OUR VISION

The Center for Research on Families (CRF) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst advances interdisciplinary research aimed at increasing our understanding of the diversity, health, and well-being of families while contributing innovative and evidence-based solutions to the most pressing problems facing families.

CRF is one of the few family research centers in the country that bridges the social, behavioral, and natural sciences; thus, we are uniquely poised to initiate and support interdisciplinary collaborations that answer complex questions about today’s families and society. CRF epitomizes the land grant mission of UMass Amherst to provide teaching, research and public service to benefit the families of the Commonwealth and nation.

OUR MISSION

• Promote, conduct, and translate high quality, substantive research on key issues affecting families
• Teach, mentor, and support family researchers throughout their careers—students to professors
• Engage with the community to address challenges facing families and to inform social policy

OUR STORY

CRF has a long history and deep roots at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Center for the Family was founded over forty years ago in the 1970s. A generous endowment given by Dorothy Dunklee Gavin (‘43) and Joseph Gavin in 1996 ensured a strong and sustainable future for the Center. In 2003, the original Center for the Family was transformed into today’s CRF.

CRF is a joint center of the College of Natural Sciences (CNS) and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS). Its programs are supported by CNS, SBS, the Edna Skinner and Tay Gavin Erickson endowments, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, grants, and alumni and corporate gifts. CRF’s unique model of collaboration serves to enhance its primary mission of supporting interdisciplinary and translational research activities on campus and in the community.
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*This report describes CRF activities undertaken from June 2016 through June 2017.*

**DESIGN:** Angela Russo, Center for Research on Families  
**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Anne McSweeney, Center for Research on Families  
**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Rose Boyko, Paul Franz, Aaron Malloy, Pablo Robles  
**ICONS:** Lance Hancock, Gan Khoon Lay via The Noun Project
Dear Friends,

As I reflect upon the past year in our country, it is quite clear that in many ways we are a country divided—by inequality, by ideology and by solutions. With that said, I have yet to meet an individual who does not value families. We may disagree about the right, size, or shape or functions of families, however, we all agree that families matter. As the director of the Center for Research on Families (CRF), that is my starting point. Families are facing tremendous challenges in the 21st century—economic inequality, substance abuse, health challenges such as obesity and diabetes, and children who are unprepared to start school, to name just a few. Our job as family researchers is to understand how these challenges impact families’ lives and to develop evidence, through both basic and applied research, to solve these problems.

This year, CRF has been involved in efforts to take on these challenges in “our own backyard.” We are partnering with agencies, schools, health care providers and the government to support the resiliency of families in Springfield, MA and surrounding communities to address head on problems such as poverty, environmental hazards, and racial and ethnic discrimination. These complex problems require multifaceted solutions that must rely on interdisciplinary approaches. We need economists and sociologists to describe the macro-level challenges such as income inequality and discrimination, public health experts to map health care challenges and community-wide solutions, psychologists to elucidate mechanisms that link broad social inequities to parental and child well-being and neuropsychologists to uncover how these conditions shape the biological and brain functioning of humans. Our goal is to harness expertise from disciplines all over campus to serve and support agencies and programs in Springfield, MA aimed at raising up the community. To that end, we have started a partnership with Project ACCCES (A Collaboration to develop Capacity for Community Engaged research in Springfield) to support the development of community-researcher partnerships to address pressing problems such as maternal and child health, substance use and mental health, childhood health problems and toxic stress.

As always, I am so impressed and proud of the scholarship that is produced at CRF and by the scholars who bring their passion, expertise and skills to the table. They are unwavering and tireless in their efforts to conduct research that will have value for families. In my estimation, families will continue to be the glue that holds our nation together, rising above political party and debates, and it is where CRF will continue its work to use research to support all families.

Sincerely,

Director, Center for Research on Families
OUR APPROACH

RESEARCH AND METHODS
- Consulting
- Academc-Year Seminars
- Summer Workshops
- Grant Support
- Pathway to Careers

TEACHING AND MENTORING
- Family Research Scholars Program
- Stress Research Working Group
- Early Childhood Working Group

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- Springfield Initiative
- Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series
- Public Engagement Project

METHODOLOGY
- Consulting
- Academic-Year Seminars
- Summer Workshops
- Grant Support
- Pathway to Careers

FACULTY
- Family Research Scholars Program
- Stress Research Working Group
- Early Childhood Working Group

STUDENTS
- Student Research Scholars Program
- Graduate Assistantships
- Student Awards

POLICY
- Local, State and National
CRF SUCCESSES 2016-2017

CRF has accomplished the following in the 2016-2017 year through its three-pronged approach:

1) Promoting and conducting high quality, substantive research on key issues affecting family life
   - Six 2016-17 CRF Family Research Scholars (FRS) developed competitive grants through intensive faculty and peer feedback and targeted instruction on the review process along with methodology support.
   - Six 2015-16 Family Research Scholars continued to develop their grants with support from faculty and peers.
   - CRF has active grants totaling $10,547,806.
   - Four student researchers participated in a new CRF-hosted Student Scholars Research Seminar which is modeled after our faculty program. Students were assisted with developing research and writing plans, fine tuning their papers and proposals and refining their methods plans.
   - For the tenth year, CRF sponsored the Stress Research Group. 28 researchers met regularly to discuss and examine the biological, behavioral and social indices and outcomes of stress.
   - Twenty-three faculty members participated in the CRF-sponsored Early Childhood Research Group.

2) Teaching, mentoring and supporting family researchers throughout their careers (students to professors)
   - CRF awarded over $35,000 in Student Family Research Grants to twelve undergraduate and graduate students.
   - CRF provided advanced statistical and methodological consultation, analysis and training to approximately 120 UMass faculty and students and researchers from 76 other institutions, 32 states and 8 countries.
   - CRF partnered with the Rudd Adoption Research Program to offer the Rudd Summer Adoption Research Institute.
   - CRF partnered with the College of Natural Sciences to present “Running a Successful Lab: Lessons from the Trenches”

3) Engaging with the community to address and inform outreach and policy on issues critical to the well-being of families.
   - CRF hosted six well-attended public lectures by renowned experts through the Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series.
   - Two Family Research Scholars participated in the Public Engagement Fellows Program (PEP) to develop skills in translating their research.
   - CRF co-sponsored the PEP event “Faculty as Engaged Scholars in an Era of Uncertainty”
   - CRF partnered with the Healthy Development Initiative to award two $15,000 pilot grant opportunities for researchers to partner with community organizations to address pressing problems in Springfield, MA and also to develop pilot grants for new collaborations whose proposed work has a clear developmental emphasis.
   - Dr. Perry-Jenkins is the 2017 Conference Program Chair for The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference in November 2017.
   - CRF participated in the Maternal Child Health Working Group taskforce to develop partnerships between researchers and community providers in Springfield. CRF provided assistance in mapping community resources.
   - CRF is collaborating with the Children’s Trust (CT) to develop a new course: Risk and Resilience in the Lives of Young Families for home visitors across the state that will be offered in Fall 2017 at the UMass Springfield Center. CRF and CT plan to build on this course to develop a pathway to a certificate or degree for home visitors.
MAUREEN PERRY-JENKINS
CRF DIRECTOR

• Executive Board, Work and Family Research Network
• Executive Board, Contemporary Council on Families
• Program Chair, National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference, 2017
• Center for Racial Justice and Urban Affairs, Academic Advisory Committee
  UMass Amherst, 2017
• UMass Medical Center for Clinical and Translational Science - Life Science Moment Fund Grant: A Prenatal Intervention for Low-Income Parents
• NIH Review Panel Member
• Numerous national presentations on work-family research
• Editorial Board of Journal of Marriage and Family; Community, Work and Family; Journal of Family Theory and Review

