

FEATURE ARTICLE

Getting out of the silo: Advancing school psychology science, practice and policy through interdisciplinary collaboration

Interdisciplinary collaboration and working in teams are critically important for promoting our science. We have much to learn from other scholars; likewise, we have much to share.

By Linda A. Reddy, PhD



As president, it is a tremendous honor and pleasure to serve Div. 16 during 2014. I am strongly committed to continue the important initiatives set by Shane Jimerson and Vincent Alfonso and build on the many accomplishments of my predecessors (e.g., Elaine Clark, Jean Baker, Cecil Reynolds, Gary Stoner, Frank Worrell, Tammy Hughes, Bonnie Nastasi, Karen Stoiber). The past presidents (over 50) have served the division tirelessly and with great distinction. I would like to thank the Executive Committee for their tremendous support. Special thanks to Shane Jimerson (2012) and Vincent Alfonso (2013) for their guidance in preparing me for this year.

My goals for Div. 16 are to advance science, practice and policy through: (1) active interdisciplinary collaborations, (2) partnerships with other APA divisions, (3) membership involvement, (4) dissemination and work group efforts and (5) strategic involvement in APA Governance.

Active Interdisciplinary Collaboration

I strongly believe that interdisciplinary collaboration and working in teams are critically important for promoting our science, practice and policy for children, families and school communities worldwide. We have much to learn from other scholars and practitioners from fields such as education, special education, statistics, measurement, clinical and counseling psychology, medicine, nursing, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, computer and engineering technology and anthropology. Likewise, we have much to share with other fields that can help generate innovations in assessments and interventions. Through interdisciplinary collaborations others' learn about school psychology and develop a deeper understanding of our science and practice. It is important to recognize that school psychology science is disseminated in school psychology and non-school psychology journals. For example, our scholarship can be seen in neuropsychology, medicine, special education, measurement, assessment, developmental, speech and language, and child clinical journals. The value of interdisciplinary collaboration can be seen in many APA task forces such as:

Zero Tolerance Task Force Violence Directed Against K-12 Teachers Task Force

Healthy Development: Summit II

These task forces included Div. 16 members and resulted in congressional briefings and on-going communications with key policy makers today. In 2014, Div. 16 (led by Kris Vargas) and Div. 44 (Society for the Psychological Studies of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues) were awarded a CODAPAR grant (*Improving School Climate for LGBT Youth: Resources and Interventions*) that will develop recommendations and resources (e.g., model curricula, strategies) for school psychologists, school administrators, staff, teachers and community agencies to promote the health of LGBT youth.

Interdisciplinary collaboration is also valued by federal funding agencies such as National Science Foundation, Institute of Education Sciences, National Institute of Justice, and National Institute of Health. Working together in interdisciplinary teams will help us navigate the many challenges and opportunities we face with national health care (Affordable Care Act) and education reform (e.g., Elementary and Secondary Education Act and educator evaluation movement). As President, I strongly encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and welcome your participation in promoting the science, practice and policy of school psychology at the state, national and international level. Please visit our Div. 16 website.

Partnerships with Other APA Divisions for the 2014 APA Convention

Under the leadership of Robin Codding (2014 Convention Chair), we have an outstanding Div. 16 APA Convention program. For 2014 the APA Convention has reduced the number of divisional programming hours and increased the number of cross-divisional programming hours. During my president-elect year (2013), Robin Codding and I engaged in cross-divisional collaborations with Divs. 7, 21, 37, 41, 53, 54, 56 and American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS). As a result, seven interactive symposiums and roundtables have been accepted. These c ross-divisional collaborations have developed positive partnerships with other divisions, increased Div. 16 visibility and enhanced Div. 16's opportunities for APA Governance. We will be in communication soon on the dates for these outstanding presentations. Please "save the dates" (August 7-10), and join us for an excellent APA convention in Washington, D.C.

Membership Involvement and Numbers

Div. 16 Executive Committee members represent the interests of membership. However, we need your feedback and participation in all Div. 16 activities. During 2013, 13 members expressed interest in servicing the division. Many of these individuals were early career psychologists (ECPs), as well as mid and advanced career practitioners and trainers. We welcome membership participation. If you are interested in serving Div. 16, please contact James DiPerna (president-elect) and me.

