celebrates
10 years of family research
ANNUAL REPORT 2013
The Center for Research on Families

The Center for Research on Families has over a forty year history at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Begun in the 1970s as the Center for the Family, new life was given to this endeavor in 1996 with a generous endowment by Dorothy Dunklee Gavin ('43) and Joseph Gavin. In 2003, the original Center for the Family expanded into today’s Center for Research on Families (CRF). CRF is currently established as a productive and growing research center within the UMass and 5-college systems and is recognized nationally and internationally as a source of state-of-the-art research on a broad, multidisciplinary range of family issues. CRF is a joint center of the College of Natural Sciences and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Its programs are supported in part by the Edna Skinner and Tay Gavin Erickson endowments, the College of Natural Sciences, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, grants, and alumni and corporate gifts.

The mission of the Center for Research on Families is to

- increase research on family issues at UMass Amherst,
- foster collaboration and build a multidisciplinary community of researchers within UMass who are studying issues of relevance to families,
- provide faculty mentoring to increase successful funding and management of external family research grant awards,
- provide advanced data analytic methods training and consultation,
- support student training in family research,
- disseminate family research findings to a wide variety of audiences including scholars, families, practitioners, and policy-makers, and
- connect national and internationally prominent family researchers with UMass faculty and students.

Research at CRF encompasses disciplines as diverse as the life sciences, social sciences, public health and nursing, education, and natural resources. CRF’s programs provide expertise, support, and mentorship to researchers at all stages of their academic careers. We are committed to investing in each faculty member and student’s research career for the long-term.
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*This report describes CRF activities undertaken from July 2012 through June 2013.
DESIGN: Carla Williamson, Center for Research on Families.
PHOTOGRAPHY: Pablo Robles, Media Compass Photography and John Solem, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
Ten years have passed since the establishment of the Center for Research on Families (CRF) as a center dedicated to advancing the quality and quantity of multidisciplinary family research. Prior to this past decade, the Center was known as the Center for the Family.

During the past 10 years, faculty, staff, students, administration, and donors have rolled up their sleeves, invested their time, energy, intellect, and financial resources into making a vibrant research center that addresses a unique niche in the life of the academy and interdisciplinary science. As a land grant public university, UMass has built this research center with the aim of providing empirically-grounded information to responsibly address current pressing needs of families.

To meet this aim, CRF intentionally set out 10 years ago to advance family research in four ways:

Increase collaborative networks among family researchers. Researchers who address family issues work in separated departments and colleges throughout UMass. The complex problems that face families are often best examined, however, from multiple disciplinary perspectives because the problems can require analysis of intersecting variables at the levels of society, the family unit, and biological processes within family members.

CRF has created a strong network of multidisciplinary collaboration and interchange among its 56 faculty affiliates through 16 departments and 6 colleges. Collaborations among UMass affiliates is built through year-long commitments of each class of CRF Family Research Scholars (see page 7), as well as through multi-year research groups, such as the Stress Research Group (see page 29). Our UMass network is expanded to national and international colleagues through CRF’s Tay Gavin Erikson Lecture Series (see page 45), summer workshops (see pages 33-35), and sponsorship of conferences and other collaborative endeavors with other UMass units (see page 51). Notably, CRF is a center located in both the College of Natural Sciences and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. This dual college support has enabled CRF to fill an extremely rare niche in national centers of family research.

CRF has become a leader in drawing together life scientists with behavioral and social scientists, to address issues that are best understood by coordinated investigations of physiological, psychological, social, and cultural factors.

Increase external funding for family research at UMass. The Family Research Scholars Program (FRS) was created in 2003 to dramatically increase external research grant awards. Through this program, CRF works intensively each year with a competitively-selected group of six faculty to support submissions of major research grant applications. During the past 10 years, FRS has brought in almost $15 million dollars in new funding for family research at UMass. This dramatic increase in funding for family research is a reflection of CRF’s high ‘hit rates’ at NIH and NSF for funded grant applications (see page 8). The benefits of the Family Research Scholars program last far beyond the year of participation in the program, altering grantsmanship skills for the future, increasing overall research productivity, and creating strong networks of faculty-to-faculty mentoring and collaboration across the university.

Provide ‘state of the art’ advanced methodological training for family researchers. The CRF Methodology Program began in Spring 2004 by offering a one-day workshop on the modeling of longitudinal data at no cost to a mostly intra-university audience. Since that time we have expanded to cover more methodological topics (28 workshops, seminars, and conferences), reached national and international audiences (787 participants from 42 states and 12 countries), and become revenue-generating. Over the years we have also trained 12 graduate students to provide in-depth statistical consulting services to faculty and external clients (see pages 33-35).

Mentor a new generation of family researchers. Each year CRF enables outstanding undergraduate students and graduate students to pursue their goals of developing as family researchers through awarding research grants and awards to work under the supervision of UMass faculty affiliates and by involving students in the running of the Center as CRF research assistants. Over the past 10 years, CRF has been able to support the family research of 62 students through our Students Research Grants and Awards Program (see page 39) with grants of over $200,000, and has mentored 24 students who have worked at the Center.

I invite you to explore this annual report to learn more about the work and the achievements of the Center within the past year, and to consider how the Center might include you in the goals of advancing family research at UMass and beyond.

All the best,

Sally Powers
Director, Center for Research on Families
Associate Dean of Faculty Development, College of Natural Sciences
Professor, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience and Behavior Program
CRF continued to offer 5 core programs for faculty across career stages and disciplines: The Family Research Scholars Program (FRS), the Methodology Training and Consultation Program, the Student Research Grants and Awards Program, the Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series, and the Stress Research Group.

Again this year, CRF offered 3 highly successful collaborative programs addressing specific research interests:

- CRF collaborated with the Rudd Adoption Research Program to hold the 5th ‘New Worlds of Adoption’ conference in April 2013.
- CRF continued to play a key role in the Public Engagement Project (PEP) to support and train faculty to use their research in the public realm to contribute to social change and inform public policy. Steering Committee member and former Family Research Scholar, Naomi Gerstel, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, directed CRF’s participation in this collaborative effort.
- CRF continued to support and train new principal investigators (PIs) affiliated with CRF through the “I’m a PI, Now What?!?” program.

CRF collaborated with many other UMass centers, departments, and programs to address a broad range of family-related issues including early education, gambling, women in STEM, diversity, and much more.

CRF faculty scholars submitted 9 new research grants to NSF, NIH, IES, DOD and foundations totaling $6,221,013 in requests.

CRF scholars and the director were awarded 2 new research, mentoring, and collaborative grants totaling $1,679,615.

CRF had 11 active research grants from NSF, NIH, U.S. Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI), American Heart Association and other foundations. The PIs were from the anthropology, psychology, and public health departments.

CRF hosted or co-sponsored 56 renowned experts to visit campus, consult with faculty, and present their research through the Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series, the Rudd Adoption Conference, the Stress Lecture Series, Methodology Workshops and Seminars, and other collaborative forums.

Six faculty participated in the Family Research Scholars program, and many former scholars and affiliates continued to work with the Center on grant submission and scholarly activities.

CRF awarded $37,900 in support to 11 students through the Student Research Grants and Awards Program.

CRF continued to hold a methodological seminar series, advanced statistical and methodological consultation, and training workshops for UMass faculty and students and researchers from 66 other research institutions from 25 states and 3 countries.

CRF awarded $37,900 in support to 11 students through the Student Research Grants and Awards Program.

CRF continued to hold a methodological seminar series, advanced statistical and methodological consultation, and training workshops for UMass faculty and students and researchers from 66 other research institutions from 25 states and 3 countries.
“Working with students in Brain, Cognition and Development Lab”

LISA SCOTT
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology
Fostering Research on Families
Family Research Scholars Program

Since 2003, CRF has offered The Family Research Scholars Program, which provides selected faculty with the time, technical expertise, peer mentorship, and national expert consultation to prepare a large grant proposal for their research support. The program was designed to boost research productivity in the area of family research, and supports a broad spectrum of faculty in the social, natural, and health sciences.

Family Research Scholars participate in a year-long interdisciplinary faculty seminar that includes presentations and discussions of the Scholars’ developing proposals, concrete instruction in grant writing and understanding of granting agencies, strategies for successful proposal submission and 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, and the time and accountability for reaching writing goals. Each year, national experts are chosen and invited to campus to provide individual consultation to each of the scholars on their specific projects and to present a public research lecture as part of the Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series.

These small interdisciplinary research mentoring groups have proven to be highly effective in increasing research productivity. This forum creates an environment for accountability, encouragement, and trust among faculty peers while providing expertise from senior research mentors. Over the past 10 years, participants have developed their research careers and interests, significantly increased funding, formed collegial thematic research groups, and established professional research networks both on and off campus.

As the federal research funding pool has shrunk in past years, the need for faculty to be highly prepared and competitive in grant-writing is critically important. As a result, demand for this unique program at UMass is high and selection is highly competitive—faculty from seven of the nine UMass colleges, as well as faculty from other UMass campuses and Five Colleges have participated in the program.

Facilitators: CRF director and professor of psychology, Sally Powers, associate director, Wendy Varner, associate professor of psychology and director of methodology programs, Aline Sayer, financial manager, David Bosch.

Family Research Scholars 2012-2013

KATHLEEN ARCARO
Department of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, College of Natural Sciences
Project: “Dietary Intervention to Reduce Breast Cancer Risk”

NILANJANA DASGUPTA
Department of Psychology, College of Natural Sciences
Project: The Impact of Same-Sex Peers on Adolescent Girls’ Interest in Science and Math”

HAROLD GROTEVANT
Department of Psychology, College of Natural Sciences
Project: “Adjustment and Relationships: Young Adult Outcomes of Adoption”

KAREN KALMAKIS
School of Nursing
Project: “Exploring the Role of Socio-Environmental and Demographic Influences on the Stress Process”

FAREEN PARVEZ
Department of Sociology, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Project: “Debt, Dowry, and Labor Migration: Reconfiguring Family Life among the Indian Muslim Urban Poor”

JERUSHA NELSON PETERMAN
Department of Nutrition, School of Public Health and Health Sciences
Project: “Predictors and Dietary and Health Consequences of Food Insecurity in Immigrant Families in the U.S.”

