



Washington Monument, Photo Jake McGuire

LA Researchers Present at APS in DC

The 23rd Annual Convention of the American Psychological Society held its meeting May 26-29 in Washington, DC. Researchers from Centenary, Louisiana Tech, Loyola, LSU, Northwestern, Tulane, and University of Louisiana-Lafayette, and others, presented their research, and covered topics from attention in movie-goers, to rules about emotional labor, to being more receptive to

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Police Psychology

Editor's note: Two police psychologists in our community, Dr. Penny Dralle and Dr. Charles Burchell, agreed to be interviewed for the Times. They described just a little about this broad and fascinating area of psychology, where they apply their multifaceted skills and knowledge to help the officers, their families, and the society.

COPPS Meets in New Orleans Dr. Penny Dralle, President

by Leda Neale

This year marked a milestone in Dr. Penelope (Penny) Dralle's and colleague Dr. Charles Burchell's work, two psychologists who have helped to build a solid foundation for the future of police psychology. The Consortium of Police Psychology Services (COPPS) 2011 met

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SB 268 Replaces Omnibus Bill

SB 268, a bill to clarify scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors, was passed in the Senate today and is pending introduction into the House. The bill will require that LPcs work in consultation with an MD or medical psychologist (but not a licensed psychologist) if treating individuals with "serious mental illness."

SB 268 replaces Senator Willie Mount's omnibus board proposal that would have dissolved the psychology and LPC boards, a move that was strongly opposed by both groups.

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Psychologists, LPcs Testify

Three psychologists and numerous counselors testified against the omnibus bill at the May 18 Senate Committee.

Dr. Greg Gormanous, retired Chair of LSU-A, speaking for himself said, "...in other jurisdictions who have tried this, the results have been less protection of the public..." When Senator Mount questioned him about the ongoing disputes he

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N.O. Psychologists To Meet July 8

Drs. Carolyn Weyand, Judith Stewart and John Fanning are organizing a new group called the New Orleans Regional Psychologists, or NORP. The gathering is set for Friday, July 8, 7-9 pm.

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Facing camera: Police Psychologists Dr. Charles Burchell and Dr. Penny Dralle at a recent meeting of psychologists in Baton Rouge.

Publisher Still Spanked

Publisher of the *Times*, Julie Nelson, contacted LPA recently to remind them that she had completed her punishment, a six-month suspension from the LPA listserve.

Nelson was suspended last November (See *PT*, Vol 2, No 4, "Times Publisher Gets the Boot") for quoting Dr. Robert Storer and Dr. Kelly Ray about their "no" votes on a resolution to support the autonomous regulation of psychology in Louisiana. Nelson was warned not to do it again. But then she was suspended after she made remarks about the inadequacy of such a rule and the ease of getting around it.

Her six months was up May 4 and she asked Executive Director Ms. Lowe about the matter. Lowe instructed Nelson she must make a "reapplication" to the EC in order to be reinstated. Nelson agreed and sent back her reapplication: "I request to be reinstated to the listserve."

However, when nothing happened, Nelson discovered that it was up to the President Dr. Kelly Ray to agree

to hear the request, in order for the EC to consider it. Even though business is conducted by the EC on a regular basis via other means, President Ray is not required to review Nelson's request until a physical meeting is held. No meeting is currently scheduled, and the EC meets physically only four times a year.

Following this, Nelson withdrew her reapplication.

Ray and Nelson have been in strong disagreement over matters surrounding Act 251, which moved the practice of psychology by MPs to the medical board. Ray pays dues of \$2500 per year to LAMP, the organization that covertly negotiated and lobbied the passage of Act 251.

Mystery Man Sends LPA's Humble Pie Letter To *Times*

Times publisher received an email on May 23, from an anonymous individual containing a letter from LPA Executive Council to LAMP. The sender acknowledged using a pseudo name but did not explain the reason for the email.

The letter, dated May 19, was addressed to John Bolter, PhD, MP. In the text of the letter, signed by the Executive Council of the LPA, the authors wrote that LPA is having "an unfortunate and very troubling experience" in its legislative efforts and "humbly requests political assistance from LAMP."

The authors also wrote that they recognize the strained relationship between LAMP and LPA, and "LPA would be most appreciative if we could move forward, putting the disagreements behind the organizations." Authors noted they recognized the loss of the "political infrastructure" developed by LAMP and Courson Nickel. And the authors noted that they "recognize the vast importance" of "political networks..." The letter was copied to James Quillin, PhD, MP.

Criticisms about a number of issues arose on the LPA listserve after the turn of events with SB 268, and the letter was posted. Based on sources, not all of the EC members approved of the letter, especially the tone.

Some LPA members have reported to the *Times* that when offering to be involved in legislative efforts they were ignored. The President recently told members to be careful not to interfere with the legislative committee or lobbyists.

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We welcome ideas for news, features, Letters to the Editor, photos, and other material related to psychological community of Louisiana. Editorials and commentary reflect the opinions of this newspaper. Columns and Letters to the Editor express the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of *The Psychology Times*.

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SB 268, from pg 1

SB 268 sets out certain limitations when counselors diagnose and treat a patient with a "serious mental illness." The bill notes that the patient of an LPC must also be "...under the active care of a practitioner who is licensed by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners and is authorized to prescribe medications in the management of psychiatric illness..." And that the LPC will diagnose and treat "...only in the context of an ongoing consultation and collaboration with that practitioner."

In the present language licensed psychologists are not included in those authorized to provide this ongoing consultation and collaboration to LPCs.

SB 268 proposes new language in the section on definitions of mental health counseling services: "...rendering or offering prevention, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment, which includes psychotherapy, of mental, emotional, behavioral, and addiction disorders to individuals, groups, organizations, or the general public by a licensed professional counselor, which is consistent with his professional training..."

