The start of the new academic year gives us an opportunity to welcome in the new, especially new people.

Our students are the clinical program’s greatest resource and the entering class contributes to strengthening our program. The new students are a group of smart, accomplished, young women and a young man who show considerable promise. In addition, this first year class stands out because 3 students are interested in clinical aging—Kelly Durbin, Jean Ho, and Belinda Yew. Together they significantly strengthen this important track, as our last clinical aging student was Justin Hummer who is now a third year student. This class also serves to build the research labs of our newest faculty. Four students are working with either Dan Nation (Jean Ho and Belinda Yew) or Darby Saxbe (Geoffrey Corner and Sarah Stoycos). The labs of Professors Saxbe and Nation are positioned to flourish. We are also excited that Sylvana Vargas has joined us to bolster our program’s focus on cultural matters. To help you all identify the new students, Erika asked them to provide a photograph and a brief bio. We include them at the end of this newsletter. Please help them feel welcome.

In addition to the new students, we welcome Dr. Bob Chernoff, the new Associate Director of Clinical Training. Dr. Chernoff received his bachelor’s degree in Philosophy from UC Berkeley and then went to UCLA to obtain his law degree. He practiced as an attorney before entering our very own doctoral program in clinical psychology. Here at USC Chernoff worked with Dr. Gerald Davison and developed his research interest in HIV/AIDS and risk and resiliency. He then went to the West LA VA for his internship and Harbor-UCLA for his post-doctoral training and his first job as a psychologist. After Harbor-UCLA he became a faculty member in Cedars-Sinai Medical Center’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences and then later assumed the position of Director of Psychology Training at Didi Hirsh Mental Health Services. Dr. Chernoff brings a strong background in clinical supervision, administration, and psychotherapy. He will be teaching both undergraduate (e.g., Abnormal Psychology) and graduate courses (Practicum with Dr. Couture). He is particularly excited to help students obtain internships that best fit their interests. Welcome back home Dr. Chernoff!

We also want to welcome Dr. Gerald Davison and Dr. Margaret Gatz back from their sabbatical leaves and administrative positions over the last several years (Davison, Dean of the School of Gerontology, and Gatz, Chair of the Department of Psychology). The clinical program benefits greatly from their considerable experience within the university administration and within the general field of clinical science. In addition, their research, publication records, and strong mentorship add considerable luster to our highly regarded clinical program.
It is important to recognize the new Psychology Services Center, our training clinic, to the program. One way to do so is to show our considerable gratitude to Dr. Shannon Couture. Over the last year, she has worked very hard in carrying out her duties as director of the training clinic as well as her new found job responsibilities as part-time general contractor, architect, interior designer, IT and video coordinator, and many other job designations. It has been both an exciting and frustrating time for her. Her attention to detail, her insistence that certain features work properly, her ability to work effectively with a wide range of construction personnel, and her splendid taste for art work and color coordination has led to an attractive, professional, state-of-the-art training clinic that we are all so proud of. We now have a first-class training home for students, supervisors, and clients alike. Thank you Dr. Shannon Couture!!! Please let her know of your appreciation for our new training home.

Finally, we want to welcome Erika Quinly in her new role as administrative assistant to the clinical program AND the training clinic. In the past, she was the administrative assistant to only the clinical program and was housed on the fifth floor with other departmental staff. Now she is the administrative assistant for both the program and clinic, and she is housed in the clinic. After considerable discussion, especially between Erika and Drs. Couture and Lopez, we decided that it was in the program’s best interest to integrate the two positions. Erika will now have much more interaction with the students, which she very much enjoys, and this will further integrate the every day activities of the program with the every day activities of the clinic. Erika has been with clinical program for over a year now and has proven to be a wonderful asset to the program—students and faculty alike.

**Welcome!**

My research interests include how couples cope with and react to health-related adversity, particularly in the form of a loss. Having spent the last five years working in the Department of Psychiatry at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, Geoff is also interested in psycho-oncology and end-of-life care. In particular, much of his past work has focused on the concept of meaning and psychotherapeutic interventions developed to help cancer patients and their families reconnect with and enhance a sense of purpose in their lives.

Geoffrey Corner
My research interests broadly include the interactions between aging, emotion, and cognition and my clinical interests include neuropsychological assessments and difficulties associated with aging. New to the West Coast, I’m looking forward to exploring Los Angeles and traveling around California!

Kelly Durbin

I graduated from Duke in 2012, where I studied psychology and film. Following that, I worked at the Duke Hospital, conducting neuropsychological assessments for patients with neurological disorders. I will be working with Dan Nation in the VaSC (Vascular Senescence and Cognition) Lab, and am interested in normal aging, MCI, and Alzheimer’s disease.

Jean Ho

My current research interests include the neurological and hormonal correlates of parenting, attachment, and empathy. These interests stem directly from my prior research experiences working with Dr. Abigail Marsh in the Laboratory on Social and Affective Neuroscience and with Dr. Jude Cassidy in the Maryland Child and Family Development Laboratory. In those labs I studied the neurological basis of face emotion processing as it relates to empathic ability and dyadic attachment in families, respectively.

Sarah Stoycos

I grew up in Sydney, Australia where I completed my undergraduate studies in Psychology at the University of New South Wales. After working for 2 years with aged populations at Neuroscience Research Australia, I moved to New York where I recently graduated from Columbia University's Clinical Psychology masters program. While at USC I will be working with Dr. Daniel Nation to explore cognitive and biological markers of cerebrovascular aging.

Belinda Yew

I am arriving to USC after a few years working in research at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, Georgetown University, and Concordia University. I completed my undergrad studies at McGill University, with a degree in psychology and literature. I am joining Dr. Steven Lopez’s lab to pursue my research interests in culture and mental health, particularly perceptions of mental illness. On a more personal note, I am of Nicaraguan background but grew up in various countries. I greatly enjoy traveling, photography, being active, and trying new foods.

Sylvanna Vargas
Clinical Faculty Meetings

Meetings held in SGM-901, 10-11:45.

- Sept. 17th
- Oct. 1st, 15th & 29th
- Nov. 19th

CONGRATULATIONS!

Winifred "Winnie" Orixe Rogan was born at 6:24pm on Saturday, August 9, 2014 in Oakland, California, 7 lbs. 9 oz., 21 inches long.

CONGRATS ESTI, WILL & WINNIE!

Sohyun married Jeffrey on June 29, 2014 in Agoura Hills.

CONGRATS SOHYUN & JEFFREY!