

# THE SELF MONITOR

*The Official Alumni Newsletter of the Psychology Department of the State University of New York at New Paltz*

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## Welcome!

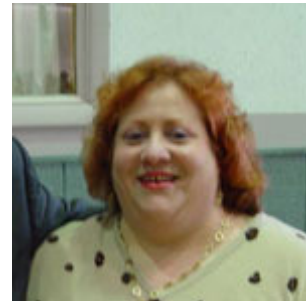
On behalf of the psychology department, we are excited to begin a newsletter dedicated to the alumni of our department. Our alumni are successful scholars, healers, and teachers, authors and artists, and much more. When we look at what our graduates have achieved, we are reminded of our goals as teachers. And we are justifiably proud.

In the Fall of 2007, the Psychology faculty discussed how best to remain connected with our alumni. Several options were discussed, and the one we thought best was the creation of a newsletter. Our goals are to keep you updated on departmental happenings, to highlight some of the current scholarly interests and achievements of our faculty, to profile current students, and to feature alumni from different generations (something of a “where are they now?” section). We hope **The Self Monitor** will help keep members of the psychology community of SUNY New Paltz connected to each other.

If you have comments or questions, don't hesitate to contact the editors. If you have suggestions for future items to include, we'd love to hear from you!

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## Department Secretary Barbara Novick Retires After 31 Years of Service



Barbara Novick, long-time Psychology Department secretary, retired at the end of March, 2008 after serving the campus for 31 years.

Barbara's immediate retirement plans are to visit her sister in southern Florida, spend time with her other sister Tina and her pets (including a new addition – a Chihuahua puppy named Bandit), and of course, enjoy being able to sleep in!

All of us at the Psychology Department, faculty and students, wish Barbara every happiness in her retirement!

**Did You Hear? New Paltz is HOT!  
Kaplan/Newsweek Names New Paltz  
Nation's "Hottest Small State School"**  
08/15/2007

NEW PALTZ -- The State University of New York at New Paltz has been chosen as the "Hottest Small State School" in the nation by the 2008 Kaplan/Newsweek "How to Get into College" Guide.

As one of the "25 Hottest Schools in America," SUNY New Paltz has been recognized for its academic excellence and its unique appeal to students seeking entry into the top schools in the country. One of the contributing factors to the college's selection was based on admission statistics.

L. David Eaton, vice president of enrollment management at SUNY New Paltz, said he is not surprised, noting that New Paltz has experienced a 40 percent spike in freshman applications since 2000.

For the 17th consecutive year, New Paltz has led SUNY colleges with the highest number of overall applications, which has allowed the college to be more selective in its admissions process. This fall, the college accepted 32 percent of its first-year applicants and 36 percent of its transfer applicants.

"What makes us unique and attractive to prospective students is an engaging atmosphere, an extraordinary array of academic programs, and a location that is stunning in its natural beauty, in a college town that is a 'hot' destination for visitors in its own right," Eaton said.



**Alumni Weekend 2008  
October 17-19, 2008**

Each year, the university organizes a series of events for alumni reunion weekend. See: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/alumni/reunion/> for the alumni webpage. Among other activities, the weekend includes dinner with former classmates, departmental receptions, tours of the local vineyards, and hikes in the *Gunks*. We look forward to welcoming you home to New Paltz!

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**An Outstanding Recent Graduate**

While we always have several outstanding psychology students each year, we are excited to highlight the special achievements of one of our recent graduates who just wrapped up a very successful athletic and academic career at New Paltz.

**Katie Becofsky** was named to the CoSIDA/ESPN Magazine Academic All-America Second Team for the College Division while maintaining a 3.94 with a dual major in Psychology and Communication throughout her four years of excellence on the volleyball court. In addition, she was named to the College Division Women's Volleyball District I All-Academic first team by the College Sports Information Directors of America. Last fall, Katie was selected to the SUNYAC All-Tournament team for her efforts. She was also named the SUNYAC East Player of the Year for the second consecutive season.

