

Department of Psychology

Monthly Newsletter

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES FOUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS



Herleesha Anderson has joined our staff as a part-time Student Services Intern. She is a 2006 graduate of UNC-CH with a BA in Communication Studies/African American Studies, and she recently earned her M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration from Georgia Southern University. Herleesha reports to Janice Kang and her primary role is to learn and support the student services function in the department. She will also support graduate admissions, working with the Program Coordinators. Her office is located in Davie 236. Welcome to the Department!



Karen Fincher, Accounting Tech, has almost 20 years' accounting experience in both private industry and city government positions. She spent almost 14 years in the Finance Department for the city of Rancho Cucamonga, CA. Most recently, Karen has served as a temporary Accounting Technician at the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. Karen joined our department on December 5th. Welcome Karen!



Linda Parson, Accounting Tech, joined us on December 12th. Linda was an Accounting Tech with TEACHH for many years before the program merged with other related programs in the Medical School, resulting in staff reductions. The Department welcomes Linda!



Mollie Throneburg joined us on December 19th as the Program Coordinator for Developmental and Instructional Programs. Mollie earned a BA in American Studies from UNC-CH in 2009, and she has been working in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Carolina for about a year and a half. Mollie also worked in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions for almost three years as an undergraduate. Welcome to the Department of Psychology, Mollie!

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Upcoming Dates:

Classes Begin	Jan. 9
MLK Holiday	Jan. 16
Interview Day	Feb. 17

NEW FACULTY



LILLY SHANAHAN joined the Department of Psychology as an Assistant Professor in the Developmental Program on January 1, 2012. She received her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies at the Pennsylvania State University, and completed post-doctoral work at the Center for Developmental Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Center for Developmental Epidemiology at Duke University. Prior to joining the Department, Lilly was an Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Dr. Shanahan's research focuses on integrating models of psychosocial and biological risk factors in the development of depression and anxiety from childhood to young adulthood. She is currently Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator of two NIMH-funded projects on the development of psychopathology during adolescence. Welcome to the Department, Lilly!

**HAPPY
NEW YEAR**

Available online at

[https://
psychology.unc.edu/news-
events/newsletters/
monthly-newsletter](https://psychology.unc.edu/news-events/newsletters/monthly-newsletter)

**Edited by:
Jennifer Workman**

Please send all
submissions to:

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Research Opportunities

For Faculty:

NIH:

Health Services Research on the Prevention and Treatment of Drug and Alcohol Use

[PA-08-263](#) (R01)

[PA-09-022](#) (R03)

[PA-07-310](#) (R21)

National Institute on Drug Abuse

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Application Receipt Date: February 5 and February 16, 2012

Drug Abuse Prevention Intervention Research (R01)

[PA-11-311](#) (R01)

[PA-11-313](#) (R03)

[PA-11-312](#) (R21)

National Institute on Drug Abuse

Application Receipt Date: February 5 and February 16, 2012

Women and Sex/Gender Differences in Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Dependence

[PA-11-047](#) (R01)

[PA-11-049](#) (R03)

[PA11-048](#) (R21)

National Institute on Drug Abuse

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Application Receipt Date: February 5 and February 16, 2012

Senior Scientist Research and Mentorship Award (K05)

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

National Institute on Drug Abuse

[PA-09-076](#)

Application Receipt Date: February 12, 2012

NCI Mentored Research Scientist Development Award to Promote Diversity (K01)

National Cancer Institute

[PA-09-052](#)

Application Receipt Date: February 12, 2012

Neural Processes Underlying Sex Differences Related to Risk and Resilience for Mental Illness

[RFA-MH-13-020](#) (R01)

[RFA-MH-13-021](#) (R21)

National Institute of Mental Health

Office of Research on Women's Health

Application Due Date: March 13 and March 14, 2012

NSF:

Smart Health and Wellbeing (SHB)

[12-512](#)

Application Receipt Date: February 6, 2012

For Graduate Students:

2012 Jack Kent Cooke Foundation *Dissertation Fellowship*

[link to guidelines](#)

Application Receipt Date: February 3, 2012

U.S. Census Bureau *Dissertation Fellowship Program*

[link to guidelines](#)

Application Receipt Date: February 28, 2012



NRI scientist, Dr. Carol Cheatham, featured in international public education campaign.

[full press release below]

Carol Cheatham, Ph.D., developmental cognitive neuroscientist with the UNC Nutrition Research Institute (NRI), was recently invited to appear as featured speaker with an international public education campaign. The campaign, sponsored by Abbott Nutrition, makers of Similac infant formula, was designed to establish greater awareness of proper nutrition for pregnant women in Vietnam and Singapore. In her role at the NRI, Cheatham studies the effects of nutrition on memory and attention from prenatal months to preschool years, making her the ideal resource to share the science behind prenatal diet recommendations in this campaign.



Carol Cheatham, Ph.D. recently appeared as featured speaker with an international public education campaign, designed to establish greater awareness of proper nutrition for pregnant women in Vietnam and Singapore.

Cheatham was warmly received as featured presenter in a lecture tour, which was a primary part of the broader, multi-national education campaign, with the ultimate goal of enhancing infant and child health levels in these countries.

On the tour, Dr. Cheatham addressed health professionals, including OB/GYN Physicians in Singapore and midwives in Vietnam, the primary healthcare support during pregnancy and delivery in that nation. To help cascade the message even further to the public, Dr. Cheatham and the other lecturers spoke directly to the media in Vietnam, encouraging increased communication throughout the nation about nutrition.

