Welcome to the Fall 2010 edition of AKRONews, the annual newsletter of the Department of Sociology at the University of Akron.

I am pleased to serve the Department as Interim Chair, now that Dr. John Zipp has been appointed as Interim Associate Dean in the Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences. I am assisted by Dr. Kathy Feltey, who is serving as Associate Chair, and our Graduate Director, Dr. Becky Erickson. I thank Dr. Zipp for his 12 years of service to the department. These three wonderful people have been very generous with their time and they have really helped me make this transition as smooth as possible. Needless to say, I have a new appreciation for Department Chairs and all of the behind-the-scenes work that they do, but more importantly I have a deeper knowledge about how much they rely on the support of others to get through the day!

I also have a better understanding of all of the hard work put in by our office staff in order to keep the Department functioning. We are fortunate that Christi Terry joined us in February to help Tammy Dixon out in the afternoons. And we are looking forward to the return of Cindy Steinel, who has been on maternity leave this semester taking care of her son Zack.

As you can see from reading the rest of this newsletter, members of our Department continue to be quite productive. From Dr. Erickson’s new NSF grant (see page 3), to Dr. Baffour Takyi’s appointment as a founding member of the new NIH Grant Review College (page 3), to Dr. Zipp’s ASA teaching award (page 2), our faculty continue to make important contributions to research and teaching. Our graduate students are also quite active (see page 7 for some examples) and you will not want to miss the discussion on pages 7 and 8 of how our faculty and alumni have had an impact beyond the U.S. From understanding medical issues in Nepal, to participating in anti-corruption efforts in Ghana, it is clear that the practice of sociology can make a difference in the world!

Enjoy reading the rest of the newsletter and please stay in touch with us. We love hearing from you. Thanks again to Dr. Takyi and Cindy Steinel for putting this together.
FACULTY AWARDS AND RECOGNITION, 2010

Dr. John Zipp
Dr. John Zipp, professor of sociology and interim associate dean in the Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences, was the recipient of the Hans O. Mauksch Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Sociology given by the American Sociological Association’s Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology. The award was presented at the American Sociological Association’s annual meeting in Atlanta.

Dr. Zipp has joined the Dean’s Office as Acting Associate Dean.

Dr. Mark Tausig
Dr. Tausig was appointed Associate Editor for the journal: Society and Mental Health. He will serve till 2011.

Other appointments include the following:
- Committee on Sections, American Sociological Association, 2010-2012.
- Chair, Committee on Sections, American Sociological Association, 2011-2012

Dr. Brian Pendleton
Dr. Pendleton received a $21,795 grant from the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. The Prime Award is provided through a federal SAPT Block grant from SAMHSA and will be used for his project titled “The University of Akron Alcohol Abuse Reduction Initiative.”

Dr. Valarie Callanan
Congratulations to Dr. Callanan, the recipient of the 2009-2010 Faculty Mentoring Award presented by the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Delta, the International Sociology Honorary Society. Dr. Callanan also received a Faculty Research Grant this past year for $10,000. The grant will be used to collect preliminary data that will lead to the resubmission of a larger $300,000 grant proposal to the National Institute of Justice.

Dr. Margaret Poloma
Margaret Poloma was a featured guest on a podcast hosted by Professor Anthony Gill of the University of Washington and a non-resident scholar at Baylor University’s Institute for Studies of Religion. She talked about her new book The Assemblies of God: Godly Love and the Revitalization of American Pentecostalism (co-authored with John Green). This book update her critically-acclaimed 1989 work The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads. Poloma notes that although Pentecostalism is commonly referred to as a denomination, it maintains a rather loose “umbrella” structure that contains a number of different theological and stylistic identities. On what she calls “routinization of charism,” Margaret provides a number of examples of how the spiritually-energized “immigrant churches” within the AoG such as Pastor Bismark Osei Akomeah’s Jesus Power Assembly of God (founded in Ohio by Ghanaian immigrants and now with several locations throughout the US) is helping to change the church.

The December 2010 issue of the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion—a top journal in the field of religion—has an article that examines Margaret and Brian Pendleton's measures of prayer types. The fact that other scholars are still using their measure which was originally published 20 years ago make their work quite impressive. The article is titled "A Psychometric Evaluation of Paloma and Pendleton's (1991) and Ladd and Spilka's (2002, 2006) Measures of Prayer."