## Katie Becofsky (Class of 2008)



"My last semester at SUNY New Paltz has arrived, and life is crazier than ever! On top of completing my dual major in psychology and communication, my basketball team is approaching post-season play and my search for the perfect graduate school is in full swing. Of course, my last few months as an undergraduate can't be all work and no play, so I make sure to set aside time for a few wings at McGillicuddy's or a timeless Saturday night visit to P&G's.

This past fall I was given the opportunity to integrate a lifelong passion with a psychology book. For the first time, New Paltz offered a Sport & Exercise Psychology course as an option for senior seminar. As a dual-sport athlete, exercise enthusiast and fitness center counselor here at the college, I was able to relate to almost every chapter covered in class. This experience solidified my decision to pursue a higher degree in this field of psychology.

My plan for the next few years is to earn a Masters degree in Kinesiology, with an emphasis in sport and exercise psychology. Specifically, I would like to study motivation and exercise adherence. My ultimate goal is to land a position that allows me to help Americans reap the invaluable benefits of leading active, healthy lifestyles."

Katie's email: [becofs95@newpaltz.edu](mailto:becofs95@newpaltz.edu)

## SPOTLIGHT: Faculty Research

**Dr. James Halpern** (joined the faculty in 1973)

Dr. Halpern, now the director of the Institute for Disaster Mental Health, recently co-authored a textbook with Dr. Mary Tramontin for the field of disaster mental health, *Disaster Mental Health: Theory and Practice*.

The following is a description of this innovative book (published by Wadsworth in 2007):

Informative and practical, *Disaster Mental Health: Theory and Practice* covers the psychology of disasters, and discusses how to assist those impacted by such dramatic, life-changing events. Its primary aim is to support and empower those mental health practitioners and students who will be working in the trenches of disaster's aftermath. An ancillary goal is to arm disaster responders who are not mental health specialists with sufficient knowledge to consider the role of mental health and how it might be helpful. The book is intended to be a tool in disaster preparedness and planning. A broader goal is to further legitimize the still-developing field of disaster mental health by offering a synthesis of trends, discoveries and related concepts.

This book presents a theoretical integration and context for what disaster mental health is and what it is not. It also presents the range of mental health interventions in the wake of disaster. These interventions are discussed in a practical manner so that readers may obtain and develop additional skills.

## Other Faculty News

**Drs. James Halpern and Phyllis R. Freeman** (joined the faculty in 1975) were awarded a \$13,000 grant by the National Institute of Mental and a \$10,000 grant from the New York State Office of Mental Health for the Institute of Disaster Mental Health's April 11, 2008 conference, "Healing the Scars of War," which provided mental health workers with the best practices in assisting returning service personnel experiencing stress reactions.

The award also will support research on the perceptions of training needs and research gaps of those providing mental health support for regional military personnel and their families. Assisting them are undergraduate psychology major Rachel Fish, and psychology graduate students David Anchin (MA Psychology Program), Diane Grimaldi, Meredith Johnson, and Jaymie Lowitt (MS Mental Health Counseling Program). The Conference also was supported by an award from the SUNY New Paltz Campus Auxiliary Services.

**Dr. Jonathan Raskin** (joined the faculty in 1996)

Dr. Jonathan Raskin continues to do research in the area of constructivist psychology. His co-edited book with Dr. Sara Bridges, *Studies in Meaning 3: Constructivist Psychotherapy in the Real World*, was published in January 2008. Constructivist psychotherapy remains somewhat unfamiliar to many clinicians, despite offering a variety of innovative and practical therapeutic approaches and techniques. In "Studies in Meaning 3," constructivist psychology is presented as it relates to everyday practice. The chapters provide many examples of what constructivist psychotherapy looks like in the real world, showing how one can make the transition from constructivist theory to constructivist practice with ease. The chapters explain basic constructivist therapy concepts and then demonstrate them with vivid case examples taken from applied experience in the field.

In addition to this book, Dr. Raskin has a 2008 article in the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* examining the relationship between evolutionary epistemology and constructivism. He will be presented papers at the New York Mental Health Counselors Association conference in April, the Constructivist Psychology Network conference in June, and he will present at the American Psychological Association convention in August.

