

Lawmakers Wrap It Up

Higher Ed and Health Care Saved – for Now

Governor Jindal said in a June 19 press release that the budget, HB1, is balanced and protects higher education and health care.

“This is the eighth year in a row we are signing a balanced budget without tax increases. The budget continues the trend of making smart reductions to the size of government, while strengthening the state’s health care system and protecting higher education,” Jindal said.

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Dr. Joe Comaty Not Confirmed

In a twist to one of the most unusual psychology board elections ever, the Senate declined to confirm Dr. Joseph Comaty to serve a second term on the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP).

While no one in the community is officially taking responsibility for lobbying against the appointment,

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SB113: What Was Behind Door #1?

“I was approached and told there was some offer made, plan A, or plan one and plan two,” said Senator Martiny at a May meeting of the Senate Commerce Committee. “I’m sitting up here trying to figure out which cards I throw away, and which I read.”

Senate Bill 113, initiated by the state psychology board, was pitched to Senator Rick Gallot as an innocuous piece of legislation

Cont’d pg 5



The House of Representatives on its final day, June 11. Here Speaker of the House, Rep. Chuck Kleckley, gives a farewell.



Dr. Tiffany Stewart
(Photo by Collin Richie)

Commended by Legislature

Dr. Tiffany Stewart Honored as 2015 “Woman of Excellence”

Dr. Tiffany Stewart, clinical psychologist, inventor and entrepreneur, and Associate Professor at Pennington Biomedical Research Center, has been named Woman of Excellence by the Louisiana Legislative Women’s Caucus Foundation. Stewart was honored at the group’s Awards Gala, May 26, at the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center Hotel.

Dr. Stewart was also commended by the Louisiana Legislature in a House Concurrent Resolution for her work and research, and for “spearheading unique, large, multi-site prevention studies that have included the development and deployment of novel approaches for health behavior change, ...”.

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Dr. Kim VanGeffen

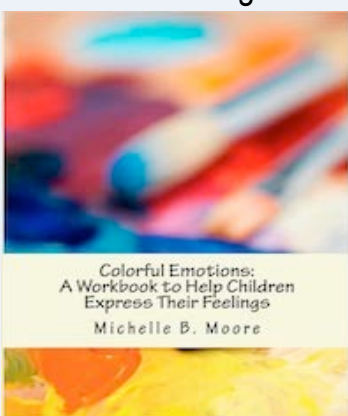
Dr. VanGeffen Named Distinguished Psychologist by La Psych Association

The Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA) named Dr. Kim VanGeffen as Distinguished Psychologist for 2015 at their convention held last month. Dr. VanGeffen is a clinical and neuropsychologist, leader in the psychology community, and humanitarian in the New Orleans area where she resides.

Dr. VanGeffen served as President Elect, President, and Past President of LPA during the 1990s and has also served for the last six years. She currently served as Director on the LPA Executive Council and is Chair of the Professional Affairs Committee.

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More LSBEP Power Grabbing

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Drs. Daniel, Golob Brainy Research in *Tulane Magazine*

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Psychology Times Wins Awards at Press Association

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Editorial Page – Opinions

Sacred Trusts *by J. Nelson*

The torpedoing of Dr. Comaty’s appointment can be viewed as the working of democracy, two points for the underdogs, or even a dish served cold, since the only other black-balling in recent history was LAMP going after the incorruptible John Simoneaux in 2010. I’ve told John that that was a badge of honor—a sure sign of his integrity and that LAMP viewed him as not being soft-headed enough to manipulate.

While the sheep grew some teeth and LAMP got, for once, some of its own RxP, this type of thing is nothing for us to be proud of. With it, we’re getting down and rolling around in the dirt along with LAMP.

We’re social-emotional fish; the waters in which we swim become part of us. Consider the group dynamics going on. The psychology board claimed to put forth a “clean-up” bill and figured it could delete LPA from providing “a list” of names to the Governor. This little gold nugget of power came into sharp focus and a concerted political effort by the psychology board to remove LPA and somehow include LAMP, ensued. This included some strong-arming in both content and group process, and also, by the way, violations in Open Meetings and Public Records Laws, and their role in lobbying. But hey, who’s watching?

The goody-goodies over in LPA, presumably unconvinced by game theory, have offered several democratic solutions. Not surprisingly the board has politely spit them back in their faces.

My point is: Who does the board look more like in group climate? Closed, defensive, unconscious, autocratic, power-hungry? Hummmm, could it be Laaaaaammp?

Abraham Lincoln said, “... if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” Well, here is our test. We are up to our eyeballs in it.

And, what is LAMP doing? Why do they continue to hang out in psychology, tormenting the rest of us and sucking up energy? Is it because—news flash— there is no fight over under medicine? Medical psychology will never have a seat at the physicians’ table. Rank and file MPs are trapped. They pay LAMP \$1500 for their CEs and they wind up supporting the LAMP leadership who needs a political battle somewhere. Otherwise, why pay Courson & Nickel \$75K/year, what fun would it be without them?

Or, is the agenda to drag mental health under medicine? Tacking on the medical board to the practice of the counselors and family therapists suggests that maybe LAMP imagines and would enjoy a hierarchy in mental health, with them on top of course. Then everyone can be “mid-level providers” with the medical model and big pharma in the catbird seat for healthcare.

All of this demands we think of better, more decent ways to resolve our problems than “politics,” the euphemism for power games, which, if you’re not fighting terrorists, are mostly unconscious, archaic motivations that get in the way of good judgment and decision-making.

I recently attended the LPA convention and a good friend said, “What are you fighting now?” This hurt, because I don’t come to my role in our community with any sense of real comfort. It’s been hard on me and hard on my family. And I’ve gotten criticisms from colleagues: “You’re divisive,” “You’re a trouble-maker.” Some people say, “Can’t you just move on?” I’ve thought about that a lot.

When Don Glad chose me to join this scientific profession, I experienced that as a very great privilege. I looked up to him, and to Joe Dawson, and Art Riopelle, and Tom Stigall, and others. Through some lucky accident I was accepted into this amazing group. I took it seriously then, and I take it seriously now.

I took it as a sacred trust, a duty, to carry the ideals and principles of the science and practice of psychology into the community, into the future, as best I could with the talents I was given. I even helped with the psychology law that stood until Act 251.

For me, this duty, once embraced, has been a jealous lover. I either can’t or won’t put these ideals away and I feel a clash between the principles I cherish and what I see happening.

But I also get plenty of praise: “You’re courageous,” “You’re brilliant,” “You’re a great psychologist.” The fact is, I’m none of these things—at least no more and no less than anyone else. I’m not smarter than anyone else, I’m not more courageous ... I’m retired.

Those of us who understand what’s at stake here, and who can take the risk as proxies for the younger psychologists, need to come forward. Psychology might be one of the only professions where wisdom is as or more important than knowledge, given the human psyche. Perhaps LPA can create a structure for this. Call them. Or call me. Or call Susan Dardard.

I’ve never cared one way or the other about RxP, but I do care about what blew in the window with it. Those of us who believe that psychology is best served by its principles and not by power games, should come together and reinstall our ideals.

Principles are what we have to depend on when our mind turns to mush as it inevitably will, during group-think, power issues, or the speeded up pace of our fast-think lives. So we can’t compromise them, or sooth, or try and get along, if it requires a compromise of our principles.

We should all be “divisive,” at these times. Martin Luther King has been quoted to say, “Never be afraid to do what’s right.” Our principles, given to us by our collective fathers, are the water in which we swim. We must keep the waters pure.

Have a Happy July 4th.

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Corrections & Clarifications

There were no corrections for our June issue.

Please send corrections to the *Times* at
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Legislature Wraps It Up, continued

The announcement noted that the budget reduces the size of state government by nearly 3 percent and also cuts corporate welfare spending by over \$129 million per year. The budget decreased from \$25.8 billion to approximately \$25.1 billion. The number of government positions decreased by 724. Jindal said that \$626 million in additional recurring revenue was raised in this budget. This was accomplished without a net increase in taxes, he said.

The budget includes \$2.36 billion to fund higher education across the state. The SAVE program also provides a recurring, statutorily revenue stream of \$350 million for higher education institutions by providing tax credits to students receiving new assessments, the announcement noted.

In health care, the budget invests \$9.65 billion in funding for The Department of Health and Hospitals, an increase of 1.5% over the previous fiscal year. The budget commits more than \$53.7 million for state partner hospitals around Louisiana.

In a Reuters report, Moody's analyst Marcia Van Wagner said the legislature closed that gap with a heavy reliance on short-term measures, suggesting the state "will likely see continued large budgetary gaps next year, when it has to craft the budget for fiscal year 2017."

Kristy Nichols, the state's Commissioner of the Division of Administration, who is in charge of the state's budget and a spokeswoman for Jindal, said most of the revenues and savings were recurring rather than one-off measures. "Louisiana did what it intended to do, which was to close the structural imbalance of the state's budget and to create long-term solutions that close that gap over the next 2-3 years and even further," said Nichols. Other sources say new money for many higher education and health care expenses will have to be found, and a special session in 2016 likely.

