



## DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Georgia State University

[psychology.gsu.edu](http://psychology.gsu.edu)

Winter, 2015 NEWSLETTER

## Dr. Julia Perilla's Journey



### Message from the chair

This fall marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the graduate program in Psychology at GSU. We started with a small master's program, and have grown into very large and strong doctoral program. Enrollment this fall is the largest ever: 119 Ph.D. students across seven concentrations! And Psychology is held up as one of the strongest doctoral programs in the university. At this marker in our development, we are both planning events to celebrate the 'birth' of the doctoral program (stay tuned!), and working hard to attract a greater number of highly qualified applicants to all of our doctoral concentrations, improve our preparation of graduate students for a range of careers, and build a post-doctoral infrastructure that will allow us to better prepare future faculty members and professionals. Key to these efforts is recruiting high caliber faculty, and we have had great success in doing so this year (see page 2 for more details). Three new faculty joined the department this fall: Assistant Professor Sharee Light, Associate Professor Michael Beran, and Professor David Smith. In January, Assistant Professor Eyal Aharoni will join the faculty. Welcome!



Each year, the recipient of the Department of Psychology's *Outstanding Diversity Teaching Award* is asked to give a talk or lead a workshop in the spring semester to help all of our faculty to become more aware and more effective in teaching the diverse student body at Georgia State. In her address, 2014 honoree Dr. **Julia Perilla** recounted the formation and growth of *Caminar Latino* (Latino Journey)—from its inception as a support group for Latina women who had experienced domestic violence, to 25 years later when it has worked with more than 1,200 women, over 600 men, and almost 2,500 children and teens. She described the ways in which her own understanding of social justice and privilege has been changed by the ongoing experience. The text below is excerpted from her talk:

"Although I did not realize it then, Sister Barbara [Harrington, the Catholic nun who suggested the original support group] and each of the women, men and children with whom I have worked at Caminar Latino were teaching me about social justice and human rights. Learning about their lives, their struggles, their hopes, their attainments despite incredible odds made me realize in a very tangible way how important it is to be open to learn from each person with whom we work, regardless of their level of education. They also taught me about privilege and the concomitant responsibility to use that privilege on behalf of those who lack access to this commodity. One of my favorite things to hear from students (both graduate and undergraduate, from GSU and other universities) is that their work at Caminar Latino has allowed them to understand the intricate connection that is necessary to own their privilege and decide to do something that may change the life of people in positive ways....I think that when Sister Barbara invited me to see domestic violence among immigrant Latino families, she was in her own way, saying the same thing that Paulo Freire [Brazilian educator well known for his campaign on behalf of literacy throughout the world] wrote about so eloquently. As a Latina woman who was in the process of obtaining a graduate degree, I had privilege that other Latinas did not have and so I had to figure out ways in which to harness the tremendous potential and important knowledge of the women, men, and children with whom we have worked for the last 25 years."

The full text of Dr. Perilla's Outstanding Diversity Teaching Award lecture is available on the departmental webpage ([psychology.gsu.edu](http://psychology.gsu.edu)).

### Gifts that keep giving!

As we enter the traditional gift-giving season, it is worth remembering the many ways that your contributions can help the students, staff and faculty of the psychology department. The awards and recruitment activities highlighted in this newsletter illustrate just some of the ways that your generous gifts to the Psychology Department and the College of Arts and Sciences help to advance our educational, research and service missions, as well as our community outreach efforts. Faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends of the department are encouraged to make tax-deductible, year-end donations to one of the foundation accounts that allow us to continue these awards and scholarships, and perhaps to expand our support of programs like those described here:

*Psychology Department (02153)*

*Psychology Graduate Student Award Endowment (02E87)*

*Language & Literacy Doctoral Fund (020001)*

*Language Research Center Endowment (02968)*

*Bailey Wade Fellowship (02291)*

*Theresa Nash Bernstein Scholarship (02G12)*

*Duane M. Rumbaugh Fellowship (02D45)*

*Doctoral Fellowship in Trauma Intervention (02908)*

*Elizabeth and Michael Kenny Scholarship (020177)*

Or contact Chris Henrich for information about establishing a new award, fellowship, scholarship, or endowment. See <http://giving.gsu.edu> to make a tax-deductible year-end contribution by credit card, cash, check, or payroll deduction.

