President’s Letter
from William M. Pinsof, PhD

Greetings! The past year has been extraordinary for all of us. On one hand, with the new administration in Washington, we have done what few thought possible and inspired people throughout the world. On the other hand, with the recession, we have unleashed the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Throughout our country, at this moment, there is more anxiety and concern about the future than most of us can remember.

The mission of The Family Institute, to strengthen and heal families from all walks of life, has never been more important than at this time in our history. We are a beacon of hope for families in these challenging times. Last year, we provided more than 53,000 therapy sessions to more than 5,000 different families. Forty percent of those sessions were offered through our Bette D. Harris Family and Child Clinic, where we provide high-quality mental health care to individuals, couples and families regardless of their ability to pay. With more people uninsured and without jobs, we know that those numbers will increase this year. I encourage you to refer anyone you think may be in need of our services to call us at 847-733-4300 to schedule a brief phone conversation with one of our intake coordinators who will connect them to the right therapist. Every consultation is confidential and very important to us.

Our education programs continue to thrive. Through a combination of philanthropic support and the generosity of The Graduate School, we offered scholarship support to more than 20% of the 100 students in the Master’s programs in Marital and Family Therapy and Counseling Psychology that we run at Northwestern University. Our research programs are also expanding, with special emphasis on new, cutting-edge research to increase the effectiveness of the treatment of Generalized Anxiety Disorder, an increasingly common problem in these stressful times. We are also entering into a collaborative research project with a consortium of Norwegian psychiatric centers at the University of Oslo in which they will be using our STIC® (Systemic Therapy Inventory of Change questionnaire) and our STIC® feedback system to assess family and their change over the course of therapy.

2009 marks our 40th Anniversary. To celebrate, we are planning a variety of special events throughout the year ranging from dinner talks in people’s homes to our Fall Conference with Sue Johnson, PhD, on Friday, November 6. Most importantly, we will continue to be there, offering families the caring and knowledge that will strengthen them for the challenges ahead.

Thanks so much for your interest and support.

William M. Pinsof, PhD, LMFT
President, The Family Institute
at Northwestern University

Angeline Heisler, MM
Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, The Family Institute
at Northwestern University

Cheryl Rampage, PhD
Senior Vice President for Programs and Academic Affairs, The Family Institute
at Northwestern University

Rebecca Hoffman, MSEd
Vice President for Institutional Advancement, The Family Institute
at Northwestern University

Karen Krefman, MSMFT, LMFT
Vice President for Strategy and Planning, The Family Institute
at Northwestern University

Reginald C. Richardson, PhD, LCSW
Vice President for Quality Assurance and Evaluation, The Family Institute
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Suzanne Puntillo
Director of Development

Cyndi Schu
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Erin Conway
Development & Public Affairs Coordinator

Katie Schechter
Grants & Fundraising Coordinator

Institute News is published two times a year for friends, donors and alumni.

To join the mailing list...
To join the mailing list and receive updates and further information on events and happenings at The Family Institute, please call 312-609-5300, ext. 485.

Are you a member of the media? Would you like to speak with Family Institute staff? Contact Erin Conway at econway@family-institute.org or 312-609-5300, ext. 480.

Photos courtesy of Family Institute Archives, Mary Hanlon Photography, Jeff Ellis Photography, Andrew Campbell Photography and Tom Lane Photography.
Passing It On

_In November, we held the Golub Family Lecture, the third in a series of evening events offered free of charge thanks to the generous support of the Golub family._ William M. Pinsof, PhD, presented _Passing It On: The Generational Transfer of Wisdom, Power and Wealth._ More than 100 people gathered at The Standard Club in Chicago to learn about passing wisdom, power and wealth from one generation to the next within families and organizations. The Institute is dedicated to sharing knowledge with broad audiences via special public programs such as this one.

Mental Health Parity

_This past October, the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health and Addiction Act of 2008 was passed._ This Act represents a milestone in mental health care. Effective January 1, 2010, the law ends health insurance benefits inequity between mental health/substance use disorders and medical/surgical benefits for group health plans with more than 50 subscribers.

_The Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 will:_

- Require that all health insurance plans that offer mental health coverage provide that coverage on par with financial and treatment coverage offered for other physical illnesses.
- Extend to all aspects of plan coverage, including day/visit limits, dollar limits, co-insurance, co-payments, deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums.
- Ensure parity coverage for both in-network and out-of-network services.
- Preserve stronger state parity and consumer protection laws while extending parity protection to 82 million people who are not protected by state laws.