ALINE SAYE
CRF METHODOLOGY PROGRAM DIRECTOR

• Served as methodological consultant on ten research grants across the following agencies: NIH, NSF, IES (Institute of Education Sciences), CIHR (Canadian Institute for Health Research), PCORI (Patient-Centered Outcomes Research)
• Inter-University Consortium for Social and Political Research, Summer Program in Quantitative Methods Advisory Board
• Numerous national presentations on family research methodology
• Workshops on multilevel modeling and structural equation modeling at Yale’s Center for Inequality and the Life Course, the Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati, and Interact for Health
Since 2003, CRF has provided selected faculty with time, expert consultation, technical expertise, and peer mentorship to prepare large grant proposals for intensive family research. The program has supported and facilitated interdisciplinary family research in a wide variety of disciplines like psychology, anthropology, nursing, economics, sociology, education, environmental health, political science, biology, and neuroscience. Despite federal funds becoming tighter nationally, the FRS program has significantly increased federal research support for family research at UMass. As funding for research becomes more difficult to obtain, centers like CRF become increasingly valuable to family researchers. CRF collaborates with the Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) to hold a workshop for new assistant professors which focuses on applying for both opportunities.

Family Research Scholars participate in a year-long interdisciplinary seminar that includes:

• Presentations and discussions of the Scholars’ developing proposals
• Concrete instruction in grant writing and understanding of funding agencies
• Strategies for successful proposal submission
• Assistance accessing the resources of the University
• Individualized methodology consultation
• Facilitated peer review throughout the formulation and writing process
• Staff support at all stages of grant submission
• Accountability for reaching writing goals
• Consultation with nationally recognized experts who are hosted by CRF through the Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series
• Guest speakers on topics identified by scholars such as budgets, foundation and corporate grants
• Continued support through the summer and following year when requested

SEMINAR FACILITATORS
Maureen Perry-Jenkins, CRF Director, Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences
Aline Sayer, Director, CRF Methodology Program
The 2017-2018 Family Research Scholars have been selected, based on their promising work in family related research:

Aline Gubrium  
Community Health Education, School of Public Health and Health Sciences

Krystal Pollitt  
Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health and Health Sciences

Kalpana Poudel-Tandukar  
College of Nursing

Jamie Rowen  
Legal Studies, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Jeffrey Starns  
Psychological and Brain Sciences, College of Natural Sciences

Ning Zang  
School of Public Health and Health Sciences
1. **Laura Vandenberg** (FRS ‘15-16) received the Pearl Award for “Disruptive” Research from the Cornell Douglas Foundation, an environmental health and justice advocacy group, in recognition of her “outstanding leadership in conducting critical research to identify and address the many issues concerning endocrine disruptors.”

2. **Michelle Budig’s** (FRS ‘06-07) work on the “motherhood penalty,” the average four percent decrease in earnings per child experienced by women in the U.S., was featured in articles from *The Atlantic, USA Today, U.S. News and World Report,* and the *Chicago Tribune.*

3. **Nilanjana Dasgupta** (FRS ‘06-07; ‘12-13) was honored with a Chancellor’s Award for Outstanding Accomplishments in Research and Creative Activity at the 12th Annual Faculty Convocation. Dasgupta also gave a distinguished lecture at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Arlington, Va. focused on increasing students’ access to successful female role models in STEM.

4. **Richard Pilsner** (FRS ‘15-16) published some of the first research on the reproductive impacts of fathers’ preconception exposures to phthalates. Pilsner will complement this work with another study funded through a two-year, $375,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health. It will investigate linkages between adult mice exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals and health effects in offspring.

5. **Karen Kalmakis** (FRS ‘12-13) and **Rebecca Spencer** (FRS ‘10-11) will develop pilot research as part of the new UManage Center to Build the Science of Symptom Self-Management. The center is funded through a $1.23 million grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research. Over the next five years, the center will develop ten technologies to help people with chronic illness manage fatigue and impaired sleep.

6. **Lee Badgett** (FRS ‘04-05) will lead a first-of-its-kind study examining how federal contractors fare on gender identity and sexual orientation discrimination.

7. **Heather Richardson** (FRS ‘10-11) was recently awarded a five-year, $1.77M grant from the NIH National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for her project, “Adolescent Binge Drinking and Effects on Adult Brain and Behavior: The Importance of Sex Differences.”
RESEARCH ACTIVITY 2016-2017

SUBMITTED RESEARCH GRANTS

Richard Pilsner (Environmental Health Sciences)
National Institutes of Health - $3,726,317
Impact of Phthalates on Reproductive Health, Potential Mediation Through Sperm DNA Methylation and Seminal Plasma Extracellular Vesicle RNA

National Institutes of Health - $458,644
Human Phthalate Exposure, RNA Profiles of Seminal Plasma Extracellular Vesicles and Reproductive Health

National Institutes of Health - $3,464,179
Impact of Phthalates on Reproductive Health, Potential Mediation Through Sperm DNA Methylation and Seminal Plasma Exosomal RNA

Brigitte Holt (Anthropology)
National Science Foundation-$823,119
Collaborative Research: Bone Strength and Physical Activity Over the Life Course in a Physically Active Contemporary Pre-industrial Population

Laura Vandenberg (Environmental Health Sciences)
National Institutes of Health - $438,626
Evaluating the Biological Activity of Bisphenol Metabolites In Vivo and In Vitro

Lisa Sanders (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
National Institutes of Health - $438,627
Electrophysiological Indices of Speech Processing in Classrooms

Institute of Education Sciences - $468,063
Electrophysiological Indices of Speech Processing in Noisy Classrooms

Linda Isbell (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality $1,708,486
Emotional Influences on Diagnostic Error in Emergency Medicine: An Experimental Approach to Understand Diagnostic Failure and Facilitate Improvement for Patients With and Without Mental Illness

Paula Pietromonaco (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
National Institutes of Health- $3,895,653
Physiological Synchrony and Physical and Mental Health Risks in Older Couples

Lindewe Sibeko (Nutrition)
National Institutes of Health -$312,615
Increased Breastfeeding Duration Rates in African American Women: A Community Based Participatory Research Approach

Agnès Lacreuse (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
National Institutes of Health - $443,755
Menopausal Symptoms: An Integrated Approach in a Marmoset Model

Alexandra Jesse (Psychology)
National Institutes of Health - $152,794
Electrophysiological Indices of Audiovisual Benefits to Speech Processing in Aging Adults

Louis Graham (Community Health Education)
National Institutes of Health - $79,750
Mental Distress and Interpersonal Relationships Among Black Sexually Marginalized Men

ACTIVE RESEARCH GRANTS

Gerald Downes (Biology)
National Science Foundation - $757,746
Collaborative Research: GABA A Receptor Control of Hyperactivity in Developing Zebrafish

Nilanjana Dasgupta (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
National Science Foundation - $2,039,819
Peer Influences on Adolescents’ Self-concept, Achievement, and Future Aspirations

National Science Foundation - $524,580

Agnès Lacreuse (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
National Institutes of Health - $1,545,557
Sex Differences in Cognitive and Brain Aging: A Primate Model

Jacquie Kurland (Communications Disorders)
National Institutes of Health - $1,757,591
Overcoming Learned Non-Use in Chronic Aphasia: Behavioral, fMRI, and QoL Outcomes

Rebecca Spencer (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
National Institutes of Health - $2,017,722
The Benefits of Naps on Cognitive, Emotional and Motor Learning in Preschoolers

National Institutes of Health - $1,904,791
Sleep-dependent Memory Processing in Older Adults

GRANTS SUBMITTED, totaling $16,869,232
ACTIVE GRANTS, totaling $10,547,806
Family, friends, and romantic and sexual partners can be a source of both support and stress, often simultaneously. As part of an ongoing project to model minority stress processes, Louis Graham, Assistant Professor of Health Promotion and Policy, seeks to detail the complexities of these relationships for people at the intersections of marginalized identities.