When not working, Dr. Raskin spends a lot of time chauffeuring his daughters Ari (12) and Noa (7) back and forth to ballet, gymnastics, and music classes.

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## **SPOTLIGHT: Curriculum**

### **Evolutionary Studies (EvoS): A New Interdisciplinary Minor**

Last year marked the launching of the university's interdisciplinary Evolutionary Studies (EvoS) program, which offers an undergraduate minor. This program is directed by psychology faculty member Glenn Geher, known for his passion for evolutionary psychology (still!). This program includes courses from psychology (such as evolutionary psychology, infancy and childhood, and social psychology) as well as courses from several other areas that highlight principles related to evolutionary theory (such as anthropology, biology, and geology).

During its first year, this program attracted more than 20 students to declare the minor—and we are confident in the future growth of this program. The centerpiece of the EvoS program is the EvoS seminar series, which presents speakers on various topics related to evolution. Last year marked the first offering of this series and, by all accounts, it started off with a bang. For instance, we hosted evolutionary psychologist Rebecca Burch of Oswego who spoke on her work dealing with the psychological effects of seminal fluid—a well attended and highly stimulating talk, indeed. All of these presentations are free and open to the public—and we encourage all our alumni to attend. In 2009 (Darwin's Bi-Centennial), the EvoS Program will host Gordon Gallup (of Albany) who will speak on the evolutionary biology of physical attraction (in addition to several others). See: [www.newpaltz.edu/evos](http://www.newpaltz.edu/evos) for more information (or contact Glenn at: [geherg@newpaltz.edu](mailto:geherg@newpaltz.edu)).

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## SPOTLIGHT: Alumni

### 1970s

**Gerry Dizinno** (B.S. Class of 1970)

([Gerry.Dizinno@utsa.edu](mailto:Gerry.Dizinno@utsa.edu))

Attended SUNY New Paltz: Fall 1964 through Summer 1971

Attended one year of graduate school in Psychology at SUNY New Paltz

M.S. Psychology Florida State University (1977)

Ph.D. Experimental Psychology Florida State University (1983)



When I first got to New Paltz I was a fairly directionless 18 year old who had never spent even a few weeks of the summer away from home; not even at summer camp! In addition, in High School (Hicksville, Long Island) I had always “coasted” on my basic abilities, focusing more on my social life and extra-curricular activities than class work. In addition, as is the focus of a number of studies of factors inhibiting college success, I was a “first generation” college student. New Paltz, being not quite as selective as it is now, was the only four-year college to accept me. I was in for some surprises.

The first surprise was that it was not possible to use my old strategies at academic “success.” To make a long story short, following my sophomore year I was not invited back for a junior year! Yes, I was a flunk-out; now I had to get a job. My jobs involved selling encyclopedias door-to-door, and working in a potato chip distribution facility doing inventory. Needless to say, after about one year I realized that

I better get educated; to do that I took one course – Introduction to Psychology – at C.W. Post College in Nassau County. I still remember the name of the professor – Dr. Appel – who taught that course since it turned out to be a key turning point in my life. I ended up getting an “A” in that course and more importantly – for some reason – I also figured out what I needed to do to succeed in college-level coursework. And, by the way, it was then I decided to become a Psychology major.

I was readmitted to New Paltz as a Psychology major and was fortunate to have, as my first instructor, Dr. David Morse. Dave eventually became my first mentor – and if it wasn’t for him and other New Paltz Psychology professors I would never have even imagined I could succeed beyond undergraduate school. Another professor who had an important influence on me was Dr. Don Schiff; I’ve had many other statistics instructors since Don in my life, and he still stands out as the best. Without his help and guidance, I would never have succeeded in graduate statistics courses. My teaching responsibilities since I started as a college instructor have always included statistics – introductory through advanced/multivariate – and I still, to this day, “plagiarize” Don’s methods and explanations! Two other faculty members who I will always remember and thank – more for their personal support than anything else – are Drs. Mark Sherman and Bob Nye.