The law does not mandate that group plans must provide mental health coverage if they don’t already offer it, but it will improve coverage for about 113 million Americans. The measure also includes a small business exemption for companies with fewer than 51 employees.”

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Does high-quality mental health care sound like a fantasy? It’s not. The Family Institute at Northwestern University is dedicated to offering high-quality mental health care to everyone regardless of one’s economic circumstances or the availability of insurance coverage. To make this goal a reality, we are very proud to say that our Bette D. Harris Family and Child Clinic offers care on a sliding-fee scale where nobody is turned away regardless of ability to pay. Yet there is more we can do with your help.

Many people who come to us for care have complex problems that require the expertise of an experienced therapist, psychological testing or a psychiatric evaluation. We do not currently have underwriting for these types of services, which have become crucial as more people suffer job loss and loss of insurance benefits along with state budget shortfalls diminishing the availability of community mental health services. Our newly formed Critical Case Fund will permit our most senior therapists, consulting psychiatrists and other affiliates to become actively involved in the care and treatment of people who would otherwise have no access to desperately needed services. A gift of any size will help. $150 will allow a family in crisis to be seen by an experienced therapist. $300 will pay for a psychiatric evaluation that allows a depressed adult to get appropriate medication. $1,500 covers the cost of a full testing battery for a child who is failing in school because of learning issues and an anxiety disorder.

For more information about supporting the Critical Case Fund, contact Rebecca Hoffman, rhoffman@family-institute.org or 312-609-5300, ext. 482.

IN THE NEWS

Family Institute staff therapists are often asked by members of the print, broadcast and online media to comment on world events, relationship issues and health matters. Here are some highlights from the past few months.

MEDIA MENTIONS

November 2008
“I don’t think the obsession [with ‘Twilight’ movie] is unhealthy. I think the unhealthy part of that could be if the parent gets caught up in the drama.”

John Ardizzone
ABC News
“Teen hysteria over ‘Twilight’ actor”

“Children thrive in a family environment that offers two things: structure and warmth.”

Cheryl Rampage
North Shore Magazine
“Privileged”

January 2009
“I think we are going to see more and more commuter marriages in the future, given the global economy and the fact that our technology now makes this more doable.”

Reginald Richardson
New York Times
“Living apart for the paycheck”

March 2009
“People are much more open to sending their résumés out of state. In this sort of job market, people are going to take care of their families. This may be what they’re forced to do.”

Reginald Richardson
Chicago Tribune
“As economy continues to falter and jobs become scarce, more couples are stuck in commuter marriages.”

“People already suffering from anxiety or depression find this latest layer — the economic stressors — an additional burden. Or, it’s brought anxiety and depression to the fore in cases where it had been just under the surface. Other families, ones who’d not been afflicted, look around and see there’s no certainty. They see neighbors and friends losing their jobs, or their homes, and they’re all stressed.”

Lynne Knobloch-Fedders
Chicago Tribune
“Your emotional stimulus plan”

“Particularly people who have been married for a long time and developed a strong bond, it’s very hard for them to be apart. When one needs specialized care, it’s hard for the other to be away.”

Linda Rubinowitz
Chicago Tribune
“Enduring union”
Sharing Knowledge in Ohio

This past February, William M. Pinsof, PhD, was invited to speak to a group of parents in Hudson, Ohio, on behalf of The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation. Thanks to the help of The Morgan Foundation and Hudson Community First, a local non-profit, more than 70 people gathered at the VUE Restaurant to hear Dr. Pinsof deliver his talk, Raising Boys and Raising Girls: The Changing Pathways to Adulthood in the 21st Century. Dr. Pinsof explained how socioeconomic and cultural changes in the last 30 years have affected the developmental pathways of boys and girls as they make their ways to adulthood. Guests walked away with specific ways they can help their children successfully confront these challenges.

The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation is a supporter of the Dr. John J.B. Morgan Fellowship at The Family Institute, a post-graduate training program. The Foundation expressed a desire to collaborate beyond the Fellowship. Based in Northeast Ohio, they wanted to share the Institute’s knowledge with their community. We were extremely excited to have had this opportunity and help them accomplish their vision.
Is Group Therapy Right For You?