The first grant proposal of Graham’s CRF residency centers on young, Black, gay men and their relationships with immediate family, friends, or partners. Through in-depth group interviews, Graham plans to develop a nuanced understanding of how relationships buffer and contribute to mental distress. Graham’s study will highlight the ways family, friends, and partners can provide critical support and connection in some facets of these young men’s lives, while also disparaging or isolating them due to other parts of their identity.

For young, Black, gay men in particular, Graham notes, “often it is the most supportive relationships that end up being the most stressful. The way that stress and rejection manifests in the relationship is often seen, by at least one member of the relationship, as rooted in love, caring, and concern.” For example, disapproval or silence about their child’s sexual or gender identity may be inextricably linked to parents’ fears their child may contract HIV/AIDS or experience violence. By categorizing relationships as either supportive or unsupportive, simplistic assumptions about stress processes fail to account for the intricacies of emotional and economic support, especially in marginalized communities.

Developing a more complex understanding of relationships in the minority stress model is just one piece of Graham’s systematic exploration. Alternating between focused, qualitative inquiries into core concepts and quantitative statistical tests of the pathways between concepts, Graham seeks to construct a comprehensive model of minority stress that can be used by researchers and practitioners working in a variety of communities.

Graham explains, “one of the things that guides my work is the idea that we stand to learn most from those who are most marginalized. Certainly if we can address health disparities and challenges for those who are most marginalized, we can do it for the collective.”

Graham began his research with a focus group study that investigated the ways intersecting marginalized identities, based in race, gender, sexuality, and class, influence health outcomes among African-American, Latino, and LGBT communities. He continues to build on this work with a five-year grant to enhance a stress intervention for older Black men in collaboration with the Men of Color Health Awareness (MOCHA) program in Springfield, MA. Using data from this project, Graham will extend his model to include stressors based on age and the spatial stigma associated with identifying as a resident of a socially and economically marginalized neighborhood.

In the second half of his CRF residency, Graham returned to quantitative research with a proposal for a longitudinal study exploring gender conformity pressure and racial justice. Working with CRF affiliates and his FRS peers has helped Graham integrate cortisol-levels and other biomarkers of mental distress and suicidality into his study designs for the first time. As part of the Tay Gavin Erickson lecture series, Graham collaborated with Lisa Bowleg, a scholar credited with bringing intersectional approaches to the field of public health. Graham is deeply appreciative of his “CRF family” for their constructive and supportive feedback. “If this project is funded I will be indebted to the group. Their fingerprints are all over it!” says Graham.
In recent weeks, Brigitte Holt, associate professor of anthropology, has been busily unpacking crates of human bones. Upper Paleolithic bones might be an unusual source of data for a CRF Family Research Scholar, but through her research, Holt aims to shed light on an issue of interest to many modern families: the relationship between childhood activity and lifelong bone health.

“It is just a biological fact that we lose bone mass with age,” says Holt. However, for women in industrialized societies, this loss of mass leads to high rates of bone fracture after menopause. Fractures can severely impact quality of life for older adults. Studying bones allows Holt to put these fractures into historical context.

While women have always lost bone mass, “we don’t see a lot of fractures in old age [in previous eras]” says Holt. From hunter-gatherers to the Industrial Revolution, the human skeleton has adapted in response to our lifestyles.

According to Holt, “Bones have changed, but women and men have changed differently.” Holt hypothesizes that women’s high rates of fracture later in life may be due to a lack of strenuous physical activity during their childhood and young adulthood, a time when young men may be more active. Holt suggests pre- and early puberty may be a critical period for developing peak bone mass and setting children up for lasting bone strength. For adults, intense physical activity can spur small amounts of bone growth, but it gets harder and harder to add bone as we age.

Strong bones are a function of bones’ size and density. Activity can spur bone to grow bigger, increasing its diameter. Just as it is harder to break a bottle than a piece of chalk, Holt explains, a bone with a larger diameter will be more difficult to fracture, even as its density diminishes. In some limited studies, women in the past seem to have increased the diameter of their bones at similar rates to men. Yet, despite advances in public health and fairly nutritious diets, modern women rarely gain bone.

To better understand what is happening to women’s bones, Holt plans to focus her research on cultures where girls and young women are very active. During her CRF fellowship, Holt submitted an NIH grant to study traditional subsistence societies in Bolivia, where boys and girls carry water, gather firewood, and participate in farming from a young age. Other studies linking physical activity to bone growth have typically focused on elite athletes, prehistoric populations, or exercise interventions for the elderly. However, none of these study designs offer specific insight into the effects of preadolescent activity levels.

“Participating in CRF’s Family Research Scholars program career changing and life changing,” shared Holt. She shares that the consultation on statistics provided by Methodology Program Director Aline Sayer changed her NIH proposal from not fundable to fundable. Working with an interdisciplinary group of fellows, and learning about different approaches, different research designs, and different ways of being rigorous also helped Holt tighten her final proposal.

Holt echoes a common sentiment amongst past Family Research Scholars saying, “CRF has helped me feel at home on campus.”
CRF recognizes the importance of making research matter in our own neighborhoods and communities. Springfield, the fourth largest city in New England, shares many strengths and challenges that profoundly impact families. Some of its strengths include strong communities and neighborhoods, expanding economic opportunities and dedicated citizens and providers. Some of the challenges include poor health outcomes, high poverty rates, poor school readiness, and high rates of substance abuse. Our goal is to partner with agencies and community leaders in Springfield to support their important work building resiliency across the city; our aim is provide the strengths that CRF and UMass Amherst can bring to the table in terms of education, research and outreach.

CRF has developed a new partnership with the Healthy Development Initiative (HDI). HDI, spearheaded by Kirby Deater-Deckard, a professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at UMass Amherst, aims to discover and share new knowledge about human development and to do this in collaboration with community partners, who put this knowledge to work. Together CRF and HDI are working with community partners to create effective and sustainable partnerships between UMass and the Springfield Community.

The UMass Springfield Center, located in downtown Springfield, 27 miles from the Amherst campus, offers a unique opportunity for CRF to connect closely with community partners, to create synergies between researchers, providers and families, and to provide rich educational opportunities for students and community members.

In 2016-2017 CRF has begun the following initiatives in Springfield:

**Research/Community Collaborations**
CRF participates in the Maternal-Child Health Network (MCHN), one of the working groups connected to Project ACCCES: A Collaboration to Develop Capacity for Community-Engaged Research in Springfield. Project ACCCES, initiated by a PCORI grant (Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute) to Sarah Goff.
Associate Professor Baystate Medical Center, Elissa Griffith-Johnson, Patient Representative, Kathleen Szegda, Director of Community Research and Evaluation at Partners for a Healthier Community and Bettye Anderson Frederic, former director of Springfield Department of Health and Human Services, aims to build capacity for community-engaged research. The MCHN working group of Project ACCCES includes providers, researchers and other stakeholders and focuses on issues such as premature birth and teen pregnancy; sexually transmitted infection; and disability. Members have identified many sources of these health issues, including lack of access to resources, such as healthy food and transportation; economic factors, including poverty and lack of jobs; difficulties dealing with the healthcare system and insurance; racism, low literacy, crime and incarceration.