The number of Div. 16 members is critically important for our visibility and "voice" in APA governance. Our membership campaign requires a *team effort*. We must increase our membership to maintain our number of APA Council Representatives. Unfortunately, our

Council Representatives (i.e., Tammy Hughes, Frank Worrell, and Beth Doll) will be reduced from three to two by the end of 2014. We need to increase our membership numbers and increase our votes (i.e., 10) on the APA apportionment ballot this fall. Please encourage your colleagues and students to join Div. 16 today and help us "get the vote out" for the APA apportionment ballot. Note that first year membership is free for 2014. (See membership application, PDF. 474KB) Please contact Jessica Hoffman (vice president of membership) to help us increase membership. Over the next few months, I will be communicating with you on ways you can help increase our number of APA Council of Representatives.

Under the leadership of Jessica Hoffman, we developed an Early Career Psychologist (ECP) Work Group. I would like thank Prerna Arora (chair), Amanda Sullivan, Bryn Harris, Natascha Santos, Kristin Thompson, and Cait Hynes for their leadership and tremendous contributions. Likewise, I thank David Cheng, President of the Student Affiliates of School Psychology (SASP) and the SASP Executive Committee (Cait Hynes, Jennifer Cooper, Samara Montilus, Kendall Bowles, Candice Aston, Rachel Stein, and Jeremy Rime) for working tirelessly with the Div. 16 Executive Committee on engaging graduate student involvement in the division. Our ECPs and SASP members are "the future" of the division and vital to advancing the science, practice and policy of school psychology for decades to come. We welcome ECPs and SASP members in all Div. 16 activities. We encourage ECPs and graduate students to please contact James DiPerna (president-elect) and me with any suggestions.

Dissemination and Work Group Efforts

As President, I will continue to strongly encourage Div. 16 members to disseminate their scholarship and practice through our outstanding publications: *The School Psychologist*, Applying Psychology in the Schools Book Series, and *School Psychology Quarterly*. Under the leadership of Melissa Pearrow (Vice-President of Publications and Communications), these publications showcase membership contributions worldwide. *TheSchool Psychologist* is considered one of the best divisional newsletters in APA. Please review the latest issues and submit brief papers and commentaries to the editor, Rosemary Flanagan. We encourage you to visit the Div. 16 Applying Psychology in the Schools Book Series that includes over 14 volumes. Please submit book proposals to Melissa Pearrow. The editor-in-chief of *School Psychology Quarterly*, Shane Jimerson, has significantly increased the number of manuscript submissions and reduced the article review process to an average of 18 days. *School Psychology Quarterly* presents premier scholarship from around the world and now offers editorial board members continuing education units for their reviews. Please submit your best work to *School Psychology Quarterly*.

In 2010, the division strategically created three work groups. The original work groups are: Translation of Science to Practice and Policy (Karen Stoiber, Chair); Globalization of School Psychology (Sissy Hatzichristou, Chair), and Social Justice and Child Rights (Stuart Hart, Chair). These work groups have resulted in substantial dissemination efforts (e.g., articles, presentations, workshops, manuals, book proposals, journal series).

Based on feedback from membership, the division created a fourth work group, Mental Health in Schools (James DiPerna and Stacy Overstreet, co-chairs) in 2013. The Mental Health Work Group has identified two subgroups, mental health promotion in schools and trauma focused school-based services. The goals of the subgroups are the same, to develop resources that: (1) address gaps in the training of school psychologists for mental health promotion and trauma focused services in schools and (2) help key stakeholders (administrators and school board personnel) make informed decisions regarding mental health promotion and trauma focused services within their schools. Several dissemination efforts will be completed by the work group such as a needs assessment with school psychology trainers, interns, and supervisors; curricula development; training guides and journal articles.

In sum, the four work groups exemplify the division's strategic planning and sustained efforts for promoting science, practice and policy in education. Each work group has representation from the Div. 16 Executive Committee and members (i.e., practitioners, trainers, early career psychologists, and graduate students). Please join us in our efforts to advance practice in schools.