This replaces the existing language of "...those acts and behaviors coming within the practice of mental health counseling as defined in this Chapter, including diagnosis and treatment, which includes psychotherapy, of conditions or disorders requiring mental health counseling..."

The existing language has been a source of conflict between the psychology board and the LPC board for a number of years. Confusing text in the LPC law

created conflicting interpretations. Mount introduced the replacement bill at the May 25th Senate Health & Welfare Committee meeting, saying "We also provided for limitations to the scope of practice for individuals suffering from serious mental illness so that LPCs can only access, diagnose, and treat an individual suffering from a serious mental illness if that individual is under the active care of a practitioner licensed by the board of medical examiners who's authorized to prescribe medication in the management of psychiatric illness and only in the context of ongoing consultation and collaboration with that practitioner."

Serious mental illnesses in the

bill are listed as schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, major depressive disorder, anorexia/bulimia, intermittent explosive disorder, autism, psychosis (not otherwise specified) when diagnosed in a child under 17 years of age, Rett's Disorder, Tourette's Disorder, and dementia.

SB 268 also lists new language in requirements for increasing graduate semester hours from 48 to at least 60, beginning in 2015, and a course in each of eight required subject areas, and the completion of a supervised internship in mental health counseling.

Making Politics & Sausage

Psychologists and counselors alike breathed a sigh of relief after Senator Willie Mount withdrew her bill to dissolve their boards, following lengthy testimony at the May 18 Senate Health & Welfare Committee.

But that was only one step in the politics. The possibility that the SB 226 was a bait and switch had been suggested by a number of sources to the *Times*. However Senator Mount seemed to be genuinely interested in why the Behavioral Health Professionals Working Group had failed to come up with compromise language, when she asked Dr. John Fanning what he felt might work in a new format for that group, as he testified against the omnibus board bill.

At the close of all the testimony however, Senator Mount had her substitute bill in hand. "With that," she said, "I'm going to offer up an amendment in the form of a substitute bill which will specifically provide for the Licensed Professional Board of Examiners to clarify the language."

Senator McPherson from Alexandria, a supporter of LAMP and of psychology, slowed the speed when he pointed out that the substitute bill was the same one Mount had offered before, and had been opposed by the psychologists. After this discussion the bill was deferred until the following week.

By the next week another bill had been written, placing limitations on the expansion or clarification, but also creating a consultation and collaboration clause that pulled in medicine and cut out those licensed by the psychology board. This new bill seems to be being negotiated by LAMP, heads to the House today after smoking it's way through the Senate.



The Behavioral Health Professionals Working Group began meeting last year. The group struggled to develop compromise language for new legislation.

Politics, Sausage...

The new language also placed an emphasis on medication, and if passed, will place into law a requirement that a person seen by an LPC with a serious mental illness must also be under the care of someone who prescribes medication.

The fingerprint of LAMP on this new bill appears to annoy some, but LAMP leaders had authority to negotiate because on May 19, the LPA Executive Council sent a letter formally asking LAMP to help them.

Several factors seem related to the course of events.

DHH

There was important testimony from Department of Health and Hospitals Deputy Secretary Kathy Kliebert who answered several questions of the committee members, about

new arrangements of mental health services in the state. This testimony would have had little to do with the omnibus-board bill, but it was related to Senator Mount's substitute which would clarify counselors' diagnosing.

Senator Cheek asked Ms. Kliebert, "Can an LPC bill Medicaid?" Kliebert said, "...individual practitioners are not able to bill for those services." She continued, "One of the things we're doing in developing our new Louisiana Behavioral Health Care Partnership is developing a system that would allow the individual practitioners to bill in accordance with their scope of practice."

Senator Cheek commented about the gap in services in the state and asked if an "all hands on deck" approach was what was needed? To this Kliebert said, "I totally agree. We have problems in terms of getting the provider capacity we need for mental

health in Louisiana. We know that. Whatever we can do to get people the right level of services and the right credentialed counselor works for everybody."

"That is one of the things we're trying to do in our reform of our managed behavioral care that we're moving to, is to be able to do that," Kliebert said. "To be able to allow them—the practitioners—to bill in those individual locations, at schools, in home services, where they need those services, vs. us having to provide more expensive clinic-based services or more expensive institutional services."

Senator Cheek asked, "Can LPCs diagnose across the full spectrum?" Kliebert said, "No, not according to their current scope of practice... That clarification of the scope of practice would certainly help in our future, because we're quoting what is in scope of practice."

Lobbying

LPCs waged a comprehensive effort and especially in Senator Mount's home district of Lake Charles where it is reported that she may be running for tax assessor. The LPC's political effort against the consolidated board was said to include considerable contact with legislators, rallies, and even newspaper ads. Some of the LPCs and counseling students at the Senate hearing wore t-shirts with "Kill Bill 226." According to reports 150 or more LPCs attended the hearing.

Psychologists, on the other hand, following Legislative Chair Dr. Jessica Brown's directions, exhibited a "measured" approach, and were warned to avoid annoying or creating tensions with the Senator or committee members. Some in the association considered this too passive.

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Politics, Sausage...

One critic told the *Times*, "LPA is the only organization I know that attempts to meet its political goals by doing nothing."

In opposing the consolidated board, LPCs and psychologists were in agreement. At the initial hearing, Senator Mount held up a stack of cards of those speaking against the bill, saying, "I want ya'll to note that there are no green cards," indicating uniform support to kill the proposal.

Also, LPCs testified convincingly at the hearing, with testimony from numerous individuals in different regions of the state, as well as from Senator Mount's district. In contrast only one psychologist testified for LPA, only one from Grassroots, and only one for himself.