On 6th December 2010, Professor Poloma was interviewed on her new book and recent research on Godly Love by Professor Anthony Gill of the University of Washington. Not only that, she used the opportunity to share her extensive research on Pentecostalism in America also with her audience. To listen to the podcast, go to: http://www.researchonreligion.org/
Dr. Baffour K. Takyi
Professor Takyi was appointed as a founding member of the new National Institute of Health (NIH) Grant Review “College.” Members of the College review application grants by leading researchers from around the world. He will serve for two years and will review a maximum of 12 grant applications per year in his field. Members of the College are also eligible for continuous submission of their own applications for one year.

Dr. Rebecca J. Erickson
Professor Erickson and Dr. James M. Diefendorf of the Psychology department have been awarded a two-year, $189,620 grant from the National Science Foundation. The funding will be used for their project titled “Identity and Emotional Management Control in Health Care Settings.” In this project, Drs Erickson and Diefendorff use a mixed methods design with a sample of full-time registered nurses working in seven acute care hospitals in the Midwest. Data will be collected through written questionnaires, organizational records, audio recordings and face-to-face interviews. By cross-validating the findings from both quantitative and qualitative methods, the researchers will be able to specify how social contexts, interactional events and the emotions that emerge from them are experienced and managed in ways that impact key dimensions of individual health and the unit-based effectiveness of nursing care provided within hospital settings.

This research will contribute to policy initiatives surrounding evidence-based practice and the nursing-related goals issued by the Institute of Medicine, with the results translated into organizational policies and practices that promote the well-being of both patients and the nurses who care for them. This study builds on Erickson’s previous $494,176 grant from the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration.

Dr. Robert L. Peralta
Dr. Peralta, and Associate Professor in the department was the keynote presenter at The Ohio Board of Regents 2010 Summit on Ohio Campus Safety & Security at Columbus, OH. The title of his presentation was as follows: “Toward Social Justice and Human Rights: Notes on Sociological Contributions to Interpersonal Violence Research.”

On a high note, Dr. Peralta was also awarded promotion and tenure to Associate Professor status during the academic year.

FACULTY RESEARCH

VALERIE CALLANAN

Presentations


CHERYL ELMAN
CHERYL ELMAN

Presentations

Chair, Membership Committee. American Sociological Association. Section on Aging and the Life Course.

REBECCA ERICKSON
Editorial Boards - Social Psychology Quarterly

KATHRYN FELTEY
Rachel Schneider and Kathryn Feltey. 2010. “No matter what has been done wrong can always be redone right”: Spirituality in the Lives of Imprisoned Battered Women.” Violence Against Women 15:443-459.

Center for Global Nonviolence and the Spark Matsunaga Institute for Peace, University of Hawaii.

RUDY FENWICK

Presentations

MATTHEW T. LEE

Presentations
conference in Provo, Utah (June).


Margaret M. Poloma and Matthew T. Lee. 2010. "Harvesting New Fields of Study: Lessons Learned from Research on Godly Love" at the Society for Pentecostal Studies conference in Minneapolis, MN (March).

STACEY NOFZIGER

Presentations


ROBERT PERALTA


BRIAN PENDLETON


Presentations

Do patients ask questions of their family physician? Society for Teachers of Family Medicine Conference on Practice Improvement. San Antonio (Dec.)

Selecting literacy-appropriate patient education materials- lesions learned from medical students. Society for Teachers of Family Medicine Conference on Practice Improvement. San Antonio (Dec.)

Best practices for data collection and maintenance. Ohio Association of Free Clinics. Columbus, OH (Oct.).


RACHEL SCHNEIDER


Presentations


BAFFOUR TAKYI

Baffour K. Takyi, Chris-Opoku-Agyeman, and Agnes


MARK TAUSIG


Presentations

JUAN XI
Hwang, Sean-Shong, Yue Cao, and Juan Xi. 2010. “The Short-Term Social, Economic, and Health Impact of China’s Three Gorges Dam Project: A Prospective Study.” Social Indicators Research Forthcoming.

Xi, Juan, Sean-Shong Hwang, and Yue Cao. 2010. “Ecological Context and Immigrants’ Earnings: English Ability as a Mediator.” Social Science Research. 39:652-661

Xi, Juan, Sean-Shong Hwang, and Yue Cao. 2010. “Project-induced Migration and Depression: A Panel Analysis” Social Science and Medicine, 70:1765-72.


