IT TAKES A VILLAGE...

We have a lot to catch up on, a year since our last newsletter – talented new faculty, outstanding achievements, and exciting advances in research, undergraduate education, and community engagement. Undoubtedly, a highlight of the last year was Dr. Carol Barnes’ election to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), a first for the Psychology Department and one of only fourteen current NAS memberships at the University of Arizona! Congratulations, Carol!

Also notable this last year was the completion of our seven-year Academic Program Review in January 2018. The report from the review panel, which included top psychology professors from across the country, highlighted the great strengths of the Psychology Department in research, teaching, outreach, and development, and diversity. Our reviewers were particularly impressed with our collaborative and collegial atmosphere, our emphasis on consensus-building and problem-solving, and our entrepreneurial spirit. They wrote “The vulcanization that characterizes many departments nationwide has been broken down, leading to a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts—with research initiatives characterized by interdisciplinarity and cross-cutting educational themes that harness strengths, relate to health and well-being (mind, brain, lives), and promote outreach and engagement.”

It really does take a village – collectively our faculty, staff, postdocs, and graduate students have contributed their energy, enthusiasm, and countless hours of work towards making our Department truly outstanding. Now we’re looking ahead to the next seven years, so that we can continue to find innovative ways to build excellence into everything we do.

Lee Ryan, Ph.D.
Psychology Department Head

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WELCOME NEW FACULTY

EVE ISHAM
Assistant Professor
I am very excited to be part of the Psychology Department and the McKnight Brain Institute at the University of Arizona. My research interests include temporal awareness and time perception, action agency and intentionality. While these cognitive processes are essential to our daily lives, we have a limited understanding of how they operate and how they may be altered or compromised under different mental or health states. To further investigate, my lab employs techniques such as EEG, eye tracking, and TMS to observe the psychological and neural mechanisms of these cognitive processes. I feel fortunate to be building my research program here at UofA alongside esteemed colleagues and at an institute with a strong foundation in cognitive science, neuroscience, and consciousness. I very much look forward to calling Tucson home.

ANDREW PERKINS
Teaching Faculty
I am a graduate of the University of Arizona Clinical Psychology Program who completed an internship and one-year postdoctoral fellowship in forensic psychology at California State Hospitals - Patton. One of my favorite things about being a graduate student was teaching and working with students, and I am excited and honored to be joining the department as a faculty member. My research has focused on issues at the intersection of law and psychology, particularly as they apply to illegal sexual behaviors. In addition to my University duties, I also have a small practice in forensic psychology. When I am not teaching or doing clinical work my hobbies are board games, video games, travel, and (I'll be honest here) Netflix.

JEANMARIE BIANCHI
Teaching Faculty
I earned my Ph.D. here in Psychology at the University of Arizona under Dr. Jacobs with concentrations in Ethology and Evolutionary Psychology (EEP) and Cognition and Neural Systems (CNS). I spent the past year as an assistant professor at Wilson College, a private teaching-focused liberal arts college in PA before moving back to Tucson to join the UA, this time as teaching faculty. My teaching & research go hand in hand: I am very interested in the cognitive strengths of young people exposed to stressful early-life conditions. I enjoy teaching psychology to diverse groups of students as well as mentoring those interested in research. Outside of work, I enjoy being physically active, cooking, relaxing with family and friends, and traveling. I am very honored and excited to be back at the UofA!