Group therapy is proven to be an effective and efficient form of treatment for many of the issues that people experience in today's world. Groups address personal issues where they typically occur — with other people. We live, work and play as members of groups, and therapy is no different.

“The Group Therapy Program at The Family Institute is dedicated to developing and providing group therapeutic services, as well as enhancing training, education and research for this effective and affordable modality of treatment,” says David Klow, MSMFT.

The Family Institute offers three different types of groups:

**THERAPY GROUPS** utilize interaction, sharing and feedback to help participants address a wide range of issues, including problems in relationships.

**SUPPORT GROUPS** are usually organized around a problem or concern that is shared by all of the participants. Often these groups are designed to help people adjust to new situations or experiences.

**PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL GROUPS** help participants develop new skills as they share information and gain knowledge about a particular topic or issue.

In a typical session, one of The Family Institute’s professionally-trained therapists leads the discussion as members work to express their problems, feelings, ideas and reactions. It provides members with the opportunity to learn with and from other people.

Group therapy can benefit almost anyone. As Klow explains, “Many of the men who have participated in The Men’s Group report increased personal and relational satisfaction. They credit the group for helping them gain personal insight and improve relational skills that they were unable to attain elsewhere.”

The Family Institute offers numerous groups which address a wide variety of issues. Below are the current groups the Institute is conducting.

**Adoption Support Group**
Parent and child groups for adoptive families to explore self-identity and receive support through shared experiences.

**Becoming Parents**
A group for expecting couples to enrich the experience of pregnancy and prepare for the transition to parenthood.

**Coffee, Kids & Conversation**
A parent enrichment group for parents of children ages 2-6 years old to enhance confidence, competence and joy in parenting.

**Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training Group**
A skills training group teaching mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, distress tolerance and emotion regulation.

**Finding Meaning in the Loss of a Loved One**
A peer process group for grief and bereavement for anyone ages 18-30 who has experienced the loss of a loved one.

**Girls Who Rock**
A group for teenage women to navigate common transitions through musical exploration.

**The Mother-Daughter Connection**
A group for mothers and their 9- or 10-year-old daughters to help gain knowledge and build skills to strengthen and maintain loving and open communication during the middle school years and beyond.

**The Men’s Group**
A group for men to support each other through life’s transitions and become empowered to move on to the next stage of their lives.

**The Peer Group for Family Business Participants**
This group provides a confidential and supportive environment for exploring the intersection between the “family” and the “business,” while allowing for rapport-building and creating connections with participants in other family businesses.

**Relationship Skills Group**
A group for adults managing long-term mental illness who are motivated to improve their social skills and gain confidence.

For more information on The Group Therapy program at The Family Institute, please contact David Klow at 847-733-4300, ext. 705 or visit [www.family-institute.org](http://www.family-institute.org).
Parental Depression, Parental Conflict and the Social-Emotional Functioning of Young Children

By Emily Durbin, PhD

The Parental Depression, Parental Conflict and the Social-Emotional Functioning of Young Children research group is interested in understanding how the family environment influences and is responsive to personality risk factors for depression in children and their parents. Children and adults with higher levels of neuroticism and lower levels of extraversion are at an elevated risk for developing depression.

One way these traits might increase risk for individuals is by shaping the quality of interactions among family members (e.g., highly neurotic adults might create more conflict between themselves and their partners), or by making some children more responsive to aspects of the family environment (e.g., more neurotic children may be more sensitive to and adversely affected by criticism from parents). Certain traits may also have a protective effect; for example, children high in extraversion may develop warmer and more intimate relationships with their siblings and parents. Thus, in addition to known genetic factors that act to make depression run in families, components of the family environment may influence personality risk factors for depression.

In our study, families from the greater Chicago community completed a series of assessments measuring personality risk factors in parents and their preschool-aged children, engaged in structured laboratory tasks designed to measure interactions between parents, between the child and each parent (mother-child and father-child), and as a family (mother, father and child). Finally, parents participated in diagnostic interviews that measured their mental health across their lifespan.

Regarding the final question, initial analyses suggest that while mothers and fathers display similar amounts of warmth, criticism and discipline in interaction with their child, mothers’ parenting is driven strongly by her child’s temperament, while fathers’ parenting is less determined by characteristics of his child. Regarding the second question, parental depression appears to be related to multiple aspects of observed parent-child interaction. Specifically, parents with a history of depression are less engaged when interacting with their child and are less responsive to their child’s attempts at interaction.