Working Group

An attempt was made last year to encourage the two groups to resolve several issues through the Behavioral Health Professionals Working Group, a study group composed of members from both boards and state organizations, and created by Mount's Senate Concurrent Resolution 100.

The conflict between the two professions has been going on for some time, including disputes over psychological testing and scope of practice, including a lawsuit filed (*Louisiana v. Atterberry*, 1995) by the LSBEP. However, for this effort, sources told the *Times* that testing was "off the table," even though the two issues are viewed as related by some.

Some psychologists in the community expressed doubt as to whether they should fight over the issue of diagnosis.



LPA members Ms. Amber Gremillion (L), Mr. John Hamilton and Dr. Darlyne Nemeth pause at the recent LPA convention to flip through *Pediatricians and Pharmacologically Trained Psychologists*, which includes contributions from Dr. Nemeth and a number of Louisiana authors. The book will be reviewed soon in the "Bookshelf" column of *The Psychology Times*.

However, the results of those in the Working Group were disappointing. Senator Mount said in the hearing that her goal in establishing the Working Group "...was simply to provide the most optimal starting point possible which would maximize the chances of successful compromise and collaboration."

The lack of success in the Working Group prompted the Senator to send a letter to both communities criticizing the lack of a clear resolution and warning them that she would submit the bill to consolidate the boards in order to force cooperation. She noted at the hearing that the strategy had worked with riverboat pilots.

LAMP

A savvy political force, few in the psychology association believed

that the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychology-PAC was sitting on the sidelines.

Legislative Chair Dr. Jessica Brown, in a meeting last month with members of Grassroots, had indicated that LAMP could effectively fight this bill if those in LPA would drop their complaints regarding Act 251. One other source indicated that same offer coming from LAMP.

Senator Mount's most recent bill could further separate psychologists from medical psychologists on ideological grounds, and medical psychologists from psychology.

This could confirm some of the consequences of Act 251 alluded to by several national groups who are watching events unfold in Louisiana.

Testify, from pg 1

said, "Scope of practice... It's just something that happens in contracting, it happens in non-health care, it happens everywhere. [...] ... legislation has politics, water is wet, and scope of practice is an issue where people disagree."

Dr. Phillip Griffin, speaking as President-Elect of LPA said, "Psychology is a proud profession. We're very proud to have our autonomous, doctoral practice. We're proud to have our autonomous board that has been in existence since 1964 without any kind of incident whatsoever." He said, "Boards license and regulate professionals. They do that to protect the public. They do it in the public interest. Boards aren't created to resolve conflict between disciplines."

The president of the counselors' association, Dr. Brenda Roberts of Lake Charles testified about the background between the two groups, saying, "Some psychologists have wanted to restrict our ability to practice our profession." She stated that the proposed omnibus board could "exacerbate the problem."

Cindy Nardini from Alexandria, and Co-Government Relations for Louisiana Counselors Association, said, "It was our perception and understanding that the majority of the conflict was related to psychological testing and appraisal..." and not about diagnosis.

Betty Jean (B.J) Cayton, an LPC and retired professor

from McNeese, commented on the "handful of people who have power in the state agency," as contributing to the problems, and noted that it has become "an absolutely abusive relationship."

Dr. John Fanning, representing Grassroots Psychology, spoke against the consolidated board saying, "Other states have tried omnibus boards, and results are typically not very satisfactory." He mentioned problems with the ratio of board members to those supervised, and that a consolidated board might lead to regular attempts by both groups to overturn it.

He said he worked with LPCs, and then interjected, "I deny ever having abused any of them!" The comment drew laughter from those in the chamber and also from Senator Mount who said, "We can just tell, you're such a nice guy."

On May 25, after behind the scenes negotiations on SB 268, most spoke with less passion, but in favor of the measure, or at least not in opposition.

Michael Goodee, Government Relations for the Louisiana Counseling Association, spoke

and said that the bill was "very workable."

Dr. Gary Gintner, Associate Professor from LSU Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice provided information regarding best practices and standards for LPCs. He said that it was important to clarify the law because of Louisiana's poor rating in mental health.

Dr. Jessica Brown, Legislative Chair for LPA, said she was at the meeting to speak in favor of the bill. Dr. Robert Storer who reviewed his own training at the masters level, then at the PhD level, said, "You can't know what you don't know." And, "This substitute bill has enough provisions, enough safeguards that I can speak in favor of it."

Dr. Tony Young, Vice-Chair of LSBEP represented the psychology board, and Dr. Gloria Bockrath Chair of the counselor board, presented themselves for information. Dr. Young noted that Chair Dr. Joe Comaty was not able to be present, because he was out of the country on vacation. Comaty has been a strong proponent of the psychology licensing law in this matter.

Grassroots Meets About SB 268

In their meeting on Tuesday, May 31, Grassroots members expressed concerns about psychologists not being included in the language of 268, and voicing the view that this is another move to bring more pieces of mental health under medicine. A number of members also indicated disapproval regarding LPA's legislative actions and are considering asking for an amendment to include psychology.

The *Times* attempted to contact Dr. Jessica Brown, Chair of Legislative Affairs for LPA, for comment, but no response has been received by press time.



Participants at Consortium of Police Psychology Services in N.O. (President Dr. Penny Dralle) were treated to this view of the Calbido and St. Louis Cathedral. Photo by COPPS attendee Dr. E. E."Grif" Griffith from FL.

Police Psychology, from pg 1

at New Orleans' Chateau LeMoyne in the French Quarter May 12-13, to celebrate their united efforts of over 26 years to serve two populations: police officers and their families, and the public they have a mandate to protect.