I came to graduate school at Florida State University in what was then known as the Biopsychology program within the Psychology Department. My research interests and affiliations were initially within “animal behavior,” but more specifically on animal communications and the intersection of endocrine systems with chemical and auditory communications in mice. My interests expanded in graduate school to include human Evolutionary Psychology with the publication of E. O. Wilson’s “Sociobiology” – it became my main focus. Ultimately, after working for a while teaching Psychology at a few schools, I finished my dissertation in 1983 – a cross-cultural study looking at the relationship of ecological and population variables on the incidence of male homosexual behavior. I moved with my wife to New Mexico where she had a full-time position at UNM.

Unfortunately, my research career had to be put aside because we needed two full-time salaries. Here my training in statistics and methodology, which started at New Paltz, served me well – I've worked in those fields now for over 20 years and currently I am the Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio. I am also a tenured associate professor in the Educational Leadership & Policy Studies department, which has an emphasis in higher education administration. I am often called upon as a consultant by other universities and by accrediting bodies to contribute to their needs in building systems of effectiveness and assessment.

It's been a long road since I started at New Paltz in 1964 – but I hope that the current group of students are being served as well as I was when I became a Psychology major. And, I hope that there remains a core number of faculty members with the same level of dedication as those I was fortunate enough to encounter. Without New Paltz and those faculty members, I'd still be selling encyclopedias!

**Robin Cohen-La Valle**, LMHC (B.A. Class of 1977 and M.A. Class of 1982)

([cohenr@newpaltz.edu](mailto:cohenr@newpaltz.edu))

Associate Dean of Students, SUNY New Paltz

My experience in the Psychology Department at New Paltz shaped much of my professional career. Close contact with faculty modeled much of what I strive to provide those I have mentored over the years: collaboration, enthusiasm about research and a healthy perspective on 'data', counseling skills, and relationships in organizations. Being exposed as a generalist to social, clinical, cognitive and behavioral psych, as well as 'perception', opened avenues for me to craft work settings where I could apply my experience to address human needs, assess perceptions and development, and consequently inform social and behavioral choices students make during the college years.

## 1980s

### Joel Neuman



BA: Class of December 1984 (SUNY New Paltz)

MA: Class of August 1986 (SUNY New Paltz)

PhD: May 1990 (SUNY Albany)

[neumanj@newpaltz.edu](mailto:neumanj@newpaltz.edu))

Associate Professor of Management & Organizational Behavior  
and Director of the Center for Applied Management, School of Business  
SUNY New Paltz

My time in both undergraduate and graduate psychology programs at New Paltz had a dramatic (and very positive) impact on professional life. As a non-traditional (older) student, I had 12 years of management experience in the private-sector prior to entering the program. My psychology courses at New Paltz emphasized both theory and practice, which appealed to my academic and applied interests. My studies and on-going conversations with New Paltz faculty shaped my decision to combine my business experience with my love of psychology. As a result, my research, consulting, and teaching interests involve the application of the principles and findings of psychology to behaviors in work settings. In short, my time at New Paltz was instrumental in shaping my career decisions and I have been extremely happy with the results.

**Marda Reid** BA: Class of 1986 and MA Class of 1989

Assistant Vice President for Human Resources at SUNY New Paltz.

The most important things I learned while I was student were how to do complex statistical analysis and how to write creatively about any topic—even the real rats in the JFT animal lab! (I guess that gives away my age!)

I remained at SUNY New Paltz after my MA degree because I love the people--we absolutely have the best faculty, professional faculty, and students. My 18 years of employment have allowed me to utilize my industrial psychology background and have afforded me the opportunity to work with all constituencies. I have been a teaching assistant, adjunct lecturer, assistant to the vice president for administration, executive assistant to the provost, and director of human resources until December 2007 when I received my current position

## 1990s

**Janet Stampler Froio** (M.A. Class of Dec 1991)

When I decided to attend SUNY New Paltz for an M.A. in Psychology, I had originally intended to go on for my Ph.D. and have a career directly in the field. As life would have it, plans did not go that way but I finished my Master's and loved my education. I decided I needed time off before committing to any further school and moved into NYC to work and contemplate other options. I had always loved music and decided to try and work in the music business before taking the last dive into graduate school. Well, that attempt to work in the music business has lasted through today, many years later. Surprisingly, and much to my satisfaction, I have never felt that I wasted my education by making this choice. I have spent the 15 years in the music industry with the last 7 years as a VP of New Media/Digital Sales at Atlantic Records.