The group has been meeting regularly with the goal of forging partnerships that will bring together the knowledge, expertise and resources of these unique groups so that future research designed to improve the health of Springfield’s vulnerable populations engages patients and stakeholders throughout the entire research process. CRF is also providing assistance with mapping resources to help providers and researchers understand the current landscape, existing services, research efforts and connections between them.

Community Partnership Research Grant Initiative
CRF and the Healthy Development Initiative (HDI) collaborated to create a pilot grant program, awarding two $15,000 grants as the first step in a newly emerging commitment to creating and nurturing ongoing collaborations between UMass researchers and community partners in the Springfield area. The two funded projects will address pressing concerns identified by Springfield families, agencies and community leaders with the goal of increasing the health and wellbeing of Springfield residents.

Mary Paterno, Assistant Professor of Nursing at UMass, along with Elizabeth Peacock-Chambers, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at UMass Medical School’s Baystate Campus, will lead a project titled “Maternal Perceptions of Opiate Addiction and Child Development Services from Pregnancy Through the First Year Postpartum.” Drs. Paterno and Peacock-Chambers aim to understand the perceptions of women in recovery from opiate addiction in relation to the continuity and gaps in addiction services from pregnancy to one year postpartum. Using this data, they propose to develop an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to providing addiction, maternal health and child development services to support parenting women and their children who are affected by opiate addiction.

Krystal Pollitt, an Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences at UMass, will join with Sarita Hudson, Director of Programs and Development for Springfield’s Partners for a Healthier Community, to implement their project “The Fresh Air Project: Using the Exposome to Personalize Asthma Management.” Springfield suffers from rates of asthma that are double statewide estimates with a disproportionate burden impacting children and some people of color. Pollitt and Hudson seek to understand the prevalent environmental exposures across children and develop novel personalized control strategies that reduce exposure to these triggers of asthma. The project will partner with the Springfield Healthy Homes Asthma Pilot Program (SHHAPP), which will serve up to 20 families with four home visits for asthma management education and support. The long-term goal of the Fresh Air Project is to decrease hospital usage for asthma in Springfield.

CRF is providing seed funding in order to foster sustainable partnerships between community agencies and researchers who share the goal of improving health outcomes for residents of Springfield, and were chosen because of their potential to lead to larger investigations.

Pathways to College for Family Workers
CRF is working closely with the Children’s Trust to develop credit-bearing courses for Healthy Families home visitors across the state that could lead to a certificate or an associate’s or bachelor’s degree for professionals who work with young families. The first course, Risk and Resilience in the Lives of Young Families, will be offered in the fall at the UMass Springfield Center this fall.

Center for Racial Justice and Urban Affairs
Maureen Perry-Jenkins and Kirby Deater-Deckard were selected as one of 14 teams who are laying the groundwork for a Center for Racial Justice and Urban Affairs in Springfield.

Their project: “Community Engaged Research on the Health Impacts of Chronic Poverty,” will help to fund continued partnerships between providers and researchers addressing a range of health problems that are impacted by chronic poverty.
Since 2005, CRF’s Methodology Program has been a resource for consultation and training in advanced statistical and methodological techniques that are relevant to family research. The Methodology Program offers training through academic-year seminars, summer workshops held in collaboration with University of Michigan’s Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and individualized methodology consulting. Our instructors have particular expertise in quantitative methods for analyzing non-experimental data that arise in studies of families and dyads, with an emphasis on multilevel modeling, structural equation modeling and analysis of nested and longitudinal data. CRF methodology training and consultation have supported many publications and grant applications relevant to research on families.

**Methodology Consultation**

CRF’s Methodology Consulting Services (MCS) provides study design and statistical analysis to academics and professionals from the private-sector.

In 2016-2017 CRF’s Methodology Consultation Services (MCS) provided individual research and data consultation on the following topics: the stress and health outcomes of attachment styles in relationships, bathroom stress experienced by trans men, the effect of protests in Malaysia on support for human rights and democracy, and an intervention in Inuit communities designed to support adolescents and prevent suicide attempts.

MCS has also expanded to partner with other areas of the campus research community, providing services to departments such as Psychological and Brain Sciences, Kinesiology, Anthropology, Community Health Education, Environmental Health Sciences, Nursing, Nutrition, and the School Psychology and Higher Education divisions in the School of Education.

**CONSULTING EXPERTISE**

Consulting services are provided by a team of faculty, led by our nationally recognized director, Dr. Aline Sayer, and include CRF staff and advanced graduate students. They offer consulting in all stages of research, including: (a) issues in study design, measurement and sampling, (b) power analysis, (c) data analysis, training in the use of software packages, and (d) writing and editing methodology sections of manuscripts and grant proposals.
CONSULTING STAFF AND STUDENTS

Lisa Fiorenzo

Lisa joined the Center for Research on Families in the Fall of 2014 as a staff methodology consultant. She has statistical training in ANOVA, regression, Bayesian methods, hierarchical linear (multilevel) modeling, structural equation modeling, and Cox hazard models (survival analysis). She also brings to CRF a good working knowledge of multiple statistical packages, such as R, SPSS, HLM, and LISREL. Lisa helps clients elucidate their plans for analysis, provides data management expertise, assists in carrying out analyses, and helps translate findings into coherent products. She has taught seminars on the basics of ANOVA, R programming, and continuous-time survival analysis. Lisa is also a staff member in the Rudd Adoption Research Program.

Nathan (Nate) Carnes

Nate joined the CRF Methodology team in the Fall of 2016 as a graduate student consultant. He has taught hierarchical linear modeling and structural equation modeling. Nate brought training in conditional process modeling, ANOVA, regression, and propensity score analysis along with expertise in the design and analysis of experiments using methods drawn from psychology and behavioral economics. Nate has provided guidance on the design of experiments and different approaches to data analysis. For particularly difficult problems, he conducted analyses and helped clients interpret their findings. Nate also taught seminars on conditional process modeling and propensity score analysis.

METHODOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES

The Methodology Program of the Center sponsored a seminar series on statistical topics relevant to family research. All seminars were intended to appeal to a broad audience and attract researchers from many disciplines, including criminology, clinical psychology, medicine, economics, computer science, and public health. Seminars provided an orientation to the topic in addition to a hands-on component whereby participants used relevant software to practice analyzing data. The seminars were presented by the CRF methodology consultants.

When Correlation Implies Causation: How to Remove Selection Bias in Observational Research

Instructor: Nathan Carnes
FEBRUARY 17, 2017

We conduct observational research because random assignment to condition is sometimes impractical, unethical, or even undesirable. Observational studies are especially susceptible to threats to internal validity, and selection bias is among the most problematic of these threats. At this seminar, participants learned the basics of propensity score analysis, which can remove selection bias and help researchers infer causation. The examples used focused on intervention research, but these techniques extend to nearly any kind of observational design. The seminar used Stata in an applied demonstration of how to conduct a propensity score analysis, providing attendees with a hands-on experience.

From Scallywag to Seadog: Intermediate Graphing in R

Instructor: Lisa Fiorenzo
APRIL 21, 2017

This seminar, targeting intermediate R users, detailed a variety of ways to modify plots in base R and introduced attendees to the lattice and ggplot2 packages. Through a combination of lecture-style examples and hands-on programming, attendees learned to identify and make edits to various graphical parameters in base R, create wireframe and contour plots with lattice, generate scatterplots with beautiful fit lines with ggplot2 and troubleshoot a variety of plotting errors across all packages. Participants were also taught how to simplify their figures into cohesive, multi-layered representations to make their visualizations more intricate and appealing with less time and effort.
METHODOLOGICAL WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS
For twelve years, CRF’s trainings in advanced statistical and methodological techniques have attracted national and international family researchers to the summer methodology workshops held on campus. Researchers have come to depend on CRF’s consistent menu of relevant and intensive trainings.

