President’s Letter

from WILLIAM M. PINSOF, PhD

Dear Friends,

The theme of this Spring’s Newsletter, “Pathways to Excellence,” reflects The Family Institute’s commitment to excellence in everything we do. Our clinical goal is to lead the way in providing the best psychotherapy and counseling for individuals, couples and families from all walks of life who struggle with mental disorders and/or relationship problems. Our educational goal is to provide the best education and training to the next generation of counselors, couple and family therapists, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists so they can provide the best practices to their clients. Lastly, our research aims to illuminate the complex relationship between mental disorders and the relationship systems in which they occur, to illuminate the pathways of change in individual, couple and family therapy, and to give therapists the best scientific information we can provide to improve their treatments. We are fortunate to be partnered with a great research university like Northwestern as we pursue excellence, particularly in our education and research initiatives.

However, our efforts to strengthen and heal families and the individuals within them require your interest and support. We cannot continue to achieve our very ambitious goals without friends like you, who understand the critical role of families in the physical and mental health of our community, our nation and our world. Thank you for your sustained interest and support. I hope you enjoy this newsletter as you learn about the people, projects and programs that make The Family Institute the vibrant, growing and caring institution it is today.

With gratitude,

William M. Pinsof
President

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

Join The Family Institute mailing list and receive updates and further information on events and happenings by contacting Michelle Weil at 312-609-5300, ext. 480 or mweil@family-institute.org.

If you are interested in donating to The Family Institute, please contact Tamara Reed at 312-609-5300, ext. 484 or treed@family-institute.org.

If you are a member of the media and would like to speak with a Family Institute expert, please contact Cyndi Schu at 312-609-5300, ext. 483 or cschu@family-institute.org.

Photos courtesy of Andrew Campbell Photography. Published in April 2012.
Pathways to Knowledge

Monogamy: Some Not-So-Simple Truths about the ‘M’ Word

Over 110 guests joined us at our Fall Circle of Knowledge lecture. Cheryl Rampage, PhD, Senior Vice President for Programs and Academic Affairs, presented Monogamy: Some Not-So-Simple Truths about the “M” Word.

Guests learned many things about monogamy and the impact of infidelity on relationships from Dr. Rampage. Among many interesting points, she shared that monogamy is not a natural preference among humans or animals but is found in 10-15% of primates, 3% of mammals and 90% of birds. In the United States, infidelity appears to be on the rise among older men and younger couples and yet our culture does not tolerate departures from monogamy.

Dr. Rampage recommended that couples renew their commitment to be faithful throughout their marriage. Though monogamy may be good for most marriages, it doesn’t mean it is easy nor can it be taken for granted. It requires a commitment to giving the relationship a privileged status, not only in word, but in action.

The lecture brought in nearly $2,000 in donations. The Circle of Knowledge lectures are wonderful ways we connect with our friends and supporters, bringing them knowledge and expertise on timely and relevant topics.

‘Monogamy is the most difficult of all marital arrangements.’
- Margaret Mead
These concerned parents wanted a better understanding of their child and a better way to parent. Over the course of the assessment, I recognized that we were observing Asperger’s Disorder, a form of autism. Using our new evaluation model, I was able to uncover the problem and offer understanding about their child. Over several sessions, they let me help each of them shift their thinking about Asperger’s and focus on deeper questions about what to do. We were able to move from shock (at the diagnosis) to acceptance to a gentle transformation of how to think about this problem, and how to begin a gradual change in how they thought and acted.

This story illustrates our new model of assessment. It follows the pioneering work of Dr. Steven Finn and his colleagues at the University of Texas at Austin. We call our testing model Collaborative Psychological Assessment. We use a similar method to Dr. Finn’s, whether we are doing a psychological or neuropsychological assessment.

The traditional child assessment involves gaining a family and child history, administering a variety of tests, and then giving parents feedback and a report, including recommendations. This process makes the psychologist a kind of arbiter of truth and leaves the parents apprehensive while they await the outcome. The Collaborative Psychological Assessment Model, however, begins with seeing both parents, not only to gain a history but to spend time forming a collaborative bond and focusing on their questions. The conversation assures everyone that we are listening and choosing the tests that will best answer their questions.