Presentations
Xi, Juan and Sean-Shong Hwang. “Unmet Expectations and Depression among the Three Gorges Project Settlers.” Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. Atlanta GA. 2010

Xi, Juan and Sean-Shong Hwang. “Relocation Stress, Coping, and Sense of Control among Resettlers Resulting from China’s Three Gorges Dam Project.” Presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Atlanta GA. 2010

JOHN ZIPP

GRADUATE STUDENTS NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

FALL 2010 GRADUATE STUDENTS
Peter Barr, DeMario Brantley, Lori Hale, Joy Harvell, Kasey Lansberry, Sara Piasecki

AKD NEWS Update
AKD would like to thank everyone who attended the banquet for making it a successful event. The 2010-2011 representatives are:

President: Lia Chervenak/Jared Rosenberger
Vice President: Mike Steiner
Secretary/Treasurer: Danielle Shaw
Service Chair: Nicole McElroy
Social Chair: Jen Steele

AKD STUDENT AWARDS 2010
Outstanding Paper – Angela Adkins
Outstanding Student Service Award – Daysha Lawrence
Outstanding Student Award – Lia Chervenak
Outstanding Student Teaching Award – Liza Grossman
Peer Mentor Award – Daysha Lawrence
Faculty Mentor Award – Kathy Feltey

Congratulations to our recent graduates

Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD)

Dr. Erin Pryor

Erin started her new position as a Visiting Assistant Professor at St. Norbert's College, Depere, Wisconsin in Fall, 2010.

Dr. Stacye Blount
Dissertation: Negative Spillover and Mental Health: The Moderating Effects of Sociodemographic Characteristics, Family Characteristics, and Socioeconomic Resources”

Stacye began her new position as Assistant Professor -- Fayetteville State University, North Carolina, Fall, 2010.

Master’s Degree (MA)

Lia Chervenak
Valiant Logan
Justin Oldaker
Jared Rosenberger
Suzanne Stachel
Lori Turttle
Loni Yatsko
Kyle Zellman

PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS


Daniela was also awarded the 2010 Outstanding Student Service Award by the department.


Literally On Top of the World!

By Dr Mark Tausig, Professor of Sociology
Associate Dean, Graduate School

That is Mount Everest in the background and how I got there is a story of how the careers of sociologists can be unpredictable. Back in 1986 I directed the dissertation of Janardan Subedi (now Professor of Sociology at Miami University-Ohio) on medical pluralism in Nepal. At his invitation I visited Nepal in 1994 and we have been doing research there ever since. At last count we have now published 9 journal articles, 2 book chapters and given 20 papers related to the Nepal mental health system, the mental health of Nepalis and the ethics of medical research in developing countries. Many of these papers have been co-authored with other UA graduate students including, Sree Subedi, Chris Broughton, Jelena Pokimica, Yinmei Huang and, Amod Pyakuryal. None of this was planned- I had and still have other research interests- but my experience illustrates the way that careers can take unexpected turns and how intertwined the lives of students and faculty members can become. A trek to Mount Everest was a side benefit of all this work and, no, I didn’t climb to the top.
ALUMNI BRIEFS

In this issue of SOCNEWS, we profile three of our alumni and their work since leaving Akron: Dr Ansar Ahmed and Mr. Vitus Azeem. Also featured is a book co-authored by Michelle B. Miller who is now an assistant professor at Kansas State University.

Dr. Ansar Ahmed (PhD, 1989), is the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, DC. Dr. Ahmed has served in several capacities throughout his professional career; starting out as a professor and a researcher, and in more recent years, working in university administration.

Prior to assuming the position at UDC, he was the Associate Dean for the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Millersville University of Pennsylvania. Before that, he was Professor and Sociology Department Chair at Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio. As a tactical and strategic manager in university administration, Dr. Ahmed is involved in program assessment and evaluation, monitoring academic standards, curricular development, enrollment management and retention efforts, and in coordinating and resolving competing needs within the institution. In his role as Associate Provost, Dr. Ahmed is responsible for planning, managing, overseeing, and the directing the University’s institutional research and institutional effectiveness agenda.

