

2012-13 Student Achievements



The honors thesis written by Christina Thai entitled "Hypodescent and Hyperdescent: Does a neighbor influence the amount of prejudice?" will be our department's nominee for the university Phi Beta Kappa Award. Christina's advisor is Matt Lee. The selection committee described Christina's "literature review as well-written and very comprehensive. Her methodology was impressive and creative, and the project has interesting implications for stereotyping for both the target of the stereotype and the perceiver. They said that this project was a huge undertaking and she executed it very well." The selection committee also reported that Angela Perta's thesis entitled "Attention Capture of Evolutionarily Relevant Stimuli" was a very close second. Angela's advisor is Krisztina Jakobsen. This thesis was also an impressive project and well-written paper. Unfortunately, our department is only permitted to recommend one thesis for the university award.

Psychology students conducted the 7th annual "Campus Camp," a grief camp for children ages 6 to 12 on Saturday, April 13, 2013. Sixteen campers spent time with nine graduate students recruited by Chi Sigma Iota, and nine undergraduate JMU students recruited from Dr. Evans' PSYC 308: Death and Dying and Psyc 497: Leadership and Service capstone courses. The JMU students were paired with children as their "buddies" for the day. Niki Crump and Shari Lockaby served as co-coordinators for the event, and it was a great day for all involved.

Psychology Major Alumnus Nick Curtis was recognized at the annual VPA conference in Wintergreen as the 2012 Virginia Academy of School Psychologists Outstanding Graduate Student. After graduation, Nick continued in JMU's Graduate Program in School Psychology, served as a teaching assistant for undergraduate courses for several years, and now teaches his own sections of Psyc 210 and 211. [More information](#)

The story of the recently published Honors Thesis competed by JMU Psychology Major Alumnus Jessa Lampe is featured on our [web site](#).

JMU Psychology Alumnus Katie (Loveless) Zopp was recently named Richmond's teacher of the year! For an example of a story about Katie see the story on [NBC in Richmond](#).

For updates on the achievements of other JMU Psychology Alumni see our recently updated [class notes](#).

Day with the Dukes. On Saturday, September 8, 2012, over 50 Psychology majors volunteered through the new Psychology Service Organization for the Sixth Annual Special Olympics "Day with the Dukes." The Special Olympians interacted with Psychology majors, student athletes, and other members of the JMU community. For more information on this exciting event, please see the [Breeze coverage](#).

A story about Psychology Peer Advisor Lukas Ace has been featured on the JMU website as an example of a highly successful student. [More information](#)

A story about Psychology Peer Advisor Ericka Welsh has been featured on the JMU website as an example of a highly successful student. [More information](#)

Psychology Symposium. The Psychology Symposium held Monday, April 22, 2013 was a tremendous success. The following individuals received awards for their excellent work:

- **Angela Perta.** The Processing of Evolutionarily Relevant Stimuli. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Krisztina Jakobsen. (The Dean's Award for Outstanding Thesis Poster).
- **Katelyn Cutts.** Predictive Factors of Marijuana Use Among College Students. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Monica Reis-Bergan. (Department of Psychology Award for Outstanding Thesis Poster).
- **Matt Clasen, Sancho Sequeira, Josh Gross, Matthew Meccariello, Melanie Vassallo, Caroline Cooke, Sarah Houhoulis, Alex Jeter, Drew Williams, & Christine Yohn.** Effects of Brief Paradoxical Sleep Deprivation on Radial Arm Maze Performance. Faculty Advisors: Dr. Jeff Dyche & Dan Holt. (Dean's Award for Outstanding Research Poster)
- **Jessica Odell, Rebecca Keegan, D.V. Stark, & Natashia Martin.** Effects of Full Scale IQ and Educational Attainment on Length of Service in Police Officers. Faculty Advisor: Dr. JoAnne Brewster. (Department of Psychology Award for outstanding Research Poster).
- **Tim Adams, Rachel Browne, Sarah Janser, Hunter Kelly, Kathryn Vila, & Laura Wiechecki.** Social Norm Intervention to Reduce Phone Related Distracted Driving. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Natalie Lawrence. (Department of Psychology Award for outstanding Research Poster).
- **Lauren Muller.** Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Monica Reis-Bergan. (Dean's Award for outstanding Field Placement or Practicum Poster).
- **Katelyn Cutts.** The Effectiveness of Domestic Violence Shelters. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Joann Grayson. (Department of Psychology Award for outstanding Field Placement of Practicum Poster).
- **Jacqueline Skutka.** Western State Mental Hospital Field Placement. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Monica Reis-Bergan. (Department of Psychology Award for outstanding Field Placement of Practicum Poster).