ARNE EKSTROM
Associate Professor
I am thrilled to be joining the University of Arizona Psychology Department and the McKnight Brain Institute as an Associate Professor. As a former alum of UofA (master’s degree in neuroscience, 2001), I have a great appreciation for the innovative and “can-do” spirit that underlies much of the great research here. My research focuses on human spatial navigation, a historic strength of UofA psychology, and an important area of study because of how fundamental it is to our everyday lives. We employ techniques like high-resolution functional magnetic resonance imaging, encephalography (EEG), and patient work, all distinct strengths of UofA research. Our inter-disciplinary research — which has foundations in computer science (via virtual reality and neural networks), geographical science, cognitive science, linguistics, neurology, neurosurgery, and others — will benefit significantly from the collaborative and enterprising spirit of University of Arizona. I look forward to coming back to Tucson and introducing my family and lab to all the fun and excitement of the desert.
TOMAS “TOMMY” CABEZA DE BACA

Teaching Faculty

I am very privileged and excited to be back in the Southwest and teaching in the Department of Psychology at the University of Arizona. I’m a native of El Paso, Texas (BA in Psychology, University of Texas at El Paso) and a graduate of Family Studies and Human Development (MS and Ph.D.) from the University of Arizona. I spent the last four years as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, San Francisco, focusing on the social determinants of cardiovascular health. My teaching interests primarily center around statistics, focusing on an applied and active approach. In my free time, I love traveling, cooking, trying different restaurants (and posting pics to my food blog), and going to the gym.

MARISA MENCHOLA

Associate Professor of Practice

I am a graduate of the U of A Clinical Psychology program (Clinical Neuropsychology Track). For the last eight years, I was faculty in the College of Medicine, and for the last three, I directed the Psychology Internship in the Department of Psychiatry. I have a neuropsychology clinic in the Department of Neurology, where I supervise neuropsych externs. I am originally from Lima, Peru, and as a proud “First Cat” (first-generation college student), I am very passionate about higher education access, which is why I am working towards a Masters in Higher Ed. In my off-campus life, when I’m not bingeing movies at The Loft, I volunteer with the Alzheimer’s Association, Pima Council on Aging, and the Southern Arizona Psychological Association. I am absolutely thrilled to be back home in the Department of Psychology among such a fantastic group of faculty and students!

TAMMI WALKER

Associate Professor of Practice

It is my great pleasure to join the Psychology Department and the James E Rogers College of Law faculty. I am most excited to be a part of the effort to create opportunities for those interested in the intersection between psychology and the law. I am an experienced litigator and a trained research psychologist with an interest in procedural fairness and the administration of justice. I have a particular interest in using psychological theory and empirical research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, to challenge the validity of commonly held beliefs the often support legal decision-making. I could not imagine a better group of people with whom to work, nor could I imagine a better environment within which to produce policy-changing research.

Learn more about our new faculty and their research: psychology.arizona.edu

(From Left to Right): Tammi Walker, Ph.D., Tommy Cabeza De Baca, Ph.D., Eve Isham, Ph.D. and Arne Ekstrom, Ph.D. at the College of Science New Faculty Reception
Research once suggested small talk makes us unhappy - here’s why that’s not true

Few people admit to liking small talk. A banal conversation about the weather or repeating tales about your weekend to your colleagues may be fine in the office kitchen, but it’s not how we’d want the majority of our conversations to go. That’s why in 2010, when a paper was published in the journal Psychological Science that appeared to suggest that small talk was associated with feeling unhappy, it was widely covered by the media and absorbed by the public. The research team, led by psychology professor Matthias Mehl at The University of Arizona, gave 79 undergraduate students devices that would record intermittently for a short period of time throughout the day. They wore them for four days, then gave the devices back so the team could upload the files and build an acoustic diary.

Read the full article from Business Insider

Smoking and Lack of Exercise Linked to Early Death After Divorce

A new study by the University of Arizona points to two possible culprits: a greater likelihood of smoking after divorce and lower levels of physical activity. “We were trying to fill in the gap of evidence linking marital status and early mortality,” said UA psychology doctoral student Kyle Bourassa, lead author of the study, which is published in Annals of Behavioral Medicine. “We know marital status is associated with both psychological and physical health, and one route from divorce to health risk is through health behaviors, like smoking and exercise. We also know that health behaviors are often linked to psychological variables, like life satisfaction.” Bourassa and his UA colleagues David Sbarra and John Ruiz based their findings on data from the English Longitudinal Study of Aging, a long-term health study of adults over age 50 living in Great Britain. The study includes seven waves of data, collected from participants every two years beginning in 2002.

