



news

Newsletter for the College of Graduate and Extended Education

Summer 2007

RU Offers First Doctoral Degree Program



It's official — Radford University will offer its first doctoral degree program. RU's new Doctor of Psychology (Psy. D.) degree in Counseling Psychology is the nation's first Psy.D. program in counseling psychology to emphasize rural mental health.

The program is designed for people interested in careers as psychologists in mental health settings and institutions where clinical supervision and the direct application of counseling, therapy and psychological assessment are required. It will train front-line practitioners who can independently assess, diagnose and treat a broad spectrum of mental health and adjustment concerns in a wide variety of settings, but primarily it will serve the needs specific to individuals in rural areas.

The Psy.D. program will enroll its first class of students in the fall of 2008 and is still in its formative stages. The university continues to hire faculty and to add to the curriculum. The American Psychological Association does not yet accredit the program; however, groundwork for applying for accreditation is currently being laid. The university expects

to apply for accreditation during the 2011-2012 academic year when the first students start internships.

The program will follow the practitioner-scholar model with an emphasis on clinical training and the application of research to practice. Students will complete a 1,800-2,000 hour internship approved by the program faculty. Applicants must have completed a master's degree in a human services area awarded by a regionally accredited institution of higher education by August 2008.

To learn more about the Psy. D. program, contact:

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IN THIS ISSUE

- RU Offers First Doctoral Degree Program** 1
- RU Graduate Participates in Prestigious Virginia Governor's Fellows Program** 1
- MFA Student Supports Community with the Work of His Hands** 2
- Support Graduate Education through the Advanced Degree Alumni Fund** 2
- Graduate Student Juggles Busy Schedule** 3
- Students in the News** 3
- Students Honored for Outstanding Contributions at Spring Commencement** 4

RU Graduate Participates in Prestigious Virginia Governor's Fellows Program

Bakir Poljac, a criminal justice graduate student at Radford University, has been chosen as one of 25 students to participate in the Virginia Governor's Fellows Program. He became interested in the field of criminal justice because of its widespread effects and is anxious to begin work in the fellows program.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity for Bakir," said RU president Penelope W. Kyle. "I know he will represent his department and the university well during his time in Richmond."

Established in 1982, the program offers a select group of individuals the opportunity to experience firsthand the administration of state government by placing participants within execu-

tive branch offices based on academic interest.

Eighty students applied for the program, which begins in June and runs through July. The applicants must have a demonstrated commitment to academic excellence, proven leadership ability and involvement in community service. They are also required to choose a House or Senate bill before the 2007 Virginia General Assembly and write an essay saying why the Governor should support or oppose the bill.

"Mr. Poljac's selection represents quite an achievement for him and reflects very favorably upon his depart-



(continued on page 2) Bakir Poljac



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ment, the College of Graduate and Extended Education and the university," said Steve Lerch, vice provost of academic programs.

"I am extremely excited," Poljac said. "This is a wonderful opportunity to get a peek at the executive branch. I can't wait to get started."

He is encouraging other students to apply for future admission into the Governor's Fellows Program.

Poljac was born in Bosnia. In 1992, his family fled the area at the start of the Bosnian War

and relocated to Germany. Eight years later, they left Germany for the United States when more than 300,000 Bosnian refugees were forced out of the country. Poljac now lives in Roanoke.

He has adapted well to American life by becoming a campus leader and serving as a founding member of the RU chapter of Phi Sigma Kappa. The fraternity promotes leadership skills, participation in service activities, academic excellence, cultural diversity and personal integrity. He is also a member of Lambda Alpha Epsilon, a professional criminal justice

fraternity that participates in service-related activities.

In April 2006, Poljac received the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Scholars award from the criminal justice department and graduated the following month with a bachelor's degree and a 4.0 GPA. He received his master's degree from RU in May. He said he chose the university because of its criminal justice program.

"I was drawn by the strength of the program," he said. "I can't imagine being anywhere else."

MFA Student Supports Community with the Work of His Hands

Chris Lively's talent and creativity are displayed through the pieces that he molds and sculpts into works of art. He is an accomplished ceramist whose work has been on exhibition at The Clay Studio in Philadelphia, Claymakers in Durham and as part of the Biennial Exhibition of North American Clay and the Feats of Clay XX national exhibition in Lincoln, Ca.

Using his talent to help his community was on his mind recently as Lively helped create over 300 bowls for Beans and Rice Empty Bowl fundraisers. Beans and Rice, Inc., a non-profit community development organization, hosts the events to raise money for their meal programs and raise awareness about hunger. The organization invites the community to attend a simple meal of beans and rice served in one of the handcrafted ceramic bowls.

"Growing up in this area, I wanted to give back to the community, and the empty bowls project allowed this to happen," says Lively.

The bowls sold for \$20 each raising about \$5,000 for the organization, which used

the money to provide nutritious after school snacks for Radford children living in low-income housing communities. For supporters of Beans and Rice, the bowls also serve as a reminder that there are always empty bowls in the world.