### See page 2 for...

- New Faces and New Roles  
- Student, Staff and Faculty Accomplishments



"Like" the undergraduate and graduate pages on Facebook.

Have you seen the new psychology department webpage? Want more psychology news? Visit the "News" link or read *Grey Matters*, the GSU Psi Chi Undergraduate Newsletter at <http://psychology.gsu.edu>.



**Transitions...** One constant in the 50 years of the psychology department's history as a graduate program is *CHANGE*. Students enroll and students graduate. Staff join our team and others leave for new opportunities. Every year it seems we welcome new colleagues to the faculty (34 in the last decade alone!) and we join with longtime professors to celebrate their retirements from academic responsibilities. This year is no different, as we congratulate **John Peterson** (1974, U. Michigan) on his retirement and transition to Professor Emeritus. Dr. Peterson joined our faculty in 1993 as an associate professor, and was promoted to professor in 2003. As emeritus professor he will remain active in the department, mentoring students and conducting research supported by ongoing grants. The same can be said of Professor Emerita **Lauren Adamson**, (1977, U. California, Berkeley) who retired last year. Dr. Adamson remains very active in grant-supported scholarship and mentoring. She joined the department as an assistant professor in 1980, and was promoted to associate with tenure (1985) and professor (1991). During her tenure, she served as Department Chair, Associate Dean, and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

As those colleagues begin new chapters in their careers, we welcome five new faculty members to the department this year. Assistant Professor **Sharee Light** (2013, U. Wisconsin, Madison) is a clinical neuropsychologist who studies the influence of pre-frontal cortex in the modulation of emotional experience. Assistant Professor **Eyal Aharoni** (2009, U. California, Santa Barbara) joins the department in January as a Second Century Initiative (2CI) hire in Neuroethics. He investigates the prediction and deterrence of antisocial behavior and the influence of extra-legal factors on legal decision making. Associate Professor **Michael Beran** (2002, Georgia State U.) studies self-control, memory, and many other aspects of cognition in humans, chimpanzees, monkeys, and other animals. **J. David Smith** (1982, U. Pennsylvania) is a 2CI hire in Primate Social Cognition, Evolution and Behavior. Hired at the rank of professor, Dr. Smith is cognitive psychologist who studies concept formation and metacognition in humans and other animals. Another professor, **John Horgan**, (2000, University College, Cork) was hired by the Global Studies Institute with a joint appointment in psychology. Professor Horgan studies the processes through which people become involved in (and disengage from) terrorism, as well as the psychological mechanisms through which people cope with commitment to violent extremist groups.

## Congratulations!

*Recognition of student, staff and faculty excellence*



*Elizabeth & Michael Kenny Scholarship (Outstanding Psychology Major)*



*Richard Morrell Outstanding Graduate Student in Psychology Award*  
**Andrea Barton-Hulsey**

**Kristin French**



*Outstanding Psychology Honors Student Award*  
**Julie Trapani**

*Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award*  
**Lauren Stites & Kate Talbot**



*Doctoral Fellowship in Trauma Intervention*  
**Jessica Morgan**

*Walter F. Daves Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award*  
**Holly Adams**



*Bailey M. Wade Fellowship*  
**Alesha Bond & William Whitham**

*John Warkentin Award*  
**Lillie Macias**



*Duggins Peer Award for Outstanding Service*  
**Irene Daboin**

*Theresa Nash Bernstein Scholarship in International Travel*  
**Asia Lee**



*College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Faculty Diversity Award*  
**Dr. Ciara Smalls Glover**

*College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Early Career Award*  
**Dr. Kevin Swartout**



*Outstanding Psychology Staff Award*  
**Kristy Hill**

*2015 Outstanding Diversity Teaching Award*  
**Kim Darnell**