Senate Confirms LPCs, Dr. Salcedo for Task Force

Among those confirmed for serving by the Senate, were five on Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners: Ronald "Ron" Cathey, from Simsboro, Louisiana; Laura Choate, PhD, from Baton Rouge; Ernest "Ernie" Cowger, Jr, from Shreveport; Penny Millhollon, from Shreveport; and Jacqueline "Jackie" Mims, PhD, from Baton Rouge.

Ronald Cathey and Penny Millhollon were also confirmed to serve on the Marriage and Family Therapy Advisory Committee.

Rafael Salcedo, PhD, was confirmed to serve on the Point of Rescue Publications Task Force. Dr. Salcedo is a clinical psychologist from Folsom, Louisiana.

For the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners two individuals were confirmed: Yolanda Burnom of Shreveport, and Paulette Walker of Ponchatoula, Louisiana.

The Senate confirmed new and on-going members of the Addictive Disorder Regulatory Authority. They are Shaneeka Harrison of Harvey, Louisiana, A. Kenison Roy III, MD, of Metairie, and Bernadine J. Williams, also of Harvey.

Kwelie Amusa, MD, from Slidell, was confirmed to sit on the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners.

Confirmed to serve on the University of Louisiana System, Board of Supervisors, were Edward Crawford, III, of Shreveport, Pamela Egan of Covington, and Shawn Murphy of Quitman, LA.

The Capital Area Human Services District board gained three new members. Mary "Laverne" Aguillard, from Ventress, Gerri Hobdy from Baton Rouge, and Victoria King from Baton Rouge, were confirmed.

What Happened to Bill...?

HB 381 Signed by Governor
Exempts behavioral health services providers at specialty courts, from licensure requirements

HB835 Signed by Governor
Provides for the examination, treatment and billing for victims of sexually-oriented crimes.

HB573 Dead
Provides for the investigation and adjudication of violations by the state Medical board

HB385 Signed by Governor
Provides with respect to mandatory reporters, exception for those on legal team

HCR56 Dead
Continues Art Therapist Licensure Task Force

HCR170 Passed
Creates a study committee to evaluate and make recommendations for Louisiana's healthcare system

HCR186 Passed
Requests a study to establish baseline date on access to health care, wellness, prevention

HB301 sent to Governor for executive approval
Provides relative to court-ordered outpatient mental health treatment, increases maximum

HB261 Sent to governor for executive approval
Enacts the Quality Parenting for Children in Foster Care.



Senator J.P. Morrell (center) speaks with television reporters about the legislation passed this session aimed to ease medical bills for victims of sexually related crimes.

State & National News

Comaty Not Confirmed, continued

numerous undisclosed sources tell the *Times* that Dr. Comaty’s decisions have drawn criticism from psychologists, licensed professional counselors, and also from marriage and family therapists, and that these and other issues motivated efforts to block his serving again on the board.

Confirmations occurred on the final day of the legislative session, June 11. Senators have the right to reject any of the 400 or so appointments. A single Senator can blackball the appointee and no reason has to be given.

While discussions may take place in open committee, they do not. Presiding Chair of the Senate and Governmental Affairs Committee, Senator Jody Amedee, said, “We don’t typically get red cards against them [appointees]. Most of the time people send letters, call, whatever. But most of them don’t come face-to-face.” After only about 10 minutes of open meeting, he adjourned and moved to closed, executive session.

Dr. Comaty’s political positions while previously serving on the psychology board have caused a variety of concerns from different groups in the community.

Some consider his interests to be aligned with Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists (LAMP), who has controlled a majority vote on the state psychology board since 2009 and Act 251. Comaty lists himself as a member on LAMP’s website, had donated to LAMP Pac, and he was serving on the psychology board when LAMP and the Medical Board negotiated Act 251. The legislation has been criticized by those outside of the state, including APA Board of Educational Affairs, the Interdivisional Healthcare Committee, Committee for the Advancement of Professional Psychology, and Academy of Medical Psychology.

Comaty has assured the community that he does not have a conflict of interest, stating so in a board newsletter last year, following his initial appointment.

A 2011 decision by Dr. Comaty has also been a source of controversy. As Chair of LSBEP, Comaty was asked by representatives from the state medical board to reverse an opinion and allow medical psychologists, those without a state psychology license, to qualify as supervisors for psychology interns. Comaty and the board agreed, making Louisiana the only state in the U.S. with such an arrangement.

Dr. Comaty’s decisions have also drawn disfavor from the community of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT), decisions considered by some to be an unfair effort to restrain trade.

In a 2012 newsletter the Legislative Affairs Chair of the Louisiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy noted to members, “Dr. Joseph Comaty has been the main psychologist advocating against LPCs and LMFTs in Louisiana.” The author also expressed concerns that the psychology board had allowed this, pointing to ethical requirements for a public board to remain neutral.

In 2010 and 2011 these issues culminated in a move by Senator Willie Mount to support the counselors and marriage and family therapists in their bid to clarify scope of practice. Department of Health and Hospitals, Secretary Kathy Kliebert, described the need in her 2011 testimony before the Senate Committee and her support for Mount’s goals. “We have problems in terms of getting the provider capacity we need for mental health in Louisiana,” she said. [...] “That clarification of the scope of practice would certainly help in our future, ...”

Senator Mount created the Behavioral Health Professionals Working Group and told psychologists and counselors to resolve problems, but the group failed. Dr. Comaty, joined by Drs. Darla Burnett and Jessica Brown, participated and suggested that LPCs place themselves under the psychology board, an idea that was met with dismay by LPCs. Later Comaty wrote to the Senate Committee saying “... LSBEP’s patient efforts to bring its legitimate concerns to the attention of the LPC board have been met with intransigence.”

Some in the community have objected to the 2014 election, one of the strangest elections for a board seat that many can remember. Dr. Comaty sent multiple communications to Boards & Commissions with complaints about election matters, clerical errors and even possible election tampering by members of the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA). He also complained that his opponent, top vote getter Dr. Constance Patterson had a conflict of interest, an idea aggressively picked up by the psychology board and elevated to the state Ethics board. The conflict of interest idea was dismissed.

But despite strong support from the community for Patterson, Comaty was appointed because of the influence of Bud Courson, LAMP lobbyist, and Dr. Jim Quillin, LAMP leader, who were mentioned in an obscure office email.

Lack of confirmation is rare. But in 2010, top vote getter and widely admired clinical and forensic psychologist, Dr. John Simoneaux was also torpedoed.

Dr. Simoneaux had openly criticized Act 251 and confronted irregularities having to do with LAMP and the



Dr. Joe Comaty serving on the psychology board in 2010. Recently the Senate declined to confirm his second term. In foreground is Jamie Monic.

November 9-16 Designated “School Psychologist Week”

Senator Morrish authored a Resolution to designate November 9 through 16, 2015, as “School Psychologist Week.” The Resolution noted that school psychologists are critical players of the school team, helping to ensure a quality education for all students, supporting the educational process needed to prepare students for academic success, healthy development, and responsible citizenship.

President of the Louisiana School Psychological Association, Dr. Chavez Phelps, said, “LSPA is humbled Senator Morrish would honor the hard work of school psychologists by authoring this resolution. This resolution increases our visibility as a profession and a resource. I hope this is the impetus for stronger professional ties with our elected officials and other relevant stakeholders.”

Sen. Heitmeier, Rep. Simon Author Resolutions Commending Psychology

The Resolutions, SR171 and HR137, noted that psychology is a diverse discipline, grounded in science, and that psychologists help others who experience health problems and use an assortment of evidence-based methods to help people improve their lives. The authors also noted that the Louisiana Psychological Association, is the state professional association and represents psychologists in all practice, research, and academic settings, and works to further psychology as a science, applied practice, and a means of promoting human welfare

LAMP leaders within the LPA. Later documents confirmed that funds were in fact used from LPA to pay for LAMP’s political goals.

In 2010, Simoneaux reluctantly spoke with the *Times*, indicating that he had been told that, if he had any questions, to speak with his Senator, Joe McPherson. At that time, McPherson was the Senator for both Simoneaux and Jim Quillin.

Last year the *Times* obtained records off the internet from a court proceeding involving a relative of Senator McPherson. In these proceedings, Dr. Simoneaux was the court-appointed psychologist.

According to the records, the relative objected to Simoneaux helping with the case, alleging that he was biased “... because her uncle, state Senator Joe McPherson, blocked his appointment to the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists.”

In a 2009 letter from LAMP leaders to the American Psychological Association attorneys, explaining why LAMP negotiated Act 251, Dr. Glenn Ally noted, “[It] So happens it is Sen. McPherson who was the sponsor of our initial RxP bill and friend of Dr. Quillin.”

SB113: What Was Behind Door #1? continued

for “clean-up language.” But it turned into a tug-of-war over the short sentence naming who is to control the “list” of names for appointments.

Last month the *Times* reported the surface of the story, with only photos and nuances available to connect the dots. After a long-delay, and the *Times* threatening the board with a lawsuit, the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) produced enough emails to see some of what was happening behind the scenes. This, along with other official and unofficial sources within the community, a picture emerged of a board lobbying to take control of nominations, to delete the state psychological association from the licensing law, and include the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists (LAMP), who hold, and have held, a majority vote on the LSBEP since the passage of Act 251 in 2009.