Lively, a Shawsville, Va. native, is working towards his MFA degree. He is president of the RU Ceramics Guild, a recipient of the RU Arts Society Scholarship and the Dodson Ceramic Award of Excellence. He was featured on the College of Graduate and Extended Education's "Point of Pride" poster, a university-wide initiative showcasing the talent and diversity of RU graduate and undergraduate students, for his academic achievement and creativity.

"Chris' work is truly exquisite. My wife and I have become true fans and own a good number of his pieces. His combination of subtle colors and designs in his art are extremely appealing," says Joe Scartelli, dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts.



Chris Lively

Support Graduate Education through the Advanced Degree Alumni Fund

Congratulations to 2007-08 Advanced Degree Fund scholarship recipients Katie Michelle Lawson and Justin Michael Chantnicki. Lawson, a full-time student in the graduate psychology program was awarded \$1,000. Chantnicki, a part-time MBA student received \$500.

The Advanced Degree Alumni Fund allows donors to make an immediate impact on current Radford University graduate students. A gift to the fund can increase support for university-funded graduate assistantships and scholarships and strengthen

the infrastructure for scholarship and professional development for graduate students.

Your gift also helps determine the quality of RU's graduate programs. Every donor, no matter the size of the gift, helps determine Radford's recognition by national ranking agencies. Alumni who give back to their alma mater are thought to possess a high degree of satisfaction with their college experience. As such, institutions such as *U.S. News and World Report* factor this alumni participation into its national ranking. This recognition enhances the value and prestige of an RU degree.

When you receive a call from RU, please consider making an annual gift. No matter the size, your participation will be counted among those who believe in the Radford experience.

We encourage you to also consider matching gifts as an easy way to double or even triple your gift to RU. Many employers will match charitable gifts as a benefit for their employees. Check with your employer today to see if your gift to Radford University can be matched or visit www.matchinggifts.com/Radford for more information.

Graduate Student Juggles Busy Schedule

Barron Griffith would love to play golf for a living, but much of his time lately is spent working on his juggling act.

Griffith is a graduate student working toward a master's degree in psychology at Radford University. In addition to his demanding school schedule, he holds down two jobs, spends many hours watching Blue's Clues and building train layouts with his 3-year-old son, McCain, and occasionally squeezes 18 holes into his busy schedule. In addition to those commitments, Griffith is a non-commissioned officer in the U.S. National Guard.

It was his dedication and work ethic that led psychology professor Tom Pierce to select Griffith as a recipient of the Foundation Faculty Award Scholarship.

"Barron works very hard to balance a demanding schedule of school work, jobs and his role as a parent," Pierce said. "He does it with an unassuming demeanor and a healthy sense of humor. Basically, he gives me the sense that he knows how to get stuff done and that he enjoys the process. That's a pretty good place to start in building a career."

Griffith isn't yet certain about his career plans, but he has an interest in psychophysiology and currently works as a substance abuse counselor at the Life Center in Galax and works with children at Mount Rogers Mental Health. He joined Pierce in a research project and the two developed an instant chemistry, Griffith said, which made the work even more enjoyable.

"We formed a connection," the humble Griffith said. "He kept pushing me to push harder, push for more. I don't know if I was deserving of the scholarship, but I'm glad he gave it to me, none the less."

Because of Griffith's busy schedule, he's not sure when he will complete his RU degree. He's aiming for spring 2008. Much of the timing, how-

ever, depends on his military commitment. Despite the schedule interruptions his military career has caused, Griffith said he is proud to serve his country as a member of the National Guard. "It has given me a broader look on the world itself," he said.

That's why, after seven years with the Guard, Griffith recently re-enlisted for another six. He says his son and service in the National Guard are the achievements he is most proud of so far in his young life.

"It is tough to fit everything together, but Dr. Pierce and other professors here at RU have been really cooperative, understanding and helpful, and they help me balance my schedule," Griffith said. It's the support from his friends and faculty at RU, he says, that helps him perfect his juggling act.



Barron Griffith

Students IN THE NEWS

► **Three counselor education students competed in the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Ethics Committee Case Study Competition.** RU's 2007 Ethics Team comprised of master's students: **HANK LEFTWICH, WINDY CHINN** and **ARYNN PAIGE JOHNSON**. The team traveled to the national conference in Detroit, Mich. to deliver their essay, which addressed an ethical dilemma posed by the Ethics Committee.

According to ACA, the purpose of competition is to support the Ethics Committee charge of helping educate the members of the association about ethical issues. The case study competition serves as an opportunity to engage graduate students (masters and doctoral level) in critically analyzing a potential ethical case and creating an appropriate ethical decision making plan to respond to the ethical situation.



Arynn Paige Johnson (seated),
 Hank Leftwich (right), Windy Chinn (center)
 and Dr. Donald Anderson, team sponsor (left).