Next, the psychologist unobtrusively visits the child’s classroom to observe and consult with the teachers. This helps get a sense of the child in a natural setting with peers, observing social and learning factors. Meeting the teacher(s) gives us another perspective about behavior and learning and gives the teacher(s) an opportunity to ask questions. Only after this is the child seen and given a variety of standard psychological tests in a friendly atmosphere to put him at ease. The child comes for a few hours at a time, in as few sessions as possible to minimize school absences. Contrary to common practice, the parents may be invited to observe the assessment process, sometimes from behind a mirror, sometimes with a doctoral student present to call attention to important clues being revealed. At the end of each session, the psychologist sees the parents privately to give preliminary findings, answer any questions or for further information. Both the parents and psychologist assume joint ownership. This helps prepare parents for the results that are emerging. Figuring out what to do next evolves from conversations. Some helpful parenting or teaching methods can be tried at home even as the evaluation is in progress.

At the conclusion of the process, both the parents and the child are given feedback separately. Depending on the child’s age, feedback for a child may take the form of an illustrated story the assessor writes and reads aloud. It highlights some positive finding or gives an alternative way the child might become more at ease or learn in a new way. Sessions and the assessment itself address any anxiety or distaste a child may have developed about learning. The
parents are then shown the results and given suggestions about what is needed and how to do that. The 15-20 page report is typically written in a familiar tone. The original questions are reviewed, one by one. The test results are given to each question the parents had asked. This is followed by suggestions and an addendum giving the scores for all of the tests.

We are pleased to extend Dr. Finn’s work and bring it to the Chicago area. It fits The Family Institute’s model of therapy – that the individual is best helped by taking into account the larger community or “system” in which (s)he lives. It respects everyone’s knowledge of the child, parents and teachers especially. The assessor’s professional expertise becomes a way to uncover new information and to open paths at home and school to use what has been found.

To learn more about the Assessment program, please contact Dr. Ardizzone at jardizzone@family-institute.org.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

People often ask about the difference between psychological and neuropsychological assessments. A neuropsychological assessment examines the brain by measuring the various areas of functioning we assign to the brain. Such things as cognition, memory, attention, spatial skills and visuomotor functioning are tested in detail. What emerges is a very full picture of how one is functioning, what problems there may be in one area and, of course, recommendations for how to begin to improve. A psychological assessment looks at functioning, too, but does not typically measure all areas of performance but only the ones most pertinent to the questions at hand. Which is best depends on what is needed to fully answer the problem presented, as well as on medical and/or accident history. This is usually answered in consultation.

PSYCHOTHERAPY CHANGE PROJECT

Through a generous donor, our Psychotherapy Change Project is moving into its next phase. Board member Dan Epstein graciously pledged $500,000 for the project. These funds will allow us to bring the latest in technology to the STIC® website, allowing for enhanced functionality and a more positive user experience.

The Psychotherapy Change Project tracks how people change over the course of therapy and therapists’ behavior associated with those changes.
Districts 65 and 202 are reporting record numbers of students who are homeless and/or come from homes in which their parents are chronically unemployed. Clearly, with approximately 45% of the students in these school districts considered living under the federal poverty line, the need for affordable health care, including mental health, is great. Many of these students come from “hard to reach” families that participate in various institutions from a distance.

The team leading our effort to provide these services consists of Community Program Coordinator Carl Hampton, MSW, LCSW, and two supervisors, Chazé Roberts, MSMFT, and Corina Mattson, LMFT. Approximately 14 Family Institute therapists-in-training are placed in one of six community sites that are clustered into two regions, South and North. South region sites are Oakton Elementary, Chute Middle School and Evanston Township High School and North region sites are Kingsley Elementary, Haven Middle School and Family Focus, Our Place.

Our community-based program allows us to address mental health challenges in places where clients already feel connected. We conduct therapy in the homes of our clients and at the community sites, removing some of the more rigid constraints such as transportation, childcare and family organization that keep clients from visiting outpatient clinics. Working in a community context enables our students to learn how to practice psychotherapy with various populations. After graduation, most of our therapists-in-training will initially be employed to work in community contexts and, therefore, need to have the requisite skills to engage families who present much differently than those in an outpatient clinic setting.

Our students are trained in a model of therapy in which they are comfortable working in a larger multi-systemic context, prepared to provide culturally competent services. This model, developed at The Family Institute, is called Integrated Problem Centered Metaframeworks (IPCM). IPCM enhances the flexibility necessary to work with clients who may have more challenges to meet basic needs than those we might see in an outpatient clinic.

Our community-based program applies strategies that promote strengths and coping skills.

For more information about our community-based program, please contact Carl Hampton at champton@family-institute.org.
Pathways to Innovation
Behavioral Medicine Research Lab

Under the direction of our new Vice President for Research, Tamara Sher, PhD, The Family Institute introduces a new research initiative, Behavioral Medicine Research Lab, focusing on illness and couples, and the challenges they face.