Research Award. Congratulations to Psychology Major **Megan Roth** for being one of two recipients of the Fraternity and Sorority Life Excellence in Research Award. Megan won this award because of the research she completed in the Department of Psychology. [More information](#)

Students Giving Back. Two sections of Judy West's GPSYC 160 class contributed \$575, in addition to toys, books, diapers, and other necessities to First Step in Harrisonburg as a Holiday Project in the Fall 2012 semester.

Psi Chi Grant. Cecilia Bergeria received a national grant to support her thesis project "An Examination of the Impact of Exercise on Substance Use." (\$1,500).

Psi Chi Grant. Sancho Sequeira received a national grant to support his project "The Effect of Cocaine on Delay Discounting in the Spontaneously Hypertensive Rat." (\$1,200).

JMU Psychology Research Grants. The Department of Psychology is pleased to announce that the following students received grants to cover some of the expenses incurred to conduct their research projects:

- **Catherine Carlton** has received a grant in support of the research project "The Relation between Athlete Status and Stress, Social Support and Social Well Being." (\$60.00)
- **Sarah Janser, Hunter Kelly, Timothy Adams, Rachel Browne, Katherine Vila, and Laura Wiechecki** have received a grant in support of the research project "An Intervention to Reduce Phone-Related Distracted Driving." (\$259.62)
- **Cecilia Bergeria** has received a grant in support of the research project "The Impact of Exercise Intervention on Substance Use." (\$500)
- **Katelyn Cutts** has received a grant in support of the research project "Predictive Factors of Marijuana Use." (\$188)
- **Matthew Classen** has received a grant in support of the research project "The Effect of Cocaine on Delay Discounting in the Spontaneously Hypertensive Rat" (\$500)
- **Christina Thai** has received a grant in support of the research project "Hypodescent and Neighbors." (\$100)
- **Ericka Welsh** has received a grant in support of her honors thesis project, "Stereotype Threat in African Americans" (\$100)

JMU Psychology Travel Grants. The Department of Psychology is pleased to announce that the following students received grants to cover some of the travel expenses incurred to present their research at professional conferences:

- **Sancho Sequeira, Matthew Clasen, and Tiffany Crosby** have received a grant to present "The Effect of Caffeine and REM Sleep Deprivation on Free Operant Responding" at the Southeastern Association for the Behavior Analysis in Columbia, SC. October 11-13, 2012.
- **Caroline Prendergast** has received a grant to present "Planting Seeds of Assessment: How Student Involvement Can Nurture Growth in Our Field" at the Virginia Assessment Group 2012 Annual Conference in Richmond, VA. November 14 – 16, 2012.
- **Zach Goble, Alexandra Bragg, Hannah Overberg, and Chelsea Rugel** have received a grant to present "Proximal Landmark Use in Foraging Behavior of *Peromyscus Maniculatus*" at the Eastern Psychological Association Annual Conference in New York City, NY. March 1 – 4, 2013.