6 new scholars were selected for the 2013-2014 class (Elizabeth Harvey, psychology; Agnes Lacreuse, psychology; Joya Misra, sociology; Jonathan Rosa, anthropology; Gwyneth Rost, communication disorders; Lisa Troy, nutrition).
2003-2013: Celebrating 10 Years of Family Research

2013 marked the 10th year of CRF’s Family Research Scholars Program, which was celebrated at the annual Family Research Forum and Awards Dinner. In attendance was Center benefactor Dorothy Dunklee Gavin (’43) and UMass Chancellor Subbaswamy (pictured below) along with deans, faculty, students, alumni and staff.

Ten for Ten – Center for Research on Families hits sweet spot of success

If a tenth anniversary isn’t enough cause for celebration, the UMass Amherst Center for Research on Families (CRF) is also riding high on the wave of its most successful year. Its scholars boast grant acceptance rates well above the national average and its flagship program has yielded upwards of $15 million in external funding—nearly $10 million of which was awarded in 2012 and 2013. That success, explains CRF director Sally Powers, flows from the interdisciplinary network of researchers that convene at the Center—a network that Powers and the team continue to build.

Every year, six new faculty members are selected for the Family Research Scholars Program which provides intensive assistance to put together a major grant proposal. Considering most Family Research Scholars are pre-tenure and submitting a national research grant application for the first time, the success rates, or “hit rates,” for these proposals are “striking”—63 percent for primary National Science Foundation (NSF) applications (over a national average of 22 percent) and 32 percent for primary National Institutes of Health (NIH) applications (over a national average of 18 percent).

“I think that’s our greatest success—keeping our eye on what faculty think would grow their research and trying to meet those needs.” - Director, Sally Powers

Beginning with a generous endowment from alumna Dorothy Dunklee Gavin ’43 (pictured right), the Center was founded to promote research that would illuminate the
family unit. Researchers look at the structure and functioning of families—from both biological and social standpoints—and how the family can impact health, society and the greater environment. Conducting research through this lens allows for a unique kind of collaboration; social science and natural science intersect within the scope of the family. In honor of that convergence, the Center is housed in both the College of Natural Sciences and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The CRF has also expanded to provide support for graduate and undergraduate students interested in family research through the Student Research Grants and Awards Program. Every year, the Center awards merit-based fellowships for students to work on a research project with a faculty mentor. To ensure faculty affiliates have success in reaching the public with their research results, CRF partners with the Center for Public Policy and Administration, the Department of Sociology, and the Psychology of Peace and Violence Program, to offer a series of seminars and workshops devoted to helping researchers more efficiently engage with their communities about their work. This collaboration, called the Public Engagement Project, has been offering programming since 2007.

Neuroscientist Lisa Scott, Psychology, is an example of a Family Research Scholar who was extremely successful with support from the CRF. As a new investigator, Scott was awarded $675,000 from the NSF to study infant perceptual learning and how perceptual experiences can impact brain development. That same year, she also received $2 million from the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences to lead a start-up project entitled “Visual Expertise in the Laboratory in the Real World.”

She regularly attends CRF’s “I’m a PI: Now What?!,” which is a workshop series designed to help new Principal Investigators adjust to their new role. Although CRF is extremely proud of its work in the last ten years, these accomplishments have only fueled the Center’s desire to improve its programs and increase its impact. Powers and the team are proud of the momentum the Center has gained and continue to listen to their scholars in order to learn how to build on the rich strengths of family researchers at UMass.

SPONSORED RESEARCH RESULTS - SINCE 2003

33 proposals have been awarded in the amount of 14.6 million dollars

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2003

56 faculty members have participated in the Scholars program.

Faculty Scholars have come from 6 different schools and colleges and 15 different departments, as well as from Smith College School of Social Work.
1996-2002


“Attention is turning to Edna Skinner’s prime focus - the family. Dorothy Gavin, true to the principles she learned directly from Edna Skinner, gave generously to establish the interdisciplinary Center for the Family.” - CHANCELLOR SCOTT (1996)

2002-03

THE CENTER FOR THE FAMILY TRANSFORMS INTO THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON FAMILIES, EMBRACING ITS MISSION TO CONDUCT SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND LIFE SCIENCES RESEARCH ON ISSUES RELEVANT TO FAMILIES.

2003-04

INAUGURAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM

TAY GAVIN ERICKSON LECTURE SERIES BEGINS HOSTING RENOWNED EXPERTS TO PROVIDE MENTORING, CONSULTATION AS WELL AS PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS.

Family Research Scholars:
- Daniel Anderson, psychology
- David Arnold, psychology
- Paula Pietromonaco, psychology
- Naomi Gerstel, sociology
- Daniel Clawson, sociology
- Erica Scharrer, communication

2004-05

FIRST SUMMER METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP IN COLLABORATION WITH INTERUNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM FOR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH.

Family Research Scholars:
- M. Lee Badgett, economics and public policy
- Sanjiv Gupta, sociology
- Richard Tessler, sociology
- Joya Misra, sociology and public policy
- Lynnette Leidy Saevert, anthropology

2005-06

SUMMER WORKSHOP SERIES BEGINS, SPECIALIZING IN TRAINING IN ADVANCED STATISTICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES.

ANDREW AND VIRGINIA RUDD PROVIDE ENDOWMENT FOR ADOPTION RESEARCH AND RUDD FAMILY FOUNDATION CHAIR.

Family Research Scholars:
- Michele Budig and Jennifer Hicks Lundquist, sociology
- Brenda Bushhouse, political science and public policy
- Nilanjana Dasgupta, psychology
- Maureen Perry-Jenkins, psychology
- Jennifer Foster, nursing

2006-07

CRF HOLDS NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ‘NEW STATISTICAL METHODS FOR ANALYZING FAMILIES AND COUPLES’.

Family Research Scholars:
- Leda Cooks, communication
- Julie Hemment, anthropology
- Jill McCorkel, sociology
- Elizabeth Harvey, psychology
2007-08

Methodology consulting services are launched.
ReniGatons begin in 622 Tobin for expanded meeting and lab space for researchers.

Family Research Scholars:
- Daniel Anderson, psychology
- Nancy Folbre, economics
- Marsha Kline Pruett, Smith College
- Dean Robinson, political science
- Lisa Wexler, public health

2008-09

A two-day symposium on “Women and Work: Choices and Constraints” explores key workplace challenges with 250 researchers, business leaders, and policy makers.

First Rudd conference is held on “New Worlds of Adoption: Growing Up in Complex Families”.

Family Research Scholars:
- DanL Davidon, psychology
- Unja Hayes, psychology
- Krista Harper, anthropology
- Rebecca Ready, psychology
- Lynnette Sievert, anthropology

2009-10

CRF expands to both the college of social and behavioral sciences and college of natural sciences.

Collaborative five college research initiatives begin: Interdisciplinary Stress Research Group and the Care, Work, and Family Policy Network.

Family Research Scholars:
- Miliann Kang, women’s studies
- David Kittredge, natural resources
- Jacquie Kurland, communication disorders
- Linda Tropp, psychology
- Lisa Scott, psychology
- Keniona Rymond-Richmond, sociology
- Linda Tropp, psychology

2010-11

Program for New Principal Investigators of Major Grants is developed in collaboration with Office of Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement.

Stress Research Group launched speaker series on physiological mechanisms of stress as part of Taylor Gavrin Erickson Lecture Series.

Family Research Scholars:
- Yu Kyong Choe, communication disorders
- Lorraine Cordeiro, nutrition
- Heather Richardson, psychology
- Nina Siulc, legal studies
- Rebecca Spencer, psychology

2011-12

Over 1200 faculty, students, researchers, staff and community members participated in CRF’s successful programs.

CRF hosts or co-sponsors 51 renowned experts to visit campus, consult with faculty, and present their research.

Since 2009, The Family Research Scholars Program Model has been replicated in CPPA, SPHSS and ISIR.

Family Research Scholars:
- Kathleen Arcaro, veterinary and animal sciences
- Nihanjana Dasgupta, psychology
- Harold Grotevant, psychology
- Karen Kalmakis, nursing
- Faren Parvez, sociology
- Jerusha Peterman, nutrition

2012-13

At the start of its 10th year, the Family Research Scholars Program yields 15 million in new external funds for UMass Family Research.

Since 2010, CRF has awarded $166,150 in support to 53 students through the student research awards and grants program.

Family Research Scholars Program Model is presented at national conference on higher education.

Family Research Scholars:
- Kathleen Arcaro, veterinary and animal sciences
- Nilanjanad Dasgupta, psychology
- Harold Grotevant, psychology
- Karen Kalmakis, nursing
- Faren Parvez, sociology
- Jerusha Peterman, nutrition

Family Research Scholars:
- Kathleen Arcaro, veterinary and animal sciences
- Nilanjanad Dasgupta, psychology
- Harold Grotevant, psychology
- Karen Kalmakis, nursing
- Faren Parvez, sociology
- Jerusha Peterman, nutrition
Research Publications Resulting from CRF Grants


Anderson*, D.R. & Hanson, K.G. What Researchers have Learned about Toddlers and Television. Zero to Three, 33, 4-10. 2013.


My experience as a CRF scholar was a wonderful way to refine and expand my ongoing scholarly and outreach efforts around children, adolescents, and media. So many families are grappling with media-related decisions in today’s world, that a nuanced understanding of the media’s role in young people’s lives is increasingly necessary. In fact, I am currently developing a book for parents about how to negotiate television, video games, the internet and other media forms in kids’ lives. The network of scholars I met and the information about applying for grants obtained as a CRF scholar have proven invaluable for me over the years.