Dr. Penny Dralle, clinical and consulting psychologist and COPPS President, described the consortium as a small group of professionals involved in police psychology who have been meeting yearly since 1985. Presently a Consulting Psychologist for the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), her titles include that of associate professor for the Louisiana State Univ. School of Medicine (retired) and member of the Blue Ribbon Committee on NOPD Police Recruiting (now Consortium of Selection and Recruitment for NOPD). She coordinates and supervises pre-screening operations for the hiring of officers for the city.

Penny was approached to take over pre-employment selection work for the NOPD after Hurricane Katrina, and she offered the Police and Civil Service Departments of New Orleans a standardized approach to the selection and evaluation of their candidates and enlisted other experienced professionals in the community to participate in this process.

Within her comprehensive training and background, she has also worked to share information with others, not only as President of COPPS but in conference presentations such as "Developing a Partnership to Enhance the Police Recruitment and Retention in New Orleans: A Case Presentation," and "Critical Incident Response for Louisiana Law Enforcement Personnel and their Families: A Journey in Crisis Intervention for the Unrecognized Victims of Crime." Also she

has presented, "Ethical Issues in the Psychiatric/ Psychological Evaluations of Police Recruits," at the 22nd Annual Convening of Crisis Intervention Personnel. Various aspects of her work with law enforcement personnel have been received across the nation.

Penny's career reflects activism on the behalf of both the police and marginalized sectors of the public, an equally strenuous effort in a society torn by fears of the "authorities," poor people, and disease. She has demonstrated an understanding of and sympathy for the enormous strains experienced by officers and their families.

"I started working with the city in the mid 1970s, with Dr. Arthur J. Gallese," she said, "who moved to New Orleans after leaving a position as Research Coordinator at the Dept. of Public Welfare in St. Paul, Minn. He had trained at University of Minnesota and was an expert in the use of the MMPI when he joined the faculty at LSUMS." Over the years the standards of practice for screening and assessment of law enforcement have become more codified with guidelines published by the Psychological Services Section of the International Association of Chief of Police and the Society for Police and Criminal Psychology, looking at what is acceptable for how a department goes about assessing candidates.

"The commonly used tests have been 'normed' and 'renormed' and new tests have been developed to address specific problems," she said. "For example, the Matrix-Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement Selection Evaluation Inventory was published in 2008 by Drs. Robert Davis and Cary Rostow of Baton Rouge."

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Police Psychology

Dr. Dralle...

As a consultant, she has worked intensively with law enforcement agencies, and as a faculty member of the Psychiatry Department at LSU Medical Center, she taught and supervised psychological interns, psychiatry residents, and medical students.

A veteran of ethics and policy study commissions, she chaired the HIV/AIDS Task Force of the Louisiana Psychological Association, and served in 1990 as Director of Neuropsychiatric Evaluation Services for the New Orleans AIDS Project. Her publications include a substantial number on the subject of HIV-related dilemmas for clinical workers.

This year's COPPS meeting saw a distinguished group converge on the city 26 years after their first New Orleans meeting which was held over a Mardi Gras weekend. Participants crisscrossed the country to attend, coming from Florida, New Mexico, Arizona, Maine, New York and beyond.

Penny strove to provide a first-class experience for the participants, making the arrangements, developing the program, advertising and facilitating registration, and planning meals and events. Convivialities began Thursday evening at Antoine's, on St. Louis St., and included dinner at Tujague's after the close of meetings on Friday.

The conference drew psychologists with origins in the field and members of the Consortium presented the

history and consequences of the decision by, first, APA, then ABPP which lead to the certification of Police and Public Safety as a specialty in 2010.

"Testing for police officers started before the '60s," Penny noted. "In 1967, a Presidential commission recognized the importance of assessment. The goal was that by 1975 every law enforcement agency would be using some sort of standardized test to determine the emotional stability of law enforcement candidates."

In 1976, the FBI and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) of the Department of Justice sponsored the National Working Conference on the Selection of Law Enforcement Officers at the FBI Academy in Quantico, VA. The first conference of the LEAA, was held at Quantico, Va., in 1979. The meeting attracted professionals from all over the country. In 1984,

at another later informal meeting at the FBI, Gabriel Rodriguez, of La., and Douglas Dentz, of Okla., named and organized COPPS. Their inaugural rendezvous was held in New Orleans In 1985. Dr. Burchell attended and Dr. Dralle presented data on the Selection Process in New Orleans.

Another milestone for police psychology was reached when ABPP announced in December 2010 that as a result of a unanimous vote it would move forward on this credential. "The American Board of Police & Public Safety Psychology (ABPPSP) has been constituted," Dr. Dralle explained, "and will conduct initial board certification examinations within the next several months. As per ABPP policy, after the ABPPSP Board of Directors and another 30 candidates have been examined under ABPP oversight, and upon approval of the ABPP Board of

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Participants at COPPS going up to Dr. Jill Hayes' apt in the French Quarter after the cocktail party at Galatoires. Photo by COPPS attendee Dr. E. E."Grif" Griffith,FL.

Profile: Police Psychologist

Charles Burchell, PhD

Trust in the Balance

by Leda Neale

When asked what has been especially fulfilling for him as a police psychologist, Dr. Charles Burchell reflects an impressive career-long level of satisfaction.

"Early on it was doing the therapy and the counseling, marital help, helping them serve in their jobs to help society. When I did the trauma work, and with SWAT teams, there was the satisfaction of dealing with traumatic events and helping people get through that. The last part of my career, working with Penny, taking people from the general population and making sure we are sending the Police Academy a qualified group . . . this is fulfilling."