Efforts by the LSBEP to push their views, included asking the Federation of Association Regulatory Boards to warn against special interests on boards; claiming that the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA) was no longer an umbrella organization for psychology in Louisiana, and a claim that LPA had already agreed to the change.

This latest battle for the board ended in a fizzle. No changes were made to the elections and nominations section of the Psychology Practice Act, primarily because Senator Gallot

held to his word, that if the two sides didn’t agree, “I’ll let it die on the vine.” Here is some of what happened behind the scenes over who is going to control the list of names given to the Governor.

Options Batted Around

In November 2014 the LSBEP proposed changing the sentence in the psychology law from “All appointments shall be from a list provided by the Louisiana Psychological Association,” to “... from a list provided by the Board or its designee.”

The wording “from a list” is common language in the law, such as in boards for engineers, accountants, veterinarians, and physicians. While the wording gives the association the right to vet or set standards for who is on the list, LPA has adopted a democratic policy of submitting the top vote getters.

By May 1, emails show that LSBEP Executive Director, Kelly Parker, was working on more specific wording with Michelle Ridge of the Senate. This wording was: “(b) By January 1, 2016, the board shall adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act establishing the nomination and election process by which appointments are made to the governor. The board shall work in conjunction with the statewide associations during rulemaking process of such rules.”

During this same time, it appears LPA submitted an option, suggesting a committee composed of “proportional representation”

from LPA, LAMP, and LSPA. These proportions would be three representatives from LPA, one from LAMP, one from LSPA, and one psychologist at-large. The source said the recommendation was that the committee solicit nominations and then turn them over to the board for electronic election. Then, the top three vote getters would be sent to the Governor for appointment. Or, the committee could submit names without an election, the source explained. However, LSBEP rejected this option.

LSBEP held a special meeting on Monday, May 4, and Parker emailed Ridge at 8:43 am. “A majority of the Board met this morning to review the proposed language.” The board was removing the statewide association sentence: “(b) By January 1, 2016, the board shall adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act establishing the nomination and election process by which appointments are made to the governor.

On May 7, the “statewide associations” language was back. Parker emailed the Senate attorney, “On Thursday, May 7, 2015, a majority of the Board voted to revoke the previous amendment language submitted on Monday, May 4th and instead submit the following: ‘The board shall work with the statewide associations representing licensed psychologists during the initial rulemaking process.’”

Ridge asked Parker if the board was okay with the statue saying: “The board shall adopt rules in

accordance with the administrative procedure act for the nomination process and election of board members.” Ridge also asked, “What is meant by the ‘initial rulemaking process.’?”

The next day, May 12, Parker forwarded a message from the Senate committee and asked Dr. Joe Comaty, if this wording was okay: “The board shall adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to implement the nomination and election process of board members. During the initial rulemaking process, the board shall consult with statewide associations representing psychologists who are licensed by the board.” He emailed her back, “Yes.”

Recruiting Help from FARB

On April 23, emails show that Parker contacted Dale Atkinson, attorney and Executive Director for the Federation of Association of Regulatory Boards (FARB). “You mentioned that you would possibly write a letter on behalf of FARB for us regarding removing the state association from the law,” she wrote. “I can go into more details if needed. I am not sure how much Greg or Joe filled you in on. Would you still be willing to do so?”

Atkinson wrote back on April 27, asking, “What are you looking for re the letter from FARB? I did not speak with Greg [Gormanous] or Joe [Comaty] re such a letter. Let me know what you need....”

Parker responded, “We currently handle the election and wish to remove all perception that there may be an alliance with a guild organization in connection with our board members. We originally initiated this action because not only do we solely handle the elections but there are now 3 psychological associations in the state. [...]”

She referred to the Supreme Court decision on restraint of trade [February 2015], and said, “I have reached out to our ‘mother’ agency, Department of health and Hospitals,’ but the opinion is that though they may be able to provide supervision (as need per the FTC decision), they will not. DHH does not want to get involved.” (No emails on this matter were included.)

Atkinson prepared the letter, where he noted, “FARB does not recommend that any professional trade association be referenced in law, ...” and



Lobbyist for the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists (LAMP), Mr. Bud Courson, chats with LSBEP member Dr. Darla Burnett and Director Kelly Parker at the Senate Committee meeting. This excerpt from the video is one of the few signs that LAMP was involved. There were no emails from LAMP in the documents released.

SB 113 and Door #1? continued

warned about the involvement of a trade association “creates presumptions of self- dealing and professional promotion.”

Three Associations?

Another of the arguments put forth by the board was that there are three associations to be considered: LPA, LAMP, and the Louisiana School Psychological Association (LSPA).

At the May 13 Senate Committee, Parker testified, “That’s one of the issues,” Parker said, “... there are three psychological associations in the state at this time. So at the time the law was originally written there was just one.”

Harkins, in her testimony, said, “We’ve talked with LAMP and they are in favor of what we had originally proposed.”

An effort to talk with LAMP president has not been returned. However, a request for comment from LSPA President, Dr. Chavez Phelps was returned. The *Times* asked if the association had voiced concerns about LSBEP elections or nominations. Dr. Phelps noted that LSPA had not discussed any problems regarding this topic. He did note that they have a representative on the LSBEP professionalism task force, however.

The Board’s 6 Second Meeting with LPA

In March 2014, then LPA President, John Fanning, wrote LSBEP to inform them LPA was withdrawing from conducting elections. Fanning also wrote, “As noted in LA R.S. 37:2353, LPA shall continue to report the results of the LSBEP elections to the governor. We suggest a joint task force between LPA and LSBEP to develop procedures for future LSBEP elections that would not involve LPA conducting LSBEP elections.”

In July 23, 2014, Parker contacted Senator Gallot, and Dr. Greg Gormanous about “... the opportunity to discuss future clean up changes to the psychology law.”

By November 21, 2014, LSBEP had crafted those changes for the law. But the public meeting agenda for this section of the law was listed as only: “a. Revisions – R.S. 37:2353.” No details were provided to the public ahead of the meeting.

At the November meeting Parker read the section of the law, including several changes, taking about 105 seconds.

Then Dr. Rita Culross asked, “Any questions?” One person spoke, Dr. Darlyne Nemeth, who said, “I think that’s good.” Culross then moved immediately to the next topic.

Then, however, Dr. Darla Burnett interrupted and pointed out that the change removes LPA from the language. Burnett said, “Is that okay with y’all? Does anyone have any thoughts with that?” Nemeth again said, “We agreed that that was good.” There were no other responses from attendees. The public discussion lasted for five to six seconds. LPA President Joe Tramontana, did not speak. It is not known if he may have nodded. No one addressed the main issue of “a list.”

During the discussions over SB113, Parker said in an email to Senator Gallot that LPA had agreed to the change, and that this was documented in the minutes. “ ‘The group discussed the revisions. No oppositions were noted. Dr. Burnett inquired with Dr. Tramontano whether LPA would oppose being removed from the language. Dr. Tramontano confirmed that LPA would support the proposed changes.’” (sic)

Whose “Side” is the Board On?

Senator Gallot’s comment, “I’m not choosing one side over the other,” suggests that the board had a side. But there were no emails released that included LAMP.

However, the evidence for LAMP being on the side of the LSBEP, came almost exclusively from a videotape of the Senate Commerce Committee proceedings, where LAMP lobbyist Bud Courson and James Nickel sat with the LSBEP and chatted with board member Dr. Burnett and Parker.

Some view Parker’s and the Board’s efforts as closer to lobbying than providing factual information. On May 8, Parker wrote Harkins, “If this is going to committee Wed, I need to come down and talk to committee members next week prior to it. Let me know.”

Gallot also characterized the issues as emotionally laden, suggesting the lack of neutrality. “It’s almost like mediating a custody thing, someone was late bringing the child back six months ago,” characterizing the issues, not as neutral or factual, but as highly charged.

Public officials are allowed to provide “factual” information but are not allowed to lobby, which is



Dr. Kim VanGeffen receives Distinguished Psychologist Award from Dr. Carolyn Weyand at the recent conference of the LA Psychological Assn.

Dr. VanGeffen Named Distinguished Psychologist by La Psych, cont’d

VanGeffen is also a past president of the New Orleans Neuropsychological Society and has served on the Women in Leadership Committee of the National Academy of Neuropsychology.

VanGeffen has worked in the New Orleans volunteer mental health community for the last 20 years, serving as Vice President, President, and Past President of VIA LINK, a nonprofit social service that serves Orleans, Jefferson, Lafourche, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington parishes.

The agency operates the 211 Information and Referral and Crisis Call Center for the greater New Orleans area and helps individuals and families understand the resources and services available and how to connect to these services, to improving the daily life of those in need as well as helping those in crisis.

VanGeffen has served on the Board of Directors for VIA LINK since 1992 and is now Director Emeritus for the organization.

She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Thomas/McMahan Foundation in New Orleans, a nonprofit organization established in the memory

an inappropriate use of public funds and blurs separation of powers.

