administration
  Alena Christiansen

- Award for the Outstanding Master's Student in Exercise Physiology
  Craig Flanagan

- Thomas S. Miller Award for Outstanding Doctoral Student in Exercise Physiology
  Michael Williams

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Research, Measurement and Evaluation**

- Ying Jin

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Higher Education**

- Isis Artze-Vega

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Award for Excellence in Human and Social Development**

- Deborah Perez

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Meaningful Life Award**

- Scott McNeil

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Dean’s Dozen Honorary Association**

- Hannah Maurer
- Monica Vandervoort

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies**

- Jonathan De Leon

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Master's Student Award in Higher Education**

- Samantha Gil

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Counseling Psychology**

- Meghan Owenz

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Higher Education**

- Thomas S. Miller Award for Outstanding Doctoral Student in Exercise Physiology
  David Edwards

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Award for Service**

- Rachel Becker
  Educational and Psychological Studies

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies**

- Excellence in Associate Teaching Award
  Silvia Rodriguez
  Amber Howard
  Robin Posner
  Danielle Agresti
  Stephanie Spy

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Dean’s Dozen Honorary Association**

- Hannah Maurer
- Monica Vandervoort

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Master's Student Award in Counseling Psychology**

- Emily Lovern

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Master's Student Award in Exercise Physiology**

- Emma Steppe

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Counseling Psychology**

- Meghan Owenz

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Higher Education**

- Isis Artze-Vega

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Award for Excellence in Human and Social Development**

- Deborah Perez

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Meaningful Life Award**

- Scott McNeil

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Research, Measurement and Evaluation**

- Ying Jin

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Outstanding Doctoral Student Award in Higher Education**

- Isis Artze-Vega

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Award for Excellence in Human and Social Development**

- Deborah Perez

**Department of Educational and Psychological Studies Meaningful Life Award**

- Scott McNeil

**Department of Kinesiology and Sport Sciences**

- Nancy Melnyk
  Award for Excellence in Athletic Training
- Brittney Steinbruch
  Award for Excellence in Sport Administration
- David Edwards
  Dr. Harry Mallios Award for the Outstanding Master's Student in Sport Administration
- Alena Christiansen
  Award for the Outstanding Master's Student in Exercise Physiology
- Craig Flanagan
  Award for the Outstanding Master's Student in Exercise Physiology
- Michael Williams
  Thomas S. Miller Award for Outstanding Doctoral Student in Exercise Physiology
**In Memoriam:**  
Lou Kleinman

Lou Kleinman, former dean of the School of Education, passed away on July 24 in West Palm Beach at the age of 87. “Dr. Kleinman was a super person who helped advance our school,” said program coordinator Chris Gilbert, who served as his secretary during the 1970s.

Kleinman succeeded John Beery as the school’s dean in the early 1970s and served nearly two decades. “He was formerly dean of the School of Education and Allied Professions at New York University,” said Caroline Garwood, who was the school’s department chair and associate dean during Kleinman’s tenure. “He was instrumental in diversifying the school’s programs, including the development of a physical therapy program, which is now part of the Miller School of Medicine.” Garwood added, “He worked very hard, but maintained a good sense of humor. I learned a lot from him, and he made a significant contribution to the school.”

Robert Simpson, who was a department chair in the 1970s and succeeded Kleinman as dean in 1988, said his predecessor was a friendly, highly personable educational leader. “Lou always encouraged us to do what we needed to do for the good of the school,” Simpson said.

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**President Obama Appointing Castor to Scholarship Board**

President Barack Obama recently announced his intent to appoint Betty Castor, M.Ed. ’58, to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Castor is the former president of the University of South Florida in Tampa, serving from 1994 until 1999. Prior to her tenure as president, Castor was the Florida Commissioner of Education for seven years and the first woman ever elected to the Florida Cabinet.

In her role as commissioner of education, Castor worked with the state Legislature to fund the first statewide program for early childhood education, and helped develop the Healthy Kids program, which provides health insurance for low-income children enrolled in public schools.

Castor has held other leadership positions in education, most recently as the executive director of the Patel Center for Global Solutions at USF. She is a member of the Tampa Bay Committee on Foreign Relations and the Society of International Business Fellows. Castor was also executive director of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). She began her educational career as a secondary school teacher in Uganda, East Africa, and continues to support the Teachers for East Africa Alumni Foundation.