– Professor, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Research Presentations Resulting from CRF Grants

* CRF faculty; + CRF student


Pietromonaco*, P. R. “Attachment Processes in Dating and Marital Relationships: Implications for Health.” Invited departmental colloquium, Department of Psychology, Rutgers University-Newark, Newark, NJ, December 2012.


Scott*, L.S. “Perceptual Expertise in the Making: The Importance of Subordinate-Level Training.” Invited talk, Universidad de Chile, Santiago Chile, August 2012.


The tremendous support, encouragement and downright good advice I have received from my fellow scholars, faculty and staff at CRF have had a huge impact on my research program. Not only am I writing more grant proposals; I also am writing better grant proposals. Being able to present my ideas and receive critical feedback from an interested audience outside of my research field has helped me hone my grant writing skills and increase my chances of success.

– ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, VETERINARY AND ANIMAL SCIENCES
Scholars’ Research Highlights – 2012-2013

Kathleen Arcaro (FRS ’12-’13, veterinary and animal science) was featured in the blog Motherhood for her research that uses breast milk to look for clues about breast cancer risk. Mothers can donate their breast milk, which will help Arcaro learn how to create personalized breast cancer risk profiles and use DNA to reduce the risk of breast cancer.

Lee Badgett (FRS ’04-’05, economics) was included in The Examiner about the financial benefits that would come to Tasmania if same-sex marriage was legalized there. According to Badgett, Tasmania would gain nearly $100 million in business spending if it was the first state to allow marriage for same-sex couples. She presented this study to Premier Lara Giddings in February.

Lorraine Cordeiro (FRS ’10-’11, nutrition) gave the keynote address for Somerville’s annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration, “Equality Through Access,” on Jan. 21. Cordeiro discussed her research on food insecurity among underrepresented groups in Massachusetts. She spoke about her work with the late Yolanda King, and encouraged the audience to embrace a broader definition of who is considered to be American.

Michelle Budig (FRS ’06-’07, sociology) was awarded a 2012 Article of the Year Award, American Sociological Association Section on the Family. Dr. Budig was also elected as an Executive Officer to the Work-Family Researchers Network (WFRN- formerly the Sloan Network) for 2013-16.

Harold Grotevant (FRS ’12-’13, psychology) was featured as a “Profile in Mentoring” in The Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring. He discussed how the field of adoption has evolved, the overlap between adoption and mentoring, and how the study of mentoring provides a new direction for adoption research.

Krista Harper (FRS ’08-’09, anthropology) and Professor Jacqueline Urla led five Anthropology graduate students to Spain to take part in an international workshop on the theme of “Space, Placemaking, and the Politics of the Local” at the University of Barcelona. Harper also presented her work on “Participatory Visual and Digital Research Methods” to the visual anthropology colloquium of the department of anthropological sciences.

Elizabeth Harvey (FRS ’05-’06, FRS ’13-’14, psychology) recently published a study in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology about the link between early fathering and children’s behavioral problems.

Elizabeth Krause (FRS ’11-’12, anthropology) received a fellowship at the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, NC for 2013-2014.

Jacquie Kurland (FRS ’09-10, communication disorders) was invited to participate on the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Clinical Trial Applications Scientific Review Panel.

Jennifer Lundquist (FRS ’06-’07 sociology) and Joya Misra (FRS ’04-’05, ’13-’14, sociology), in a study published in the January 2013 issue of the journal Fathering, dispelled myths about academic parental leave. They showed that although there are still gender-balance concerns regarding family leave policies, these are due more to issues women face from the childbearing process. Some simple nuancing of policies, such as providing additional time to biological mothers, may provide more balance.

Jerusha Nelson Peterman (FRS ’12-’13, nutrition) and Lorraine Cordeiro (FRS ’10-’11, nutrition) spoke at the 7th Annual - Keys to Ending Homelessness Conference in Lowell. The event entitled Food Security and Healthy Living took place at the University of Massachusetts Inn and Conference Center in Lowell, MA.

Paula Pietromonaco (FRS ’03-04, psychology) was awarded Fellow status in the American Psychological Association, Division 8. Pietromonaco also became a consulting editor for the publication, Emotion, and in October, chaired a symposium on “Close Relationship Processes and Health” at the meeting of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology, Austin, Texas.

Rebecca Spencer (FRS ’10-’11, psychology) was featured in The Examiner for her work on the effects of napping and sleep on toddlers. Spencer says, “Right now, there’s nothing to support teachers who feel that naps can really help young children, there’s no concrete science behind that. But if sleep is going to enhance all these benefits of attending preschool, we need to know it.” A good night’s sleep can boost positive memories, according to a study by Spencer, which has implications for treating post-traumatic stress disorder.

Lisa Wexler (FRS ’07-’08, public health) was invited to be a member of the National Alliance for Suicide Prevention’s American Indian/Alaska Native Suicide Prevention Taskforce, and co-chairs the research subcommittee.

PHOTO: “PEP presentation” LINDA TROPP, Psychology
Lisa Wexler (Family Research Scholar ’07-’08, public health)

As a 2008 Family Research Scholar, Wexler was granted a three year award from the National Science Foundation entitled, “Collaborative Research: IPy: Negotiating Pathways to Adulthood: Social Change and Indigenous Culture in Five Circumpolar Communities.” Her Circumpolar Indigenous Pathways to Adulthood (CIPA) study has significant implications for the field of indigenous suicide prevention and resilience. She focuses on how the rapid and imposed social and economic changes occurring over the last century are shaping everyday youth challenges, and most importantly, looks at how young people are responding to these changes in indigenous communities. Wexler’s study is one of the first of its kind to use international, participatory approaches to understand these challenges and provide insight into how to bolster the necessary community-level factors that can increase indigenous youth wellness.

Wexler’s research draws from intergenerational narratives and indigenous wisdom to illuminate the problem of youth suicide in ways that offer encouraging possibilities for action to individuals, families, and tribal communities. She is also committed to the translation of her research findings to practical applications and has worked directly with tribal communities and organizations to secure support for locally-meaningful service projects. Together, these community-based programs have brought over $5 million into the Alaska Native villages with whom she works. Increasing resources and researching indigenous resilience in Arctic communities is both timely and important as the unprecedented, rapid social change taking place has been strongly associated with poor circumpolar indigenous health outcomes, particularly for young people.

This ambitious study required that Wexler work with researchers from anthropology, psychology, and public health, as well as to collaborate with diverse indigenous communities from different parts of the world. “I had to focus on the details while holding out the vision of what we collaboratively set out to do. I was vigilant about communicating with everyone so they were aware of our progress.” In this process, Wexler learned how to translate ideas across disciplines and education levels, to negotiate shared goals, and to share important decisions. “Balancing community and academic values and priorities was a challenge, but is absolutely critical to furthering this area of youth research”, Wexler stated.

Using the knowledge and the relationships she cultivated in the CIPA project, Wexler took the lead in developing an EArly-concept Grant for Exploratory Research (EAGER) proposal that was subsequently awarded by the National Science Foundation. This collaborative research effort involved youth and adults from five circumpolar communities -- Northwest and Southwest Alaska, Canada, Norway, and Siberia. The Principal Investigators at each site helped youth co-researchers to contextualize their community’s findings about schooling, community and family, and hopes for the future, by producing a short film. These youth-produced videos were then shown in a multi-day, cross-site international meeting to engage other community youth and adults in thinking and talking about the stressors and challenges Arctic indigenous youth face, as well as resources and resilience strategies. This participatory visual approach engaged indigenous youth and other community members in cross-site analysis and collaborative learning, while encouraging horizontal knowledge sharing among academics and circumpolar indigenous community members. The scale of this type of research had not been done previously in Arctic social science. The research, productions, and youth and community insights were presented at the International Inuit Studies Conference in Washington, DC in October 2012.

Wexler believes that working directly with the community to understand key topics, accurately captures the contrasts and continuities of their culture, and provides a context for advocacy and change. Her research has already made a significant impact on the field of indigenous resilience and youth support. By securing funding for both her own research and resources for the communities she studies, Wexler has provided insight into this population which has implications not only for Alaskans but for indigenous youth across the world.
chapTer name

“Alaskan and Siberian community members”

LISA WEXLER, School of Public Health and Health Sciences
“Krause meeting with Dr. Bressan in Prato, Italy”

ELIZABETH KRAUSE, Anthropology
Elizabeth Krause (Family Research Scholar ’11-’12, anthropology)

On the heels of her recent award from the National Science Foundation, Elizabeth Krause, Associate Professor of Anthropology, was also awarded a collaborative research grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation. This two year research project takes place in the Italian Province of Prato, and is entitled, “Tight Knit: Familistic Encounters in a Transnational Fast Fashion Zone”. Krause’s collaborator is anthropologist Massimo Bressan of the IRIS Institute in Prato, Italy.

According to Krause, “The intensely globalized Province of Prato serves as an ethnographic laboratory for investigating the conditions of fast fashion. Here, a historic textile district known for its MADE IN ITALY “brand” has earned the distinction of having Europe’s largest Chinese community. Most of these transnational migrants produce low-cost items for the fast-fashion industry. Historically, the success of the MADE IN ITALY “brand” was attributed to small family firms lauded for their flexibility for meeting work demands. Less celebrated is the long history of an informal economy characterized by family arrangements tied to unwritten contracts, clandestine work, and old-world sensibilities of reciprocity. Many of these longstanding practices persist, yet the status quo has changed. Workers have intensified their ways of being flexible, and the state has deepened its mechanisms of control. Primary targets are transnational family firms and workers”. Krause and Dr. Bressan, will attempt to answer: what family arrangements does this economy require, repel, or generate? How do family members cope with über-flexible lives? And finally, what cultural logics and values emerge from encounters between fast-fashion workers and state institutions? Contributions to anthropology as a result of this research will have implications for economic areas. The innovative approach locates places where fast-fashion workers and state institutions encounter one another and collaboration occurs at multiple levels from data collection to policy making. Graduate students who study family research will be addressing social challenges in transnational encounter zones.

