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**The C.C. Staff:**

Kelly Davis  
Elizabeth Looney  
Kristin Morfill  
Khanh T. Dinh, PhD

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*While the spirit of neighborliness was important on the frontier because neighbors were so few, it is even more important now because our neighbors are so many.*

~Lady Bird Johnson

# The Community Connection

The official newsletter of the Community Social Psychology Graduate Program  
Department of Psychology  
University of Massachusetts Lowell

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## And The Times They Are A-Changin' Graduate Program Welcomes New Coordinator

By Elizabeth Looney

The Community Social Psychology program would like to welcome Dr. Khanh T. Dinh as the new Graduate Program Coordinator. Dr. Dinh is taking over for Dr. Richard Siegel, who stepped down from the role, after seven years of dedicated service.

Dr. Dinh brings much energy and ambition to the role of Graduate Coordinator. When asked about her hopes and visions for the future, Dr. Dinh cited her main goal as "further [facilitating] our sense of community and connection among students, alumni, and faculty." Dr. Dinh has also set program outreach and promotion as priority goals. Specifically, she would like to "further enhance the visibility and excellent reputation of our program, both at the local and national levels."

In her efforts, Dr. Dinh invites all students and faculty to contribute their ideas and feedback. Hopefully in doing so, she believes, we can openly explore options on how to improve various aspects of our program, including potential changes to the CSP curriculum, as well as changes to the overall graduate program.

"No doubt," Dr. Dinh said, "my first year will be a trial and error period but I am excited about my new role and the opportunity to further contribute to our graduate

program, especially to our students. All in all, I hope this school year will be a fun and productive year for our CSP community."

As we say thank you to Dr. Siegel for his contributions, the CSP program is grateful to Dr. Dinh for her willingness to take on this new role, and excited to see where she takes us. Her new energy and ideas are a welcomed asset to the program, that will hopefully carry us for years to come.

Welcome, Dr. Dinh!



Dr. Khanh T. Dinh

### Save the Date! 10th Anniversary of the Center for Women and Work Celebrations

#### Women's Works: A Celebration of UML Creativity and Scholarship – Fall 2007

Activities include a Publication Party, Holiday arts & crafts fair by women connected to UML, refreshments and music.

**Time:** Friday November 30<sup>th</sup> (11:30am -7:00pm)  
**Location:** Cumnock Hall, North Campus

Future events: 10th Anniversary gathering at the Well Forum April 3, 2008

## ALUMNI CORNER: Interview With Robin Toof

by Kris Morfill

Robin Toof, Assistant Director for the UMass Lowell Center for Family, Work & Community (CFWC), graduated from our Community Social Psychology program in 1998. Robin began her CSP coursework while working full-time at CFWC. Her position there involves working with students and brokering partnerships between the University and the Lowell community.

Robin explains how her work is connected to the field of Community Social Psychology, "Helping people at CFWC, writing grants, and trying to build University-Community Partnerships, puts intentionality to the coursework I completed while in the CSP program. I am able to apply the knowledge I gained as a graduate student to the everyday experiences that I have in my work."

Robin feels that her experiences as a student in the

CSP program has truly enhanced her position at the University. Two of the most positive experiences that Robin had as a graduate student were the group work that she engaged in with both students and faculty, and completing her master's thesis.

Robin is currently pursuing her Doctorate in Higher Education Administration at UMass Boston, while continuing to work as Assistant Director of CFWC. Her doctoral program is based on a cohort model, in which all students in the program have the commonality of full-time employment and doctoral studies as they go through the program together. Robin encourages CSP students who are interested in pursuing their doctorate education to look into cohort model programs as it provides a supportive environment for doctoral students and enables them to network as future colleagues and professionals in the field. (continued on p. 2)

### Alumni Corner (continued from page 1)



Robin Toof, CSP Alum '98.

With regard to career options for CSP graduates, Robin believes there is a high demand for our graduates, especially in the human services, including high level management, grant writing, and program development positions. She also mentions a variety of other career opportunities for CSP graduates, such as those in educational systems, law enforcement agencies, and non-profit organizations.

It is indeed inspiring to hear from a successful graduate of the CSP program, about the positive experiences Robin has had as both a student and professional, and how she has been able to develop and apply the knowledge she gained from CSP to her career and doctoral study. Needless to say, Robin Toof is an excellent role model for current and future CSP graduate students!

*“Changing their lives and those around them as they work toward a better understanding of Community Social Psychology.”*

Heads up!! Graduate Student Association meetings will be held on South Campus for the Spring semester. Location TBA.

## Welcome to New Students by Kelly Davis

The UMass Lowell Community Social Psychology program is proud to welcome its new students into the program. In true CSP style, these students differ according to a broad range of demographics, including race, gender, age, and nationality. For instance, Nataliya Poto is a married mother of one who originally hails from a small mountain village in the Ukraine. Nataliya started the program this year as a BA/MA student. On a more traditional student path is Allegra Williams who is from Brookline, Massachusetts. Allegra did her undergraduate studies at Mount Holyoke College, where she majored in Psychology and African Studies. Two years ago, Allegra had the opportunity to visit Africa while doing research on the prison systems in Kenya. A memorable account of this work was when Kenyan women prisoners braided her hair in the prison's beauty salon—unforgettable! Matt Jones, one of the only two men in the program is also one of the youngest students, coming directly from his undergraduate program at Maris College. Matt hails from a small town in Western Massachusetts and is already looking forward to entering a PhD program after he graduates from UMass Lowell. These new members of the CSP community join the approximately 30-40

other students in the program, changing their lives and those around them as they work toward a better understanding of the principles and practice of Community Social Psychology.



The new CSP class with professor Anne Mulvey



### The CSP Faculty:

Back row (L-R): Jason Lawrence, Ashleigh Hillier, Michelle Haynes, Richard Siegel, Nina Coppens (Department Chair), Khanh Dinh

Front Row (L-R): Ivy Ho, Anne Mulvey, Meg Bond, Andrew Hostetler

CSP-Affiliated Faculty not in photo: Doreen Arcus, Bill Berkowitz, Linda Silka, & Sharon Wasco

### Save the Date!

*“Women in Charge: Strengthening Our Lives, Our Communities, Our World”*

The theme for Lowell is **Women in Strengthening Communities,**



the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Women's Week **Charge: Our Lives, Our World.**

The week will kick off on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and conclude on Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, and planning committee meetings are open to all community members.

Planning Committee meetings are scheduled from 12:00-1:30 on the following Fridays: December 7<sup>th</sup>, January 18<sup>th</sup>, and February 15<sup>th</sup>. To join the planning committee or to learn more about Lowell Women's Week, visit [www.lowellwomensweek.org](http://www.lowellwomensweek.org). You also can contact Sharon Shelton at 978 459-0551, ext. 281 for more information.