Dr. Burchell, former president of the Louisiana Psychological Association, brings 27 years of experience in providing psychological services to sworn police officers and their families. He began working with police in 1984 at the New Orleans department, and is an associate of Dr. Penny Dralle, Consulting Psychologist for the NOPD, directing pre-screening procedures of officer candidates for the NOPD academy.

"It's a wonderful profession, protecting the public while enhancing the professional and personal lives of a class of people who do something very necessary. It's important now, more than ever. There is growing suspicion of government and police agencies—New Orleans has a lot of people who view police officers as unfair, brutal, can't be trusted—and one thing police psychologists can do is to help departments make sure their agencies are truly professional."

Currently based in Texas, Dr. Burchell has served on the faculties of Southern Univ. and Louisiana State Univ. in Baton Rouge, and LSU Health Sciences Center and Xavier Univ. in New Orleans. He earned his degrees at Southern and Louisiana State universities, and interned at Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute at the University of California Medical Center, San Francisco. He has worked for both Hammond and Tulane police departments, the EAP (Employee Assistance Program) for DEA and Border Patrol, and also offers high-risk assessment to client organizations.

He has provided training in stress reduction, diversity issues, and disaster response. He has also provided on-site consultation with SWAT teams dealing with hostage and barricaded suspect situations. Fitness-for-duty examination is also his specialty.

Police Psychology

Dr. Dralle...

Trustees, ABPPSP will become the 14th ABPP affiliated Specialty Board."

About the recent COPPS meeting, Dr. Penny Dralle said, "This time, we focused on collegiality, and the exchange of information and ideas. This year we also drew people from all over the central and southern regions."

"It was an honor to have such a distinguished group of psychologists come to New Orleans and share the joys of our culture and cuisine," Dr. Penny Dralle told the *Times*. "Their responses to presentations about the unique issues facing NOPD and the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina were also very insightful, helpful, and compassionate. It was a wonderful way to celebrate with colleagues the development of the practice of police psychology and the recognition the field has gained in recent years."

Dr. Burchell's practice in other areas has concerned assessment of employees felt to be a significant risk to the safety and emotional well-being of others in the workplace. He also has worked as a Military and Family Life Consultant providing stress management and psycho-educational intervention to military members and their families.

Dr. Dralle and Dr. Burchell have studied and built fitness-for-duty assessment processes that are comprised of a series of psychological tests and a structured interview, plus collateral interviews with others who interact with the individual.

Problems in fitness for duty, Charles explains, have to do with officers in the field who began to exhibit behaviors that could cause decreased functioning in their roles, since they are, in fact, "licensed to kill, in certain circumstances."

Police psychology has evolved in ways that few might have imagined, as changes in planetary weather and patterns of crime affect the public consciousness and international law enforcement. As it has changed and grown, Charles notes, "My career has morphed."

"In terms of duties, as an African-American man, I had ambivalence about the police department. I

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Police Psychologist
Dr. Charles Burchell...

knew it was necessary. Most of my experiences had been positive, though not all; I knew there were backgrounds that encouraged racism. I understood the basis for feeling that you didn't call the police unless you really, really needed to. But I talked to some African-American community leaders, and they felt, as I came to feel, that it was important, because they would have an African-American psychologist that could deal with the racism in the department, possibly a change agent in keeping that type of behavior to a minimum."

"There are always going to be issues involving negligence in hiring and retaining. Corporations and governments have a responsibility to see that the people they hire are capable; they must avail themselves of people who can do that. Psychologists provide tests and interviews for potential recruits regarding background and criminal behavior. In this respect, we first rule out psychopathology. There's no one test, so psychologists use a battery of tests as a matter of ethics and fairness."

"We try to prevent people with serious mental disorders from becoming officers. We try to rule in those persons who have a particular combination of traits, such as integrity, assertiveness, having a good energy level, ability to concentrate, an ability to work well with others but also ability to make decisions on one's own. Cops often don't have a situation where they can consult with others before making decisions."

Another aspect that society will continue to need is therapy and counseling for police officers and their families. Charles keeps two goals in mind, both rewarding to the dedicated counseling professional. First, this interaction

with struggling public servants "gives you the ability to alleviate stressors and other problems, helping them to do a better job. Anxiety, depression, decreased concentration can interfere with their work, so you can help them. It also increases their quality of life. The other thing is that it helps the public: it keeps them from interactions with the public when their functioning is significantly compromised--'til they get better. Police psychologists know the culture: they know the unique stressors, and can interface with the supervisory administrators."

The collaborative approach encourages faith within the force, as psychologists show increasing knowledge of and respect for the daily grind of police work.

"They know that we accept them and that we support them. Psychologists who affect things most deeply are the ones who are

most familiar with them, their days and schedules; we are part of them, not just sent by the city. In the best departments, depending on our duties, they see us as part of management, or as making counseling available." The most successful police psychologists also recognize boundaries. "Before I did the pre-employment screening, a partner and I split the management duties and counseling to avoid inappropriate overlap and ensure confidentiality."

Dr. Burchell served as an on-scene consultant with the NOPD Special Weapons and Tactics division in their calls for hostage and barricaded suspect situations. Here, as elsewhere, awareness of trouble in the law enforcement camp, as well as in the public, improves results.

The DEA provides counseling
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Dr. Tom Hannie (L) with Dr. Charles Burchell. Dr. Burchell has served as an on-scene consultant with the NOPD Special Weapons and Tactics division in their calls for hostage and barricaded suspect situations.

**Police Psychologist
Dr. Charles Burchell...**

services, training, and other response to trauma employees may experience, involving threats, narcotics gangs, suicides, or being hurt in the line of duty.

