



# Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Criminal Justice, and Marriage & Family Therapy Newsletter

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FALL 2009

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## Todd West joins Department Faculty



The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice would like to welcome Todd West to the Valdosta State University family as well as the department faculty. Mr. West joined the department as a Full Time Temporary Instructor in August 2009. Mr. West teaches a variety of Sociology courses.

Mr. West has advanced degrees in sociology and political science from Elon University, Georgia Southern University, and the University of Georgia. In addition, he has also attended two universities in the People's Republic of China—Beijing Language & Culture University and East China Normal University. Before joining VSU, Mr. West taught sociology and political science at Gainesville State College in North Georgia. For a summer, he also worked for the Global

research at the German National Library of Economics in Kiel, Germany. For a year, Mr. West worked in Japan for Nova Intercultural Institute as a foreign language instructor. Mr. West has several personal goals also: "My chief academic interests lie in the areas of cultural, political, and international sociology. I want to fly across the Bering Strait from Alaska to Russia and visit the City of Vladivostok." Mr. West can be contacted in his office in UC 1139 or at [tmwest@valdosta.edu](mailto:tmwest@valdosta.edu).



## Department Christmas Drive

This year, the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Criminal Justice and Marriage and Family Therapy will once again be collecting items for needy families. Please stop by the office after Thanksgiving break to pick an item off of the department Christmas tree. Donations for the families will also be accepted. Any questions regarding this project can be forwarded to Candi Toole at 229-333-5943 or email at [cmttoole@valdosta.edu](mailto:cmttoole@valdosta.edu).

## Rinehart attends Lakota Workshop

Dr. Melissa Rinehart attended a week-long workshop on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota this past summer focusing on Lakota history and culture. The goal of this workshop was to teach scholars and students of Native American communities how they can implement a Lakota voice in their work and studies respectively. The workshop emphasized experiential learning including Lakota historical, cultural, and language lessons. Dr. Rinehart visited the Wounded Knee Memorial and learned first-hand from a Lakota ethnohistorian what happened during the Massacre of 1890. She also

toured the area where the 71-day armed standoff between the Lakota and the Federal Bureau of Investigation took place in 1973. Dr. Rinehart learned about the importance of Lakota winter counts. Winter counts depicted one memorable event per lunar year through pictographs generally oriented in a circular fashion. She was able to view several of these winter counts on the neighboring Rose Bud Reservation and has already incorporated knowledge about winter counts in class this semester. The workshop also included the importance of ritual and ceremony. In this capacity, Dr. Rinehart learned more about the significance of The Sundance ritual. The Sundance is an annual event that replenishes the

human spirit for men and women. Men, if called, will pierce and pull their skin from a tree in the center of the grounds, and women, if called, pierce their upper arms. Another ritual Dr. Rinehart participated in was a Lakota sweat (sweatlodge). The sweat is a cultural norm for many Lakota who want to purify their bodies and minds, so they pray and sing extensively for their loved ones. Dr. Rinehart lived in a tipi for the duration of the workshop and ate many tasty buffalo dishes. She enjoyed it so much she plans on returning next summer for the Lakota ethnogeography workshop. This workshop will focus on the importance of place in the Lakota landscape. *Please see page 2 for pictures.*

# Anthropology

## Study Abroad 2010



Dr. Richard will be returning to Belize next summer to conduct another Field School in Maya Anthropology. We will return to the village of Santa Elena for four weeks (June 5-July 2, 2010). Students will conduct studies of their own design on topics ranging from

ecological sustainability to indigenous medicine and cross-cultural psychology. Two upper-level (4900) electives will be offered. The program will include a side-trip to Tikal, Guatemala, site of the ancient Mayan city state and its extensive remains. We will reside in a typical Maya dwelling and take

our meals with families in the village. We hope to have a stronger language component this year (language tapes in Mopan, the local dialect).

Please see Dr. Richards for more information on this exciting opportunity. He can be contacted at 229-333-5485 or by email at [mjrichar@valdosta.edu](mailto:mjrichar@valdosta.edu).