Currently, I have my own consulting business, which now gives me the pleasure of working in the industry I have loved yet having the autonomy I have craved. My understanding of individuals and group dynamics was cultivated through my studies and, on a daily basis, helped me navigate my career. I have had the good fortune of working with many great artists whose personalities were so complex and interesting that while I was not "practicing" psychology as a profession, I had to have a psychological awareness and understanding, and flexibility, to be good at my job. Now, as a consultant in the New Media/entertainment world, that is even more-so. I have realized that no matter what occupation I have chosen, it's all a psychological mine field and that is what makes everyday interesting. I still use and value many of the lessons learned during class and in the field work required to attain my M.A. I have always been very grateful for that personal accomplishment.





**Catherine Kelly** (M.A Class of 1992)

[kellyc@newpaltz.edu](mailto:kellyc@newpaltz.edu)

Assistant Professor of Nursing, SUNY New Paltz

PhD, Nursing, 1999, Adelphi University,  
Garden City, N.Y. 11530

MA, Psychology, 1992, State University of New  
York at New Paltz, New Paltz, NY

MSN, Critical Care Nurse Practitioner, 1983,  
State University of New York at Stony Brook,  
Stony Brook, NY 11794

BSN, 1978, State University of New York at  
Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY 11794

AS, Science and English, 1976, Suffolk County  
Community College, Selden, NY 11776

LPN, 1973, Harry B. Ward Vocational School,  
Riverhead, NY 11901

The knowledge and skills I learned as a MA student in Psychology, in addition to a MS in Nursing, at New Paltz enabled me to provide better care for the patients and communities I worked with as a nurse. I was able to work more effectively with Emergency Care providers during times of crisis, developed response teams, and designed programs to help prevent chronic stress for health care providers. In addition, the psychology program greatly enhanced my writing and research abilities. These skills helped me to complete a PhD in nursing and write grants. All of these skills assist me with teaching nursing students at New Paltz.

**Michelle Warfield** (M.A. Class of 1995)

[warfield\\_michelle@yahoo.com](mailto:warfield_michelle@yahoo.com)

I am currently working as a clinical and forensic psychologist at California State Prison Sacramento, located in Folsom, California. It is a Level 4 prison for any of you interested in prison settings, and the place for mentally disturbed and anti-social criminals. My psychology career has included working in prison systems in different states: Kansas, Colorado, New York, and California since May, 2002 when I earned my PhD in Clinical Psychology. I received my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at SUNY Albany in December, 1987, and my Masters in Counseling Psychology at SUNY New Paltz in December, 1995; and subsequently obtained an additional Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology and a doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology: all of these degrees while working around my priority, my two children. And I have never regretted one moment of how I completed my education. While my professional work has included a satisfying clinical private practice including psychotherapy, assessment, testing, and evaluation, my forensic work remains challenging and rewarding as well.

SUNY New Paltz prepared me for my role as a scientist / practitioner beginning with quality research coursework, and supervised experience in conducting psychotherapy at the SUNY New Paltz Counseling Center, an amazing combination, offering an opportunity to excel in the scientist / practitioner model. SUNY New Paltz set the foundation for me to become a competent and ethical clinical, and later, forensic, psychologist. At one point in my ever growing career as a clinical psychologist, I had the opportunity to work at the SUNY New Paltz Counseling Center in a professional capacity as well. Please feel free to contact me about my education at SUNY New Paltz, and my subsequent academic and work experience at my e-mail address. I wish you the very best in all of your academic and professional endeavors.