"When I was with the DEA EAP, '86 to '10, as part of the trauma-response team, I responded to Hurricane Andrew, in Homestead, and also [to events] in Puerto Rico. I responded to the bombing of the Murrah building in Okla., worked at least 12-hour days supporting agents who came in to help—assisted with death notification, supporting families who had lost someone, debriefing agents—a very rewarding experience, and very stressful. There had never been an act of home-grown terrorism like this, so focused on the government.

"Before I left, I visited the site and could smell death. I handled that not only by interacting with my fellow clinicians and also with the program manager, who offered an hour at a time as needed. Also I would call a friend every night. In the face of death like that, it was necessary. What trauma does is change our perception of the stability and predictability of the world. The brain is an organ of predictability; it's one of the things that makes us feel safe. When we have a trauma, we don't know what's going to happen. The same thing took place with Katrina, and is now in Joplin, Mo."

Time is a "big healer," though Dr. Charles Burchell teaches that memories, once fragmented, can come back unexpectedly. "Your feelings, problems are normal for what you've been through.' It's very difficult for them to hear that sometimes. The brain always wants completion, understanding, and sometimes you have to go on without complete understanding."

"Everywhere, in every setting, for example, people break up. Sometimes there's the fantasy of closure, reuniting, explaining what had happened; but sometimes you will never know—the person may not share, may not be there, may not understand it themselves," Dr. Charles Burchell said.

"There are small mysteries and there are larger mysteries, and that is the state of our existence."

N.O. Group To Meet , from pg 1

All psychologists are welcome.

"Our first goal," Dr. Weyand told the *Times*, "is to establish a viable fellowship of psychologists in the greater New Orleans region."

She explained that the organizers hope to "develop a professional society to facilitate psychologists' entry into professional affairs in Louisiana," and also to "give local psychologists a voice."

She and the other organizers hope that this will help with "reciprocal exchanges of information between the local level and the state level," she said.

She added that another objective is to "provide a forum for local networking..." and one that also "opens discussions among psychologists in which they can air concerns."

The first meeting is to be at the home of Dr. Kim VanGeffen who "...graciously opens her home to us," said Carolyn.

Interested psychologists can contact Dr. Carolyn Weyand at carolynweyand@gmail.com

**Lafayette Psychologists
To Meet June 23 at 7pm**

The newly formed Lafayette area of psychologists will meet on June 23, according to founder Dr. Gail Gillespie. She told the *Times* that the next meeting will be June 23, at 7:00, but that the exact place has not been determined. All those interested psychologists can contact Dr. Gillespie at gailgill@msn.com.

A new regional New Orleans group is being formed and Gail is assisting the organizers with ideas. Both groups are looking into the bylaws used by the Baton Rouge Area Society of Psychologists, (BRASP).

BRASP was founded by Dr. Marc Zimmermann. Other early members included Drs. Tom Stigall, Darlyne Nemeth, and Christine Angelloz. BRASP meets regularly in Baton Rouge.

Dr. Melinda Sothern's "Trim Kids" Program

by Alice LeBlanc
LSUHSC School of Public Health

What do Oprah Winfrey, "Good Morning America," the BBC, *New York Times*, *USA Today* and *Ladies Home Journal* have in common? They have all interviewed Dr. Melinda Sothern about her breakthrough translational research on childhood obesity and her Trim Kids Program. The nationwide media interest keeps growing, with Sanjay Gupta, the *Washington Post*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Parents Magazine*, Nickelodeon, and Radio Disney all featuring Dr. Sothern and her book *Trim Kids*.

Trim Kids: The Proven Plan that has Helped Thousands of Children Achieve a Healthier Weight, is authored by Dr. Sothern, Heidi Schumacher and Dr. T. Kristian Von Almen, and continues to be the gold standard for kids and families, helping any child, any age, anywhere to reach a healthier weight.

The Trim Kids Program continues to be acknowledged and replicated. It is considered a research-tested intervention program by the National Cancer Institute and received the 2007 US Surgeon General Award for community dissemination into YMCA centers. This was only one of a long list of awards and citations, the most recent of which was the Oded Bar Or Award for Excellence in Pediatric Obesity Research, The Obesity Society, Pediatric Obesity Section, awarded October 25, 2009.

Dr. Melinda Sothern is tenured Professor in the LSU Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC) School of Public Health's Behavioral and Community Health Science Program. She has worked diligently for decades to develop the program that successfully addresses childhood obesity and diabetes. The media attention may be astonishing, but it is definitely well deserved.

She has come to much of her wisdom about what children need for change through her own experiences. Melinda recalls her childhood as "A tomboy—climbing trees, throwing footballs, always outdoors. All that energy was a challenge to harness during school time," she said. But, with the help of the good nuns in Houma, Louisiana, she learned to direct her boundless energy and focus on studies throughout the school year.



Dr. Melinda Sothern, author of *Trim Kids* and Professor in the LSU Health Sciences Center School of Public Health's Behavioral and Community Health Science Program.

During summers, she found another outlet, swimming. She was a lifeguard by age 13, a teacher by 14, and a coach of competitive and synchronized swimming by 19. Convinced to major in physical education by her father, she engaged in an extended field experience, "Six years in the Virgin Islands," she explained. "There were all of these kids on an island, and they didn't know how to swim."

She became founder, president and director of the St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Swimming Association. Her swimmers swam in island-wide championships in Puerto Rico, Granada and the Dominican Republic. Next she moved to St. Croix to become the Research and Training Assistant for the MALO Institute with exercise physiologist, Dr. Orjan Madson of Norway and Michael Lohberg of Germany. Their team of

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Dr. Sothern, *Trim Kids*

swimmers included gold medalists Peter Bergen and Michael Gross among other sports luminaries.

But it wasn't the superstar athletes who captured Melinda's heart. It was a group of students whom she met while working during the same period as Athletic, PE and Aquatic Director for Good Hope School in St. Croix.