Through CRF’s affiliation, UMass serves as a satellite site for the prestigious Summer Institute in Quantitative Methods organized by the University of Michigan’s Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), providing four weeks of intensive training. Participants consistently rate their experiences very highly, indicating that CRF is meeting an important need in the field.

SUMMER METHODOLOGY WORKSHOPS 2016-17
REGRESSION MODELS FOR CATEGORICAL OUTCOMES
Dr. J. Scott Long, Indiana University
“As someone getting reacquainted with not just Stata but qualitative analysis after years of qualitative work, Dr. Long’s illustrations and examples were especially useful in explaining certain concepts and methods. He was very knowledgeable about almost every detail of the methods--it was very impressive.”
- Workshop attendee

GROUP-BASED TRAJECTORY MODELING FOR THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Dr. Daniel Nagin, Carnegie-Mellon University
Dr. Thomas Loughran, University of Maryland, College Park
“Dr. Nagin’s knowledge about the topic is very deep and he presents in a way that is very clear and intelligible to his audience. He is enthusiastic and passionate about this topic.”
- Workshop attendee

ANALYZING INTENSIVE LONGITUDINAL DATA
Dr. Jean-Philippe Laurenceau, University of Delaware
Dr. Niall Bolger, Columbia University
“Dr. Bolger is one of the best instructors I’ve ever had - his explanations are clear and logical and make very complex concepts easy to understand. I will recommend this course to my graduate students - it was phenomenal!”
- Workshop attendee

HIERARCHICAL LINEAR MODELING I: INTRODUCTION
Dr. Aline Sayer, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Dr. Holly Laws, Yale University
“This was an outstanding workshop relative to both graduate level courses and other workshops I have attended. Concepts were explained clearly and illustrated through hands on work. Instructors collaborated seamlessly and were very knowledgeable. Most importantly, high level concepts were explained in an accessible manner.”
- Workshop attendee

The June 2016 & June 2017 workshop series served 87 researchers. In the past two years participants came from the following institutions:

- Auburn University
- Baystate Health
- Boston College
- Brandeis University
- Brown University
- Chinese University Hong Kong
- College of the Holy Cross
- Columbia University
- Connecticut Children’s Medical Center
- CUNY-Graduate Center
- Emory University
- Fordham University
- George Mason University
- George Washington University
- Georgetown University
- Georgia Southern University
- Harvard Medical School
- Harvard University
- Indiana University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Lifespan Healthcare
- Macquarie University
- Medical University of Groningen
- Mississippi State University
- Mount Holyoke College
- National University of Singapore
- Northeastern University
- Northwestern University
- Notre Dame University
- Ohio University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Portland State University
- Purdue University
- Queens College - CUNY
- Rice University
- Rutgers University
- Sam Houston State University
- Seoul National University
- St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
- SUNY Stony Brook
- Tufts University
- Texas Tech University
- University of Arizona
- University of Arkansas at Little Rock
- University of California at Berkeley
- University of Chicago
- University of Cincinnat
- University of Connecticut
- University of Delaware
- University of Kentucky
- University of Manchester, England
- University of Massachusetts Amherst
- University of Massachusetts Boston
- University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
- University of Massachusetts Lowell
- University of Massachusetts Medical School
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota
- University of Nebraska - Omaha
- University of Nebraska - Lincoln
- University of North Carolina - Greensboro
- University of Northern Colorado
- University of Rhode Island
- University of Rochester Medical Center
- University of South Florida
- University of Texas Health Science Center
- University of Texas - Dallas
- University of Vermont
- University of Washington
- University of Wisconsin Milwaukee
- Vanderbilt University
- Washington State University
- Wellesley College
- West Virginia University
- Western University Canada
- The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania
- Yale University
Dr. Aline Sayer selects the most talented doctoral students in methodological techniques to be a part of the consulting team. CRF provides a rich training ground for students that can lead to exciting career opportunities. Several recent methodology students found that their time and the mentoring they received at CRF positioned them well for great careers. Past graduate student team members have obtained impressive positions in a range of careers as a direct result of the experience they gained while consulting for CRF.

Here are some recent success stories from our methodology students:

**Nate Carnes,** a methodology consultant in 2016-2017, is beginning a position as Assistant Professor of Quantitative Psychology at California State University, San Marcos in September, 2017. According to Nate, “CRF gave me the opportunity to learn new quantitative skills and teach those skills to others. The knowledge and confidence I gained in the process helped me find a great faculty position, and will continue to help me as a teacher and scholar well into the future.”

**Tina Chen,** who worked as a methodology consultant in 2015-2016, says: “I will be starting a position as a Lecturer at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) in fall 2017. Being a Research Methodology Consultant with CRF allowed me to fully realize my passion for statistics pedagogy at all levels, which also bolstered my job applications. My experience with consulting through CRF was an invaluable asset while I explored and planned my post-degree career trajectory.”

**Dr. Lindsay Demers,** a methodology consultant in 2012-2014, has started a position at The Boston University School of Medicine, Department of Medicine as the Founding Director of the Medical Education Evaluation Core, a methodological hub that assists in the design and evaluation of curricular and educational interventions. She will have responsibility for the development and administration of an educational evaluation core that is responsive to the evolving opportunities in medical education. Lindsay says, “This is definitely a dream position. I feel very fortunate. It is a primary appointment in the school of medicine with a secondary appointment in the school of education.”
TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FAMILY RESEARCHERS

STUDENT FAMILY RESEARCH AWARDS PROGRAM
The CRF Students Research Awards program provides support to undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines to recognize and support outstanding student research on issues related to families. CRF received an unprecedented number of applications this year. Fifteen talented students were selected to receive more than $27,000 in funding for their research in six categories for the 2017-18 academic year. Winners come from a broad range of disciplines and departments. Students were feted at a reception on May 3rd, and they will be recognized at the 2018 annual CRF dinner. Since the Student Research Awards program began in 2010, 113 students have received over $362,000 to conduct research and present their research findings at professional meetings.

GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS
Up to $10,000 for one year
Chaia Flegenheimer, Ph.D. candidate, Neuroscience and Behavior
“Examining Error Processing and the Stereotype Inoculation Model to Lessen Gender Disparities in STEM Fields”
Mentor: Assistant Professor Jennifer McDermott (Psychological and Brain Sciences)

Sarah Lowe, Ph.D. candidate, Community Health Education
“Home, Health, and Solidarity: Digital Storytelling for Refugee Resilience”
Mentor: Associate Professor Aline Gubrium (Health Policy and Promotion)

Haotian Wu, Ph.D. candidate, Environmental Health Sciences
“The Influence of Parental Phthalates on Poor In-Vitro Fertilization Outcomes”
Mentor: Assistant Professor Richard J. Pilsner (Environmental Health Sciences)

Ragini Saira Malhotra, Ph.D. candidate, Sociology
“An Exploration of Migrant Children’s Experiences of Family in Paid and Unpaid Work in India”
Mentor: Professor Joya Misra (Sociology)

UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP
$3,000 for one year
Shirley Plucinski (class of 2018), Psychological and Brain Sciences
“Impact of Midday Naps on Motor Memory in Preschool-aged Children”
Mentor: Associate Professor Rebecca Spencer (Psychological and Brain Sciences)

GRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS
$500 for one year
Rachel Herman, Ph.D. candidate, Psychological and Brain Sciences
“Reducing Depression and Stress among First-time, Low-income Mothers and Their Partners”
Mentor: Professor Maureen Perry-Jenkins (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESIS/CAPSTONE AWARD
$500 to a graduating senior
Durga Kolla (class of 2017), Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
“Developmental Exposure to Xenoestrogens and Their Effects on the Female Mouse Mammary Gland”
Mentor: Assistant Professor Laura Vandenberg (Environmental Health Sciences)