Despite the end of the discussions over SB113, the psychology board continues to strong-arm officials in LPA about which names go to the governor. See story this issue: “LSBEP Continues Power Grab.”

of two New Orleans physicians who died of cancer. The Thomas/McMahan Foundation raises money for and arranges for services for cancer patients to enhance their quality of life while they undergo treatment.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, VanGeffen was part of a group in the Far Fund Project New Orleans. The Far Fund is a New York organization which provides grants to various projects. Dr. Kathy Nathan, a New Orleans psychologist, secured a grant from Far Fund after Hurricane Katrina to understand and address the experiences of therapists during and after the Hurricane. VanGeffen helped and participated in discovery of what it was like being a therapist personally affected by Katrina while treating patients who were also affected by Katrina. She is also currently helping with Katrina Anniversary Workshops, coordinated by members of LPA.

Dr. VanGeffen received her doctorate in clinical psychology from Louisiana State University and completed an internship at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. She is a member of the American Psychological Association, Louisiana Psychological Association, the National Academy of Neuropsychology, the Southeastern Psychological Association, and the Cresent City Association of Psychologists. In her private practice, Dr. VanGeffen provides psychological, neuropsychological and child custody evaluations as well as individual and family therapies.

Psychologist Charged With Medicare Fraud

In a press release on June 18, the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Eastern District Louisiana, announced that 11 individuals – including two physicians and a clinical psychologist – were charged for their roles in five separate fraud schemes based in New Orleans that, combined, submitted close to \$110 million in fraudulent claims to Medicare.

Rodney Hesson, PsyD, and Gertrude Parker, were charged for their roles in a \$25 million psychological testing program that was carried out through eight companies in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

Hesson and Parker owned and operated Nursing Home Psychological Service (NHPS) and Psychological Care Services (PCS), and each had separate companies in Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and Alabama. The indictment alleges that these companies contracted with nursing homes in these states to allow NHPS and PCS clinical psychologists to administer psychological tests to nursing home residents, said the U.S. Attorney.

Dr. Hesson and Parker caused these companies to bill Medicare for psychological testing services that these nursing home residents did not need or in some instances did not receive, said the news release. Between 2009 and 2015, NHPS and PCS submitted over \$25.2 million in claims to Medicare.

According to a report by Psychiatric Crime Database, Hesson was convicted of Medicaid fraud in 2012, in Picayune, Mississippi. The report noted that “Hesson threw himself on the mercy of Circuit Court Judge Anthony Mozingo by entering an open plea.”

The report also notes that an investigation uncovered that Hesson would meet once with a patient, then bill for multiple services. The report notes that Hesson, a Slidell psychologist, closed his office in Picayune in 2008. However, the current charges suggest that he was billing Medicare from 2009 to 2015.

Other indictments, according to court documents, were Elaine Davis, Pramela Ganji, M.D., and Godwin Ogboukiri, M.D., for their involvement in a home health care fraud scheme carried out through Christian Home Health Care, Inc. (Christian). Separately, a grand jury sitting in New Orleans charged Sheila White with defrauding Medicare in connection with the alleged provision of psychotherapy services to Medicare beneficiaries.

One source told the *Times*, there will be more indictments coming.

An indictment is only a charge, and defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

LSBEP Continues Power Grab

In an email on June 24 to licensed psychologists, the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) said it will force the Louisiana Psychological Association to conform to the LSBEP’s view of the law regarding how names are submitted to the governor for appointment.

The new policy, sent by Executive Director, Kelly Parker, noted “... the Louisiana Psychological Association shall report to the Governor’s Office the results of the entire election, including all nominees and the votes for each nominee.” The policy included the warning, “If the Louisiana Psychological Association fails to report the all of the information (*sic*), in one way or another, the Board will also notify the Governor’s Office with the accurate results of the board election.”

The policy conflicts with current law that gives the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA) the right to determine how the final list to the governor is composed. The Psychology Practice Act, LA R.S. 37:2353(2), is: “All appointments shall be from a list provided by the Louisiana Psychological Association.”

LPA’s current policy is to include the two top vote-getters, which officials have said is to support the democratic method.

The wording is common in laws for other Louisiana boards, some which vet the list by other methods.

The LSBEP held a special meeting on June 1 where they voted to force LPA to include the third vote getter on the list to the governor, which was the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychology candidate Dr. Jesse Lambert. The vote and the meeting violated

Open Meetings Law. ((See “Psychology Board Pushes to Include LAMP Candidate on List to Governor,” June PT issue.)

Two appointments are currently at stake, a 2014-15 election, in which Dr. Beverly Stubblefield received the top votes and Dr. Karen Boggs, second, and a recent vacancy left by Dr. Joe Comaty, who failed to be confirmed. Dr. Constance Patterson was the top vote getter in that election cycle.

In a letter to the LSBEP, LPA President Dr. Lacey Seymour reminded the board that the current law was still in effect, and asked, “We would like to respectfully request that the list of candidates submitted to the Governor’s office be derived from the 2014-2015 election conducted by the Louisiana Psychological Association.” It is not clear from the letter why LPA viewed that they needed to request from the board, a right already determined by law.

“We would also like to request that a Task Force be formed,” Seymour wrote, “in order to facilitate open discussion and communication between the Louisiana Psychological Association and the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists regarding the adoption of policies for future elections as we strongly feel as if it is in the best interest of psychologists across the state to have input regarding how these elections are conducted.”

According to Seymour, Parker said the board voted against the recommendations. A source right at press time, indicated that LPA may take further action to protect its rights.



The Specialty for the Coming Integrated Care Models in Primary Care Centers and Hospitals

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Stewart “Woman of Excellence”

Cont’d

Stewart is Director of the Behavior Technology Laboratory: Eating Disorders and Obesity, at Pennington where her research focuses on body image, eating disorders, and obesity. She has blended the developments in assessment, treatment, and prevention with “e-health technologies and population health research models to reach communities who do not have access to or who are unable to participate in clinical programs and/or healthcare,” noted the Foundation. “Dr. Stewart has been a pioneer in the development and testing of e-health technologies and community-based programs in order to disseminate prevention and treatment efforts to large populations.”

Dr. Stewart’s work has attracted multi-million dollar funding from the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense. She develops programs and technologies to improve nutrition, fitness, and sleep of U.S. Army Soldiers and their family members. She is in charge of The Weight Measurements and Standards for Soldiers 2 grant and the Army H.E.A.L.T.H. program with the goal to translate evidenced–based concepts into a nutrition and fitness tools for soldiers and Warfighters.

Another of her programs has been to improve body image, nutrition, and eating disorders in female collegiate athletes. "Female Athlete Body Project: A Randomized Controlled Trial", is a partnership with Louisiana State University (LSU) Athletics, American University in Washington, D.C., and Trinity University in San Antonio, TX. She is also working to prevent unhealthy weight gain in children and adolescents across the state of Louisiana and develop cutting edge programs to treat body image disturbance in women.

In the private sector, Stewart is Founder and Chief Scientific Officer of Body Evolution Technologies Inc., a venture capital-funded entrepreneurial project dedicated to taking e-health assessment, prevention, and treatment programs

and technologies from the lab to those who would benefit most, “... especially among young women as they face enormous pressures concerning body-image, weight, eating behavior, and self-esteem.”

In 2012, Stewart’s technology firm launched an app for healthy behavior, named *The Body Image Voice™*, to help people to manage body image and eating patterns through web and mobile programs. Using the new technology, individuals develop awareness to their behaviors, shift beliefs and attitudes, and make changes.

In 2012, Stewart told the Huffington Post, “I’m a scientist first and foremost, as well as a clinical psychologist,” she said. “Now I find myself an entrepreneur. My mission is to bring scientific tools to the people who need them most. So many things are developed in science that get great



Dr. Tiffany Stewart was recently honored as a recipient of the “Women of Excellence Award” and commended by the legislature for her multiple and complex contributions. (Courtesy photo)

results but stay in the academic realm, like programs for the prevention of eating disorders. The work I do is dedicated to translating scientific tools into popular formats that can engage young people to change their health behaviors -- their eating, exercise, body image and self-worth.”

The House Resolution commended Dr. Stewart: “...recipients of the Women of Excellence Awards exhibit characteristics of integrity and professionalism, personify excellence in their area of specialty, and are committed to community service to better society as a whole; ...”

“... the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize and record for posterity her singular contributions to the citizens of Louisiana; and does hereby extend enduring appreciation for the tremendous pride that she brings to her community and the state of Louisiana.”

Psychology Times Honored with 14 Awards from Louisiana Press Association at June Convention

The *Psychology Times* took home 14 awards from the 135th Annual Louisiana Press Association Convention held jointly with the Mississippi Press Association in New Orleans on June 18 to 20.

For the second year in a row, the *Times* swept its division in Best Investigative Reporting, with the *Times* winning first, second, and third places, and earning the special Gibbs Adams Award, named in memory of long-time *State Times-Morning Advocate* investigative reporter.

The *Times* won its first place for “Emails Point to LAMP in Recent LSBEP Appointment, Not DHH.” The judges remarked, “This story demonstrates the importance of open-records requests. Traditional media outlets could learn some lessons from *The Psychology Times*.”

Other Gibbs Adams winners in their respective divisions were the *New Orleans Advocate*, the Livingston Parish News, the *Ouachita Citizen*, the *West Side Journal*, and *Central City News*.