Did you know that nearly 1 in 2 people have a chronic medical condition? This could be an illness like cancer, diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis, or a condition such as migraines or back pain from a car accident. Almost all of these people will be in or have been in a committed, romantic relationship. Taken together, these statistics suggest that most of us will experience illness from the point of view of either the patient and/or the partner of a patient. As Principal Investigator, Dr. Sher is deeply interested in the effects that a relationship has on a medical condition, and conversely, the effects that a medical condition has on a relationship.

Current studies in the lab include the following:
• The effects of hearing loss on couples and relationship functioning
• The communication of couples in which one person has heart disease
• The effects of bariatric surgery on couple functioning

Within the research lab, students, both graduate and undergraduate, are involved with all aspects of the research process including literature reviews, methodology, analysis of data and interpretation of data findings. They are also an integral part of the dissemination of findings including participation in the writing of articles and the presentation of findings.

For more information on the Behavioral Medicine Research Lab, please contact Dr. Sher at tsher@family-institute.org.

IN MEMORIAM

The Family Institute lost a true friend with the passing of Arthur C. Nielsen, Jr. in October 2011. Mr. Nielsen and his late wife, Patty, supported the Institute from its very beginning in 1968. Through their generosity and foresight as Institute leaders and benefactors, Art and Patty played a crucial role in helping The Family Institute become a beacon for families in trouble and a pioneer in the development of better ways to strengthen and heal families. Their devotion to the mission of the Institute is deeply appreciated by the Institute’s staff, Board, students and alumni. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his family.
Pathways to Our Future
Alumnus of the Year Awards

The Alumni Association held a reception following the November Fall Conference and the Alumni Association’s Annual Meeting to honor the 2011 Alumnus of the Year Award recipients from the Marriage and Family Therapy and Counseling Psychology programs. Alumni, staff, faculty and current students reconnected with one another at the event.

The Marriage and Family Therapy award went to Joanne M. May, PhD, who graduated from The Family Institute’s Two-Year Postgraduate Training Program in Marriage and Family Therapy in 1993. She is currently the Director of Behavioral Health Services at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center. Prior to joining Advocate, Dr. May served as Chief Operating Officer at Community Counseling Centers of Chicago (C4). She has built a strong and impressive career as a clinical psychologist in community health and private practice.

The award for achievement in Counseling Psychology went to Ava Carn-Watkins, PhD, who graduated from The Family Institute’s Counseling Psychology program in 1991 and is currently the Director of Clinical Training in The Family Institute’s Counseling Psychology program. Dr. Carn-Watkins joined the Counseling Psychology program as Assistant Program Director and Assistant Clinical Training Director in 1993. In 2007, she was appointed Director of Clinical Training and also served as Interim Program Director for the 2009-2010 academic year. Dr. Watkins has also worked in private practice as a clinical psychologist for over 20 years, seeing young adults and adults in individual and couples therapy.

Alumni Advisory Board List
Janice Witzel, PhD, LCPC
Chair
Heather Bates, LMFT
Dana Bennison, MA, LPC
Beth Chung, MSMFT
Class Representative
Erica Estes Watson, MA, LPC
Gary Friend, DPM, LPC
Jaime Henry-Juravic, LMFT
Jayne Kinsman, LMFT
David Klow, LMFT
Ashly Lawrence, MA, LCPC
Patricia Peña, MSMFT
Maryah Qureshi, MSMFT
Maryanne Williams, PsyD, RDDP
Debbie Youderian, LMFT
Dina Zwiebel, MA, NCC
Class Representative
Tamara Reed
Director of Development
Michelle Weil
Development and Database Manager

UPCOMING EVENTS
The Inside Track – May 17
All Family Institute alumni are invited to re-connect with The Family Institute and each other at the annual Inside Track event which will feature one of our very own alum as the evening’s special guest speaker.

Stay tuned for more information about this wonderful evening.

Classes of 1997-2002-2007 Reunion – September 8
The Alumni Association is pleased to welcome back our alumni. Watch for information about the upcoming 5-10-15 year Alumni Reunion.

www.family-institute.org/alumni

SINCE YOU ASKED
A series of questions and answers about The Family Institute’s Alumni Association

What are the reasons to stay involved with the Alumni Association?

After graduation, many students wonder how they will maintain contact with their colleagues from whom they have learned much and grown close. The Alumni Association is here to help maintain that contact by promoting a spirit of loyalty and camaraderie among alumni. Through our many networking and social events, advocacy efforts, mentoring programs and professional development opportunities, the Alumni Association is here to help.