GRADUATE SUMMER METHODOLOGY SCHOLARSHIPS
Laura Patrick, University of Kentucky, MS in Family Sciences
Attending “Analyzing Intensive Longitudinal Data”
Mentor: Professor Nathan Woods (Family Sciences)

Jean Cody, UMass Amherst, Ph.D. candidate, Nursing
Attending “Group-based Trajectory Modeling for the Medical and Social Sciences”
Mentors: Associate Professors Genevieve Chandler and Jeung Choi (Nursing)

GRADUATE TRAVEL AWARDS
Up to $300 in travel costs

Martha Balaguera, Ph.D. candidate, Political Science
“We Are All Migrants: Building Transnational Citizenship from Below in the Globalized Transit Periphery Central America-Mexico-United States”
American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
Mentor: Professor Sonia E. Alvarez (Political Science)

Fiona Ge, Ph.D. candidate, Psychology
“How You Talk about it Matters: Cultural-Fit Hypothesis of Communication in the Context of Romantic Relationships”
Society for Personality and Social Psychology - 18th Annual Meeting, San Antonio, CA
Mentor: Professor Paula Pietromonaco (Psychological and Brain Sciences)

Dana Johnson, Ph.D. candidate, Anthropology
“Why was Everything Better in the Past? Generational Intimacies and Desires of Mobility in Serbia”
American Anthropological Association - 115th Meeting, Minneapolis, MN
Mentor: Professor Julie Hemment (Anthropology)

Adrial Lobelo, Ph.D. candidate, Nursing
“The LIGHT Model and Animal-Assisted Therapy - A Pilot Study with Hispanic Older Adults”
American Psychiatric Nurses Association - 30th Annual Conference, Hartford, CT
Mentor: Associate Professor Genevieve Chandler (Nursing)

Sarah Winokur, Ph.D. candidate, Neuroscience and Behavior
“Altered Monoamines and Associated Metabolites across the Postpartum Period in the Wistar-Kyoto Rat Model of Postpartum Depression”
The Society for Neuroscience Conference, San Diego, CA
Mentor: Assistant Professor Mariana Pereira (Psychological and Brain Sciences)

Albert Lo, Ph.D. candidate, Psychological and Brain Sciences
“Trajectories of Birth Family Contact in Domestically Adopted Individuals Over Time”
Society for Research in Child Development, Austin, TX
Mentor: Professor Harold Grotevant (Psychological and Brain Sciences)
CRF 2016-2017 STUDENT AWARD RECIPIENTS SHARE THEIR RESEARCH

CRF launched a new Student Research Scholars (SRS) program for its student awards recipients this year. The SRS Program mirrors CRF’s Family Research Scholars (FRS) program for faculty, where a group of award recipients meet regularly to discuss their research projects with peers, faculty, and staff. By providing funding, methodology, and mentorship support, CRF enables student scholars to pursue valuable research that could inform policy and practice in a wide range of family related areas.

“The aim of the SRS program is to support graduate and undergraduate students to perform cutting-edge research on families. Through the SRS program, our goal is to create the next generation of scholars who can think in profound interdisciplinary ways to solve the complex problems facing families.”
- Maureen Perry-Jenkins, CRF Director

This following section highlights the research and experiences of several SRS program participants and two of CRF’s seven travel award winners this year. Awardees repeatedly stressed the important role CRF played in furthering their research.

Mahala Stewart, a Ph.D. student in the department of Sociology, was awarded a $10,000 dissertation fellowship. Under the guidance of her advisor, Professor Joya Misra, Mahala’s dissertation provides a new angle for interrogating social inequalities around schooling. She explores how homeschooling families and conventionally schooled families arrive at decisions about how to school their children. Through intensive interviews with white and black, middle-class mothers of children, some of whom home school and other use public schools - her dissertation investigates the role of race in mothers’ schooling logics and compares them across school type.

“The CRF fellowship has been hugely helpful, allowing me to cut back on my teaching which has been instrumental in moving my dissertation forward. I have felt thoroughly
supported by the CRF faculty, staff and other student fellows. I can’t thank you enough for this incredible opportunity.”
- Mahala Stewart

Yolanda Wiggins, a Ph.D. student in the department of Sociology, was awarded a $5,000 pre-dissertation fellowship to continue her work on college experiences of black students and their families. Under the mentorship of Professor Naomi Gerstel, Yolanda used the CRF award to continue her exploration of the experiences of black college students and the ways in which the black family “reaches” into college life. Yolanda’s research will uncover the strategies that black students employ in efforts to maintain family ties while away at college, and the pathways by which they succeed, or not, in degree attainment.

“CRF’s support has allowed me to focus fully on my research over the course of the academic year. In addition to that, CRF introduced me to a network of student scholars whom I may not have met otherwise. Because it can often be isolating to work alone as a graduate student, I appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of CRF.”
- Yolanda Wiggins

Dana Johnson is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Anthropology under the guidance of Professor Julie Hemment. Her research focuses on the cultural meanings of mobility in relation to the highly politicized issue of brain drain from Serbia. Her dissertation examines how the plans and aspirations for mobility of Serbian youth are shaped by intergenerational familial relationships.

As a recipient of a CRF travel award, Dana presented a paper at the 115th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Minneapolis, MN.

“I was able to expand my network to scholars who each approach research on families in a different way, through the lenses of intimacy, generation, and affect, to name a few. Armed with fresh data from the field, I also met and had rewarding exchanges with several other scholars working in Serbia. The panels I attended left me inspired to move forward with my writing, and left me with a sense of renewed commitment to my research goals.”
-Dana Johnson

Fiona Ge is a fifth-year graduate student in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences. Her research broadly focuses on psychosocial factors that contribute to well-functioning, romantic relationship processes. Working with Professor Paula Pietromonaco, her current research examines how culture shapes the way individuals communicate with their romantic partners and the implications for romantic relationship quality. As a recipient of a CRF travel award, Fiona attended the 18th Annual Meeting for the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference in San Antonio, CA.

“With the assistance of the CRF travel award I was also able to meet with my admired researchers in close relationships and emotion; their insights and advice have greatly inspired and motivated me to further pursue my research goals in this area.”
-Fiona Ge
RODRIGO DOMINGUEZ-VILLEGAS

As a Mexican citizen studying in the United States since 2007, Rodrigo Dominguez-Villegas cultivated his interest in international migration research early on during his undergraduate years at Middlebury College. In addition to pursuing a doctoral degree in Sociology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Dominguez-Villegas also works as an independent consultant at the Migration Policy Institute, a nonpartisan think tank in Washington, DC. His graduate school experiences include researching salary equity, teaching statistics, and providing methodology consulting at the Institute for Social Science Research.

As a CRF student research scholar and recipient of a pre-dissertation award, Dominguez-Villegas is working on his dissertation with his advisors Professors Jennifer Lundquist and David Cort. Rodrigo is employing a mixed methods approach to evaluate the differences in reception back to Mexico between families who are deported and those that return voluntarily. Dominguez-Villegas will also examine how varying contexts of reception influence the socioeconomic outcomes of the families.

“Given the current political discourse on immigration and deportation, issues on migration flows in Central America, Mexico and the United States are as timely as ever”, says Dominguez-Villegas who is currently conducting an extensive literature review, finalizing his research design and performing quantitative analyses. He reports that the unprecedented trend of voluntary reverse migration may be influenced by changing domestic policies within the United States and changing socio-economic climate in Mexico. Every migrant’s involuntary or voluntary decision to return to Mexico nonetheless appears to have direct micro-effects on one’s family and indirect macro-effects on local communities and society at large.