The speaker panel featured Dr. Cheatham as the leading science resource, providing the technical research behind the panel's common message of maternal nutrition. She shared the stage with other prominent health experts, including leaders in medicine and government, who corroborated her emphasis on the importance of a mother's prenatal nutrition. Other panel speakers included a highly recognized Vietnamese government official, the General Secretary of the National Institute of Nutrition, Dr. Tu Gnu, M.D., Ph.D., and a prominent Vietnamese Director of Ho Chi Minh City Nutrition Center, Dr. Do Thi Ngoc Diep.

In her presentation, "Maternal Nutrition and Cognition of Infants and Toddlers," Dr. Cheatham spoke about the importance of certain necessary nutrients, the risks of deficiencies, and how to obtain the nutrients through proper diet. Much of this information was new to many in her audience because the importance of women's nutrition to the development of their children is still new for many people around the world. Through Cheatham's lecture, the audience learned that during the prenatal months and first two years of life, any nutritional deficiencies will have an enormous effect on the developing brain.

"The women of Vietnam, Singapore, and many other countries need to more fully understand the importance of proper nutrition -- it is critical to their child's brain development," states Cheatham. "The education gap on maternal diet presents quite a learning opportunity in these areas, thus the need for this education campaign. With our new information around proper diet, they are learning

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the foods that provide the essential nutrients. The people of these nations, both professionals and the public, both urban and rural, will benefit greatly from awareness of this issue."

Dr. Cheatham's research pivots on her findings that proper nutrition among pregnant mothers is critical to the brain development of the fetus and the subsequent cognitive development of the infant. To explain the applicability of this research to her audience, Cheatham elaborated on the importance of certain nutrients, such as folate, iron, and iodine in a pregnant woman's diet, and food sources of these nutrients. For example, seaweed and other sea vegetables readily available in Southeast Asia were promoted in order to ensure appropriate levels of iodine intake among these populations, since pregnant women are often counseled to avoid salt, a major source of iodine, as a way to prevent prenatal complications such as high blood pressure. "This recommendation was essential to share because iodine deficiency is still the #1 cause of mental retardation worldwide. By raising awareness about the importance of prenatal nutrition, we can directly and positively impact their national health statistics," explained Dr. Cheatham.

Cheatham had the added challenge of developing her presentation content with local cultural beliefs and practices in mind. For instance, pregnant women of these areas often do not eat with their baby's brain development as a consideration. Instead, their pregnancy goal commonly is lighter newborn birth weight, since the mothers typically have relatively petite frames and want to decrease the risk of birthing complications and obstetric issues, especially in the rural areas where healthcare may not be readily accessible. This common practice of limited caloric intake during pregnancy, while an accepted part of their culture, will have a negative impact on fetus brain development. Therefore, one challenge for the education campaign is to encourage proper nutrients through a healthy prenatal diet, while also respecting cultural beliefs and fears around the birthing process.

By hearing Cheatham's proven research results on brain development and links to diet, her audience of government health officials, clinicians, and the public can make fact-based diet decisions, resulting in enhanced health levels for children of these countries.

Fortunately, Cheatham's influence will not end with the lecture attendees. As part of this education campaign, Cheatham will participate in upcoming live webinars, making her research findings accessible to people in less urban areas of the country who could not attend the lectures in person. "The research we're doing is significant on a global scale," Dr. Cheatham elaborates. "There are still millions of people that could benefit from our research. Communication is key." Through these live online forums, her message will have extended impact to an even larger scope of audience, helping to educate a broader range of mothers.

Steven Zeisel, M.D., Ph.D., and Director of the NRI shares, "This was a valuable opportunity for the NRI to communicate our message, research, and knowledge with a population that is not yet educated in prenatal diet. Dr. Cheatham provided insight and influence to those who desperately need it. And through her partnership with the Asian governments and health professionals, she has gained valuable international exposure for the NRI, helping to further establish our credibility and solidify the NRI's global reputation as the leader in nutrition science."

By influencing the nutrition recommendations of health professionals, and personal diet decisions of the public, Dr. Cheatham's lecture is one more example of how the NRI contributes to the health of future generations.

To learn more about NRI, visit www.uncnri.org

Upcoming Talks

January 9, 2012

Monica W. Hooper, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*, Department of Psychology
University of Miami
Title: TBA
11:00AM
Davie Hall, room 310

Kristen Lindquist, *Postdoctoral Fellow*, Mind, Brain, Behavior Initiative
Harvard University
Title: "What are emotions and where are they in the brain?"
4:00-5:30PM
Davie Hall, room 310

January 11, 2012

Kurt Gray, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*, Department of Psychology
University of Maryland, College Park
Title: "Mind Perception and Morality"
3:30-5:00PM
Davie Hall, room 261

January 19, 2012

Stacey Daughters, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor, Director*, Stress, Health and Addiction Research Program (SHARP), Department of Behavioral & Community Health, School of Public Health
University of Maryland
Title: TBA
11:30AM
Davie Hall, room 261

January 23, 2012

Vivian Zayas, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*, Department of Psychology
Cornell University
Title: TBA
4:00-5:30PM
Davie Hall, room 310

January 26, 2012

Derek Hopko, Ph.D., *Associate Professor*, Clinical Psychology
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Title: TBA
11:00AM
Davie Hall, room 261

January 30, 2012

Paschal Sheeran, Ph.D., *Professor*, Department of Psychology
University of Sheffield
Title: TBA
4:00-5:30PM
Davie Hall, room 310