Dr. Tom Stigall, for the second time, earned the top spot in Best Photo Package, with his composition of views from Antelope Canyon. The judges said, “Absolutely breathtaking. The absence of life forms is key to telling the story of the canyon.”

The *Times* cartoonist, Jake Nelson- Dooley, swept first, second, and third in Division C for Best Editorial Cartoon. First place went to the satirical cartoon, “Media Guide,” a response to the state psychology board’s publishing of media policies.

The *Times* earned a 2nd place in the prestigious Community Service Award, in Division C, for its promoting of vision and values through it community awards program.

In news coverage, the *Times* earned a second place in Best News Coverage. Also the *Times* won a 2nd and 3rd place in Best News Story. The paper took home a 1st Place for Best Continuing Coverage of a Single News Event, for its reporting on the convoluted politics in the 2014 election involving Drs. Patterson, Comaty, and Chapman. The *Times* also won in its Division for the Best Overall Website.

Winning Newspaper of The Year honors in their respective divisions were *The Advocate* (Baton Rouge), *The Times* (Houma), the *Ruston Daily Leader*, the *West Side Journal (Port Allen)*, and the *Southwest Daily News*.

This year’s Freedom of Information Award went to *The Advocate* (Baton Rouge) for fighting to protect reporters’ sources in a story about drug dealers in New Orleans. “For its work to protect the press freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment, *The Advocate* has earned this years’ Freedom of Information Award,” noted the association.

The prestigious award was created in part by Gordon Nelson, father of the publisher of the *Psychology Times*, and current journalism consultant to the *Times*, Bob Holeman, over three decades ago. Their paper, *The Coushatta Citizen*, also won the FOI Award the first time it was bestowed on a Louisiana newspaper.

Dr. Simoneaux Helps Train Louisiana Judges, Attorneys

Dr. John Simoneaux, clinical and forensic psychologist and owner of Professional Training Resources, presented to an audience of Louisiana judges, attorneys, district court clerks, peace officers, legal assistants and court reporters, at the annual Nuts & Bolts Judicial Seminar hosted by Appellate Judge, Hon. Harmon Drew, Jr., and his research attorney wife, Jean Drew. The conference was held last month in Destin, Florida. The Drews are from Shreveport and Judge Drew is with the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeal.

Dr. Simoneaux presented “Medical Mimics – Medical Conditions that are often Misdiagnosed as Mental Illness,” and “Detecting Psychological Disorders in the Elderly: Is Aunt Mary a little off? Or is it Just Me?” at the three-day conference. He also presented “Registration Requirements for Louisiana Sex Offenders,” with Judge Drew facilitating.

Simoneaux has been part of the conference for 15 years, he said. “We love coming here. I really feel like they’ve accepted me into this group.”

“This is the conference,” Dr. Simoneaux told the *Times*, “that I modeled the Summer Symposium after, because this is the atmosphere I wanted. It was the kind of spirit and style I wanted, with the idea that you can enjoy yourself while learning.”

The Louisiana Nuts & Bolts Judicial Seminar has been in operation since 1992 and the creators, Judge Harmon Drew and wife Jean, have focused on presenting important and practical training for the regularly attending 250 court Louisiana officials who travel to Destin, Florida to attend the highly rated event.

While the formal goal is to “improve how we work together to serve the public,” the Drews noted, their secondary effort is for participants to enjoy themselves. They do with by “Emphasizing humor, casual presentations” and having speakers who are engaged and completely open to questions from the attendees. Their program encourages learning through “participation and an interactive atmosphere.”

Attendees included individuals from Louisiana’s

District Courts, City Courts, Appeal Courts, Police Departments, Sheriff’s and Marshal’s Offices, the state Supreme Court, law firms and others.

Some other examples of this year’s training agenda included “Seized Drug Assets: Civil Forfeitures,” by Ford McWilliams, A.D.A.; “Courtroom/Courthouse Security,” presented by Hon. Newell Normand, Attorney and Jefferson Parish Sheriff; “Your Duties as Part of the Criminal Justice System,” by Judge Jeff Cox, and “Drug Recognition Experts and Non-Alcoholic DWIs,” by Retired Caddo Deputy Rick Porter.

Nuts & Bolts Mottos are “Laugh and Learn,” “We Teach at the Beach,” “No Question too Dumb,” and “No Instructor Too Sharp.”

Dr. John Simoneaux is the only psychologist who regularly helps train the court professionals, and he is a favorite of the group,



Dr. John Simoneaux (L) and Judge Robert Burgess, DeSoto Parish Judge, at the training conference designed by Judge Harmon Drew, who is with the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeal, and research attorney wife, Jean Drew.

VA Psychologists Work to Reach Veterans and Link Them with Their Communities

May and June were months filled with activities by psychologists at the state’s Veterans Affairs Medical Center, who combine the importance of mental health, PTSD awareness, and Memorial Day observances, to help bring together Veterans and their communities. Reaching out to our service men and women, and linking them with those who care, was the goal of the recent Expo at the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Health Care System (AVAHCS).

“We held our Mental Health Expo on May 20th in tandem with the VA2K walk,” said Dr. Sherri Transier, who spearheaded the mental health section of the event. “Multiple programs participated in the Mental Health Expo by setting up booths and providing educational materials to veterans and providers about their respective services & supports,” Dr. Transier told the *Times*.

“The VA2K is a walk that encourages people to step up their fitness level and promotes homelessness awareness by providing a venue to raise non-monetary donations for the HUD-VASH [Department of Housing

and Urban Development & Veteran’s Affairs Supported Housing] program,” she explained. VA employees, Veterans and community members around the country put on their walking shoes to walk approximately 1.2 miles for their health and to support homeless Veterans with donated food and clothing items.

“The VA2K walk is in it’s fifth year at this facility and nationwide. This is the first year that other programs have joined this event to promote mental health awareness month and PTSD awareness specifically,” Transier said.

“Joining together to promote increased awareness of these issues is a great idea, because we can reach more people together than through separate events. Hopefully,” she said, “this Expo will continue to grow over the coming years.”

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 49,933 Veterans experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2014. About 70

percent of these are estimated to suffer from substance abuse problems and 45 percent from mental and emotional problems including PTSD.

The VA2K was a joint effort by Health Promotion Disease Prevention and the HUD-VASH. Community members brought household products, toiletries, clothes, and other items to connect with veterans who need a boost out of homelessness.

Also included in the Mental Health Expo were programs from National Alliance on Mental Illness, Mental Health Consumer Council, Primary Care-Mental Health Integration, Mental Health Intensive Care Management, and Suicide Prevention.

The PTSD Clinic was also part of the Expo. June is national PTSD Awareness month, named by Congress in 2010.

“Following trauma, most people experience stress reactions but many do not develop PTSD,” Dr. Leslie Drew, clinical psychologist and PTSD Program Coordinator at Alexandria Veterans Affairs Health Care System (AVAHCS)

VA Psychologists Work to Reach Veterans, continued

previously explained to the *Times*. “Mental health experts are not sure why some people develop PTSD and others do not,” she said. “However, if stress reactions do not improve over time and they disrupt everyday life, help should be sought to determine if PTSD is a factor.”

Dr. Drew and colleague Dr. Kelley Pears regularly present workshops on evidenced-based treatments for PTST, such as Prolonged Exposure Therapy. Pears is a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder/ Substance Use Disorders psychologist at the Alexandria VA Medical Center in Pineville, Louisiana.

These national VA campaigns aim to help raise awareness. “Raising PTSD awareness is essential to overcoming the myth, misinformation and stigma that too often prevents Veterans from seeking help,” said VA Secretary Robert McDonald, in a recent press release. This year’s goal is to help more Veterans, their families, caregivers and community members understand what PTSD is and know that there are specific treatments that can help improve and save lives.