It was then that Melinda found herself involved in helping her first group of overweight youngsters, developing ideas that were destined to evolve later into a program of national recognition.

While coaching the cheerleading team, several overweight girls tried out at Melinda's invitation. "Not only didn't they make the squad," Melinda related, "people made fun of them – the kids, the judges, even the teachers."

The next year, Melinda put all the girls into four teams, and arranged the groups so that the top team, the A team, were big sisters to the B team, and they were big sisters to the C team, and so on, 48 girls in all. "These girls were accepted by the group, got individual attention and were learning how to make meaningful change through exercise. They trimmed down, and it was great to see."

In 1989 after Hurricane Hugo hit, destroying everything in the island, Melinda returned to Nicholls State University to finish her studies. Focused on her academic pursuits, she finished a B.S. in Arts and Sciences in 1990 at the University of New York Regents College and a M.Ed. in Exercise Physiology in 1991 at the University of New Orleans.

She had a "great job as Corporate Health and Fitness Director for Pan American Life Insurance Company," when she was approached by Dr. Robert Suskind of LSUHSC Pediatrics. Asked if she would work with "overweight kids," Dr. Sothern immediately took the position of Research Associate in Gastrointestinal Nutrition of the LSU School of Medicine. Becoming an Instructor the next year, she worked with that group until 1997.

"There were doctors from LSUHSC and Children's Hospital working on the project along with dietitians and psychologists. But none of them were professionals in exercise or the physiology of movement," she recalls.

"The study that was in place before I joined the team had kids walking two hours a day, trying to burn 500 calories a day – 80% of the participants left that first cohort. These kids weren't lazy, they were sick."

She introduced a progressive program of exercise involving 15 overweight children and their families. Beginning with chair aerobics, to help the children gradually build to achieve a healthy state, the groups' exercise regimens were stratified by obesity level. Red was for severely obese; Yellow for obese; Green for overweight; and Blue for ideal. It took 12 to 24 weeks for the children to move to the next level. The goal for everyone was the Blue level, not unlike the A-Team in St. Croix.

"The nutritional component was initially more restrictive," Melinda explained. "Low carbohydrate diets could put the students into ketosis, so we modified them to what is similar to the South Beach diet." From that beginning, the "Trim Kids Pediatric Weight Management Program" would be born.

"In those early days, people just weren't focused on obesity. Eventually there was an explosion of interest in obesity among children," Dr. Sothern recalls. "We were leading the pack."

Having completed her Ph.D. in 1997, Dr. Sothern was appointed Assistant Professor of Research and Director of the Section of Pediatric Obesity Clinical Research at the LSUHSC School of Medicine and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge. She then moved her primary appointment to the Pennington Center, under the direction of Dr. Eric Ravussin, Director of the Health and Human Performance Division.

Senior researchers at Pennington "told me I was a researcher, but that I wouldn't be a scientist until I had been awarded an NIH RO1 grant," Dr. Sothern grins. "So, I got two of them."

While working at the Pennington Center as the Director of the Prevention of Childhood Obesity Laboratory, Dr. Sothern joined Dr. Larry Weber with Tulane University as Co-Primary Investigator and interventionist in his Trial of Activity for Adolescent Girls Study with the NIH. She also continued her work as Director of the Pediatric Obesity Clinical

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Dr. Sothern, Trim Kids

Research Section at LSUHSC, splitting her time between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

During this time there was a huge demand for materials from childhood obesity programs. In response, Dr. Melinda Sothern, along with Heidi Schumacher and Dr. T. Kristian Von Almen began writing the text *Trim Kids: The Proven Plan that has Helped Thousands of Children Achieve a Healthier Weight*. The book came out in 2001, and amid glowing reviews, *Trim Kids* became the gold standard. "It isn't a diet book," she emphasized. "We instruct the reader to work with a nutritionist on a dietary plan that complements the program."

In 2004 she was asked to come to LSUHSC School of Public Health. "I was delighted to get the call in 2004 from Terry [Dean Elizabeth T.H. Fontham] asking me to join the School of Public Health Faculty," said Dr. Sothern.

Professor Sothern brings to the school the mentoring experience she has gained from her work as principal and co-principal investigator on 22 grants and contracts totaling well over \$20 million. Perhaps as importantly, she brings the patience and insight she gained with her cheerleaders in St. Croix.

"I challenge my students by showing them what they can be in 20 years. I like to raise their curiosity, and give them pieces of the puzzle to work with," she explained.

As the author of 34 manuscripts in peer reviewed journals, three books, and 28 chapters in texts and peer-reviewed journals, Dr. Melinda Sothern emphasizes thorough review of previous research. "My students begin by exploring the needs of the community and reviewing the literature thoroughly before thinking about an intervention," she said. "This opens their eyes; they become aware and learn what experts have done in the area."

"After they know a problem front, back and sideways, then they need to think out of the box – using the theories, but arriving at ideas of interventions that have never been done before."

"Only then can they clearly define a solution, very specifically thinking about the means they

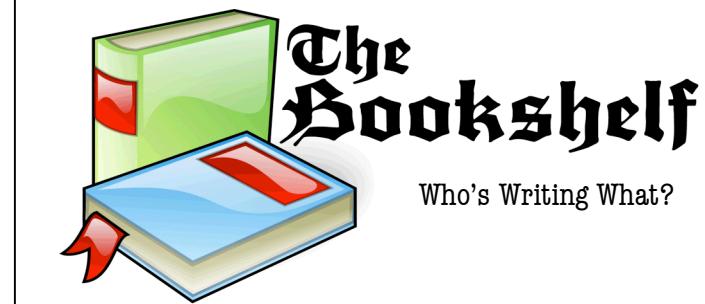
The Proven 12-Week Plan that Has Helped Thousands of Children Achieve a Healthier Weight

Trim Kids™

- Scientifically tested and easy to use
- Includes shopping lists, meal plans, and kid-tested recipes—everything you need
- Strategies that really work to end power struggles over food
- Exercise activities designed with kids in mind

Melinda S. Sothern, Ph.D., M.Ed., C.E.P., T. Kristian Von Almen, Ph.D.,
and Heidi Schumacher, R.D., L.D.N., C.D.E.