As a professor, he taught courses in research methodology, applied sociological research, social inequalities, and global issues. His research is focused on community development issues, with a specific concentration on gender empowerment and human development. More recently, he has been looking at the relationships between dysfunctional factors (like corruption) and how it impacts human development. He has also done research in the areas of academic issues and challenges.

Mr. Vitus A. Azeem (MA, 1997), is the Executive Secretary of The Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII). Since leaving Akron for his native Ghana, Vitus has used his sociological training and knowledge in diverse ways, including helping to develop civic society and transparency in Ghana. Among its various activities, GII provide some support for the evolution of strong institutions of governance—especially those directly involved in anti-corruption activities. It also train and advises the populace about their civic rights and duties.

Another work of GII is that it lobbies for legislative reforms—especially when it comes to anti-corruption rules, enforcement procedures and rules for free media. Furthermore, the organization liaises with other international anti-corruption bodies around the world. Prior to his current appointment, he worked _______. His work has taken him all over the world—US, Europe, Asia included!!! When I contacted him about our intent to feature him in this issue of SocNews, Vitus was in Hong Kong attending a meeting on governance.

You can contact Vitus at the address below:
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Fax No: +233-(0)302-782365
Office e-mail: vaazeem@tighana.org

Dr. Michelle Bemiller (PhD, 2005)
ALUMNI BRIEFS (continued)

Lori Andrews (BA, ‘94)
Lori is Technology Coordinator in the Career Development Center at Minnesota State University, in Mankato Minnesota.

Dr. Denise Baird (BA, ‘92)
Denise is an associate professor of sociology at Franklin College, Indiana, received the 2007 Franklin College Faculty Distinguished Service Award. Baird holds master’s and doctorate degrees in sociology from Purdue University.

Dr. Nicole Bouchet, (PhD ‘04)
Nicole is a Statistician for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Anazette Hudson, (BA ‘10)
Anazette is teaching English in South Korea for a year beginning in September, 2010, at a private language school for children. While in Korea she plans to get her certification to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) and continue teaching.

Dr. Benjamin Lewin, (MA ‘01)
Ben is a professor of Comparative Sociology at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA. He specializes in medical sociology. His interests include understanding the connections between pharmaceutical direct-to-consumer advertising and physician-patient interactions, and in understanding the impact of the pharmaceutical industry on medicalization, which is the process by which certain behaviors come to be defined as medical issues and move under the control of the medical institution.

Suzanne Slusser, (PhD, ‘09)
Suzanne is a full-time Instructor at Valdosta State University, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice, Valdosta, GA.

Dana Williams, (PhD ‘09)
Dana is a tenure-track assistant professor at Valdosta State University, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice, Valdosta, GA.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

2010 Rogler Scholarship Winners ($1,000 each)
Courtney Verardi
Christopher Weil
Michele Kalabon

2010 Rogler Scholarship Winners ($500 each)
Sean Brown
Rebecca Jackson

2010 Fisher Scholarship Winners ($500 each)
Joshua Snyder
Courtney Modie

2010 Outstanding Undergraduate Award
Thomas Kychun

Below: 2010 Women in Higher Education Banquet
SCHOLARSHIPS CHANGE LIVES

Many students today cannot afford the cost of a college education and rely on the availability of scholarships to pursue their dream of achieving a college degree in their field of interest. The University of Akron is proud of its top-notch Department of Sociology, whose alumni and friends are especially mindful of students’ needs.

A scholarship in your name can be established for as little as $10,000. For information on contributing your support or for making a donation of any denomination, please contact:

Evelyn C. DiBello  
Director of Development,  
Buchtel College of Arts & Sciences  
(330) 972-2575  
dibello@uakron.edu

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

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AKRONews is a publication of the Department of Sociology, University of Akron, Akron OH 44325-1905. Its purpose is to provide news concerning the activities of the Department, including teaching, research, scholarship, and service.

Contributions and comments are welcomed. Please direct all correspondence to:

Dr. Baffour K. Takyi [Editor]  
btkyi@uakron.edu or 330-972-6887

We encourage you to visit our website at www.uakron.edu/sociology

Dr. Brian Pendleton’s 60th birthday!  
Pictured with Brian are Drs. Rudy Fenwick (who celebrated his 60th earlier in the year!), Mark Tausig and Kathy Feltey (in the Newman Library).