Read the full article from Neuroscience News
UA PSYCHOLOGY IN THE COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT COURSE BRINGS TOGETHER UNDERGRADS AND OLDER ADULTS

Elizabeth Glisky’s new Adult Development and Aging class this past Spring connected 20 senior undergrads with older adults in the Tucson community. The students visited with residents of retirement communities to learn about their lives. The students wrote up the life stories and published them in a book with individually-designed covers and photos, and presented them to each of their senior friends at the end of the semester. The project got rave reviews from both the students and the people they engaged with. Special thanks to graduate teaching assistant Cindy Woolverton, who looked after all the organization that was necessary to pull this off!

PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS IMPACT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WITH DONATIONS

Jeff Stone’s Social Psychology of Attitudes course requires students to apply course material to real-life situations. Students in the class recently went out to the Tucson community to educate people about food insecurity on campus, and to request donations for UA’s Campus Pantry, whose mission is to alleviate hunger in the UA Wildcat community by providing food assistance to those in need. Students developed their own sales campaigns and took their campaign door-to-door. The results were impressive, collecting over 400 pounds of food and 200 in cash donations. Thanks to Professor Stone and his class for making a difference in our community! To learn more about how you can support Campus Pantry, visit their website.

NEW IN UA PSYCHOLOGY
“BUDDIES PROGRAM” FOR ARIZONA ONLINE STUDENTS

In Spring 2018, Ashley Jordan, Assistant Professor of Practice and Director of Psychology’s Arizona Online, implemented a new program specifically designed for online Psychology students: The Buddies Program! The program was developed to allow students an opportunity to connect with each other and have an “accountability partner” to help each other stay on track with coursework. The Buddies Program is optional, however, research has shown that programs utilizing support partners or “buddies” increase an individual’s commitment to the program and overall success-rate compared to people without a “buddy.” For more information on our new buddy program, visit our website.
TWO NEW PSYCHOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Michelle (Rogers) Villegas-Gold Undergraduate Scholarship in Psychology

The Villegas-Gold Undergraduate Scholarship in Psychology was established by UA Psychology Alum Michelle Villegas-Gold to assist undergraduate students majoring in Psychology who are first-generation college students and are unlikely to receive funding to graduate, with an interest in pursuing a career in gender issues, sexual trauma, or mental health issues. The first recipient of this scholarship is Psychology undergrad Jacob Ybarra.

The John Weiner and Lynne Lehrman Weiner Memorial Scholarship

The John Weiner and Lynne Lehrman Weiner Memorial Scholarship was created by my husband Jim Sullivan and me, Sara Weiner, to honor my parents.

My mother’s father Philip R. Lehrman was a neurologist and psychoanalyst who practiced in New York City from the 1920s-1950s. Early in his career he had a five-year correspondence with Sigmund Freud hoping to be accepted as Freud’s personal student and analysand. Despite Freud’s poor health at the time, he eventually agreed and my grandfather went to Vienna, Austria in 1928 with my grandmother, my uncle Howard who was 6, and my mother who was 2. My grandfather spent a year studying with Freud and also took home movies of Freud, Freud’s family, and many of the psychoanalysts at that time. After my grandfather died, my mother worked for years to preserve these historic films, identify the people who appeared in the film, and turn the film into a documentary entitled “Sigmund Freud, His Family and Colleagues, 1928-1947” that premiered at the Freud Museum in Vienna in 1999 as part of a special year-long exhibit. My Mom then edited a book published in 2008 entitled “Sigmund Freud Through Lehrman’s Lens,” which includes the history of psychoanalysis in cities around the world at the time the films were taken.