*On 28 October 2009, Dr. Marvin T. Smith, Dr. Rudy K. Prine and received a certificate of recognition for fifteen years of service to VSU. The presentation was made by President Schloss in the University Center Cypress*

## Causes 2010

Dr. Richard and VSU Senior, Andrea Zvikas are planning the next edition of "Causes: VSU's Mini-Film Festival." Causes is a public anthropology project in which local people from both on- and off-campus create 90-second videos that educate citizens about a local problem (for example, the environment, racism, poverty). The videos are shown at a film festival in January (Saturday, January 23, at 7 pm in the Bio-Chem Auditorium). Past film fests have had their solemn as well as their comic moments, and organizers expect the same this year. Having received a couple of small grants, we will award four prizes again this year, including a top prize of \$250 and a \$100 prize reserved for school kids. Causes is now in its third year and it has become a VSU tradition. For 2009 we received over 60 mini-documentaries. See Dr. Richard for more details.

## Anthropology Club News

The Anthropology Club is back and better than ever. Elections were held in September and a new slate of officers was elected including David Howell (President), John Baker (VP), Angie Sharp (Treasurer) and Casey Mead-

ows (Secretary). The club has put together a schedule that includes the showing of ethnographic films, a theory reading group, local activism, field trips, and camping trips. We'll also hold our occasion teas at Hildegarde's at which

all of Valdosta's anthropologists share professional advice for anthro majors. Already this semester the Anthro-Geeks have shown the film "Black Robe," and hosted a talk on the Peace Corps by VSU student and Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, Brett Bailey.

## 350 Global Day of Action

Dr. Richard and members of S.A.V.E. (Students Against Violating the Environment) sponsored a local day of consciousness-raising over carbon emissions. The event was part of a Global Day of Action that's being organized by 350.org, an organization dedicated to reducing carbon emissions to 350 parts per million (from the current level of 390 ppm) by mid-century (go to [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) for more information). There was a nice slate of activities from a poster competition to poetry readings, a live band, and performance art. This 350 Universal Day of Action took place from 12-4 pm on October 24, and was held at the John W. Saunders Park at 1151 River Street.



# Criminal Justice

## Graduate Program News



This fall the MS in Criminal Justice Program received two Strategic Graduate Assistantships. The assistantships were designed to recruit students to programs that would not have considered applying to graduate school because of financial barriers. One graduate assistant is a teaching assistant assigned to the CRJU 3401 Criminal Justice Data Analysis class and the other graduate assistant is a research assistant that conducts research projects with faculty in

the criminal justice department. In addition, there will be a switch in graduate coordinators effective spring 2010. After serving for graduate coordinator for the past four years Dr. Fred Knowles is training Dr. Shani Gray to take over the position in the fall. Dr. Knowles has been instrumental in maintaining the MS in Criminal Justice graduate program and revising many criminal justice graduate policies and procedures. Dr. Gray in-

tends to build upon Dr. Knowles contributions by further revising policy and practices, improving the program website, increasing recruitment efforts, creating additional research and publication opportunities for criminal justice graduate students, maintaining rigor in the program, and developing online opportunities for MS in Criminal Justice program delivery.

*Drs. Prine and Ballard have a 2009 book chapter titled, "If Crime is the Problem, is Community or Problem Solving Policing the Solution?" in "Doing Sociology: Case Studies in Sociological Practice," Lexington Books.*

### Alpha Phi Sigma – APS:

2009-2010 Officers

- We are excited about the new 2009-2010 year! Our officers for this year are Nicole Thomas-Treasurer, Lakeisha Tolbert-Secretary, Steven Shadron-Vice President, and Cathia Moon-President.
- On October 23, 2009 VSU's APS members voted unanimously to re-affiliate with the National Alpha Phi Sigma Honor Society. VSU's APS had been a self-contained honor society from 2004-2009. Current members are looking forward to engaging in the opportunities provided by national affiliation.