PHOTO: Unraveled, A Weaver’s Tale of Life Gone Modern. Elizabeth L. Krause (Author)
Research Activity – 2012-2013

Grants Submitted
9 grants submitted, totaling $6,221,013

SCHOLARS’ GRANTS SUBMITTED

The Mary Kay Foundation - $99,987
“Dietary Intervention to Reduce Breast Cancer Risk: Monitoring Epigenetic Changes in Breast Epithelium”
Pl: Kathleen Arcaro (environmental toxicology)

U.S. Department of Defense - $527,312
“Epigenetic Markers of Breast Cancer Risk in Human Milk”
Pl: Kathleen Arcaro (environmental toxicology)

National Institute of Nursing Research - NIH - $1,214,886
“Effect of Adverse Childhood Experiences and Axis Dysregulation”
Pl: Karen Kalmakis (nursing)

National Science Foundation - $5,000
“Local Cultures, Global Crises: Women’s Work, Banking and White-Collar Subjectivities in Modern Turkey”
Supplemental Proposal - Research Experience for Graduate Students (REG) Berra Topcu (anthropology) Graduate Student to Pl: Elizabeth L. Krause (anthropology)

National Science Foundation - $5,000
“Deinstitutionalization of Mental Health and Industrial Decline”
Supplemental Proposal - Research Experience for Graduate Students (REG) Mackenzie Jackson (anthropology) Graduate Student to Pl: Elizabeth L. Krause (anthropology)

Charles H. Hood Foundation - $149,743
“Understanding Contributors to Child Refugee Dietary Practices and Weight Gain; Establishing a Model for Promoting Long-term Health”
Pl: Jerusha Nelson Peterman (nutrition)

Spencer Foundation - $495,903
“Adult Workers’ Pursuit of Job Skills and Credentials: Information, Decision-Making, and Educational Re-Entry”
Pl: Ryan Wells (education)

Institute of Education Sciences - $399,738
“Springfield Public Schools - University of Massachusetts Amherst Partnership for Examining Job-Embedded Professional Development”
Pl: Sara Whitcomb (education)

COLLABORATIVE GRANTS SUBMITTED

National Institute of Health – NIH - $3,323,444
“Preventing Perinatal Stress and Depression and Infant Biobehavioral Dysregulation”
PIs: Maureen Perry-Jenkins (psychology), Sally Powers (psychology; Director, CRF).

ACTIVE RESEARCH GRANTS

American Heart Association - National Program - $109,252
“Interdisciplinary Stroke Rehabilitation Delivered by a Humanoid Robot”
Pl: Yu-Kyong Choe (communication disorders)

National Science Foundation - $400,310
“Investigating Underlying Mechanisms and Behavioral Consequences of Emotion Induced Implicit Prejudice”
Pl: Nilanjana Dasgupta (psychology)

National Science Foundation - $164,419
“Chinese Immigration and Family Encounters in Italy”
Pl: Elizabeth L. Krause (anthropology)

Wenner-Gren (ICRG) - $35,000
“Tight Knit: Familistic Encounters in a Transnational Fast Fashion Zone”
Pl: Elizabeth L. Krause (anthropology)
Selected Directors’ Consulting and Related Professional Activities

CONSULTING

National Institutes of Health
“Benefit of Naps on Cognitive, Emotional and Motor Learning in Preschoolers.”
PI: Rebecca Spencer (psychology) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

National Institutes of Health
“Sleep-dependent Memory Processing in Older Adults.”
PI: Rebecca Spencer (psychology) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research
“Adding Motivational Interviewing to Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Severe Generalized Anxiety Disorder.”
PI: Michael Constantino (psychology) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

National Science Foundation
“Evaluating the Developing Mathematical Ideas Professional Development Program: Researching Impact on Teaching and Learning.”
PI: James Hammerman (Technical Education Research Center) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

National Institutes of Health
“Biopsychosocial Factors in Depression and Marriage.”
PI: Paula Pietromonaco (psychology), Co-PI: Sally Powers (psychology, CRF director) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

National Institutes of Health Career Award
“Impact of a Daughter-Mother Afro-Centric Physical Activity Intervention on Activity Level of African-American Girls.”
PI: Sofiya Alhassan (kinesiology) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

Institute of Educational Services
“A Randomized Controlled Trial of Student Success Skills: A Program to Improve Academic Achievement for all Students.”
PI: Jay Carey (education) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)

National Science Foundation
“Peer Matters: When and How Do Peers Influence Young Women’s Participation in STEM.”
PI: Nilanjana Dasgupta (psychology) Consultant: Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)
PRESENTATIONS

Institute for Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, August, 2012.
Workshop on “Longitudinal Analysis Using HLM.”
Presenter: Sayer, A. G.

International Association of Relationship Research, Chicago, IL, July 2012.
“Modeling Longitudinal Convergence in Physiological Attunement in Newlywed Couples.”
Presenters: Laws, H. R., Sayer, A. G.

“Adolescents’ Attachment to Adoptive Parents: Predicting Attachment Styles in Emerging Adulthood.”
Poster: Grant-Marnsey, H., Grotevant, H., Sayer, A. G.

Cincinnati Health Foundation, Cincinnati, OH, January 2013.
“Introduction to Multilevel Models for Health Researchers.”
Presenter: Sayer, A. G.

“Plasma 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels and risk of premenstrual syndrome in a population-based study.”

Mentoring Conference, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, October 2012.
“An interdisciplinary faculty mentoring program for research funding success.”
Poster: Varner, W. & Powers, S. I.

“Consent Process and Special Populations” Workshop on Proposed Revisions to the Common Rule in Relation to the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences, and Education Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences. Invited presenter: Powers, S. I.

European Association for Research on Adolescence (EARA) and the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) Summer School, June 2013.
Senior Scholar: Powers, S. I.

Inter-University Consortium for Social and Political Research, Ann Arbor MI, July 2013.
Workshop in “Advanced Topics in Hierarchical Linear Models.”
Presenter: Sayer, A. G.

PUBLICATIONS


RELATED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Sally Powers (psychology, director, CRF)
STEM Diversity Institute, UMass Founding member
Rudd Adoption Research Program, UMass Advisory Board
Institute for Social Science Research, UMass Governance Committee

Aline Sayer (psychology, director, CRF Methodology Program)
Inter-University Consortium for Social and Political Research, Summer Program in Quantitative Methods Advisory Board
Technical Education Research Center, Developing Mathematical Ideas Evaluation, Advisory Board

PHOTO: Aline Sayer and Sally Powers
The Post-Award Program for New Principal Investigators

In 2010-2012, in collaboration with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, CRF developed and launched a seminar and workshop series for new principal investigators: “I’m a PI: Now What?” The program assists faculty who have received their first major grant to scale up their research operations and understand and access university resources during the first year of their projects. Now in its third year, the program has migrated over to the Research Business Manager Network (RBMNet). The goal is to build upon past successes and establish this methodology as a framework to help interested faculty get off to the right start with managing their specific research awards. The RBMNet will help to provide one on one consultation using this methodology to help formulate management plans best suited for individual PIs and their research goals.

This year, the Center for Research on Families focused its programming on new principal investigators and family researchers affiliated with the center and offered both individual consultation as well as trainings. In October, CRF held “I’m Still a PI: Now What?” in which faculty participants discussed issues of lab management, time management, negotiation skills, and personnel strategies. Continued demand from faculty with funded research projects underscores the need for mentorship and skills training in post-award areas.

Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Professor in the Psychology Department, led the fall workshop, and worked closely with Wendy Varner, CRF Associate Director, and David Bosch CRF Financial Manager of Grants and Revenue to develop the presentation and facilitate the group.

“Our team at CRF laid the groundwork for establishing a sustainable and successful post award program for new investigators on campus. The program was developed in response to faculty requests for help managing the multitude of new responsibilities facing new PIs. In short, it is a program ‘by faculty and for faculty’ to insure the success of research programs.”

— Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Professor, College of Natural Sciences
“CRF Scholars Discussing Health Outcomes”
Past Scholars Collaborate on Ambitious NIH Research Proposal Submitted through CRF

Submitting a multi-million dollar grant with many partners is not for the faint of heart, but with the collaborative leadership of Maureen Perry-Jenkins (FRS ’06-’07, psychology) and CRF Director Sally Powers, and the expertise of CRF staff, they were able to submit a $3.4 million research proposal to NIH with ease (okay... with fewer headaches!). Their proposal, “Preventing Perinatal Stress and Depression and Infant Biobehavioral Dysregulation” was a response to NIH’s call for research to examine the impact of women’s perinatal stress and depression on human fetal and infant nervous system development, and simultaneously address disparities in services for underserved populations.

Dr. Marsha Kline Pruett (FRS ’07-’08) as Co-PI, joined her CRF colleagues to lead the research team from Smith College and intervention. This proposal also includes research collaborators from Williams College and UMass Medical School.

Maternal perinatal depression not only harms mothers, but has far-reaching negative effects on families and children. The proposed research aims to address a pressing public health need to ensure mothers’ well-being and infant development.

MAUREEN PERRY-JENKINS’ research focuses on the ways in which socio-cultural factors such as race, gender, and social class, shape the mental health and family relationships of parents and their children. She is a nationally renowned scholar whose contributions on the national, state, regional, and university levels have had profound impact.

SALLY POWERS’ research focuses on clarifying the effects of family stress on endocrine and behavioral processes that may trigger or exacerbate depression across the life span.

MARSHA KLINE PRUETT is a licensed clinical psychologist and the Macconda Brown O’Connor Professor at Smith College School for Social Work. She is researcher, mediator, and consultant to couples, attorneys, and judges. Dr. Kline Pruett has a national reputation for the development, implementation, and evaluation of preventive interventions in courts and family-focused community agencies.