- **Cecilia Bergeria and Daveon McMullen** have received a grant to present “Exercise Lapse Following a Cannabis Quit Attempt” at the Society for Behavioral Medicine in San Francisco, CA. March 20 – 23, 2013.
- **Jessica Jones** has received a grant to present “Emotional Contagion and Cognitions in Infancy” at the Southwestern Psychological Association Annual Conference in Fort Worth, TX. April 5 – 7, 2013.
- **Lauren Gerson, Hannah Holloway, and Benjamin Corbett** have received a grant to present “Influence of Romantic and Primal Imagery on Perceptions of Birth and Breastfeeding” at the Virginia Psychological Association in Richmond, VA. April 24 – 26, 2013.
- **Elaina Wampler** has received a grant to present “Techniques Used to Redirect Disruptive Behavior in Elementary School Children” at the Virginia Psychological Association in Richmond, VA. April 24 – 26, 2013.
- **Hunter Greer, Sarah Sheppard, Stephanie Smith, Chelsea Strumpell, and Thomas Verbanic** have received a grant to present “Peer Views of Accommodations for College Students with Disabilities” at the Virginia Psychological Association in Richmond, VA. April 24 – 26, 2013.
- **Katelyn Cutts** has received a grant to present “The Effectiveness of Domestic Violence Shelters” at the Virginia Psychological Association in Richmond, VA. April 24 – 26, 2013.
- **Rachel Koenig and Kaila Dey** have received a grant to present “Media Exposure and Perceptions of Pregnancy and Breast Feeding” at the Virginia Psychological Association in Richmond, VA. April 24 – 26, 2013.
- **Sarah Janser, Hunter Kelly, Timothy Adams, Rachel Browne, Katherine Vila, and Laura Wiechecki** have received a grant to present “An Intervention to Reduce Phone-Related Distracted Driving” at the Virginia Psychological Association in Richmond, VA. April 25, 2013.
- **Caroline Prendergast** has received a grant to present “AERA Undergraduate Student Education Research Training Workshop” at the American Educational Research Association Meeting in San Francisco. April 26-28, 2013.
- **Amanda Campbell** has received a grant to present “Increasing Student Understanding of Affirmative Action in College Admissions” at the American Educational Research Association Meeting in San Francisco. April 26-28, 2013.
- **Ariane Chretien** has received a grant to present “Depression and Attitudes Towards Medication” at the Association for Psychological Science Annual Conference in Washington DC. May 23 – 25, 2013.
- **Lauren Muller** has received a grant to present “The Relationship Between Personality, Capitalization, and Freshman Roommate Relationship Satisfaction” at the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, DC. May 23 – 26, 2013.
- **Chris Deitrick** has received a grant to present “Restorative Yoga Improves Psychological Well-Being and Physical Health” at the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, DC. May 23 – 26, 2013.
- **Caitlin Wilkinson** has received a grant to present “Sex-Role Stereotypes on Freshman Roommate Relationship Expectations” at the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, DC. May 23 – 26, 2013.
- **Sean McVay, JJ O’Malley, Ashley Shemery, Ashley Assgari, Andrew Tiry, Matt Clasen, Sancho Sequeira, Caroline Cooke, Chrissy Yohn, Sarah Houhoulais, and Drew Williams** have received a grant to present “Strategic Differences on a Radial Arm Maze Task in a Rodent Model of ADHD” at the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, DC. May 23 – 26, 2013.

- **Angela Perta, Lindsey Umstead, Sidney Cover, and Veronica Eisenmann** have received a grant to present “Human Faces Capture Attention More Efficiently than Animal Faces in Complex Arrays” at the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, DC. May 23-26, 2013.
- **Gregory Farrell and Jacob Schmitz** have received a grant to present “To Shave or Not to Shave: Perceptions of Boldness and Race” at the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, DC. May 23-26, 2013.
- **Maria Ayala, Caroline Cooke, and Nate Kelmers** have received a grant to present “Home Court Advantage: Sleep as a Predictor of Athletic Performance” at the American Academy of Sleep Medicine” conference in Baltimore, MD. June 1-5, 2013.
- **Sean McVay, JJ O’Malley, Ashley Shemery, Ashley Assgari, Andrew Tiry, Matt Clasen, Sancho Sequeira, Tiffany Crosby, and Lauren Whitehurst** have received a grant to present “Effects of Brief Paradoxical Sleep Deprivation on Radial Arm Maze Performance in SHRS” at the American Academy of Sleep Medicine conference in Baltimore, MD. June 1-5, 2013.
- **Kate Hall, David Elliot and Nancy Rhodes** have received a grant to present “Effects of Chronic Marijuana Use on Sleep, Circadian Rhythms and Cognitive Performance” at the American Academy of Sleep Medicine conference in Baltimore, MD. June 1-5, 2013.
- **Sarah Yi** has received a grant to present “Qualitative Reports of Multicultural Learning in Psychology Students” at the American Psychological Association in Honolulu, Hawaii. July 31-August 4, 2013.
- **Christina Thai, Matthew Ace, and Maria Ayala** have received a grant to present “Asian Americans’ Well Being and Experiences of Racial Microaggression” at the American Psychological Association in Honolulu, Hawaii. July 31-August 4, 2013.

[2011-12 Student Accomplishments](#)