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Dear Dr. Neff,

I wanted you to know that my school voted me “Rookie Teacher of the Year” in May. In addition, I worked with the lowest functioning students in the county, yet data placed those students third in gains on FCAT writing. I am the only 4th grade teacher at my school, and we were competing against all the large public schools. I had a gain in writing of 22% since last year. I just want to thank the University again for helping me finish my degree. I am truly paying UM’s generosity forward – working with the "in risk" youth that my school is dedicated to serving.

Tamara Alvarado  
Instructor, Kingsbury Academy  
Ocala, Florida
Graduate Students Connect At Teach For America Reception

For participants in the nationwide Teach For America program, the School of Education master’s degree Education and Social Change program offers an ideal combination of in-depth learning and hands-on experience.

“Teaching can be very challenging the first year,” said Sasha Mungal, who has taught second grade students at Morningside Elementary School for the past two years. “But it’s very satisfying when you see the growth – a child who can finally read.” Prior to joining Teach For America, Mungal was active in youth advocacy and community organizing. “I’ve really enjoyed the school’s master’s program, which covers a lot of issues relating to multicultural education and complements what I’m learning in the classroom. It’s a perfect fit for me.”

Pete Haas was finishing his senior year at Georgetown University majoring in healthcare policy and management when Teach For America recruited him. He came to Miami and began teaching 8th grade science at José de Diego Middle School and discovered a personal passion for education. “Enrolling in the school’s program was a natural step,” he added. “Getting the academic perspective has been very relevant to my role as a teacher.”

For Morayo Faleyimu, a first-grade teacher at Gateway Elementary School in Homestead, the School of Education’s program helped her decide on a career in teaching. “The master’s program gave me a lot of practical knowledge I could bring to the classroom,” she said. “It had a great impact on my students, and it really sparked a fire in me. Now, I’m planning to stay in this field and keep on helping students.”

(Top) The Dean, faculty, and recent graduates of the Education and Social Change master’s degree program at the awards reception.

(Right) Professor Beth Harry, center, with Pete Haas, left, and John Planisek.
The Haiti Project: Helping to Rebuild a Society

From training healthcare workers and counselors to providing hands-on support, students and faculty from the School of Education are actively involved in helping Haiti recover from the devastating January 2010 earthquake.

“We have received incredible support from the Haitian-Americans in our community,” said Guerda Nicolas, professor and chair, Department of Educational and Psychological Studies, and a native of Haiti. “That volunteer support has been crucial because they are very familiar with the cultural nuances.”

The Haiti Project is a partnership with the Ministry of Health of Haiti and Justinien University Hospital in Cap Haitien, the nation’s second largest public hospital. It includes the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health in the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, as well as the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

“‘We are taking a community-based approach to a social intervention program,’” she said. “‘We don’t want to impose our values on them – we want to make an effective intervention based on cultural strengths.’”

One key goal of the Haiti Project is to increase the mental health services capacity of the staff at Justinien Hospital, said Casta Guillaume, a graduate student in the school’s Community and Social Change Master’s Degree Program. The school’s team spends about a week in Haiti, training about 30 professionals at a time, added Guillaume, who has been providing research support, thanks to a grant from the University’s Center for Latin American Studies.

“It’s all about building capacity within the community,” she said. “It’s very rewarding to see the results.”
A team of five University of Miami students in the School’s Sport Administration program took the checkered flag ahead of 11 competing universities in the spring 2011 edition of the NASCAR Kinetics: Marketing in Motion competition. The UM team placed first, trailed by Oklahoma State University and Coastal Carolina University.

The NASCAR Kinetics competition consisted of two marketing innovation case studies and an official viewing party for a NASCAR race. The UM team was the top performer in both case studies and received the highest marks for its ‘M&Ms Makes Race Day Fun’ viewing party held at Smoke’t Southern Kitchen & Tap across from the Coral Gables campus.

“We felt confident the whole time” said team leader Justin Leiser, “but we didn’t expect anything; we knew the competition was going to be very close.” A senior from Clearwater, Leiser utilized classroom knowledge as well as insight he gained during past internships with Homestead-Miami Speedway and International Speedway Corporation’s corporate marketing team.