At CRF, researchers know they can find individualized attention, research advice, technical expertise, and a network of other scholars with common research interests and approaches — the center is a nexus of family researchers on campus.

— ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR WENDY VARNER
“Meyer meeting with members of his research lab”

JERROLD MEYER, Psychology
Stress Research Group

From childhood to old age, stress affects us. Our bodies and minds respond to it with a variety of physiological mechanisms that affect both hormone and immune function. Stress responses are not always healthy; if unchecked over time, they can contribute to disease. The Stress Research Group takes a holistic approach to studying the causes of stress and its effects. The group’s findings about how and why stress manifests in the body throughout life and what to do about it hold the promise of providing a prescription for better health.

The Stress Research Group consists of 16 faculty from UMass and Smith College who study the physiological mechanisms of stress and how stress affects health across the life-span. Family relationships, animal bonding, and developmental phases are important aspects of stress effects examined by this research cluster. The research group is led by Sally Powers, CRF director, and Jeff Blaustein, professor of psychology and director of the Neuroscience and Behavior Program, and meets every other week at CRF.

"Working with this interdisciplinary group has been an incredible experience. Together we focus on the many dimensions of stress from entirely different perspectives, a process that has stimulated so many innovative ideas for research and outreach. We are extremely collaborative and work together on grants and papers. This group has given me so much over these past 3 years. The experiences and academic network will contribute to my research career forever." – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES

FACULTY IN THE STRESS RESEARCH GROUP

Sally Powers, (co-leader) director, Center for Research on Families, professor of psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior Program, associate dean, College of Natural Sciences

Jeff Blaustein, (co-leader) professor of psychology, director, Neuroscience and Behavior Program, Organismic and Evolutionary Biology Program

Annaliese Beery, assistant professor, psychology, Smith College

Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson, associate professor, public health

Matt Davidson, assistant professor, psychology and Neuroscience and Behavior Program

Kristina Deligiannidis, assistant professor, UMass Memorial Hospital M.D.

Sue Hankinson, professor, public health

Mary Harrington, Tippet Professor in Life Sciences, psychology, Smith College

Lynnette Sievert, professor, anthropology

Jerrold Meyer, professor emeritus of psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior Program

Jennifer McDermott, assistant professor, psychology

Melinda Novak, professor and chair, psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior Program, Organismic and Evolutionary Biology Program

Maureen Perry-Jenkins, professor, psychology

Paula Pietromonaco, professor of psychology

Luke Remage-Healey, assistant professor, psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior Program

Heather Richardson, assistant professor, psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior Program

Brian Whitcomb, assistant professor, public health
CRF Stress Research Group Answers the Question: Stressed?

Excerpts from a feature article in UMass Research NEXT (Sep. 2012)

Formed in 2009, the group combines the expertise of interdisciplinary researchers from UMass Amherst and the Five College System to examine the impact of stress on mental and physical health across the life span. According to Sally Powers, professor of psychology, director of CRF, and co-director of the Stress Research Group, the life-span approach is what makes their work unique and its promise of offering new and exciting breakthroughs so strong.

Group members come from all across campus: psychologists (clinical, developmental, and social), neuroendocrinologists, epidemiologists, and anthropologists. They collectively achieve a holistic approach to researching stress effects that no single researcher could match.

“Some researchers,” says Powers, “look at cognitive-function and brain development in early-childhood life events. Some study issues of puberty and adolescence, others focus on postpartum stress, menopause, and aging.” In studying each of these life stages, the group pools its expertise to arrive at answers about how the physiological processes of stress effect development in mental and physical health.

“A distinguishing feature of the group is that we’ve taken the time to develop the common languages we need to work together,” says Powers’s codirector, Jeffrey Blaustein, professor of psychology and director of UMass Amherst’s Neuroscience and Behavior Graduate Program. In a recent Distinguished Faculty Lecture, Blaustein outlined how to use animal results to predict the impact of stress on the human brain and mental health. Neuroscientists have made discoveries of how hormonal and environmental influences on the brain influence depression-like behaviors in rodents. “And,” Blaustein adds, “by working with colleagues in the group who do clinical or epidemiological studies, we’ve come up with ways to test whether any of these are factors in depression in adolescent girls—something I could never have done had I only been talking to folks in my field.”

When the group was first established, its members found themselves working from different methodologies but often having strikingly overlapping interest areas, including many related to women’s health. For example, Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson of the School of Public Health and Health Sciences investigates Vitamin D and its role in women’s health conditions including premenstrual syndrome, depression, and breast cancer. Biological anthropologist Lynnette Leidy Sievert’s research focuses on age at menopause. In a partnership forged within the group, Bertone-Johnson and Sievert are looking at associations between the occurrence of premenstrual symptoms and menopausal symptoms in Mexican women. Bertone-Johnson thinks of the cluster as “a structured but informal and comfortable environment where I can brainstorm with people such as Lynnette who are working on distinct but interrelated questions.”

Because researchers trained in various methods rarely collaborate this way, researchers in different fields sometimes feel like they speak different languages. “At the Stress Research Group,” says Powers, “we recognize that we’re often trying to answer similar questions, and we’ve taken the time over the past three years to develop a fruitful shared language that will lead to more collaborative work.”

Another example of the group’s collaboration: a human study by Sally Powers and Paula Pietromonaco of the psychology department and a rodent study by Blaustein are focused on how physiological mechanisms of stress might lead to depression. As Pietromonaco and Powers jointly work on a longitudinal study of biophysical factors on depression in family members from the first few years of marriage, Blaustein and the other researchers in the group are serving as a sounding board for their work.

What’s next for this dynamic group? They hope to expand the successful “Stress Lecture Series” that brought nationally renowned researchers to campus. They’re also developing the groundwork for a training grant for a specialized, interdisciplinary graduate program centered on stress across the life span. Some members already collaborate; others are turning their new common languages into joint-research proposals. The group also hopes to use the research cluster as a foundation to build faculty to fill out the full scope of the group’s interest.

“The life-span approach is what makes our work unique and its promise of offering new and exciting breakthroughs so strong.” —Sally Powers
Providing Methodology Training and Consultation
Jean-Philippe Laurenceau, Ph.D., Univ. of Delaware, with attendees at CRF's 'New Methods' Conference 2006
Begun in 2005, CRF’s Methodology Program is a resource for consultation and training in advanced statistical and methodological techniques that are relevant to family research. The program continues to be a cornerstone of the Center. CRF’s methodological training programs, workshops and consulting services have translated into publications and grants on research relevant to improving the lives of families and children.

Methodological Workshops and Trainings

For eight years, CRF’s methodology 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. CRF has also collaborated with the University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) to offer additional on-campus summer workshops at UMass. These forums receive high praise from participants, ensuring the continued demand for these offerings.

Workshop presenters release a new book!

Since 2008, Drs. Niall Bolger and J.P. Laurenceau have offered their workshop on modeling diary and dyadic data during CRF’s summer methodology workshop series. This year, their collaborative book, *Intensive longitudinal methods: An introduction to diary and experience sampling research*, was released by Guilford Press. The authors thanked CRF in their acknowledgements: “We are grateful to Aline Sayer at the UMass Amherst Center for Research on Families …for supporting the summer workshops we have given over the past several years. Through these workshops, we refined much of the material in the book.”

CRF 2012 SUMMER METHODOLOGY WORKSHOPS:

NEW ENGLAND WORKSHOP ON SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS  MAY 30 – JUNE 1
Dr. Ryan Acton, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Dr. Andrew Papachristos, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“To many workshops range from tepid to terrible. This one was excellent. As a beginner in SNA, for me this workshop educated, inspired and provoked many ideas. I am eager to delve into SNA in greater depth and do some of my own projects. Thanks”

ANALYZING DEVELOPMENTAL TRAJECTORIES I  June 4-7
Dr. Daniel Nagin, Carnegie-Mellon University
Dr. Bobby Jones, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Health System

“I really enjoyed the workshop. I’ve wanted to learn this for a long time, now I’m full of ideas. It’s been wonderful.”

HIERARCHICAL LINEAR MODELS I  June 13-17
Dr. Aline Sayer, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Dr. Mark Manning, Wayne State University

“The instructor’s ability to translate HLM concepts and equations into “accessible” language is extremely high. Consequently, she’s able to convey a great deal of information in a relatively short period of time. This is especially helpful for students who have had less exposure to HLM.”

MODELING DIARY DATA USING HLM  June 28 - July 1
Dr. Jean-Philippe Laurenceau, University of Delaware
Dr. Niall Bolger, Columbia University

“This is a great workshop; the instructors are very friendly and knowledgeable; and generously share their knowledge and skills with us. It exceeded my expectations to learn about mediation and power analysis. Very useful!”
CRF Methodology Seminar Series

As part of its seminar series on methodological topics, Dr. Scott Long, Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Statistics at Indiana University, presented a lecture on “Drowning in Data? The Workflow of Data Analysis” to a packed room of researchers from across campus in March. His lecture provided strategies for improving the entire process of scientific research, including planning, documenting, and organizing work; creating, labeling, naming, and verifying variables; performing and presenting statistical analyses; preserving work; and (perhaps, most importantly) producing replicable results. He introduced his lecture by saying, “most of our work in statistics classes focuses on estimating and interpreting models. In “real world” research projects, these activities often involve less than 10% of the total work. The lecture is about the other 90% of the work.”

As a follow up to the lecture, CRF convened an intensive working group of faculty and graduate students to address issues of workflow and data management in their own research projects. Dr. Long will continue to advise this group when he returns in June 2013 to teach a week-long course in ‘Workflow’ as part of CRF’s Summer Methodology Workshop series. Dr. Long received the Paul Lazarsfeld Memorial Award for Distinguished Contributions to Sociological Methodology. He has authored eight books on statistics including The Workflow of Data Analysis Using STATA (2009), and contributed many articles to the American Sociological Review and other journals.