My father’s family owned hotels in the Catskill Mountains in NY starting in 1919 and also later in Miami Beach. As air travel became more common in the 1950s, business declined and my father transitioned to teaching. Every weekend for five years he and the family drove 120 miles from upstate NY to NYC so he could complete his masters degree in history and English at NYU. My father was a dedicated, innovative, and beloved middle-school English teacher for over 25 years. One project, for which he received a grant, was to use New Yorker magazine cartoons to teach vocabulary; another was used to encourage reading -- Dad lined the back of his classroom with shelves of books from garage sales and donations. Students could take, and keep, as many books as they wanted! After my dad retired he turned his “Free Books” idea into a way to raise money through donations for the homeless in White Plains, NY for which he won numerous awards from the city, county, and state.

My husband Jim and I have called Tucson our home for 25 years. We are both psychologists - Jim is a Criminal Forensic Neuropsychologist and I am an Industrial and Organizational Psychologist and a member of the Advisory Board for the Department of Psychology at the U of A. Our daughter Alyssa Sullivan graduated with a BS in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science with a Psychology minor from the U of A in 2018 and is in her first year in the Clinical Psychology doctoral program at the University of Iowa. Our son Zachary is in 11th grade.

My parents would be thrilled to know this scholarship is going to help support an exemplary undergraduate student in Psychology. It is our family’s distinct pleasure to honor my parents by supporting the outstanding Department of Psychology!

Sara Weiner, Ph.D.

The first recipient of this scholarship is Psychology undergrad Erin Mamaril.

The Villegas-Gold Undergraduate Scholarship in Psychology was established by UA Psychology Alum Michelle Villegas-Gold to assist undergraduate students majoring in Psychology who are first-generation college students and are unlikely to receive funding to graduate, with an interest in pursuing a career in gender issues, sexual trauma, or mental health issues. The first recipient of this scholarship is Psychology undergrad Jacob Ybarra.
CAROL BARNES, PH.D., ELECTED TO THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Carol Barnes, University of Arizona Regents’ Professor of Psychology, Neurology, and Neuroscience, has been elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences, in recognition of her distinguished and continuing achievements in original research. Barnes is the only new member from Arizona, and only the 14th current member from the UA. Barnes, who holds the UA’s Evelyn F. McKnight Chair for Learning and Memory in Aging, is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking research on how the brain changes during the course of normal aging, and the consequences those changes have on memory and information processing.

"Over the course of her remarkable career Dr. Barnes has reshaped our understanding of the aging brain,” said UA President Robert C. Robbins. "She continues to do cutting-edge research that is fundamental to understanding how we can live longer and healthier lives, both physically and cognitively, and she has positioned the UA to be a worldwide leader in research on long-term human wellness. Dr. Barnes is a titan in her field, and I am very proud that she is being recognized in this way.”

“The election to the National Academy of Sciences is a great honor for me personally, especially because it indicates a scientific communitywide appreciation of the importance of understanding the neurobiology of brain aging and its impact on cognition,” said Barnes, who joined the UA Department of Psychology in 1990 and was named a Regents’ Professor in 2006.

Barnes has published hundreds of journal articles, has received numerous awards for her work, and has been continuously funded for her research by the National Institute on Aging since 1982. She also is a longtime member and past president of the Society for Neuroscience, the largest body of scientists in the world who study the brain.

"Carol has not only made groundbreaking contributions to the study of the aging brain, but her research literally established the field,” said Lee Ryan, professor and head of the UA Department of Psychology. "At a time when most people simply equated aging with deteriorating, Carol showed us that the aging brain is resilient – it’s constantly adapting, reshaping and rewiring. Disorders like dementia are not the inevitable endpoint of aging. This is an incredibly important and positive message that we owe to Carol’s work. She is not only an amazing scientist, but she is also a wonderful colleague and a dedicated mentor and educator. Many young neuroscientists around the globe – in particular, women neuroscientists – are indebted to Carol for her guidance and encouragement.”