“It was an amazing opportunity to put experience into action and provide NASCAR and its partners with creative marketing ideas. We worked well as a team, threw a fantastic viewing party, and to be declared the winner is a huge thrill for us.”

The winning participants also included senior Alex Bryant of Durham, NC, a past public relations intern of Homestead-Miami Speedway, as well as senior Ethan Alpern of Encino, CA, sophomore Lucas Schutt of Trumansburg, NY and senior Matt Small of Rutherford, NJ, all of whom volunteered during NASCAR’s Ford Championship Weekend last November.

“We really enjoyed the chance to partner with the team at Homestead-Miami and greatly appreciated their promotional guidance and support with our party” said Bryant. “Their expertise and advice added a lot to our experience and definitely helped push us over the top.”

In addition to a promotional partnership with Homestead-Miami Speedway, the team successfully activated NASCAR Official Partners M&Ms and Coca-Cola at the viewing party and completed case studies focused on NASCAR sponsors Growth Energy and Nationwide Insurance.

NASCAR developed NASCAR Kinetics: Marketing in Motion in 2009 with the mission of educating college students across the nation and exposing them to the NASCAR brand. This enriching program provides college students with hands-on learning experience from professionals in the world of motorsports.
Publications and Research Papers


**Pérez Benítez, C. I., Zlotnick, C., Stout, R., Lou, F., Dyck, I., Weisberg, R., and Keller, M.B.** In press. 5 Years Longitudinal Study of PTSD in Primary Care Patients. *Psychopathology*


**Prilleltensky, I., & Stead, G.** (in press). Critical psychology and work. In D. Blustein (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of psychology and work*. Oxford University Press.

Conference Presentations


Counseling Psychology Student’s Essay Published in APA Newsletter

The following essay by Daniel K. Birichi, a doctoral student in counseling psychology, was published in the summer newsletter of the American Psychology Association Division 44. His essay focused on his experience presenting his work at the National Multicultural Conference and Summit in Seattle, last winter.

Interplay of Multiculturalism and Psychological Science Reinforced Research Ethics
By Daniel Birichi

As an international student, I felt extremely privileged to have received the APA ethics and Division 44 Travel award to attend the National Multicultural Conference and Summit. It really exemplified APA’s commitment not only to recognize ethnic and racial minorities, but also to respect the presence of its global members. As a burgeoning researcher, the theme of multiculturalism and its interplay with psychological science throughout the conference reinforced the rationale for the research that is important to me and the imperative of consideration of ethics in sexual minority research.

There are various ethical issues relating to studies of sexual minorities. While some are more overt, there are others that may go unnoticed or unchallenged. More overt ethical issues are conversion therapy or informed consent in research. Issues such as informed consent are contained within the ethics codes, and APA has a resolution critiquing conversion therapy (1998). Perhaps more insidious, and thus deserving attention as well, are the ways that heterosexism affects research (Herek, Kimmel, Amaro, & Melton, 1991).

I believe it to be an ethical issue that sexual orientation is often left out of demographic data in studies or not even considered to be data worth collecting. For example, various studies indicate that there may a higher prevalence of mental disorders in lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults (King, Semlyen, Tai, Killaspy, Osborn, Popelyuk, & Nazareth, 2008; Cochran, Sullivan & Mays, 2003). Research suggests that these prevalence rates might be attributed to oppression or minority stress (Meyers, 1995).

However, many studies do not consider these variables in their sample; a loss for the literature in LGBT research. It may be our ethical duty to consider whether there are justifiable reasons to exclude this information from studies or whether it is simply heterosexist bias. As sexual minorities are a historically oppressed group, the ethics of propagating research that might be used to further oppress must be weighed. A focus on well-being and strengths in sexual minorities despite stress and adversity should be further explored.

Attending the conference allowed me the opportunity to meet, discuss, and be provided feedback from experienced professionals in the field. It was truly an invaluable experience that I will be taking me with me as I progress in my career. This award highlighted for me the importance of how ethics permeates all facets of the field, and how as a young professional involved in sexual minority research I need to take on my own mandate to make sure that I’m always aware of this. This award has provided me with a support network of mentors who will be guiding me to become an ethically sound psychologist, for which I am extremely grateful.