As part of CRF’s methodology seminars for researchers, “Graphing Multilevel Models in Excel” was presented by Casey DeBuse, Ph.D. candidate in psychology, to teach methods for accurately graphing models using common office productivity software.

“Thank you again for an amazing course! I told my dean it was the best faculty development course I’ve attended in 20 years. I feel as though I finally have the tools I need to move forward in my own work.”

— WELLESLEY COLLEGE FACULTY

The June 2012 workshop series served 66 researchers from the following institutions:

Auburn University
Boston College
Boston University
Children’s Hospital Boston
Clark University
Duke University
Education Development Center
Emory University
Florida State University
Hampshire College
Harvard University
Humboldt University Berlin
Independent Health
Kansas State University
McGill University
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Mount Holyoke College
New York University
Niagara University
Ohio University
Pennsylvania State University
Rutgers University
Spelman College
Stony Brook University
TERC, Inc
Tufts University
UCLA
University at Buffalo
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
University of Louisville
University of Massachusetts Medical School
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Massachusetts, Boston
University of Miami
University of Minnesota
University of Montana
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
University of New Brunswick
University of New York, Center for Educational Studies & Training
University of North Carolina
University of Pittsburgh
University of Southern California
University of Texas at Austin
University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
University of Utah
University of Vermont
Wellesley College

Thank you again for an amazing course! I told my dean it was the best faculty development course I’ve attended in 20 years. I feel as though I finally have the tools I need to move forward in my own work.

— WELLESLEY COLLEGE FACULTY

CRF ANNUAL REPORT 2013
Methodology Consultation

CRF’s Methodology Consulting Services (MCS) provides study design and statistical analysis to an array of faculty and students from colleges, universities, and organizations.

MCS Provides a Wide Range of Consulting Services in Five Main Technical Areas:

- Power Analysis
- Statistical Analysis
- Software Training
- Study Design
- Grant Proposal & Manuscript Editing

In 2012-2013 CRF’s Methodology Consultation Services provided individual research and data consultation on topics including scale development for positive attributes of adolescents, the effects of exercise on aspects of working memory, adolescent individuation in adoptive families, and psychological well-being. MCS has also expanded to partnerships with other areas of the campus research community, providing services to departments such as Microbiology, Languages Literatures, & Cultures, and the School of Education.

CONSULTING EXPERTISE

Consulting services are provided by a team of faculty, CRF staff, and advanced graduate students. They offer consulting in all stages of research, including: issues in study design, measurement and sampling; power analysis; data analysis, training in the use of software packages; and writing and editing methodology sections of manuscripts and grant proposals. MCS has particular expertise in 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.

Dr. Aline Sayer, director of CRF’s methodology program, oversees the consulting services and provides direct consultation, as well as ongoing supervision of the other members of the team.

Newest Consultant: Heather Lavigne

Heather Lavigne is currently working on her dissertation in the Developmental Science program and her research focuses on how media impacts children’s cognitive development and real-world behavior. She is trained in a variety of statistical techniques including ANOVA/MANOVA, regression, hierarchical linear modeling, structural equation modeling, as well as techniques for dealing with intensive measurement/diary data, missing data, and modeling change over time.

Heather’s past clients have included faculty and graduate students from the UMass community in Journalism, Anthropology, Geosciences, and Political Science. Heather joins a group of faculty, CRF staff, and other advanced graduate students, who make up the team of consultants for CRF’s methodology program.

Thank you so much for helping me with my study design. You put in so much time and effort. I am really glad I had you to consult with and don’t know how I would have gotten through this project without you!

– PH.D. CANDIDATE, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
“CRF TEAM Collaborating” (LEFT TO RIGHT)

CARLA WILLIAMSON-BRITT, Events Coordinator CRF

STEPHANIE CALDWELL, Project Assistant CRF

WENDY VARNER, Associate Director of CRF

KRISTA SOLIE, Research and Project Assistant CRF
Training the Next Generation of Family Researchers
Student Research

Each year CRF grant funding provides support for students to become involved with the research and activities of the Center and its faculty.

Student Research Grants and Awards Program

In its fourth year, the CRF Student Research Grants and Awards Program has continued to support student research, training, and conference travel. This year, $37,900 in funding was awarded to exceptional undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in researching issues related to the family. The program provides opportunities for students to work with UMass faculty on research projects and acknowledges outstanding student research on family issues. Awardees engage with the Center by attending two roundtable events to present their research.

Eleven students were selected to receive one of five grants or awards in Family Research:

The CRF Family Research Graduate Student Fellowship provided $10,000 to each student for one year in order to work with a faculty member on a family research project:

Alix Olson, Ph.D. candidate in Political Science
“Queerlying Permanent Partnership: Rethinking Kinship”
Mentor: Barbara Cruikshank (political science)

Claudia Lugo, Ph.D. candidate in Psychology
“Culture and the Emotion Socialization of Preschoolers”
Mentor: Elizabeth Harvey (psychology)

Samantha Bernecker, Ph.D. candidate in Psychology
“Patient Interpersonal and Cognitive Changes and Their Relation to Outcome in Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Depression”
Mentor: Michael Constantino (psychology)

The CRF Family Research Travel Award is given to graduate students who have written an outstanding paper on issues of family research and will be presenting the paper at a national research conference. The award is used for travel expenses. Recipients were:

Rosanna Breaux, Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology
“The Role of Parent Psychopathology in the Developmental Trajectories of Preschool Children with Behavior Problems”
Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, National Harbor, Maryland
Mentor: Elizabeth Harvey (psychology)

Hillary Hadley, Master’s candidate in Psychology
“Early Infant Experience Influences Perceptual Processing in Childhood”
Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Seattle Washington
Mentor: Lisa Scott (psychology)

Milena Marchesi, Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology
Mentor: Elizabeth Krause (anthropology)

Holly Grant-Marsney, Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology
“Adolescents’ Attachment to Adoptive Parents: Predicting Attachment Styles in Emerging Adulthood” Society for Research and Development, Tampa, Florida
Mentor: Harold Grotevant (psychology)

The CRF Family Research Undergraduate Assistantship Award enables an undergraduate to work with a faculty member on a family research project through a grant of $3,000. Two awards were given to:

Maggie Cunningham, (class of 2013) Psychology
“Children Adopted by Lesbian, Gay, and Heterosexual Parents: How Peer Relationships Influence Children’s Feelings of Self-worth”
Mentor: Rachel Farr (psychology)
Chantal Newkirk, (class of 2014) Sociology
“The Entrepreneurship of Motherhood: How Women’s Family Responsibilities Shape and Are Shaped by their Paid Work”
Mentor: Michelle Budig (sociology)

The CRF Family Research Honors Thesis/Capstone Project Award provides awards to outstanding UMass senior undergraduate students whose honors theses focus on family issues. These awards were given to:

Michelle Hien, (class of 2013) Public Health, Economics, Psychology
“A Little Goes a Long Way: The Effects of Workplace Policies on the Mental Health of Low-Income, Working Mothers During the Transition to Parenthood.”
Mentor: Maureen Perry-Jenkins (psychology)

The CRF Family Research Methodological Studies Grant allows a student or post-doctoral fellow to participate in the CRF summer Methodology Program for no fee and receive $500 travel reimbursement. Grants were awarded to:

Jinni Su, Ph.D. candidate, Human Development and Family Studies, University of North Carolina

“Receiving the award this year meant so much to me! The fifth year of a Clinical Psych program is very stressful - on top of a 24-hour per week clinical practicum, I had to apply for internship and write/defend my dissertation proposal. Receiving the award meant that I did not have to have a 20-hour per week TA position, which would have added a lot more work to my already busy schedule. I’ve been very grateful for this opportunity. I honestly don’t think I would have been able to do any research this year if I did not receive the fellowship.”
- Ph.D. Candidate in Psychology

Student Research Highlights

This past academic year, the CRF 2012-2013 Student Research awardees met each semester to present their research to their peers and share their research experiences. Students talked about the details of their projects, the support from their faculty mentors, and the importance of this learning experience during their time at UMass. Given their different disciplines, the students gave valuable advice about methodological approaches to each other and their projects. The group was facilitated by CRF graduate student, Krista Solie.

Jessica Looze, Ph.D. candidate in Sociology, used her CRF fellowship award to support her collaborative work with her faculty mentor, and dissertation chair, Michelle Budig, on a project examining non-standard work arrangements among non-college youth. Jessica spent the fall semester cleaning the data in preparation for analysis and learning the statistical methods that will be used in this project. In the spring, Jessica and Michelle drafted the first paper that will come out of this project. Jessica also used the support of this fellowship to further her dissertation research, which examines the effects of children on women’s job changes and wage trajectories over time. She successfully defended her dissertation proposal in September 2012 and is working on the analysis and writing up of results. She will be presenting some of the findings of her dissertation at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in August 2013.

Danila Musante, Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology, has been using her CRF fellowship to support her dissertation research, which examines the effects of adolescent individuation in adoptive families on adolescent and young adult adjustment. For the first semester of fellowship funding, Danila successfully proposed her dissertation and is in the midst of conducting data
analyses. Danila has also been grateful for the assistance of CRF’s methodology consultant for help with her data analytic plan for her dissertation work.

Katie Newkirk, Ph.D. student in clinical psychology, used her CRF Fellowship to support collaborative research on maternal mental health with her advisor, Maureen Perry-Jenkins. Katie’s work during her fellowship year included presenting work on the division of labor and postnatal maternal mental health among single, cohabiting, and married mothers at the 2012 National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference. Additionally, her CRF fellowship supported her preparation of two manuscripts to be submitted on the division of childcare and housework and parental well-being among new parents, and furthering her research on interactions between infant temperament and family environment to predict children’s later well-being.