**Migrant Worker Food & Clothing Drive:** In collaboration with Women's and Gender Studies APS is hosting a food and clothing drive for migrant farm workers and their families in Lowndes County. APS will be collecting items until the end of the semester. Needed items include: rice, dry beans, Meseca Flour, cooking oil, sugar, sanitary napkins, men's clothing, blankets, sweaters, flip flops, and towels. If you would like to make a monetary donation make checks payable to Migrant Farm Workers Clinic and send it to the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office. Please drop off items in Dr. Gray's office (UC 1140), Carlswell Hall or the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office. The contact persons are Tracy Woodard-Meyers and Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto.

**Drug Awareness Educational Activity:** APS will sponsor a drug awareness program on November 19, 2009 at 7pm.

**Criminal Justice Career Roundtable Educational Activity:** In spring 2010, APS will sponsor a criminal justice career roundtable. Look for details in the spring 2010 department newsletter.

- Fred E. Knowles will be the keynote speaker at the Southeastern Native American Education Summit at Western Kentucky University in Paducah, KY, November 20-21, 2009.
- Dr. Shani Gray was promoted to associate professor effective fall 2009.
- Dr. Fred Knowles was tenured and promoted to associate professor effective fall 2009.
- **England & Scotland 2009** – Drs. Shani Gray & Chris Sharp led a group of 8 students on a study abroad trip to England & Scotland. Students visited criminal justice agencies in all aspects of the criminal justice system (courts, corrections, law enforcement, and juvenile justice). In addition, students were introduced to several restorative justice programs utilized in both countries.
- **Sydney, Australia 2010** – Drs. Chris Sharp & Shani Gray are preparing a study abroad trip to Sydney, Australia. The trip is being organized in collaboration with CAPA International. Students will be introduced to various aspects of the Australian correction system and Aboriginal justice practices. In addition, it is expected that students will have the opportunity to interact with a criminological research institute at one of the local universities. The trip will occur June 3 - June 26, 2010 and costs approximately \$5,000 excluding airfare and tuition.

# Marriage & Family Therapy

## Darren Moore Wins the Prestigious AAMFT Minority Fellowship



Darren Moore, who is attending Virginia Tech's MFT PhD Program has just been awarded the AAMFT association's most prestigious fellowship for doctoral. In addition to his current scholarship and assistantship from Virginia Tech, he will receive \$20K per year for up to 3 years from AAMFT.

The AAMFT Minority Fellowship Program's objective is to expand the delivery of culturally competent mental health and substance abuse services to underserved minority populations, and to increase

the number of doctoral level culturally competent ethnic minority Marriage and Family therapists. The mission of the fellowship is to increase the pool of talented, culturally competent doctoral-level researchers, teachers and practitioners dedicated to assisting underserved minorities. This fellowship program is directed at Marriage and Family Therapy doctoral students who are committed to research about and service ethnic minority and underserved populations.

The fellowship is funded by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The MFT fellowship is a professional training appointment into a community of other students and professionals who hold similar professional interests. The fellowship is also intended to facilitate leadership development and provide professional guidance with the aim of deepening the skills sets and knowledge base of the fellows in areas related to minority mental health research and services.

**Article Published**  
Dr. Lambert-Shute and Dr. John Miller have just published an article called "Career Aspirations and Perceived Level of Preparedness among Marriage and Family Therapy Doctoral Students" in *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*. You can read it online right now (you must be an AAMFT member to access the site), go to <http://www.jmft.net/>. The article will come out in hard copy sometime in 2010.

## We've Built Ourselves A Research Machine, and It Is Working!

The faculty of the Marriage and Family Therapy program has created a one-of-a-kind research team called, "The Research Machine".

The Research Machine consists of twelve MFT graduate assistants and the three MFT faculty members. The graduate assistants hail from all over the US and their topics cover a wide spectrum of research interests.

Here is a sample of our research in progress:

Dr. Jennifer Lambert-Shute and first year Erica Hopkins from Ozark, Alabama are exploring the relationship between obesity and familial relationships and also the impact of

- that participation in support groups for the overall well-being of women.

- Dr. Kate Warner and first year student Natalie Tait from Tallahassee, FL are exploring the ways that training family court personnel to see women who are seeking help with domestic violence as resourceful, resilient people might reduce the fatigue and burnout often experienced by those who work with domestic violence cases.