## 2000s

**Sarah B. Asmussen** (B. A. Class 2000)  
([sarah.asmussen@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.asmussen@gmail.com))



I graduated last June with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Pacific Graduate School of Psychology (PGSP-Stanford Affiliate in Palo Alto, CA). Last year I was on internship in Tampa at the VA Medical Center. I worked with 20-30 y/o men and women coming back with spinal cord injuries and/or head trauma from Iraq, suicidal children and adolescents, burn victims, and in-patients.

Now I'm further specializing in neuropsychology. I work with neurologists and neurosurgeons at the BNI (Barrow Neurological Institute) in Phoenix, Arizona. My primary focus now is understanding patients with epileptic and non-epileptic seizures ("pseudo-seizures," a.k.a. psychiatric seizures). I help decide whether the patients with seizures go on to surgery.

I recall Experimental Psychology quite vividly. I have to say that the course content and introduction to SPSS really helped me when I first started graduate school. In general, my SUNY New Paltz Psychology degree has been useful, despite many people asking me where and what SUNY New Paltz is. In fact, I found that many of my fellow Stanford graduate colleagues had less experience, knowledge, and useful coursework.

**Andrew Lehr** (B.A. Class of 2002 and M.A. Class of 2004) ([lehr48@yahoo.com](mailto:lehr48@yahoo.com))

I am currently working as a Registered Nurse on a Specialized Neurology, Medical-Surgical Unit at White Plains Hospital Center. After leaving high school, to attend SUNY New Paltz, I had little idea of what would become of the rest of my life. Luckily, with the help of a few key professors, including Dr. Geher, I began to spend more time learning. Ultimately I received a Bachelors degree in Psychology in 2002. With a growing interest in not only Psychology, but also research, I went on to achieve a Master's degree in Experimental Psychology from SUNY New Paltz in 2004. From this point, my direction seemed pretty clear. I intended to continue my education in Psychology and eventually receive a Doctoral degree, though a family crisis would soon intervene.

Soon after finishing my Masters degree and moving home, my mother tragically and suddenly passed away. My role as primary caretaker for my grandmother became clear, which would ultimately cause my career to be put on the back burner. This was a tough time in my life, but a very meaningful one. I then took a job as a Mental Health Worker at New York Presbyterian Hospital in Westchester, which is a Psychiatric Facility. After working for 2 years, I decided that I needed to look onward.

While caring for patients on a day-to-day basis, I learned that what had initially driven me into the field of Psychology was the prospect of helping people. With the aid of some much needed funding through my job; I went on to complete a second Bachelors degree, this time, in the area of Nursing, from Pace University - Pleasantville. While the medical field is a new prospect for me, very different from the theoretical world that I was so accustomed to, it will certainly be another learning experience. Although my current job entails working in the medical field, I have found that my knowledge and experience in the area of Psychology has certainly helped. My abilities to interact and therapeutically communicate with patients would not be possible without my Psychology background.

I owe much of my success in the job world to the education and knowledge bestowed upon me from the numerous excellent teachers that I came across while attending New Paltz. If anyone is interested in the nursing field or any of the areas I talked about feel free to email me.

**Benjamin Rickard** (B.A. Class of 2003)  
([ben9rk@aol.com](mailto:ben9rk@aol.com))



I will always look back at my time at SUNY New Paltz as a period of great personal and intellectual growth. My SUNY experience extended over 5 years, which included a brief hiatus that allowed me to refocus on my studies. When I returned to SUNY I sought out a strong support network and immersed myself in my school work. The school was flexible and accommodating in helping me achieve my educational goals. Further, many of my professors, most notably Dr. Glenn Geher, seemed sincerely interested in my success and often volunteered free time in helping me. With this support and my renewed educational ambition I was able to raise my GPA 1.5 points over my final 2 years and I was accepted into Northeastern University's MA in Political Science program. My intention was to complete the program and subsequently attend law school with the ultimate goal of going into politics.