Left: Rodrigo Dominguez-Villegas speaks at the 2017 CRF Research Forum and Awards Dinner.
Rodrigo also participated in the new Student Scholars Seminar in the spring and found the feedback from faculty and peers very useful. He says, “CRF’s pre-dissertation fellowship made it possible for me to devote more time on my research. The fellowship also covers my travel expenses to conduct fieldwork in rural Mexico where I will be interviewing 30 to 50 return migrants this summer. CRF’s fellowship has also freed up my time to write an NSF dissertation improvement grant for next year.’

GENNARINA SANTORELLI
Genna Santorelli, a doctoral student in the clinical psychology program, is honored to have her gerontological research supported by the Center for Research on Families. “I never thought of my work as family research until I sat down to write the proposal” she says, but “these are our parents, our grandparents, these are such important family members in our lives.”

Genna’s research focuses on the 10 to 20 percent of Americans age 65 or older experiencing mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a decline in their memory or other cognitive functioning that is not serious enough to significantly interfere with daily life. Declines associated with MCI are noticeable to seniors and to their family and friends. Seniors with MCI may struggle with tasks like abstract reasoning, planning, or keeping track of medications.

Unfortunately, along with MCI come much higher rates of depression, anxiety, and irritability than is typically experienced by healthy seniors. However, the linkages between mild cognitive declines and emotional health have not been thoroughly investigated.

Genna views her award from CRF as a confirmation of the “immensely important role” older adults play in our lives and the challenges many families face as their love ones experience cognitive declines and emotional disturbances. Because of the false assumption that emotional decline is a normal part of aging, seniors and caregivers may be less likely to take steps to prevent and address the issue. By better understanding the mechanisms of negative emotional experiences for adults with MCI, Santorelli’s work will help dispel inaccurate assumptions and inform possible solutions for our aging population.
COLLABORATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

TAY GAVIN ERICKSON LECTURE SERIES 2016-2017

Through the 2016-2017 Tay Gavin Erickson lecture series, CRF hosted six eminent researchers who gave well-attended public lectures and provided in-depth consultation to CRF scholars.

Daniel Lieberman, Ph.D.
Edwin M. Lerner II Professor of Biological Sciences, Department of Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University
Lecture: Is Exercise Medicine? An Evolutionary Medical Perspective
Date: October 6, 2016
Consulted with CRF Scholar Associate Professor Brigitte Holt

Lisa Bowleg, Ph.D.
Professor of Applied Psychology, Department of Psychology, The George Washington University
Lecture: Ain’t I a Woman and I Am a Man: Intersectionality’s Travels from Black Feminist Theory to HIV Prevention and Sexuality Research with Black Men
Date: November 3, 2016
Consulted with CRF Scholar Assistant Professor Louis Graham

Suzanne Fenton, Ph.D.
Group Leader, Reproductive Endocrinology, The National Toxicology Program, National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, NIH
Lecture: Early-Life Chemical Exposures and Female Puberty-Related Outcomes in Animal Models
Date: November 29, 2016
Consulted with CRF Scholar Assistant Professor Laura Vandenberg

Germaine Buck-Louis, Ph.D.
Director and Senior Investigator, Division of Intramural Health Population Health Research, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health
Lecture: Environmental Influences on Human Reproduction: Moving Beyond Individuals to Couples
Date: December 5, 2016
Consulted with CRF Scholar Assistant Professor Rick Pilsner

Jose Blackorby, Ph.D.
Senior Director of Research and Development, CAST Inc.
Date: February 16, 2017
Consulted with CRF Scholar Assistant Professor Ezekiel Kimball

Maureen Black, Ph.D.
John A. Scholl, MD and Mary Louis Scholl, MD Endowed Professor, Department of Pediatrics and Department of Epidemiology; Public Health Chief, Division of Growth & Nutrition, University of Maryland School of Medicine
Lecture: Building Blocks: Promoting Healthy Habits Through Child Care
Date: March 2, 2017
Consulted with CRF Scholar Associate Professor Sofiya Alhassan

“ The visit, consultation and lecture provided exactly the guidance and encouragement to help me with my grant application. ”

- ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES

The Tay Gavin Erickson lecture series allows CRF to simultaneously foster family research while engaging the broader community in public conversations and lectures. The Lecture series brings internationally recognized speakers with expertise in family research to campus each year. The lecture series began in 1999 through an endowment established in memory of Tay Gavin Erickson.
The Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture series brings internationally recognized speakers with expertise in family research to campus each year. The lecture series began in 1999 through an endowment established in memory of Tay Gavin Erickson.

Thursday, February 16 | 4:00 PM
CAMPUS CENTER, ROOM 804-08, UMASS AMHERST

JOSE BLACKORBY, PH.D.
Senior Director of Research and Development
CAST, Inc.

CAST, Inc. is a nonprofit education research and development organization that works to expand learning opportunities for all individuals through Universal Design for Learning.

Thursday, March 2 | 1:00 PM
Room 160 West, Commonwealth Honors College, UMASS AMHERST

MAUREEN BLACK, PH.D.
John A. Scholl, MD and Mary Louise Scholl, MD Endowed Professor
Department of Pediatrics & Department of Epidemiology
Public Health Chief, Division of Growth and Nutrition
University of Maryland School of Medicine

The high prevalence of pediatric obesity is setting children on a trajectory that includes health disparities throughout life. Dr. Black will address the evidence from systems-level interventions conducted among child care centers in promoting healthy habits and preventing obesity among young children.

Thursday, February 16 | 4:00 PM
CAMPUS CENTER, ROOM 804-08, UMASS AMHERST

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING 2017:
A Framework Grows Up

Jose Blackorby, Ph.D.
Senior Director of Research and Development
CAST, Inc.

CAST, Inc. is a nonprofit education research and development organization that works to expand learning opportunities for all individuals through Universal Design for Learning.

Thursday, November 3 | 4:00 PM
Room 160 West, Commonwealth Honors College, UMASS AMHERST

LISA BOWIEF, PH.D.
Director of Program Development
CAST, Inc.

CAST, Inc. is a nonprofit education research and development organization that works to expand learning opportunities for all individuals through Universal Design for Learning.

Unicenter for Research on Families
TAY GAVIN ERICKSON LECTURE SERIES 2017

Is Exercise Medicine?

Thursday, October 6 | 4:00 PM
Commonwealth Honors College, Room 160 East
UMASS Amherst

Daniel Lederman, Ph.D.
Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Biomedical and Behavioral Research, University of Maryland Baltimore County

Environmental Influences on Human Reproduction: Monkeys, May and Individuals to Couples

Monday, December 5 | 4:00 PM
CAMPUS CENTER, ROOM 404-08, UMASS AMHERST

Germaine Buck Louis, Ph.D., M.S.
Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Biomedical and Behavioral Research, University of Maryland Baltimore County

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CRF is committed to creating opportunities for research collaboration and the formation of intellectual communities that bring students and researchers together across traditional boundaries. CRF collaborates with other centers, departments, schools and colleges within UMass Amherst to develop multidisciplinary projects. Faculty from the Five Colleges and other UMass campuses also engage in joint ventures with CRF, which has led to innovative projects and an extended network of research opportunities. Some of the activities include:

- **Supporting** faculty “think tanks”;
- **Bringing together interdisciplinary teams of faculty** with shared interests in issues and topics of importance to families such as stress, work and family, early child development and adolescence;
- **Co-sponsoring public events and lectures** on key family issues;
- **Co-sponsoring faculty events** like “Running a Successful Research Lab: Tales from the Trenches” in partnership with the College of Natural Sciences;
- **Co-sponsoring an event organized by Psychology of Peace and Violence Program** about long-term strategy and movement building in response to the presidential administration.