This study will deliver knowledge for others to draw upon, changing the future of children’s research.

Data from this study will address a number of questions, including:

- Are personality traits related to how family members interact with one another?
- Is parent mental health related to the parent-child relationship?
- Are these relationships the same or different for mothers versus fathers?

Emily Durbin, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Kovler Scholar of The Family Institute. She received her PhD in 2002 from Stony Brook University. Contact Dr. Durbin at edurbin@northwestern.edu.
Commencement
Illinois State Senator Christine Radogno will be the keynote speaker for Commencement on Saturday, June 20, to be held at the Alice Millar Chapel on the Northwestern campus.

Save the date!
The Alumni Spring Social will be held on Wednesday, April 29 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at The Tasting Room (1415 W. Randolph St.) in Chicago. Tickets are $10. RSVP to Erin Conway at econway@family-institute.org or 312-609-5300, ext. 480.

Reunion time!
The Family Institute is planning a 40th Anniversary Alumni Reunion. If you are interested in helping to plan the event, please contact Suzanne Puntillo at 312-609-5300, ext. 484.

To help us reach out to all of our graduates for this celebration, we are trying to find alumni whose contact information has been lost. If you know anyone on this list, please contact Alumni Relations at 312-609-5300, ext. 480.

David Bryk
Judith Carpenter
Judy Chiodo
Susan Colavito
Bonnie Cox
Susan George
Jackie Gilette
Erica Gustasson
Linda Horwitz
Joseph Huber
Delores Kavanaugh
Constance Kehl
Lawrence Kerns
Loretta Lacayo
Stanley Levi
Isolde Loughlin
Brigit Lutz
Linda Lyman
Donald Mackay
Julie Matja
James McCoy
Linda Melby
Sandra Meredith
Susan Merit-Nachinson
Connie Napless
Perreault
Donald Norum
Megan Owens
Alisa Paulsen
Arthur Raske
Noreen Riordan
Suzanne Rosenfeld
Michel Rosenthal
Mona Ross
Madelon Rudman
Bruce Smith
Susan Ubben-Miller
Terri Watson
Nanci Weinfield

*Two-Year Training Program

Alumni Through the Years
The Family Institute is celebrating 40 years since its founding. We’ve dusted off some old photos to share with you. Join us for a look back at moments from our history.

1975 Alumni Fall Conference

1976 graduation

Charles Kramer and Miriam Reitz (‘71-2YT*)

Jeannette Kramer led The Family Institute with husband Charles Kramer for 18 years, spearheading growth and innovation in the field of family therapy.
Online Presence

The Family Institute at Northwestern University has hit the Internet. We are now on Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) and Facebook (www.facebook.com). With your help, we hope to increase traffic to our sites and add content to our pages. Please feel free to add what you can about our Master’s and training programs or your memories of The Family Institute. Be sure to add us as a friend and hear about our upcoming events.

Change.org

The Family Institute now has a page on change.org. This website serves as a platform that aims to connect people, allowing them to exchange information, share ideas and support the issues they care about. Check out our page here: www.change.org/nonprofits/view/175765.

LinkedIn

The Alumni Association now has a group on LinkedIn. This can be a helpful networking tool, as well as a way to stay in touch with other alumni. Please contact Erin Conway at econway@family-institute.org if you are interested in joining.

If you would like to update your contact information, please visit our website at www.family-institute.org/alumni or contact Erin Conway at econway@family-institute.org or 312-609-5300, ext. 480.

If you would like to make a gift to the Alumni Scholarship Fund, please contact Suzanne Puntillo at spuntillo@family-institute.org or 312-609-5300, ext. 484.
Coping With Economic Uncertainty

By Lynne Knobloch-Fedders, PhD

In these tough times, financial worries have become overwhelming for many families. It’s difficult to maintain a sense of personal well-being when news about the economy seems to get worse every day. Financial worries can severely strain a marriage, and children can be negatively affected. Here are some tips for families coping with financial worries.

1. Educate yourself about your financial situation.

Sit down together and look at the details of your situation. If it’s too difficult to do this alone, have a financial professional look at the numbers with you. Educating yourselves is the first step towards assessing the problem and looking for solutions.