I moved to Boston in 2003 and prepared myself to settle in for at least five more years of school. I immediately found work as a job coach for adults with mental retardation and started graduate school a few months later.

My final two years at SUNY provided me the necessary tools to succeed in grad school. However, while my grades and my interest in the course material remained high, I began to question my desire to work in the world of politics. I found my work in Human Services to be much more rewarding and it seemed very natural to me. I decided to hold off on law school and worked in Human Services for two more years following the completion of my studies at Northeastern. I was promoted to Project Director after 2 years and felt that I had hit a professional and financial ceiling. For this reason I recently took on a position of Account Manager/ Recruiter for a Boston area IT Staffing Firm. The money is much better and I could not work for a better organization.

SUNY New Paltz will always be special to me because it marked a turning point in my life. The people that I met and the knowledge that I gained there have unquestionably had a profound impact on my career and personal life.

**Karla Vermeulen** (M.A. Class of 2005)  
([vermeulen@fordham.edu](mailto:vermeulen@fordham.edu))

When I came to SUNY New Paltz in 2003 to begin a Masters in general psychology, I'd been out of college and working for more than a decade and I was very unsure if I was making the right decision in returning to school. I wondered if I'd be able to handle graduate-level academic work, and I wondered if I was crazy to give up a well-paying (but unsatisfying) job. But I quickly realized that I loved being challenged to really use my mind again, and I especially loved the collegial relationships I formed with professors, several of whom remain mentors and friends today. It was largely their encouragement that convinced me to go on for a PhD, which I'm in the last stages of (just the dissertation to go!) at Fordham, and it's their enthusiasm in the classroom and respect for students that I try to emulate now that I'm back at New Paltz as - to my own surprise - an adjunct teacher. Now I can't imagine how much poorer my life would have been if I hadn't taken the plunge into graduate school here, and I'd strongly encourage any undergraduates who are considering an advance degree to go for it. It's a ton of work, but it's also extremely rewarding.

**Kimberly Clouston** (B.A. Class of 2007)  
([kimmyclouston@hotmail.com](mailto:kimmyclouston@hotmail.com))



It seems like a lifetime has passed since May 20<sup>th</sup> of last year (2007), I'm not quite sure where to start. I spent my first semester after leaving New Paltz as the assistant women's volleyball coach at Kean University in northern New Jersey. It was a graduate assistant position, so I was enrolled in a master's program in exercise science as well. I felt ahead of the game in all my graduate classes in terms of understanding parameters for quality research and presenting scientific writing as a result of all my undergraduate experience in those areas. Kean's exercise science program is new and has few resources for research and internships, so I decided to break out of my comfort zone and have since applied to transfer to a bigger university with a more well- established program for next fall.

The resources at New Paltz: professors, coaches, administrators, and their commitment to my success and recognition have put me in a wonderful position to be able to take such academic risks with confidence. If all goes as planned I hope to join a club volleyball team wherever I end up and complete my master's in exercise science and health promotion with a certificate in gerontology by 2010. My psychology background has proven essential in understanding behavior modification and the barriers to health behavior, which are essential concepts in the field of health promotion. After that who knows, maybe a Ph. D, or maybe I will jump into the work world and try to embrace adulthood.

Either way, I know the work I put in at New Paltz and the people who aided in my success there will allow me to try on as many academic hats as I need to figure out how I can be most useful to the community while feeling fulfilled with my work. I hope everyone else is enjoying the present and thinking back on New Paltz as fondly as I am. I would love to hear what others are up to out in the world.

### **SPOTLIGHT ON YOU!**

Would you like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter? Do you have any news you'd like to share? We want to hear from you! Please contact one of the editors - either Dr. Freeman ([freemanp@newpaltz.edu](mailto:freemanp@newpaltz.edu)) or Dr. Geher ([geherg@newpaltz.edu](mailto:geherg@newpaltz.edu)) - or contact the Psychology Department:

Tel: (845) 257-3470

Web: [www.newpaltz.edu/psychology](http://www.newpaltz.edu/psychology)

See you October 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> for Alumni Reunion Weekend!