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (PEP)

The Public Engagement Project supports and trains faculty members from all disciplines to use their research to contribute to social change, inform public policy, and enrich public debate. CRF, in collaboration with ISSR, CPPA, and the Psychology of Peace and Violence Program, spearheaded this program which has resulted in national exposure for faculty in public media outlets such as PBS, the New York Times, the Boston Globe, and the Huffington Post, to name a few.

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**NEGOTIATING FOR LIFE: Personal Fulfillment, Professional Success and the Power of Negotiation**

**SARA LASCHEVER**

Recent efforts to help women negotiate the workplace have focused on negotiation skills to address issues of pay and compensation. The author argues that the power of negotiation is far greater than we recognize. Our ability to negotiate is key to our personal fulfillment and professional success. Women need to develop their negotiation skills and learn to negotiate for what they want, even if it challenges our assumptions about fairness and power in the workplace.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2017, 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM**

**Room 160 East, Commonwealth Honors College**

**UMass Amherst**

**Free and Open to the Public**

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**Adoptive Parenting: Navigating the Calm and Rough Waters**

**JESUS PALACIOS, PH.D.**

Adoption is one of the most effective alternatives for children who have experienced early adversity. It allows for nurturing and socialization in an environment that is free from physical abuse, neglect, and social disadvantage. Despite recent efforts to improve adoption services and increase public awareness, adoption remains a complex and challenging process. This talk will focus on the adoption process, including the legal and social implications of adoption, and will discuss strategies for building successful adoptive families.

**FRIDAY, MAY 19TH, 2017**

**9:00 AM - 11:30 AM**

**Friday, May 19th, 2017 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM**

**Classroom 14**

**UMass Center at Springfield**

**Free and Open to the Public**

The Rudd Adoption Research Program and the Center for Research on Families are closely linked through their overlapping missions and strategies. CRF provides administrative support to the Rudd program, and their close proximity and shared research strengths benefit both programs. The Rudd Adoption Research Program is a leader in producing and disseminating state-of-the-art research on the Psychology of Adoption through conferences, workshops, graduate and postdoctoral training opportunities, and stimulation of research activities. Dr. Harold Grotevant is the Rudd Family Foundation Endowed Chair in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences and leads the Rudd Adoption Research Program.

In May of 2017, the Rudd Adoption Research Program held a Summer Adoption Research Institute (SARI). SARI brought together graduate students and recent Ph.D.'s with a strong interest in developing a career involving adoption research. The Institute provided an opportunity for extended interactions and community-building among the small group of participants and research faculty. Along with Dr. Grotevant, instructors Scott Long, Amanda Baden, Ruth McRoy, Abbie Goldberg, Holly Laws, Kirby Deater-Deckard, Aline Sayer and Jesús Palacios led workshops about conducting research on LGBT adoptive families; the special considerations of ethics in adoption research; culture, race and class in designing and interpreting adoption research; as well as methodological topics such as data organization and management, analyzing couple and family-level data and longitudinal data analysis.

Participants and instructors take part in the 2017 Rudd Summer Adoption Research Institute in May.
STRESS RESEARCH GROUP

Stress is a pervasive theme in the lives of families. The physiology of stress affects both hormone and immune function; if unchecked over time, symptoms associated with stress can contribute to disease. Symptoms associated with stress in individuals can impact the entire family, making the understanding of stress a critical issue for family researchers.

The interdisciplinary Stress Research Group consists of approximately 27 researchers who have been meeting since 2008 to better understand the causes of stress, the effects of stress, and methods of stress measurement. The Stress Research Group has been working across disciplines to integrate techniques, tools, and perspectives to examine how and why stress manifests in the body throughout life, how the manifestation of stress influences relationships and mental health, and how we can address the negative effects of stress to improve health. The Stress Research Group applies a lifespan approach, studying stress beginning at gestation and extending through infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, and to menopause and beyond.

The interdisciplinary group meets bi-monthly to discuss their family-related stress research. The meetings stimulate cross-disciplinary analysis to support members with their research. Family relationships, animal bonding, developmental phases, and neuroscience are important aspects of this cluster’s research. Members of the Stress Research Group have co-authored articles, submitted grant proposals together, and enhanced their productivity and creativity.

FACULTY IN THE STRESS RESEARCH GROUP

**Heather Richardson**, Co-Director of Stress Research Group, Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Lynnette Leidy Sievert**, Co-Director of Stress Research Group, Professor, Anthropology  
**Annaliese Beery**, Associate Professor, Psychology, Smith College  
**Joseph Bergan**, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Jeffrey Blaustein**, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson**, Professor, Epidemiology  
**Matt Davidson**, Lecturer, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Kirby Deater-Deckard**, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Katherine Dixon-Gordon**, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Andrew Farrar**, Research Fellow, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Louis Graham**, Assistant Professor, Health Promotion and Policy  
**Susan Hankinson**, Professor and Chair, Biostatistics and Epidemiology  
**Mary Harrington**, Tippet Professor in the Life Sciences, Psychology, Smith College  
**KC Haydon**, Assistant Professor, Psychology and Education, Mount Holyoke College  
**Karen Kalmakis**, Associate Professor, Nursing  
**Agnès Lacourse**, Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Jerrold Meyer**, Professor Emeritus of Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Jennifer Martin McDermott**, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**David Moorman**, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Melinda Novak**, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Mariana Pereira**, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Maureen Perry-Jenkins**, Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences and CRF Director  
**Paula Pietromonaco**, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Sally Powers**, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences; Associate Dean, College of Natural Sciences  
**Rebecca Ready**, Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Luke Remage-Healey**, Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Lisa Troy**, Assistant Professor, Nutrition  
**Brian Whitcomb**, Associate Professor, Public Health
EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH GROUP

The Early Childhood Research Group is an interdisciplinary working group that consists of researchers who share a mutual interest in early childhood development. Faculty members from a wide range of disciplines meet regularly to share their research and to develop collaborations that can lead to a richer and more nuanced understanding of the complex issues related to early childhood development.

FACULTY IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH GROUP

Meghan Armstrong-Abrami, Assistant Professor & Honors Program Director, Spanish & Portuguese Studies

Luiz Amaral, Assistant Professor, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Ysaaca Axelrod, Assistant Professor, Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies

Brenda Bushouse, Associate Professor, Political Science and Public Policy

Erik Cheries, Assistant Professor and Honors Program Director Psychological and Brain Sciences

Kirby Deater-Deckard, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Claire E. Hamilton, Associate Professor, Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies

Elizabeth Harvey, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Laura Lovett, Associate Professor, History

Magda Oiry, Lecturer, Linguistics, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Joonkoo Park, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Lisa Sanders, Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Rebecca Spencer, Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Sara Whitcomb, Associate Professor, Student Development

Seon Yeong Yu, Assistant Professor, Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies
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BRENDA BUSHOUSE, Political Science and Public Policy
NAOMI GERSTEL, Sociology
HAROLD GROTEVANT, Psychological and Brain Sciences
CLAIRE HAMILTON, Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies
LYNNETTE LEIDY SIEVERT, Anthropology
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KATHLEEN ARCARO, Veterinary and Animal Science
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HILLARY HALPERN, Graduate Assistant in the Work and Family Transition Lab, College of Natural Sciences, Psychological and Brain Sciences
CRF staff, from left: Emily Adelsberger, Anne McSweeney, Stephanie Covelli, Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Angela Russo, Palista Kharel, Gisele Litalien.
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RYAN WELLS, Educational Policy, Research & Administration
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