This is the second year that a team from RU has entered the competition. Last year's team competed among 18 doctoral programs and 41 master's programs to win national recognition in the 2006 ACA Ethics Competition. Hank Leftwich was also a member of that team.

► **Radford University sent five graduate students to the Virginia Graduate Student Research Forum at the State Library of Virginia in February.** The Virginia Council of Graduate Schools hosted the event to highlight how Virginia's investment in graduate education is an investment in Virginia's future.

The work graduate students do contributes to the economic, social and civic development of the Commonwealth. According to Dr. Karen DePauw, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School at Virginia Tech, graduate students enrolled at Virginia colleges and universities come from virtually all states in the nation and over 60 nations throughout the world. They are the future generation of scientists, teachers, leaders and professionals. Approximately 70 percent of these individuals remain

in Virginia after graduation, becoming valuable members of the Commonwealth workforce and citizenry.

RU students who attended the forum and the topics they presented are as follows:

TINA BUTTERFIELD, Art (Painting), "Connection through Portraiture"

ELIZABETH EADS, Counseling and Human Development (School Counseling), "Issues Facing Immigrant Children and Families in U.S. Schools"

HEATHER HORD, Communication Sciences and Disorders (Speech-Language Pathology), "Cortical Auditory Evoked Potentials in Children with Asperger Syndrome"

JOSIE LOOMIS, School Psychology, "Attachment and Exploration in College: A Building Recognition Approach"

GINA MCCASKILL, Social Work, "African Americans and Mental Health Access Barriers"

► **JERROD SMERK presented a paper at the Great Lakes Chapter of the College Music Society.** Smerk based the presentation on his thesis, which is an analysis of three works by Argentine composer Maximo Diego Pujol.



College of Graduate and Extended Education *news*

Students Honored for Outstanding Contributions at Spring Commencement

The Graduate College honored four students for their outstanding contributions to academia during the Spring 2007 Hooding Ceremony. Awards were presented based on creativity, performance and research during the 2006-07 academic year.

CATEGORY: *CREATIVE ACTIVITY*

Debra Hill Santos was presented the award for Creative Activity for her thesis "What NO UNDO BUTTON?! The Challenges and Gratification of Metalworking."

Santos came to the graduate program with a background in graphic arts but no experience with jewelry making. She began with two-dimensional designs and translated them into three-dimensional pieces, which became, according to one of her professors, "a museum quality exhibition." Her written thesis described the difficulties of metalworking and the creative process by which each piece was conceived and produced.

Santos received her Master of Fine Arts in December 2006. She is working in graphic design as an Acquisition Business Liaison for the U.S. Army in Alabama and continues her artistic metalworking. Her thesis advisor was Alison Pack, assistant professor of art.

CATEGORY: *EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE*

Stephanie D. Nelson received the Exemplary Performance award for her project "Women in Combat." She examined Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, focusing on gender differences. From her integration of theory, practice, and policy research, she formed a working model to support recovery for those experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This model is now being presented to and used by social work professionals.

Nelson graduated with a Master of Social Work degree. Her advisor on the project was Dr. Jo Brocato, assistant professor of social work.

CATEGORY: *RESEARCH*

The awards committee declared a tie in the research category. **Philip R. Ferguson** and **Jaime P. Walsh** both received the award.

Ferguson was presented the research award for his thesis "Us and Them: Orientalism and the Evolution of Robert Olen Butler's Fiction." His thesis examined the Vietnam fiction of the contemporary American writer, Robert Olen Butler, using the theoretical construct of "orientalism." Ferguson demonstrated that fiction could have as much value as non-fiction in revealing cultural constraints and political motivations. His analyses of literature and society produced an innovative research project that adds to the body of knowledge on



Left to right: **Stephanie Nelson, Dr. Carole Seyfrit, Dr. Jo Brocato**

political and cultural outcomes and reactions when divergent societies clash.

Ferguson graduated with a Master of Arts degree. His thesis advisor was Dr. Jeffrey Saperstein, professor of English.

Walsh earned the second research award for her thesis "The Use of Cuban Rhythms in the Works of Gershwin, Bernstein, and Copland." The thesis identified the Cuban musical styles and practices that influence the three composers and provided a detailed analysis of how each composer adapted the Cuban folk rhythms, revealing their unique qualities of music style. Walsh's research broke new ground in existing music theory scholarship, specifically as a rhythmic analysis.

Walsh received a Master of Arts degree. Her thesis advisor was Dr. Bruce Mahin, professor of music.



We've Moved!

The College of Graduate and Extended Education has a new home. This spring we moved our offices to Lucas Hall beside McConnell Library. The new location offers more space and opportunities to better serve our students and faculty.

Be sure to visit the following offices and programs at these locations in Lucas Hall:

Graduate Admissions, Ground Floor
Assistantships, 1st Floor
Continuing Students, 1st Floor
Continuing Education, 2nd Floor

Extended Education, 2nd Floor
Non-Degree Students, 2nd Floor
Office of the Dean, 2nd Floor