Stefan Goetz, a CDS student, has received an Owen Aldis Scholarship from the International Society for Human Ethology for his proposed study, "An Ethological Study of the Formation of Dominance and Deference in a Novel Competition." The award comes with $8,000 for research expenses plus air fare and other expenses for the next meeting of the Society, in this case in Athens.

Two graduate students in clinical psychology were recently awarded APA Dissertation Awards ($1,000 grants to support their dissertations). These two students, with their advisors and dissertation titles, are:

Leia Vos DeMaagd (advisor: Doug Whitman): "Cognitive style, laterality, and executive function"

Maisa Ziadni (advisor: Mark Lumley): "Stress and health interview for primary care patients with medically unexplained symptoms: A randomized trial"

Congratulations, Leia and Maisa!

Michael Williams is first author on the paper that was featured on the American Psychological Association (APA) Journals Facebook, Google+, and Twitter accounts. Another interesting twist is that Michael drafted the results of the paper as part of a project in the department of psychology’s advanced statistics course.


Clinical psychology doctoral students Jennifer Carty and Maisa Ziadni get funding to study a life-stress assessment for patients with chronic pelvic pain and unexplained medical symptoms

Can a novel, life-stress interview improve mind-body awareness and physical symptoms in chronically ill patients? Research being conducted by doctoral students and faculty in the Psychology Department at Wayne State hopes to answer this question. Medically unexplained pain and other symptoms conditions, such as chronic pelvic pain, headaches, fibromyalgia, and irritable bowel syndrome, are common but
costly and disabling ailments frequently treated in primary and tertiary care medical settings. Individuals with these illnesses not only experience symptoms such as pain, discomfort, and impaired physical functioning, but also are more likely to have experienced trauma, abuse, or victimization, or have emotional conflicts related to difficult relationships. Research has shown that unresolved stress or emotional conflicts can trigger or worsen pain and other physical symptoms, but assessment of the presence and role of psychological stress is rarely done in health care settings, where the focus is on medication, physical therapy, or referring patients out to mental health providers. When mental health is assessed in the medical clinic, it is typically done using brief screening questionnaires for depression and anxiety, which does not provide a holistic view of stress, emotions, and health; nor does it motivate patients to change or relieve their symptoms. Jennifer Carty and Maisa Ziadni, who are both pursuing doctoral degrees in Clinical Psychology, have each been awarded $3,000 grants from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation to investigate the feasibility, acceptability, and effectiveness of a novel life-stress interview given to patients in the medical clinic. The goal of the life-stress interview is to provide patients with a greater awareness of their health and symptoms throughout their life, the role that stress has played in their symptoms, and the value of addressing that stress psychologically. Both studies will be randomized clinical trials of about 100 patients each. Jennifer will be conducting her dissertation research with women with chronic pelvic pain at the Women’s Urology Center at Beaumont Hospital, and Maisa will be conducting her dissertation with patients with medically unexplained symptoms at the WSU Family Medicine Center at Crittenton Hospital. Both students are mentored by Mark Lumley, Professor and Director of Clinical Psychology Doctoral Training of the Psychology Department, in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Annalise Rahman-Filipiak a clinical psychology Ph.D. student, is this year's winner in the Olson Paper Competition at the Institute for Gerontology. Annalise was chosen for her paper entitled "Octogenarian and Centenarian Performance on the Fuld Object Memory Evaluation." The Judges described her paper as "very well written" and "thorough". Congratulations Annalise!

The following undergraduates from the Department of Psychology have been selected as members in course to receive an invitation to join Phi Beta Kappa: Monica Thipparthi, Carol Noronha, Xiaofan Mi, Kendall Belsky, Analena Iacobelli, Rita Samaan, Nisha Kuruvadi, Megan Kucemba, David Kata, Tincy Oommen, Angy Hanna, and Lubna Ayoubi

Phi Beta Kappa is the nation's oldest academic honor society (founded December 5, 1776); it celebrates and advocates excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. It is a highly selective honor: Only 10% of universities are awarded a Phi Beta Kappa chapter and no school may elect more than 10% of a graduating class. About one college senior out of 100 nationwide will be invited to join Phi Beta Kappa each year.

The honor of becoming a member in course reflects the students' considerable dedication and accomplishments and also those of the educational environment that facilitated the students' development.