Strategic Involvement in APA Governance

It is critically important for Div. 16 to strategically increase and sustain its presence in APA governance specifically APA Boards and Committees. APA is the most powerful psychology association in the world. In 2011, Shane Jimerson created the APA Governance Committee which included Tammy Hughes, Frank Worrell, Beth Doll and myself (serving as chair from 2011-2013). The committee focused on increasing Div. 16 involvement in APA Boards and Committees. Going forward this committee will include all president-elects to sustain communications and efforts. In January, Beth Doll and I emailed the membership to identify members interested in being nominated for APA Boards and Committees. The response was tremendous, thank you. Communications will continue throughout the year as we strategically help members get on APA ballots and hopefully (eventually) become elected to APA Boards and Committees. As a recently elected member of the Board of Professional Affairs (2014-2017), I hope to learn more about APA governance and continue to contribute to this important initiative.

As noted, it is important for us to increase our number of APA Council Representatives (i.e., two to three seats) in the near future. These initiatives will enhance school psychology's visibility and input in important issues such as predoctoral internships, licensure, and future discussions of the Model License Act. Div. 16 needs to be "at the table" with other professional psychologists engaging in thoughtful (planned) discussions that inform system and policy changes, which impact children, families, schools, and communities. Please contact me if you are interested in learning more about our efforts in APA governance.

Throughout 2014, I look forward to communicating on the division's good work through our excellent website (*The School Psychologist;* Twitter and Facebook led by Shane Jimerson our Technology Chair) and Div.16 announce-only email messages. Our website includes all Executive Committee meeting minutes, initiatives, and updates.

Please take some time to visit our Div. 16 website. I also welcome hearing from you and learning about other important topics and activities you believe warrant further consideration by the division. Again please consider contributing to Div. 16 in the many roles and activities that advance our science, practice and policy for schools.

STUDENT CORNER

Beyond family: Enhancing social support for graduate students

Graduate students often experience what they perceive to be a lack of support from family and friends during their graduate school years.

By Caitlin V. Hynes and David O. L. Cheng

Almost every graduate student has had the experience of having a friend or family member turn to them and ask a variation of the dreaded question: "Are you ever going to be done with school and get a real job?" For many, hearing this question can feel like an attack on their choice to stay in graduate school and may characterize what they perceive to be a lack of support from their family or friends. This lack of support can leave graduate students feeling invalidated and undervalued, or make them feel ostracized from those they are close to. Given the emotional turmoil these feelings can cause, it is important to understand where this lack of support may be coming from, as well as how graduate students can draw support from other sources when needed.

Reasons for Lack of Support

One of the main reasons that graduate students may not feel supported by their family and friends is that there is a lack of understanding of what a graduate degree in school psychology entails for those who have not gone through the process. While those with limited exposure to academia may view you as "just a student," being enrolled in a school psychology program involves adapting to a variety of roles. The culture of school psychology graduate student is unique in several ways. Many people outside the field are unaware that graduate students take classes, conduct research, and participate in fieldwork just to fulfill their degree requirements, to say nothing of assistantships or additional responsibilities that students take on. As advanced degrees are becoming more and more of a requirement for careers, students pursuing a degree in school psychology may be the first person in their family to attend graduate school, and even family members with advanced degrees in other fields may not have an accurate conception of what is required in psychology. It can be difficult for family and friends to understand that for most graduate students, work does not stop when we leave the building, and it can be frustrating for them to watch us work during weekends or holidays if they do not understand the nature of our responsibilities.

There are also cases when unsupportive family or friends not only have misconceptions about the nature of graduate school but also express a genuine disapproval of a student's decision to attend graduate school or enter the field of school psychology. Whatever the reason, open criticism from family or friends can lead graduate students to question their own choices and make them reluctant to share their graduate school experiences, be they struggles or successes.

Alternate Sources of Support

There is no doubt that social and emotional support is a critical piece for success in graduate school, regardless of where such support comes from. Research has shown that those students who do not have an adequate support system in place experience higher levels of stress and are more likely to drop out of their programs prior to completion (El-Ghoroury, Galper, Sawaqdeh, & Bufka, 2012; Jairam. & Kahl, 2012). Thankfully, there are a number of different groups that school psychology graduate students can draw on to create an academic and professional network of "family and friends."