JAMIE EDGIN, PH.D., AWARDED KOFFLER PRIZE

It is our great pleasure to announce that Dr. Jamie Edgin has been awarded the Henry and Phyllis Koffler Prize for her outstanding accomplishments in Public Service and Outreach. The award, with a prize of $10,000, was endowed by UA past president Dr. Henry Koffler to honor outstanding faculty. In his award letter, Provost Comrie wrote: “You have made extraordinary contributions to the community through service and advocacy for families dealing with developmental disorders with your well-established community partnerships, workshops, and community events.” Dr. Edgin’s research has changed our basic understanding of how memory and cognition is altered in individuals with developmental disabilities, and the interplay between memory and sleep disturbance for these individuals. In addition to her deep and abiding commitment to research and community service, Dr. Edgin has been a powerful advocate for children and families with developmental disabilities through her membership on boards of government agencies and national advocacy organizations. We are very lucky to have Dr. Edgin in the Psychology Department.
LYNN NADEL, PH.D., RETIRES

Last May, after 32 years at the University of Arizona, Dr. Lynn Nadel officially retired from the University of Arizona. In December, we celebrated Lynn’s career with a day-long research meeting here at UA that was attended by the “who’s who” in the field of cognitive neuroscience from around the world - an extraordinary day that reflected the importance of Lynn’s lifelong contribution to science and the special place of honor that he holds in our field.

Lynn is one of the world’s major contributors to our understanding of the role of the hippocampus in learning, memory, and spatial navigation. Lynn’s first book, written with Nobel laureate John O’Keefe, “The Hippocampus as a Cognitive Map” has been described as one of the most influential books in the field of neuroscience published in the past 50 years. The ideas captured in that book changed the field of memory research when it was first published in 1978. In 1997, Lynn changed the field of memory again, publishing a new theory of hippocampal function with his long-time collaborator and friend Morris Moscovitch at the University of Toronto, “Multiple Trace Theory” has generated well over 3,000 publications in the field and has resulted in fundamental changes to our understanding of disorders affecting memory, including amnesia, Alzheimer’s disease, Down Syndrome, and epilepsy.

During a career spanning four decades, Lynn published over 200 papers and an astounding 24 co-authored or edited books. His unique ability to synthesize ideas across domains has led to novel insights into the role of sleep and dreaming in memory consolidation, the neurobiology of PTSD and Down Syndrome, the influence of language on spatial memory, the cognitive neuroscience of emotion, the implications of memory functions for the legal system, and the neurobiology of enduring change in psychotherapy. His contributions have been recognized by many prestigious awards, including the coveted Norman Anderson Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society of Experimental Psychologists.

Lynn’s legacy goes well beyond research. No less important is the influence that Lynn has had on the careers of countless young researchers over the years. Throughout his years at the University of Arizona, Lynn mentored graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who have gone on to outstanding academic careers. As the Head of Psychology, a position he held for 13 years, Lynn hired promising young faculty including Carol Barnes, Bruce McNaughton, Daniel Schacter, and Paul Bloom who went on to be giants in their fields. Because of Lynn’s vision, the University of Arizona became an internationally-recognized center for cognitive neuroscience, a reputation that we continue to enjoy today.

The end of an era, yes, but also the beginning of a bright, exciting new future for Psychology. We may not know exactly what the future will hold for us, but Lynn’s legacy of excellence in research, collaboration and collegiality, and commitment to education will be carried with us and keep us strong.

Be part of our journey, support UA Psychology

We are on the road to becoming one of the top 10 research departments in the country. Support our journey by helping us Recruit talented faculty who advance cutting-edge research programs and provide exceptional education for our students, Enrich student learning through research and community service opportunities that create future scientists and leaders and Build long-term strategic alliances with business, community groups, and government organizations to enhance our impact throughout Arizona and beyond.

Help us meet our annual goal of $100,000. Every contribution helps!

www.psychology.arizona.edu/giving