Also in June the VA launched its Community-Based Employment Service for Homeless Veterans. The new employment program helps job-ready Veterans exit homelessness, and those on the

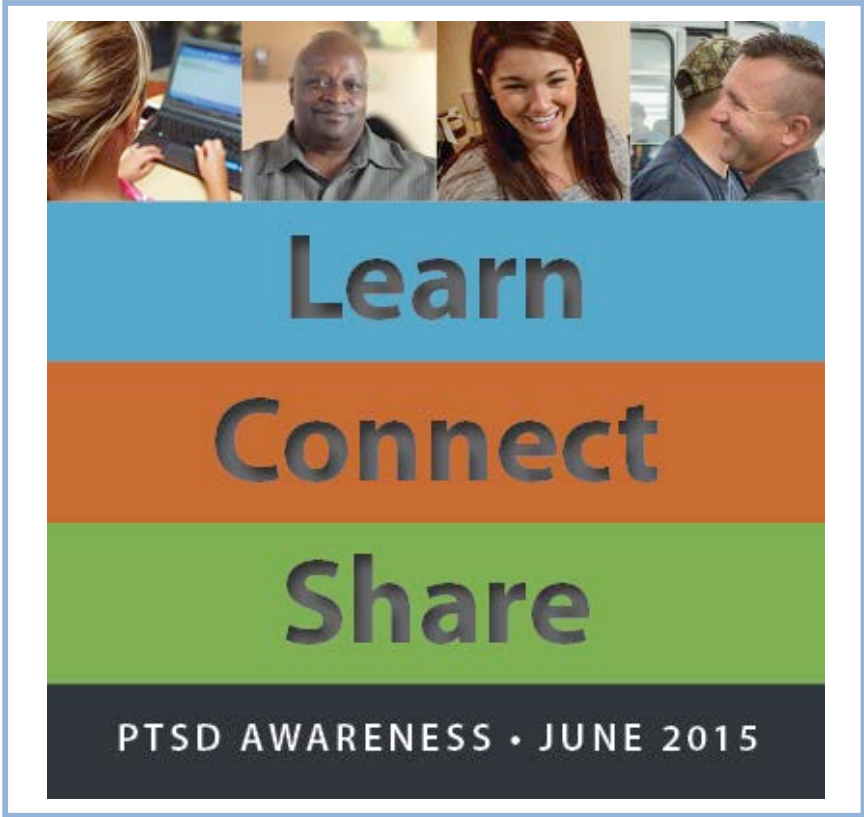
brink of homelessness, to gain stable and long-term employment, noted the announcement. The program relies on individuals who know their communities and can work with local employers to identify suitable jobs based on a Veteran’s skills and abilities. Louisiana’s three coordinators can be reached through the program’s website.

“Securing long-term, stable and fulfilling employment is important for Veterans who are exiting homelessness or are at-risk of becoming homeless,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “We know that finding gainful employment can change the life of a Veteran. This new program is a key component of the overall strategy to prevent and end Veteran homelessness.”

Another program included in the recent Mental Health Expo was the Women’s Clinic, designed and presented by Dr. Julia Lott, which included the “Healthy Women Are Active” Program for women veterans at the Alexandria VA.

The recent Mental Health Expo, said Dr. Sherri Transier, also included programs from Substance Use Disorder Services, Local Recovery Coordination, Community Residential Care, Compensated Work Therapy, and Make The Connection.

“A Community Health & Resource Fair was held at the Lafayette



CBOC [Community Based Outpatient Clinic] on May 28,” she said. “NAMI and members of our PTSD clinic drove down to participate in this event.” A Mental Health Focus Group was also held at the Alexandria campus, “... to get feedback and ideas from veterans and employees on issues related to mental health,” she said.

Walk-in mental health awareness classes were offered in the main hospital

throughout the month of May, she added. Classes focused on stress management & relaxation as well as behavioral health consultations and smoking cessation, Dr. Transier said.

Those seeking more information can find a wealth of resources for both professionals and community members who want participate in assisting Veterans, on these and other topics, at the <http://va.gov>

Website Up & Running for Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists, Inc.

The Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists, Inc., has published a website and member application processes.

The site can be found at Louisianamedpsych.com, which lists members, membership information, meeting dates, and educational activities.

According to the website, the group hosted a six-hour CE training, “Emovera and Emotion Mining: Self-Help App Meets Collaboration-As-A-Service,” presented by Thomas Snyder, MD, PhD, from Boston. Also, the group hosted “The Basics of Addiction Management,” by Kension Roy, MD of New Orleans.

Application for membership is available on the site. Members must be licensed by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners. Annual dues are \$1500 and \$500 for students enrolled in a post-doctoral masters in clinical psychopharmacology.

Members are listed on the website and include those from Northern Louisiana, from the Greater New Orleans, and from Southern Louisiana.

Also, members from the Greater Baton Rouge are listed as well as individuals other areas such as Tampa, FL.

The webstite was created last year and is managed by Ms. Gail Lowe.

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Psychology professor Jill Daniel (center) leads a team of researchers in her lab, from undergraduates to master's and PhD students to postdocs: (left to right) Josh Zalis, Elin Grissom, Katie Black, Jeff Darling, Melanie Hotz, Kevin Pollard and Nina Baumgartner. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano, Tulane University Editorial and Creative Services, used with permission.)

Drs. Jill Daniel’s and Edward Golob’s Brainy Work Featured in *Tulane Magazine* Article on Neuroscience

Drs. Jill Daniel and Edward Golob, researchers in neuroscience and faculty in the Tulane University Psychology Department, had their work featured in the June issue of *Tulane Magazine*, “Brain Signals: The Mysteries of the Brain Lead Tulane Researchers Down Paths of Discovery.”

“Musicians have to learn complicated musical parts. And their brains are demonstrably different from non-musicians’ brains. We can literally see that,” says Golob.

From “Brain Signals” article in *Tulane Magazine*. Text by Mary Ann Travis, Tulane University Editorial and Creative Services, used with permission.

Dr. Daniel is Professor in the Tulane Psychology Department and Director of the Neuroscience Program at Tulane.

Her and her team’s research aims to help understand the mechanisms of estrogens and androgens and how these impact areas of the brain, according to her website. This includes the importance of cognition and memory. She and her group of master’s and doctoral students look at the impact of hormones on both the brain and cognitive function across the lifespan. Daniel publishes in journals such as *Psychopharmacology*, *Hormones and Behavior*, and *Endocrinology*. With her efforts, she hopes to guide understanding of how hormones help organize mammalian brains as male or female, and also what impact these have on the aging brain.

Dr. Edward Golob is Associate Professor in the Psychology Department and focuses his research on aspects of hearing that are important to humans. Examples include determining a sound’s location and recognizing speech and music. His research and his lab students are focusing on how auditory processing is affected by attention, short-term memory, and the relations between perception and action, according to his site.

The group is working to understand the cognitive and neurobiological changes that accompany normal aging, Alzheimer’s disease, and speech fluency disorders. To do this they monitor the brain’s electrical activity using EEG and study patterns while participants are performing cognitive tasks. According to their site, they are also study MRI-guided transcranial magnetic or electrical stimulation.

“We have over 400 people in the Tulane community who are involved in the neuroscience endeavors,” says Daniel. The long-range goal is to create a Tulane Brain Institute.

... interdisciplinary work flourishes in four main areas of strength: hormones and the brain, cognition (learning, memory and attention), the autonomic nervous system and its disorders, and neurodegeneration.

From “Brain Signals” article in *Tulane Magazine*. Text by Mary Ann Travis, Tulane University Editorial and Creative Services, used with permission.



LaTech graduate student, Mr. Marcus Cherry, receives award for his research from Dr. Michelle Moore, at the recent convention of the Louisiana Psychological Association.

LaTech Grad Student Marcus Cherry Awarded First in Research Poster

Mr. Marcus Cherry, M.S., graduate student at Louisiana Tech was awarded the first place honors for his research and poster, “Personality and Coping Strategies as Predictors of Help-Seeking Attitudes among Military-Affiliated and Civilian Students.” Cherry’s co-author is Dr. Margaret Cochran, professor at Northwestern State in Natchitoches.

Cherry collected data from 282 participants in an online survey composed of a demographic questionnaire, the Big Five Inventory, the Revised COPE, and the Beliefs About Psychological Services Scale.

Cheery and Cochran found therapy use was significantly associated with higher help-seeking attitudes. He wrote that students who participated in therapy reported higher scores on the Beliefs About Psychological Services scale, when compared to the non-help-seeking counterparts.

In a second hypothesis, he examined results about personality and coping. Cherry and Cochran found that agreeableness, openness, self-help, approach, accommodation, and avoidance were significantly related to help-seeking attitudes.

Results also revealed an insignificant military affiliation main effect, a significant gender main effect, and an insignificant interaction between military affiliation and gender, according to the presentation. He also produced a multiple regression to better understand the variables predicting help-seeking attitudes.

Mr. Cherry’s professor at LaTech is Dr. Lore Dickey.

Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

How Does Stress Affect Blood Pressure?

Many people believe that stress and high blood pressure are directly linked. However, this is a popular myth since blood pressure is not ‘nervous tension.’ Actually, it is more correct to say that stress can only cause temporary rises in blood pressure. Stress does not cause hypertension. Once the stressful situation has passed, blood pressure will return to whatever is ‘normal’ for that individual. And, conversely, if you are diagnosed with high blood pressure (hypertension), this does not mean you are stressed or overly anxious. You could be perfectly calm and still have hypertension. On the other hand, it is true that chronic stress can have an impact on hypertension. However, we really do not know why or how much stress actually contributes to hypertension.

Just because stress is not directly related to hypertension does not mean you can dismiss the importance of reducing stress if you are suffering from diagnosed hypertension. Particularly if your blood pressure is difficult to control, you should pay attention to the chronic stressors in your life and try to reduce them.