Classmates

Many graduate students turn to others in their cohort or program as an easily accessible source of support. The benefits of maintaining a supportive group of classmates include having a group of people who are familiar with the demands of life in your program and who are facing- or, in the case of students with more advanced standing, have recently faced- similar challenges. They will be able to empathize with the frustrations you may be experiencing with coursework, research, or field placements. Furthermore, they can appreciate the significance of milestones in the program and will celebrate on your behalf when you defend your proposal or get an internship. The bonds you form with your fellow students need not be limited to school-related discussions but can also extend beyond academic and professional activities, and many programs encourage students to socialize outside the walls of their university.

Mentors

Mentors may also serve to provide both emotional and professional support to graduate students. Students can utilize mentors at both professional and person levels for moral support, guidance, and preparation for life after grad school (Walton, 2013). Graduate students may find mentors in a variety of places- professors they conduct research under or have taken courses with, supervisors in their field placements, or another member of the profession with similar interests to their own- and students may develop a mentoring relationship with multiple individuals over the course of their graduate careers. Where other students can empathize with current struggles, mentors are able to provide feedback and suggestions based on their own experiences and knowledge of the profession. In addition to providing knowledge-based guidance, mentors can also serve as role models for students, particularly for those who are the first in their family to pursue a graduate degree.

Professional Organizations

Another valuable source of support can come from professional organizations in the field. School psychology has a number of well-established professional organizations at both the state and national level, many of which have resources geared specifically towards graduate students. Groups such as SASP can provide networking opportunities at events, connect students via social media, and match students with mentors. Participating in discussion groups or listservs can greatly expand the number of people

students can draw on for suggestions or guidance. Many school psychology programs also have SASP chapters or other student organizations, which sponsor events designed to build community at a local level.

Educating Family and Friends

Regardless of the size of your academic and professional networks, many students still naturally turn to family members and non-academic friends for support. One possible way of maximizing this support is to educate friends and family members about the process so that they have a better understanding of your experiences. While not everyone will be interested in the intricacies of your research or internship, many do want to know more about what you are doing and where your studies are leading. Just as students receive a Student Handbook in order to explain their program, explaining some of the expectations and requirements of the profession and your personal goals can help your family to appreciate when you reach significant milestones or provide sympathy when you hit a roadblock. Those closest to you often want the opportunity to be proud of you, so be sure to share your accomplishments with them!

In cases where family members disagree with your decision to attend graduate school or become a school psychologist, explanations on why you have chosen this specific path and what you hope to accomplish can help them develop respect for your decision. Some people in your life may never be as supportive as you would like them to be, but having even a single family member or close friend with a greater understanding and appreciation of your work can keep you feeling connected to your non-academic circles and strengthen your network of support.

The culture of a graduate student in school psychology is one unique to our field. The requirements and procedures of every program are unique to themselves, and in turn, create for a unique experience for its students. In order to feel supported through our programs, we must make an effort to educate our family and friends, while also knowing who we can reach out to for additional support.

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EARLY CAREER CORNER

Preparing for the EPPP as a school psychologist

Doctoral level school psychologists are in a unique position, in that the decision of whether to become a licensed psychologist (which is independent of school psychology certification) is not as pressing of an issue as it may be in other fields of psychology.

By Kristin Thompson, PhD, and Prerna Arora, PhD

Early career school psychologists are presented with a number of decisions upon graduation, one of which includes whether to pursue professional licensure as a psychologist. Doctoral-level school psychologists are in a unique position, in that the decision of whether to become a licensed psychologist (which is independent of school psychology certification) is not as pressing of an issue as it may be in other fields of psychology. In fact, while the majority of doctoral level clinical and counseling psychology graduates become licensed, past studies have estimated that as few as 36 percent of doctoral level school psychologists are licensed (Curtis et al., 2008). The traditional work setting for most school psychologists, a K-12 school setting, typically requires only state certification as a school psychologist and does not require one to have a professional psychology license in order to practice. Similarly, many academic positions in school psychology do not require one to be a licensed psychologist in order to obtain a full-time faculty position. These factors, as well as the fact that the process of getting licensed is lengthy and often quite expensive, are major considerations in deciding whether to get licensed. Likely the most intimidating factor for many, however, is the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP), the major exam required for one to qualify for licensure. According to the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB, 2013), the EPPP serves to help in the "... evaluation of the qualifications of applicants for licensure...and is intended to evaluate the knowledge that the most recent practice analysis has determined as foundational to the competent practice of psychology..." (p. 4).