Dr. Martha Laughlin and first year student, Cyndi Amante from Grand Rapids, MI are exploring how southern culture shapes identity development and the

transitioning process for transgendered people in the rural south. The other researchers are: Pascale Pierre from Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Alyse Lucas from St. Louis, MO; Misty Johnson from Ranburne, AL; Heather Just from Denver, CO; Sarah Morehouse from Jeromesville, OH; Arianna Higgs from Millwood, GA; Sara Thompson from Greenville, SC; Kormasah Karmala from Baltimore, MD; and Tameka Gaston from Detroit, MI.

## MFT Program is Approved for a Strategic Focus 2010 Initiative Award

Valdosta State University has embarked on an aggressive strategic planning initiative entitled "Strategic Focus." In Spring 2009, faculty, staff, and students participated in developing the standards that will advance VSU. The Strategic Focus 2010 process allowed VSU to ask the questions:

"What can we do to attract new students who would otherwise not apply?"

"What can we do to keep students at VSU who would otherwise leave?"

"How can we enhance VSU's reputation as a community of scholars?"

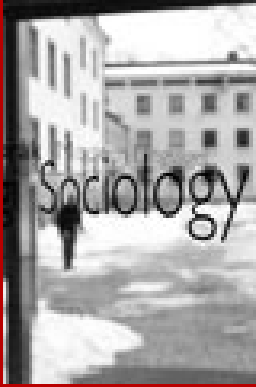
The MFT program submitted a proposal to create a unique training opportunity that emphasizes student life. Through a mutually beneficial relationship with Student Affairs, we proposed to expand the clinical services now provided by MFT interns to compliment the services offered by Student Affairs. Our goal is to establish a national profile and to continue to attract highly qualified students from all over the nation. By collaborating with student life services all over the campus, we hope to train graduates who are well prepared for positions in university settings while enhancing VSU student support. Over a five year period the proposal calls for the MFT program to add both new students and faculty. Stay tuned and watch us grow!

**Need Help?**  
Make an appointment with the Moore Street Clinic  
210 W. Moore St  
229-219-1281  
Or contact  
Dr. Martha Laughlin for more information

# Sociology

## Nehring receives book contract

Dr. Daniel Nehring, Sociology professor, recently received from Pearson Education a book contract for a combined reader and textbook for courses in introductory sociology and sociological theory. He will author this book together with Professor Ken Plummer (University of Essex), and it will likely be published in 2011. The book will be different from others in this area, as it will not only include canonical Western sources, but also provide a global perspective on social thought. The likely title will be: Sociology in Context: Global Perspectives.



## Alumni Update: Ms. Zoe Meyers



Zoe Myers is working on a Masters Degree in Sociology in our program. Zoe earned her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from VSU in 2008. She is Executive Director of Cook County Family Connection and worked previously as Community Resource Specialist for the Cook County Department of Family and Children Services. This fall she has gained over 1.4

grant money for her organization and its partner agencies. The first was a \$625,000 award from the National Drug Free Communities Support Program. The second was a \$293,000 System of Care grant from the Governor's Office for Children and Families to support the Cook County Board of Education. She said her collaborative partners are very excited about the new opportunities this grant

funding will bring to Cook county. The Drug Free Communities grant will expand and intensify efforts to prevent alcohol and drug abuse among youth through a variety of prevention programs and outreach initiatives. The Drug Free Communities project was implemented in Cook County five years ago with measurable success and the continuation funding will target all students in grades K-12 for an additional five years

## Would you like to experience where East meets West?

### Study Abroad: Turkey 2010

#### Dr. Isik Denizman

Would you like to experience East and West at the same place while you earn 3 to 6 credits? I am going to teach Introduction to Sociology and Sociology of Religion in Istanbul, June 10-July 1, 2010 for three weeks. In three weeks, we will also visit Ankara, the capital of Turkey, and Capadocia for four days. In our increasingly interconnected world, your

daily lives can be enriched by a greater knowledge of the ways of life and perspectives of others. In addition, exposure to an array of diverse cultures and societies can be a tremendous help as you to grasp the sociological perspective and gain a fuller understanding of the culture, social structure and institutions of the U.S. Our own ways often seem "only natural" to students and can be

invisible to them as a result. Comparing and contrasting the U.S. culture and social structure with others highlights these "invisible" qualities.