Eiko Strader, Ph.D. candidate in Sociology, used her award to support the progress of both her own research and the collaborative research that she and her mentor Joya Misra conduct. Their article “Family Policies, Employment and Poverty among Partnered and Single Mothers” was published in 2012, and another article “A Cross-National Look at How Welfare States Impact Inequality” was published in Sociology Compass earlier this year. Additionally, she has her own manuscript and another collaborative article under review. They will also be presenting their collaborative work at the annual American Sociological Association meeting. She and her mentor have also begun work on a new project with Donald Tomaskovic-Devey investigating gender and motherhood wage gaps in the U.S. since mid-1970s.

Jooyeoun Suh, Ph.D. candidate in Economics, used her CRF Fellowship to support the part of her dissertation research that examines whether time devoted to primary child care activities can be truly understood to represent the total amount of time devoted to child care (as is implied by the focus on primary care activities that dominates the time-use literature), exploring problems of conventional definitions of child care and utilizations of time-use surveys. During the fellowship year, she successfully defended her dissertation proposal and presented a preliminary analysis of findings at the Annual Economic Association conference.

Marianne Tichovolsky, Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology, used her CRF fellowship to support her dissertation research, which focuses on how fathers’ and children’s symptoms of depression covary over time. Marianne completed her dissertation proposal and successfully defended it to her committee this fall. She is currently learning two new statistical techniques and working on her analyses. The CRF fellowship also allowed Marianne to prepare her Master’s thesis, “Parenting and Parent Predictors of Changes in Child Behavior Problems,” for publication; she has submitted this paper and is now working on an invited revision.
An Interview with Ashley Silvia ('13) & Talia Grossman ('13), recipients of CRF’s Undergraduate Student Research Award in Family Research 2012-13

PHOTO: Talia Grossman and Ashley Silvia.

CRF: What opportunities has your CRF Research Award provided this past year?

ASHLEY: Receiving this award has exposed me to many opportunities that have been invaluable as an undergraduate student. I have been able to gain exponential amounts of first-hand experience in the laboratory and I have had the opportunity to work alongside some of the most caring and helpful mentors, who have guided me throughout the process of conducting research. Early this year, I was able to submit my abstract to the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) and I was selected to give a poster presentation at the annual meeting in April in Washington, DC. This was my first national convention.

TALIA: The assistantship has provided me with the opportunity to carry out research on the linguistic narrative abilities of sibling dyads where one sibling has high-functioning autism and one is neurotypically developing as compared to the linguistic narrative abilities of sibling dyads where both children are neurotypically developing.

CRF: What has been the best or most rewarding part?

ASHLEY: The techniques I have learned throughout my research assistantship have prepared me for future success. It was not until I started looking into graduate school programs and full-time jobs in the science industry, that I realized how much I knew and understood about basic laboratory machines and procedures. I feel confident that I will be able to build on the skills I have learned throughout my research assistantship, no matter where I end up next.

TALIA: The most rewarding part of my assistantship has been collecting language samples from children in their homes. I have worked with children on the autism spectrum, but not interacted with them in the context of their families. It was interesting to see the siblings relationships, and then to analyze the collected data afterwards.

CRF: What has been your experience working with your faculty mentor?

ASHLEY: My faculty mentor, Kathleen Arcaro, has been incredible. I have been able to absorb a lot of valuable information during my time in her research lab. Kathleen is the type of mentor that wants you to succeed and be able to figure things out on your own, and she has definitely allowed me to do that by working on this project. I have learned how to write a proposal, an abstract, and even create a poster. Her style of teaching has allowed me to learn the background of how things work, instead of getting by, only following procedures. The idea is, if you learn how something works, you can appreciate the results and be able to analyze them efficiently.

TALIA: Dr. Andrianopoulos and Dr. Boisvert from the communication disorders department have been beneficial to my research. I have been able to set up meetings with both professors, receive guidance on which questions I should be asking, and even help with recruitment for participants.

CRF: How has CRF helped to support you this year?

ASHLEY: CRF has some truly hardworking individuals who have made my time with them very fulfilling. I enjoyed the lunch meetings that were held periodically where I was able to learn about the different research projects going on at UMass. It was inspiring to hear how the center has dedicated their efforts in trying to make the lives of families better by funding research. They made this year enjoyable and I was able to work on presenting my research to a fresh audience and receive useful feedback.

TALIA: CRF has helped to support me this year in terms of making me realize the importance of research on families from multiple perspectives. This is my first time carrying out my own field research project, and I have felt that CRF has been able to help me answer questions about analyzing data, recruitment, and in general the process of applying for research grants.

CRF: What are your plans for after graduation?

ASHLEY: I have recently accepted an offer to attend Penn State University to pursue a Forensic Science M.S. with a concentration in Biology and DNA. From there, anything could happen—but as of now I would still like to go on to medical school after Penn State so that I can become a medical examiner.

TALIA: I am planning to either enroll in a graduate study program for speech-language pathology or teach English in Taiwan.
Disseminating Research Findings
“Clancy Blair, Ph.D. New York University
Tay Gavin Lecture Spring 2012”
Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series

CRF is committed to bringing cutting-edge research results to the public and the research community by offering lectures to present findings, holding workshops to engage and inspire action, and distributing publications that summarize research results.

The Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series brings nationally recognized speakers with expertise in family research to campus each year. The speakers provide public lectures, highlighting the importance of research on the family and its implications for public policy. Equally important, the presenters of the Tay Gavin Erickson lectures also provide individual consultation and mentorship to CRF Family Research Scholars on their research projects and grant proposals.

"My invited presenter and mentor was indeed the perfect person for the consultation. We had several hours of intensive, uninterrupted conversation, which gave me some new ideas, valuable insights, and very useful feedback to my proposal. She also had helpful feedback about the NIH process and various study sections. It was a very productive visit."

– PROFESSOR, COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES

THE FOLLOWING EXPERTS VISITED CRF IN 2012-2013:

EMILY HO, PH.D.
Endowed Director of the Moore Family Center for Whole Grain Foods, Nutrition and Preventive Health, Associate Professor and Principal Investigator in the Linus Pauling Institute, Oregon State University.

Lecture: "Dietary Histone Deacetylase Inhibitors for Cancer Prevention"
Consulted with Kathleen Arcaro (veterinary and animal sciences).

CHRISTINE A. BACHRACH, PH.D.
Research Professor at the Maryland Population Research Center, University of Maryland, Co-director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Health and Society Scholars Program.

Lecture: “Can Meanings be Modeled? Exploring a Neural Networks Model of Culture”
Consulted with Hal Grotevant (psychology).

JUDITH CROWELL, MD.
Professor and Director of Training, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Stony Brook University, Senior Scientist, Judge Baker Children’s Center, Harvard Medical School

Lecture: "Influences of Childhood Adversity on Health in Midlife: First Findings of a Longitudinal Study”
Consulted with Karen Kalmakis (nursing).

PAUL APOSTOLIDIS, PH.D.
Professor and T. Paul Chair of Political Science at Whitman College, Washington.

Lecture: “Migrant Day Laborers, Neoliberalism, and the Struggle for Time”
Consulted with Angelica Bernal (political science).
Public Engagement Project

The Public Engagement Project (PEP) supports and trains faculty members to use their research to contribute to social change, inform public policy, and enrich public debate. Scholars learn new skills from experts and from each other to improve their communication and engagement with the media, community groups, policymakers, and practitioners. PEP also helps faculty members build their own networks of institutions and individuals who can apply their research findings, and it helps create institutional spaces for communication between academics and non-academics who do applied work in common areas of expertise. PEP is a collaborative initiative of the Center for Research on Families, the Center for Public Policy and Administration, the Department of Sociology and the Psychology of Peace and Violence Program.

2012-2013 Highlights

PEP Workshop – October 2012: “Using Research to Change the World for Families” was led by M.V. Lee Badgett (co-founder PEP; FRS Scholar ’04-05; professor of economics and director of the Center for Public Policy).

Scholars of the family at UMass have generated important knowledge and ideas about the structure, functioning, and challenges of families. Their knowledge is useful and potentially game-changing for policy, service providers, and families. But there is a significant challenge to convincing policymakers, communities, and the general public to pay attention to this work and to act on these research findings.

To address these challenges, CRF held a workshop for family researchers, “Using Research to Change the World for Families,” to teach the strategies for successful engagement with the public, including seeing the big picture, learning to communicate with new audiences, and building a strategic professional network. Badgett used materials from her forthcoming book on How to Use Research to Change the World.

PEP Website Launch – January 2013: The project’s website (www.umass.edu/pep) went live! Connecting ideas with action, the site includes news and events and serves as a resource for faculty and the community.

PEP Workshop – April 2013: “The Engaged Campus: Giving Back to the Commonwealth and Beyond”

PEP held a workshop as part of the 2013 Founders Week celebration about the importance of the University’s involvement in the local, state, and national community. The panel presentations addressed how UMass students and faculty can and do give back to the Commonwealth through service learning, research, and community outreach. Panelists included: Dan Gerber ’95, a professor of public health who chairs the Faculty Senate’s public service and outreach council; Marla Michel, director of both Community Engagement at UMass and the Scibelli Enterprise Center in Springfield; John Reiff, director of the UMass Office of Civic Engagement and Service-Learning; the Honorable Stanley C. Rosenberg ’77, MA State Senator and Majority Leader; and Linda Tropp (FRS Scholar ’09-’10; co-founder of PEP; professor of psychology and director of the Psychology of Peace and Violence Program) Distinguished University Professor of Sociology Naomi Gerstel (FRS Scholar ’03-’04; CRF Steering Committee member) moderated.
Collaborators Highlights

M.V. Lee Badgett (co-founder PEP; FRS ’04–’05, economics) was quoted about the benefits of the recently passed marriage laws in an Associated Press article that was published in media outlets across the country which states that the new gay marriage laws passed by voters in Maine, Maryland and Washington will generate a total of $166 million in new spending in the next three years which means new jobs and a boost for tax revenues. She has co-authored a new report that explains how an executive order by President Obama could help protect LGBT people from workplace discrimination. She says that the Employment Non-Discrimination Act would bring uniform protections to all workers. If passed, the law would require that all Americans be judged in the workplace based on their skills, qualifications, and the quality of their work—not on job-irrelevant characteristics such as their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Amy Schalet (co-founder PEP; sociology) received the Healthy Teen Network’s Carol Mendez Cassell Award for Excellence in Sexuality Education at the group’s annual awards luncheon on Oct. 17 in Minneapolis. Schalet is the author of “Not Under My Roof: Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex.” In the book, Schalet compares attitudes about teen sexuality of parents in the Netherlands and the U.S. Her research shows that Dutch parents have a more open view of teen sexuality than their U.S. counterparts and she notes that teen pregnancy and rates of sexually transmitted diseases are much lower in the Netherlands.