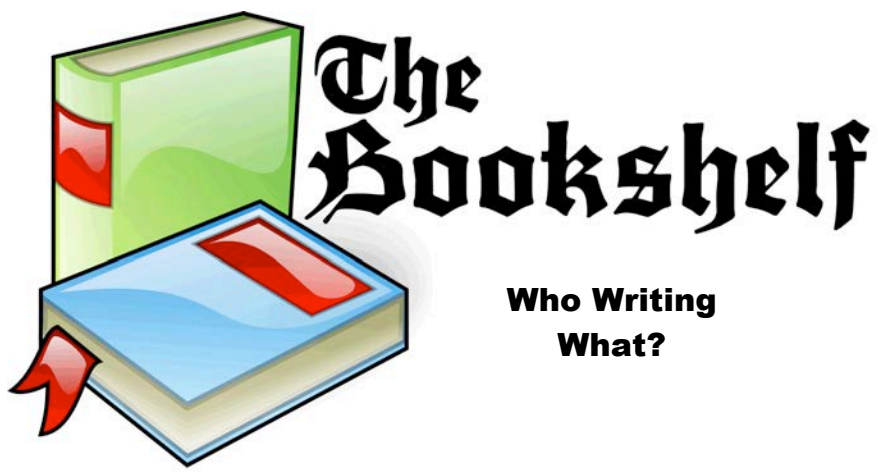
Even simple changes in your daily schedule can have a positive impact on your health and well-being. For example, adding a daily walk in the fresh air in the morning before work or in the evening after work can dissipate built up stress. New research indicates that taking up yoga can lower your blood pressure. Exercise in general can help reduce stress and manage weight, and being active will certainly help reduce your chances of getting high blood pressure. This doesn’t mean you have to join a gym, in fact here are some ways to quickly and easily incorporate more exercise into your day

- Walk or bicycle rather than take the car to work
- Take the stairs rather than the escalator or elevator
- If you travel by bus get off a stop early and walk the rest of the way
- Cycle short journeys rather than take the car
- Walk a bit further every day with the dog
- Get out of the office at lunchtime and have a walk

By far the most effective way to reduce blood pressure AND manage chronic stress is breathing. This is so easy. Five to 10 minutes of measured slow breaths where you breathe in to a shorter count and breathe out with pursed lips to a longer count is guaranteed to take you out of sympathetic distress and engage the parasympathetic nervous system. Add music to anything you do and double your benefit. This is a good time for a Relaxation Break.



Dr. Susan Andrews, Clinical Neuropsychologist, is currently Clinical Assistant Professor, LSU Health Sciences Center, Department of Medicine and Psychiatry, engaged in a Phase III study on HBOT and Persistent PostConcussion Syndrome. In addition to private clinical practice, Dr. Andrews is an award-winning author (Stress Solutions for Pregnant Moms, 2013).



**Who Writing
What?**

Colorful Emotions: A Workbook to Help Children Express Their Feelings

Michelle B. Moore, PsyD

Dr. Michelle Moore, using her strong background in psychotherapeutic and educational techniques, has created and produced a delightful book that can be used to help youngsters express and label their emotions.

Colorful Emotions: A Workbook to Help Children Express Their Feelings is an all-in-one activity book that can help parents, teachers, and professionals in their interactions with children of any age.

Dr. Moore, a licensed clinical psychologist with a certificate in Infant Mental Health Specialist Certification, is also Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, at LSU Health Sciences Center, Department of Psychiatry, Section of Psychology, in New Orleans. At the Center she is also Associate Director of Pre-Doctoral Training.

The workbook includes beautiful cover art that is immediately pleasing, and two-page sections with a line drawing of a youngster and large type labels such as “Happy,” “Sad,” “Lonely,” and “Helpful.” Adjacent to the artwork is a description to read to the child, or allow them to read for themselves.

For example, “Worried,” is described. “When I feel worried, my mind starts to race with thoughts, sometimes it is hard to breathe and my heart beats really fast. I also tell others that I am nervous or anxious about something.” And then, “What do you think happened that has made him feel so worried?” And, “When is a time when you have felt worried?”

Loved: “When I feel loved, my heart fills with happiness, and I feel protected by someone special. I am ready to take on any challenge that comes my way.” Then, “Who do you think makes him feel loved?” And “Who makes you feel loved?”

Moore covers an array of emotions including being shy, embarrassed, relaxed, or angry, and many others.

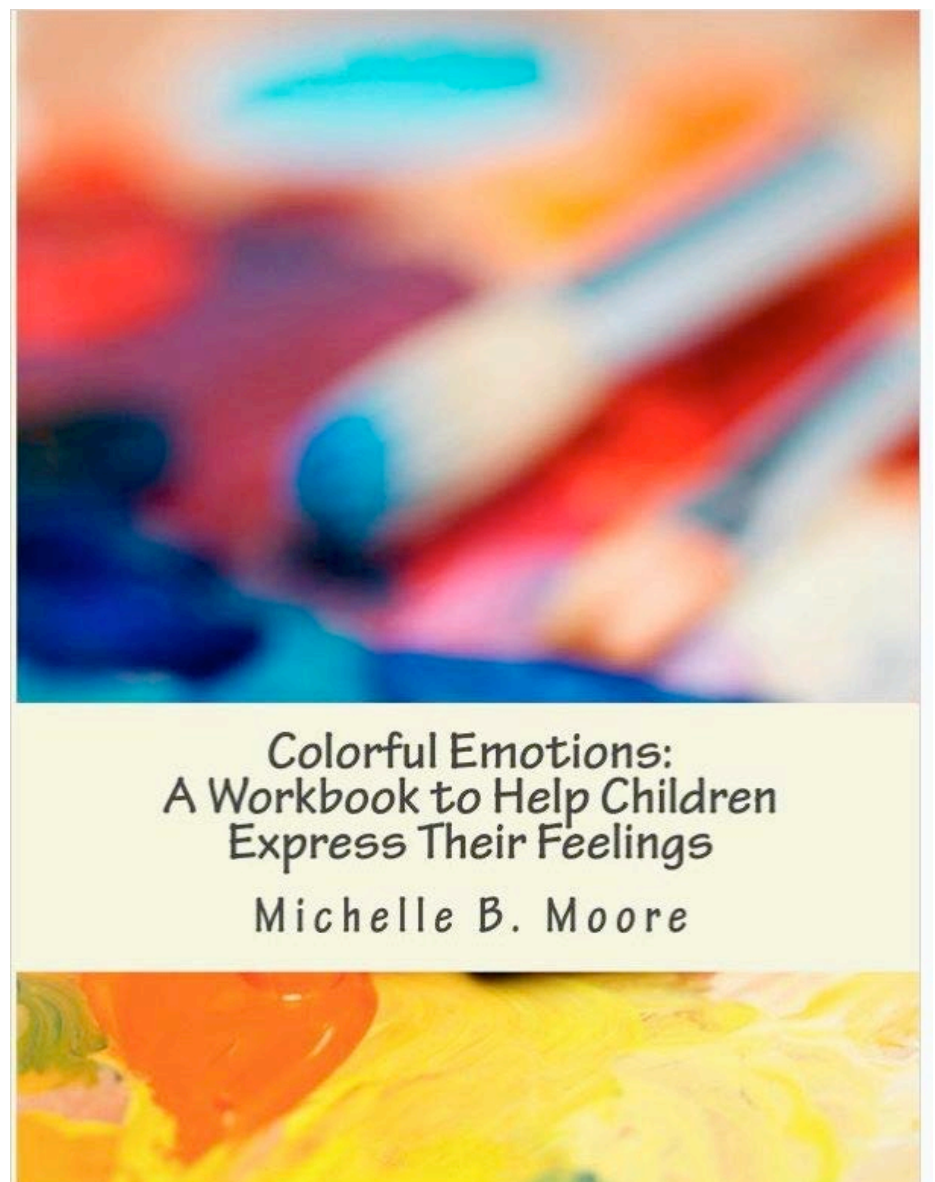
The parent, teacher, or therapist can engage the youngster to “develop a language to express their emotions with others,” writes Moore in the introduction. “Sometimes children have a hard time using their words to express how they feel which is how this coloring book can come in handy.”

Moore also relates how one child, who was having difficulties, “... began to color the picture, while he talked about a time when he was sad.” In this manner, the book may serve as a useful therapeutic or play therapy method.

“I work primarily with children and adolescents,” Dr. Moore said to the *Times*. “I often find that children aren’t taught to use feeling words in their everyday language and they get confused about what different emotions actually are,” she said.

“I was looking for a simple and effective means to convey information about feelings to children while providing a multi-sensory experience for them,” Moore said. “Rather than just reading a book they can color the pages while they talk to get a better understanding of what each feeling means. Ideally, parents will read this book with their children and parents will also become more informed about how to use emotion words and why it is important to do so.”

Moore has extensive background in instruction and teaching and the text draws on her experience with youngsters and parents. Dr. Moore has worked in the Louisiana Rural Trauma Services Center research project funded by Mental and Behavioral Health Capacity Project-Louisiana. She provided mental health screenings and psychological interventions to children and adults who have been affected by a natural or man-made disaster.



She has also developed a series of workshops for parents of elementary school age children. Topics have included: Positive discipline strategies; Being a single parent; How to help your child succeed in school; “How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk”; and Success in the summertime: How to maintain a peaceful household and happy child all summer long.

She has also created, organized and led quarterly consultation groups for elementary school counselors to discuss how to handle challenging cases and collaborate with other professionals to best serve population.

And Dr. Moore has also organized, created and led resiliency and social-emotional skills building workshops for children in St. Bernard Parish. Topics included: Managing difficult emotions, Bullying, Increasing positive change in communities and Hurricane preparedness.