Go find your bike, jump rope, hula-hoop, mini-trampoline, or your laser tag gun and get a copy of *Trim Kids* to have some fun. In this practical and research supported manual for parents of overweight youngsters, the authors combine their experience to build a program of clear, doable steps to help create lifestyle changes and permanent improvements in health for today's kids and families.



will use to solve the problem, and how to monitor and evaluate an intervention."

Dr. Melinda Sothern concludes with a smile, "I love teaching – watching the students' faces when the light bulbs go off on top of their heads."

For more information about Dr. Sothern's extensive research, see her CV at:
http://publichealth.lsuhsc.edu/faculty_cv/CV_Sothern.pdf

LA Researchers Present, from pg 1

advice if you're looking up, to mediation and mindfulness. Research topics from the following schools are covered below, with others in subsequent issues.

Centenary

Amanda Shackleton, Jessica Garris, Michael Naquin, Shakeria Alcorn, Jacob Jones, and Katherine Shamburger, with professor Amy Hammond, presented "A Sense to Remember: Seeing and Touching Are Better Than Hearing." The researchers found that recall was better for items presented in the tactile and visual modes, rather than auditory.

Louisiana Tech

Margaret L. Hindman (now at Louisiana State University) Mary M. Livingston, and Alice P. Carter. In an investigation of social comparison and grades, showed how grades of other students influenced happiness and satisfaction ratings in "Influence of Social Comparison on Happiness and Satisfaction With Grades."

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LA Researchers Present...

In "Numeracy and Domain-Specific Risk Attitude as Potential Predictors of Framing Effects," Kevin T. Mahoney, Amy L. Frost, Walter C. Buboltz, and John E. Buckner examined numeracy, thinking-style, and domain-specific risk attitude are examined as individual differences that may predict risky choice framing effects.

John Buckner, Kevin Mahoney, and Amy Frost examine the relationships among positive display rules, emotional labor, personality, and emotional display by manipulating the presence (or absence) of a positive display rule in a work-sample task, in "Positive Display Rule, Personality, Emotional Labor, and Emotional Display."

"Self-Regulated Learning: A Brief Intervention Designed for Elementary Students," by Ashley N. Carroll and Alice P. Carter. Researchers determined the effectiveness of a short intervention teaching self-regulation to elementary students.

Margaret L. Hindman (now at Louisiana State University,) Mary M. Livingston, and Alice P. Carter determined the amount of personal space that people leave between them and understanding of sex, age, and familiarity differences in "Personal Space Proxemics: Race, Sex, and Familiarity Differences."

In "Relationship of Psychological Health, Sleep Quality, and Physical Health Sleep" examined sleep quality, mental health, and physical health and showed them to be interrelated. Students with better sleep quality were less likely to exhibit mental or physical health difficulties. By Steve M. Jenkins (Wagner College,) Jennifer Thibodeaux, Walter C. Buboltz, and Janel McDaniel.

Loyola

"Attention Goes to the Movies: Impact of Auditory Components on Film Perception" by Lewis J. Baker and Lawrence B. Lewis, looked at how participants with an elevated ability to split attention showed greater accuracy in distinguishing cinematic elements.

Erin C. Dupuis and Sheridyn R. Miller presented "Welcome to the Club: Recruitment's Effect on Social Support and Well-Being." Researchers looked at women going through sorority recruitment and compared to a non-recruitment group. Before and after recruitment, self-esteem, depression, loneliness, and aspects of identity were measured. Results indicated that sorority women were less depressed and perceived greater social support; however, sorority women were more likely to drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes.

"Effects of Short-Term Dynamic and Static Meditation Practices on Attention and Mindfulness." Lawrence B. Lewis and Matthew S. Glenn had participants practice either a static (still breathing awareness) or dynamic (tai chi or yoga) meditation exercise for ten minutes. Relative to controls, mediators performed significantly better on a change blindness attentional task.

LSU

"Factors of the High School Experience in Relation to First Year College Success," presented by Wade Smith (Louisiana State University Laboratory School), Jason Drodny (Louisiana State University) and A.J. Guarino (MGH Institute of Health Professions). This study investigated the relationship between high school accountability, Pell Grant eligibility, core GPA, Taylor Opportunity Program eligibility, and free/reduced lunch status on first year college retention.

The Psychology Times

The *Psychology Times* is provided as a community service for those in the practice, teaching, and science of psychology in Louisiana and related individuals and groups.

The *Times* offers information, entertainment, and networking for the Louisiana psychological community.

None of the content is intended as advice for anyone.

Desselle, Fanning Vie For LPA Director

In another contested race within LPA, current Director Dr. Sherry Desselle from Baton Rouge, and Dr. John Fanning from New Orleans, submitted their names to the membership for the chance to hold a director position in the Louisiana Psychological Association.

Ballots were sent to LPA members in May and should be returned to LPA offices by close of business, June 20. The ballots can be faxed to Executive Director Ms. Gail Lowe at 225-766-0112. All ballots must be identifiable by name or by a clear return address on the envelope.

The director position opened up when Dr. Bryan Gros, who currently holds a director position, won his bid to become the next President-Elect, following an election this April.