Linda Tropp (co-founder PEP; FRS ’09–’10, psychology) was interviewed for NPR’s Talk of the Nation where she spoke with Eric Deggans and Neal Conan about Eric’s new book on race and media. Tropp studies perceptions of racial differences and discussed communicating about race across group lines and what that means for what Deggans calls “a divided America.” (NPR, 11/1/12). Professor Tropp also commented in a story about why people and groups such as the National Rifle Association keep lists of enemies. She says the lists help solidify a sense of group identity. “When people distrust other groups, they become more vigilant and likely to attend to any potential threats against the group,” Tropp says. (BBC News magazine, 2/13/13)

Naomi Gerstel’s Research Broadens Vision of Work, Family and Inequality

Sociologist Naomi Gerstel’s research has brought to light the issue of gender inequality and how equality is promoted or discouraged through women’s and men’s participation in work and families. As she sees it, “I entered a field with arbitrarily narrow, even myopic, images of woman’s place, of work, of families, and their connections. And I worked throughout my career to change and broaden those images.” Gerstel’s early work examined marriage. Her first book, Commuter Marriage, focuses on couples who live apart to pursue their jobs and, as she emphasizes, to maintain their marriages. More recently, her articles on how marriage limits social ties to relatives, neighbors, and friends have been widely cited in the media. Gerstel seeks to broaden the vision of what constitutes a family to include elderly parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, adult siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews, and classmates. She demonstrates that both race and class shape caregiving and social connections with these relations. Gerstel has also authored a number of articles examining how race and class shape caregiving and the extended family, one of which was awarded the Rosabeth Moss Kanter International Award for best international research on the family.

Gerstel is a two-time Russell Sage Foundation scholar, an appointment offered to a select group of individuals each year to pursue their writing and research at America’s principal foundation devoted exclusively to research in the social sciences. During her most recent time there, she worked with colleague Dan Clawson, sociology, on a forthcoming book explaining the processes that influence the unpredictability of work schedules. Their research shows that work hours—whether shifts, vacations, or sick time—are shaped by inequalities rooted in gender and class. That work began in what Gerstel says was “a wonderfully productive time at the Center for Research on Families” where she and Clawson were Family Research Scholars.

Gerstel’s work clearly has impact beyond academia, addressing the limits and promise of public policies that affect American families. She has spent her career shaping society’s conceptions of work and family, and plans to make the results of her work more publicly available.

Naomi Gerstel is now facilitating CRF’s engagement in the Public Engagement Project (PEP), which trains and supports faculty so that they use their research in the public realm and inform public policy.

Naomi Gerstel’s Research Broadens Vision of Work, Family and Inequality

Article feature from UMass University Relations (Dec. 2012)
Expanding an Interdisciplinary Network of Colleagues
Internalized Racism: Australia

Study of 312 Indigenous volunteers in Darwin, Australia. Internalized racism measured by 4 item scale:

1. Not feeling good about being Indigenous
2. Wanting Indigenous people to think and act more like other Australians
3. Disagreeing that Indigenous people have fewer opportunities than other Australians
4. Reporting not being accepted by other Indigenous people

- One third had high levels of internalized racism

Paradies & Cunningham. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 2009
Collaborations

CRF fosters a climate where collaboration is a priority. The Center is interested in galvanizing family research activities across campus by collaborating with other centers, departments, schools and colleges and bringing awareness to multidisciplinary projects that are happening. Faculty from many colleges within UMass Amherst, as well as with the Five Colleges and other UMass campuses, engage with CRF, which has led to innovative projects and an extended network of research opportunities.

Highlights

- In October, CRF co-sponsored a visiting consultant, Dr. Laura Kramer (former NSF ADVANCE program officer and grant consultant) to meet with faculty about issues facing women in science and discuss best practices for universities. Other sponsors were the College of Natural Sciences, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Office of Faculty Development.

- CRF and the UMass Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) work together to coordinate several complimentary activities, including mentoring programs to support faculty research and methodology training workshops. Sally Powers (CRF director) serves on the ISSR steering committee.

- Several CRF affiliates were part of a working-group of faculty from across campus, led by David Buchanan (public health), who are interested in the effects of gambling on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These researchers developed a successful response to an anticipated call for proposals from the new Gambling Commission of Massachusetts.

- Dr. Judith Duncan, Ph.D. from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, presented “From Diversity and Difference to Standardization and Conformity: A Critique of New Zealand’s Early Childhood Experiment with Neoliberal Politics” in October. Her visit was co-sponsored by CRF, the Center for Public Policy and Administration, the UMA Department of Political Science, and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Dr. Brenda Bushouse (FRS ’05-’06; CRF Steering Committee; political science and public policy), whose research focuses on policies regarding early childhood education, hosted her visit.

- In March, David R. Williams, Ph.D. came to campus for a full day to meet with students and faculty and also give a public presentation on “Racism and Health: Findings, Questions and Directions.” Dr. Williams is the Florence Sprague Norman and Laura Smart Norman Professor of Public Health at Harvard School of Public Health and Professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard University.

"Racism and Health" - David Williams Ph.D.

Dr. Williams is internationally recognized as a leading social scientist, enhancing the understanding of the complex ways in which race, racial discrimination, socioeconomic status and religious involvement can affect physical and mental health. Over 150 university students, staff and faculty, as well as many community members attended his informative talk and 48 faculty and students met with him throughout the day. His visit was coordinated and co-sponsored by the UMass Center for Research on Families’ Tay Gavin Erickson Lecture Series, and the 2012-13 Clinical Psychology Diversity Speaker Series (awarded a 2012 APA CEMRRAT Implementation Grants Fund (IGF) for Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention and Training in Psychology), the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Psychology Department Research Mentoring Group Speaker Series, which is supported by the UMass Amherst Center for Teaching & Faculty Development’s Mutual Mentoring Initiative, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Department of Public Health in the School of Public Health and Health Sciences and the Western MA Public Health Training Center.
"Adoption Conference 2013 Foster Care Panel"
Since its inception, The Rudd Adoption Research Program and the Center for Research on Families have been closely linked through their missions. This collaboration and focus on today’s changing families has afforded opportunities that are unique to UMass Amherst: a synergy yielding programs and research that facilitate positive change in the social policies and clinical practices affecting families.

The goal of Rudd Adoption Research Program is to establish UMass Amherst as the leader in state-of-the-art research on the psychology of adoption through conferences, workshops, graduate and postdoctoral training opportunities, and stimulation of research activities. Program activities provide research-based information to influence policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

Once again this April, the Rudd Adoption Research Program in partnership with the CRF, held its fifth annual conference on new perspectives on adoption, with panel presentations by internationally recognized scholars. Experts in the field of adoption, as well as practitioners and families, came together to explore the theme of “Contact between Adoptive and Birth Parents: What Works.” Over 200 people attended the two day forum, which offered workshops and lectures by over 40 presenters from across the country and England, Spain, Canada, and Korea. Discussions included contact issues in domestic infant, child welfare and international adoptions, legal and other issues relating to contact between adoptive and birth parents and the role of social media in searching for birth parents, and other topics. First-hand accounts of young adults, adoptive parents and birth parents involved in contact were also presented.

PHOTO: Virgina Rudd, Andrew Rudd and Hal Grotevant celebrating 5 years of the Rudd Adoption Conference.
(LEFT TO RIGHT)

DAVID BOSCH, Grants and Research Financial Manager CRF

JEFF WINER, Graduate Research Assistant CRF
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ALINE SAYER – Director of CRF Methodology Program, Associate Professor of Psychology
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LISA TROY, Nutrition
RYAN WELLS, Education
LISA WEXLER, Community Health Education
BRIAN WHITCOMB, Public Health
SARA WHITCOMB, Education
The People Involved

CRF’s History over Ten Years of Family Research Success

In 2002-2003, Director Maureen Perry-Jenkins, working with a dedicated faculty steering committee of eminent UMass Amherst family researchers, guided the development of a new vision of the Center for the Family, which would be wholly dedicated to promoting research on issues of importance to families. At the end of that intensive year Perry-Jenkins stepped down to direct her own NIH-funded research program, and I was fortunate to be able to step in as CRF’s director at this exciting juncture in the Center’s development. It has been my privilege since 2003 to witness a unified team of faculty, staff, students, administration, and donors build this highly productive research center. By 2004-2005, Wendy Varner became the first staff member of CRF, later becoming Associate Director and taking major responsibility in all aspects of the growth of the Center. Aline Sayer joined CRF as Director of the Methodology Program in 2005-2006, creating an internationally known program of methodological training. After the first few years, the Center has relied on the talent and dedication of a team of extraordinary staff: Stephanie Covelli, Carla Williamson, and David Bosch, and many graduate and undergraduate assistants.

As with all successful multidisciplinary endeavors, insightful investment from UMass administration has been crucial. Beginning with Dean Janet Rifkin, and now with primary leadership from Deans Feldman and Goodwin and Vice Chancellor for Research Malone, the Center has been able to successfully magnify the impact of gifts from generous donors and funding awards from national research agencies and foundations. This 10-year point in CRF’s history is a natural occasion to review the Center’s progress toward its mission of advancing family research, and to encourage others to become a part of shaping the future of the Center.

- Sally Powers

PHOTO: CRF office construction in Tobin Hall