More Information:  
Dr. Isik A. Denizman,  
[idenizma@valdosta.edu](mailto:idenizma@valdosta.edu).

Study Abroad Programs: <http://www.valdosta.edu/cip/VSUGroupStudyAbroadPrograms.shtml>

*Dr. Isik Denizman will be leading a study abroad trip to Turkey in 2010. Please contact her at the information to the right for details.*



# Alumni News: Andrea Brockman

Andrea Brockman, a VSU alumni graduated in 2006, is now a doctoral candidate of Clinical Psychology with a concentration in Forensics at Nova Southeastern University. During her study at VSU, Andrea completed requirements for a dual bachelor's degree in psychology and criminal justice. A year and a half later, she graduated again for a master's degree in criminal justice. While she studied for her graduate degree, Andrea worked as a full-time correctional counselor for inmates in the Valdosta State Prison. Currently at Nova, she

is receiving clinical training at an adolescent drug abuse and treatment program. She has worked closely with experts in police psychology and hostage negotiations. Meanwhile she has engaged in collaborative research with criminal justice faculty at VSU. She hopes one day she will be working for federal or state law enforcement agencies as a forensic psychologist.



*In Action!*

## Congratulations to Our Spring and Summer 2009 MS Program Graduates!

*MS Criminal Justice:*

Monica L. Cline  
Yolanda Y. Robinson



*MS Marriage and Family Therapy:*

Christina L. Able  
Meagan C. Callahan  
Megan M. Fox  
Racine R. Henry  
Taqueilla L. Ivey  
Kaydian N. Jones  
Misty L. Lamb  
Mandi D. Rice

James D. Seman  
Dawn A. Simpson  
Portia T. Smith  
Emily A. Vickers  
Denese D. Henderson  
Laiel M. Winder

*MS Sociology:*

Sharon L. Daniels  
Chad T. Adams  
Ewelina B. Gad

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**Thanks for your support!**

## Marriage and Family Therapy Speed Networking Conference

On October 10, 2009, The Department of Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Marriage and Family Therapy co-hosted with The Georgia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy a Speed Networking Conference in the University Center's Magnolia Room. The event was designed to bring VSU alumni and current VSU marriage and family therapy students together.

The event was a resounding success! In attendance were 25 VSU alumni and 19 current marriage and family therapy students. Everyone in attendance reported that they could not wait for the next one. The students stated that it was "very helpful", "would have liked more time to interact and network", and "it was great to talk with people who know what we will have to do in the next year or so". An alumni stated "we liked interacting with the next generation, it reminded us [me] of why I do what I do".

Speed Networking is a networking event with an Accelerated twist. The program allowed attendees to quickly introduce themselves, create connections within 15-20 minutes, and gather information in a fun entertaining format before rotating to the next table of choice.



*"The professionals were very open and honest. I gained useful knowledge." --MFT Student*

### Topics at the Speed Networking Conference included:

- How to Start a Private Practice
- What Do I Need to Know to Succeed in an Agency Setting?
- How to Study for the Licensing Exam
- How to Get Licensed
- How to Survive Your First Year Out
- How to Stay Systemic in a Non-systemic World
- How to Maintain your Sanity, Networking for Internships
- Continuing On: Ph.D Programs.



*"I found this to be VERY helpful. I recommend doing this at least two or three times a year." --MFT Student*



**Department of Sociology, Anthropology,  
and Criminal Justice  
With Marriage and Family Therapy**

1500 N Patterson St  
University Center, Room 1120  
Valdosta, GA 31698  
Phone: 229-333-5943  
Fax: 229-333-5492

You may also access a copy of this newsletter by visiting:

**Send Us Your Info!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

VSU Graduation Year/Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What are you doing now? \_\_\_\_\_

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Please return to:  
Candi Toole, Senior Secretary  
Dept. of Sociology, Anthropology , and Criminal Justice  
Valdosta State University  
Valdosta, GA 31698

**OR EMAIL TO: [cmttoole@valdosta.edu](mailto:cmttoole@valdosta.edu)**