2. Communicate to your children in age-appropriate ways.

When you talk to your children, be both straightforward and reassuring. Try to strike a balance between giving age-appropriate information but not overwhelming your children with unnecessary details.

3. Focus on what you can control, not on what you can’t.

Focusing on what you can’t control tends to leave families feeling helpless. It’s healthier to focus on what you can do. Can you save more or spend less? Can you balance your budget by making small changes in your spending or saving habits?

4. Work together as a family on a financial plan.

When financial worries become overwhelming, family relationships can be affected by the strain. Work with each other to make a financial plan. Young children can help clip and organize coupons. Older children can organize a garage sale or save spare change that can be used as the family’s “fun money.”

5. Take joy in life’s simple things.

Make sure that you don’t focus on money matters to the exclusion of life’s pleasures. Spend time with family and friends and enjoy activities that don’t cost anything – reading books from the library, going to the park, etc.

6. Consider those less fortunate than you.

Counting your blessings is one of the best ways to reduce stress and worry. Spend time volunteering for those less fortunate, and you will probably feel better about your own situation. Your family can spend a couple of hours volunteering at a homeless shelter, nursing home or hospital.

7. Take care of your physical and emotional health.

Make sure your family is getting enough sleep, eating right and exercising. If you notice that you or a family member worries constantly, is irritable, not sleeping well, withdrawn from friends or family, or using drugs or alcohol, it’s time to seek professional help.
What is your favorite book?
I liked Winesburg, Ohio for its daring foray into the grotesque and for its exposure of the underbelly of small-town American Midwest life. It’s a fascinating, if a bit unpleasant, novel.

What is your dream vacation?
I would have to do more research, but I’ve been drawn to Mauritius for some time. It has a dizzying array and mix of cultures.

What is your favorite food?
Chicken vindaloo and garlic nan. Yum. I will also never turn down a big bowl of Pho Ga (Vietnamese spicy chicken soup).

Do you prefer the city or the country?
I prefer the city, but I’ve come to re-appreciate the country, especially the hilly, rural Wisconsin terrain of my youth. Because it’s impossible to spend an evening listening to live Malian music after dining on chicken vindaloo and garlic nan in the country, I think I will always prefer the city. The city offers variety and intellectual stimulation. Perhaps a person needs both city and country – to learn about others and to learn about oneself.

What do you do to relax?
From April to (hopefully) October, I watch the White Sox. After they won it all in ’05, I’ve been much more relaxed. In a way, I also find playing tennis relaxing. Although I love my job, relaxing means getting absorbed in something quite different.

What do you like most about working at The Family Institute?
Dedicated staff and colleagues with diverse backgrounds and interests; so many opportunities to learn and grow as a therapist.

Describe The Family Institute in three words.
Hard-working; caring; leading.

Any other words of wisdom?
Empathy cannot be overestimated as a powerful act (to oneself, one’s family, one’s society and one’s world).

Contact Dan at dgill@family-institute.org.

Dan Gill, MSMFT, LCPC

NEW FACES

Maru Torres-Gregory, JD, MSMFT
Clinical Intern
Maru is a multi-lingual Marriage and Family Therapist at The Family Institute, where she is completing her clinical internship towards her PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy, and working to earn the Approved Supervisor status from AAMFT. Maru is fully bilingual in Spanish and English, and is fluent in Portuguese and French.

Board of Directors

Denis Field, CPA, JD, LLM, is Chairman of the Board and founding partner of the Executive Recruiting firm Gartner Partners LLC. Denis currently serves on the Board of Directors of a privately held company, Health Integrated Network. He received his bachelor’s degree in accounting from Michigan Tech University, his JD from Thomas M. Cooley School of Law and his LLM in taxation from New York University. Denis resides in Naples, Florida, and spends several days per month in Chicago.

Paula Harris is Senior Vice-President for Residential Asset Management at Golub and Company, an international real estate investment and development company. Paula is recognized for being a key strategist and exceptional motivator of sales and management personnel. Paula understands, supports and is committed to the mission and vision of The Family Institute.
The Family Institute at Northwestern University, founded in 1968, is the premier organization dedicated to couple and family therapy, community outreach, education and research. In addition to our community sites, we have four staff practice locations, including Evanston, Chicago, LaGrange Park and Northbrook. For more information, please call 847-733-4300 or visit www.family-institute.org.