For many early career psychologists, the EPPP induces significant dread and anxiety, as it is often associated with fears of low pass rates and anxieties of how to accommodate hundreds of hours of studying within one's schedule. The EPPP can be even more daunting for those from a school psychology background, given that it covers domains in the field of psychology that are not intensely studied in school psychology programs. For example, in addition to clinical psychology, abnormal psychology, test construction, learning theory, ethics, and psychological assessment, the EPPP includes several domains not typically covered in school psychology programs such as industrial organizational psychology, social psychology, physiological psychology and psychopharmacology. The EPPP also covers these topics across the lifespan, whereas school psychologists are typically just trained in issues affecting children and adolescents.

For school psychologists, there are several advantages to being licensed as a psychologist. Licensure allows for more diversity in working setting, as a license is required to work in a private practice or deliver clinical services in a hospital or outpatient setting. Being licensed also opens up more opportunities for supervision and contribution to the training of doctoral students, as most internship programs require interns to have a licensed supervisor. Though not required, the American Psychological Association (APA) encourages faculty of APA-accredited programs to be licensed. Despite these benefits, several disadvantages to seeking licensure exists, including the cost of the exam and license application fees (which can sum to well over \$1000), as well as the time commitment needed to study for the EPPP.

Despite these anxieties surrounding the EPPP, recent statistics indicate that early career psychologists may not need to be as intimated by the EPPP. Although rumors exist of as few as half of all applicants passing the EPPP on the first try, data actually indicates that as many as 80% of examinees from APA-accredited psychology programs pass the EPPP on the first try (ASBPP, 2013). Little data exist examining pass rates of graduates of school psychology programs specifically, but one recent article found that while PhD clinical psychology graduates outperform those from PsyD clinical psychology programs, counseling psychology PhD programs, and school psychology PhD programs, there were no significant differences in pass rates between school psychology and counseling psychology graduates (Kupfersmid, 2011). Similarly, while many fear the EPPP because of the hundreds of hours of studying required, a 2012 study published in *Training and Education in Professional Psychology* reported that pass rates did not improve significantly for those who spent more than 200 hours of studying (Shaffer, Rodolfa, Owen, Lipkins, Webb, & Horn, 2012).

For those early career professionals seeking to take the EPPP, obtaining guidance from those who have successfully maneuvered the process may be of help. We polled several early career school psychologists employed in various settings to share what suggestions they had for dealing with the daunting process of preparing to take, and pass, the EPPP.

Emery Mahoney, PhD, who recently graduated and is currently completing her postdoctoral hours stated that "creating a schedule and sticking to it" was very beneficial. Janna Kautz, PhD, an early career school psychologist who worked full-time in a school setting while studying provided similar advice, "think of study sessions as an appointment on the calendar to help hold yourself accountable. The amount of information to review can be intimidating, but looking at it in smaller amounts each day makes it less daunting." Dr. Kautz also added that she found the depth of knowledge obtained through the studying process to be "extremely beneficial while working in a school setting, as I am better prepared to answer questions and provide more applicable recommendations to parents and teachers."

Katie Eklund, PhD, an assistant professor in school psychology, also recently took the EPPP and became licensed. She stated that she spent 2-3 intensive months studying prior to the exam and encouraged attending workshops that are regularly offered for

those studying for the EPPP. "I took a 4-day workshop and it was worth every penny. It helped me narrow down what I needed to study and provided me with valuable test-taking strategies." Another licensed psychologist practicing in the schools provided additional tips on helping manage the large amount of information needing to be studying for the EPPP: "I focused a lot of my study time on areas I knew nothing about or knew less about, but I could easily learn. I gave less time to areas where I felt I couldn't make large gains in the time I had."

Using a variety of study modalities was also suggested by several of the early career psychologists polled, particularly when fitting studying into a busy work schedule. Lisa Costella, PhD, an early career psychologist in a medical setting stated, "I designated a small window of time to study intensely. I gave myself three months and set the goal of studying between 150 and 200 hours. I used study guides, online exams, and listened to audio CDs. Taking the online exams multiple times was the most useful study activity for me." A psychologist working in private practice who took the EPPP twice found it beneficial to structure her study regimen but also emphasized her use of various study modalities when preparing for the EPPP her second time, after which she passed.