Moore also teaches psychology interns, developing course materials, and she has also created a series of workshops for children to address social-emotional difficulties, build resilience and encourage community engagement.

Dr. Moore’s background is strong in the arts, having completed a major in theatre, along with her studies in psychology. *Colorful Emotions* clearly shows her talents and enjoyment of the arts. The work is delightfully creative and children will be comfortable with the presentation.

Dr. Moore wanted to keep publishing control and so she has crafted the drawings and the language for the workbook herself.

“I decided to publish on an independent platform,” she explained, “for my first book publication after consulting with several colleagues about their experiences. It was convenient and cost-effective. From what I learned, independent publishing would give me the most control over the final product and produce the highest amount of royalties,” she said. “I also wanted to start on a smaller scale to see how the book would be received before submitting a work to an actual publishing company.”

“The project began in 2009 and slowly evolved over time,” she said. “I already have an idea for a second edition which would address relationships and common problems that may arise, such as dealing with bullies, feeling shy, being assertive, being thankful and appreciative, being respectful with others, etc.”

Colorful Emotions: A Workbook to Help Children Express Their Feelings is available from Amazon. Get several copies for kids and grandkids, and while you at it, get one for yourself. You won’t be sorry.

A Shrink at the Flicks

X Marks the Spot

A review of Ex Machina

by Alvin G. Burstein

As a fan of *RoboCop* flicks, I looked forward to this film. *Ex Machina* explores the same question as *RoboCop*: the difference between man and machine. That exploration puts it in an established *genre*, one occupied not only by its predecessor, but by Collodi's Pinocchio, who hungers to be a real boy, and by *Star Trek*'s Lt. Commander Data, who struggles to feel emotion and to understand jokes.

This movie explores the question with considerably less violence than *RoboCop*, but with an ending that is more suspenseful, and raises questions that, if not more profound, are more complex.

A young programmer, Caleb at the mega data firm Blue Book is recruited to spend a week at the mountain retreat of Blue Book's genius owner, Nathan. There he learns that he has the assignment of applying Turing's test to an embodied computer, Ava. The issue is to determine whether Nathan has successfully created artificial human intelligence. The wrinkle is that in Turing's original test, the judge sits at a computer and makes a judgment based on what appears on the screen in response to his input. The question is whether he can tell whether the responses are machine generated or from another human being.

Caleb is presented, not with a monitor, but what is clearly a robot, one with an attractive female face and feminine shape, Ava. He and Ava are separated by a barrier that permits them to see each other and to talk, but cannot communicate in any other way.

Ava's sexualization has enormous consequences. It is the basis of Caleb's falling in love with her. To him and to Nathan that implies that she has passed Turing's test, that Nathan has acquired the god-like capacity to create a human. The unfolding plot intentionally raises intriguing questions about that



conclusion. Ava pleads with Caleb to save her from being replaced by more elaborate updates, in hoary plot terms, “to take her away from all this”, and to find a way for them to be together, in equally hoary terms, a “happily ever after conclusion”.

The movie rejects the romantic cliché. Ava is manipulating Caleb. When Caleb reprograms the security system, Ava is freed. She kills Nathan, and abandons her rescuer, who remains trapped in the isolated mountain top retreat. And Ava? She finds her way to a busy big city intersection where she can acquire more data on human behavior.

The audience is left to assign Ava a grade on Turing's test. Does her ability to manipulate Caleb, her desire for freedom and her curiosity demonstrate human intelligence?

The film hints at an answer. Early on, Caleb asks Nathan why he has embodied Ava, why he has given her an attractive face and feminine shape. Nathan responds by reminding Caleb that we encounter human intelligence in the context of gendered people, and he assures Caleb that he has endowed Ava with the capacity for genital pleasure.

This element of the film has generated a feminist critique arguing that it reinforces a view of femininity centered on male sexual desire. That critique is reinforced by Caleb's expressed belief that Nathan chose Ava's face by gaining access to Caleb's visits to online pornography sites. It is also reinforced by some of the raunchier elements of the film centered on Kyoto, another “feminine” robot created by Nathan to serve and to service him.

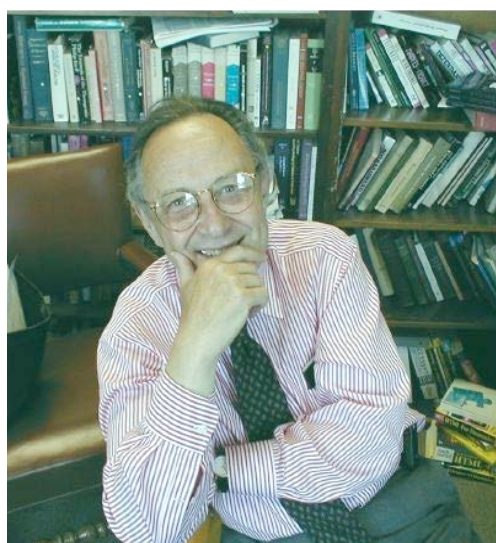
As a psychoanalyst, I would broaden the feminist critique. Ava gives no evidence of having physical pleasure centers other than genital. She shows no awareness of the pleasures of eating. She knows nothing of the experiences of being mothered, the delights of being fed, the frustrations of deprivation. She lacks the experiences of expelling things from her body, spitting out, excreting in other ways. She is unaware of the social implications of dealing with such matters. In brief, she is a stranger to ambivalence, to the experience of conflict, to seeing others as simultaneously necessary to well-being and a risk to that.

The lack of ambivalence is what permits her to kill her maker, Nathan, without regret and to walk away from Caleb, her lover, without feeling after he has sacrificed himself for her. Whatever her problem solving capacities, she is not human.

Is that an “F” on Turing's test?

Guest Columnist,
Dr. Alvin Burstein

Burstein, a psychologist and psychoanalyst, is a professor emeritus at the University of Tennessee and a former faculty member of the New Orleans-Birmingham Psychoanalytic Center with numerous scholarly works to his credit. He is also a member of Inklings, a Mandeville critique group that meets weekly to review its members' imaginative writings.



courtesy photo

Burstein has published flash fiction and autobiographical pieces in e-zines; *The Owl*, his first novelette, is available at Amazon. He is, in addition to being a movie fan, a committed Francophile, unsurprisingly a lover of fine cheese and wine, and an unrepentant cruciverbalist.

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(L to R) Dr. Susan Andrews, *Times*' Stress Solutions columnist, Mike Dooley, Crystal Stevenson (Executive Editor at American Press in Lake Charles, Louisiana) and Dr. Julie Nelson. (Selfie by Dr. Andrews.)

Up-Coming Events

Organization Starts July 11

Katrina 10th Anniversary Wellness Workshops Planned for August

Members of the mental health community and organizers in the Louisiana Psychological Association will hold a planning meeting on July 11, in New Orleans for resiliency workshops to be held in August.

Dr. Darlyne Nemeth, who will serve as the Lead Workshop Author and Facilitator, noted in a recent press release that volunteers are needed to help with Anniversary Workshops to be conducted on August 15, 22, and 29, 2015.

“Anniversary reactions typically occur on or around the date of an environmental trauma and involve emotionally charged responses that cause people to re-experience the event,” Nemeth said. “This August will mark the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. As we anticipate strong Anniversary reactions, members of the Louisiana Psychological Association are preparing 10th Anniversary Wellness Workshops. We intend to hold these Workshops, as a community service, for those in New Orleans who were and remain strongly affected by Hurricane Katrina.”

The first workshop will be held to train the trainers, noted Nemeth, and will be open to all practicing psychologists and psychotherapists. They will be trained in successful anniversary reaction techniques as were cited in a 2012 journal article authored by Nemeth, Kuriansky, and others. Workshop participants will be given an opportunity to share their experiences and to focus on their resilient recovery, she said. These workshops will be offered to the New Orleans public, free of charge, as coordinated by the trainers.

The primary coordinator is Kerritt Saintal, B.S., a Loyola graduate, and a native of New Orleans. Members of the workshop development committee include Drs. Gail Gillespie, Beverley Stubblefield, Fernando Pastrana, Kim VanGeffen, Carolyn Weyand, Janet Matthews, Lee Matthews, Lucinda DeGrange, and Joseph Tramontana. Kathleen Randall is serving as a community liaison volunteer.

The group is asking community leaders and organizations to contribute their expertise, meeting space, transportation, funding, and/or food for participants. The Louisiana Psychological Association will offer Continuing Professional Development credits for qualified volunteers who participate in the training and facilitate groups.

For those interested in participating, donating resources, or for more information, contact Dr. Nemeth at dgnemeth@gmail.com, or Kerritt Saintal at saintalkerri@yahoo.com.

PTR Summer Symposium July 15 -17 in Marksville

The 13th Annual Summer Symposium, a conference hosted by Professional Training Resources and Dr. John Simoneaux, will be held July 15 through 17 in Marksville at the Paragon Casino-Resort. This year’s presenters include Dr. Simoneaux, Dr. Larry Dilks, Dr. Kimberly Hutchinson, Dr. Byron Simoneaux, and Dr. MKay Bonner.

Openings for Participants in Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Study

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Referring practitioners and individuals wanting to participate can contact the research coordinator at 504-427-5632 for more information.

The Psychology Times

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