Of those polled, studying the material with a colleague who is also preparing for the examination was suggested by nearly all. Dr. Mahoney stated, "I found it helpful to add in some social interaction which made the process more fun and my study partner was also able to explain concepts that I did not understand and vice versa." When asked what they would have done differently, taking the EPPP closer to graduation was a sentiment described by several of those polled. In addition, maintaining a positive mindset was encouraged. As Dr. Mahoney stated, "One of the things I wish I had done differently was not to get so discouraged by my performance on the practice exams I took throughout my study process. If I received a lower score from one week to the next I took it as a sign that I had somehow lost ground, when really I should have viewed these as opportunities to learn new information to which I probably had not previously been exposed."

The EPPP is an intimidating test; however with the right preparation and planning, it does not need to be the major barrier for a school psychologist deciding whether to become licensed as a professional psychologist. Below are resources for the EPPP and deciding whether to become a licensed psychologist:

- Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards
- The path to EPPP excellence
- What you need to know to get licensed

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IN THIS ISSUE

People and places

Read the latest about what Div. 16 members are doing.

By Ara J. Schmitt, PhD

Dr. Michael Tansy has been elected president of the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). Dr. Tansy will serve a two-year term as president-elect, then a two-year term as President, and finally a two-year past president term.

School psychology faculty members **Dr. Paul Jantz** (Texas State University) and **Susan Davies** (University of Dayton), recently coauthored a book with neuropsychologist **Dr. Erin Bigler**, entitled *Working with Traumatic Brain Injury in Schools: Transition, Assessment, and Intervention*. The book, published by Routledge, is a comprehensive practitioner-oriented guide to effective school-based services for students who have experienced a TBI. Chapter topics include: basic brain anatomy and physiology; head injury and severity level classification, biomechanics of injury; injury recovery and rehabilitation; neurological, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, social, and academic consequences; understanding community-based assessment findings; a framework for school-based assessment (TBI-SNNAP); school-based psychoeducational report writing, and school-based interventions; monitoring pharmacological interventions; and prevention. An accompanying website includes handouts, sample reports, and training templates to assist professionals in recognizing and responding to students with TBI.

Michigan State University is pleased to announce the addition of **Dr. Kristin Rispoli** (Duquesne University; UNL IES postdoctoral fellow) to its school psychology program faculty.

The APA accredited school psychology program at the University of Utah is very pleased to welcome **Aaron J. Fischer** to their faculty as an assistant professor, beginning in Fall 2014. Aaron J. Fischer will be completing his degree requirements as a graduate of Louisiana State University (PhD, BCBA, August, 2014). He is presently completing a year-long pre-doctoral internship in clinical psychology at the May Institute to complement school based and pediatric internship experiences. Overall, his training has focused on best practices in school psychology and evidence-based assessment and treatment of children with autism spectrum disorder and their families. Dr. Fischer's research focuses on the use of technology in school psychology, specifically the application of videoconferencing during consultation, supervision, and parent training. He is excited to join his new colleagues at the University of Utah and begin his career in academia.

The school psychology program at the University of Georgia welcomes **Dr. Ashley Johnson**. Dr. Johnson will be joining the program in August 2014 as an assistant professor. She received her PhD in clinical psychology at SUNY-Binghamton and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at Brown University. Dr. Johnson's research focuses on

(1) identifying how differential development of attention contributes to child psychopathology and (2) disseminating empirically supported assessments and treatments for autism to underserved populations globally and locally.

Dr. Nancy McKellar was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Kansas Association of School Psychologists at the organization's fall conference. Dr. McKellar directs the school psychology program at Wichita State University.

The University of Montana School Psychology Program faculty are pleased to announce that Ms. Jacqueline Brown, MA, PPS, PLMHP will be joining the program as an assistant professor of psychology in fall 2014. The University of Montana program offers both the EdS and PhD degrees and is located in Missoula, Mont. Ms. Brown is currently a doctoral candidate in the combined program in Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology (APA-accredited) at the University of California-Santa Barbara with an emphasis in school psychology. She received her bachelor of arts in psychology at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and received her master's in school psychology at the University of British Columbia. She is currently completing her predoctoral internship at Boys Town within the Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology (APA-accredited). Her primary research interests are in (a) international school psychology and (b) crisis prevention and intervention. The University of Montana is excited to have her aboard.