You will also receive the Alumni Association’s quarterly eNewsletters with updates on The Family Institute, both Master’s programs, notes from the Program Directors and job openings in addition to news about fellow alumni. You will also receive the biannual Family Institute newsletters and invitations to our Circle of Knowledge events.

The Alumni Association also offers an online Practice Directory, where alumni can be listed for a yearly membership contribution. The Practice Directory is a simple way for you to market and enhance your business, make referrals, build your professional network and stay connected.

Have a question about your Alumni Association? Email us at Alumni_Information@family-institute.org.
Pathways to New Experiences
Rainbows at The Family Institute
By Lisa Gordon, PhD

Peanut butter and jelly. Thanksgiving and football. Sunday morning and a crossword puzzle. Each of these entities is good alone, but partnered, the pairs are awesome. As splendid is the collaboration between The Family Institute and Rainbows, an international not-for-profit organization that eases children through family change due to parental death or divorce. At our Northbrook office, graduate students in our Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology program facilitate peer-support groups for children in grades K-6th, at no cost to families.

The collaboration provides the following benefits:

- **For North Shore children:** A safe, nurturing environment for these children to mourn the loss of their relatives and/or nuclear family. Grieving with their comrades allows children a sense of hope, normalcy and peace that neither parents nor individual therapists can confer.

- **For North Shore families:** A team member to shoulder the challenge of guiding children through devastating family change. Parents who have scant emotional room or practical knowledge for holding children in their pain can gain relief from accessing not one, but two child advocates.

- **For our graduate students:** Experience working with children and facilitating groups. This unique training opportunity increases the marketability of our students and thus the reputation of the Master's in Counseling Psychology program.

- **For The Family Institute:** Enhanced breadth of the resources we provide to our community. The Family Institute-Rainbows partnership creates an additional, powerful medium to further our mission of strengthening and healing families.

For more information about Rainbows at The Family Institute or to refer a child, please contact Lisa Gordon, PhD, at 847-733-4300, ext. 606 or lgordon@family-institute.org.

Downtown Expands

The Family Institute recently took occupancy of a third floor at the downtown Chicago location. The 11th floor houses our Billing department as well as seven additional clinical offices. This expansion allows us to help more individuals, couples and families.
INTRODUCING OUR BOARD

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Esther Franklin

Though I love traveling the world, Chicago runs through my veins and I’ll always call it home. I have a life-long fascination with people, understanding what makes them tick and discovering what matters and is meaningful in their lives. One of the areas I’m most passionate about is underserved, overlooked, under-valued, and “invisible” people and communities. Oftentimes the brightest ideas, greatest innovations and most compelling solutions come from those with non-traditional views and experiences. As our world confronts change, transition and consternation in ways never before experienced, keeping close to people with alternative perspectives promotes a better world for us all.

What attracted you to The Family Institute?

My attraction to The Family Institute is driven by its dedication to the development of expert practitioners, knowledge and processes – all designed to help today’s spectrum of modern families address and overcome increasing challenges presented in the course of daily life.

What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure on the Board?

I hope to inspire the organization in a variety of ways – stimulate new thoughts and ideas, help transform them into tangible assets used in service of people in need, and ensure that the people and communities I spoke about earlier have increasing access to and benefit from our offerings.

Describe the Institute in three words.


Ed Laumann, PhD

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I hold the George Herbert Mead Distinguished Service Chair at the University of Chicago and am an active researcher on sexuality and health and aging. I’ve been the editor of the American Journal of Sociology, chair of the department of sociology, dean of the division of social sciences and provost of the University of Chicago, and am currently the director of the Ogburn Stouffer Center for Population and Social Organization.

What attracted you to The Family Institute?

Years before I joined the Board, I presented at the Institute about my sex research. Then an old family friend, Jim Feldman (current Board Chair), recruited me to join the Board, bringing my administrative skills and counsel about the affiliation of The Family Institute and Northwestern University. Dr. Bill Pinsof also wanted to have a sounding board to explore strategies in building greater research capability. I also assisted in securing funding for a national survey of adults to establish population-based norming data for the STIC®.

What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure on the Board?

I hope to continue to be an advisor and counselor with the issues surrounding The Family Institute/Northwestern University affiliation. I also hope to enhance strategies for further research capabilities.

Describe the Institute in three words.

Professional. Promoter of important psychotherapy interventions. Holistically serves families.
Emily Bettin  
Psychotherapy Change Project Administrator  
Following six months of volunteer research work on the GAD Project, Emily Bettin has joined The Family Institute as a full-time employee on the Psychotherapy Change Project. She assists in the training, operation and development of the STIC®, and will serve as a key source of support for any user/client questions. Emily earned her Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Kenyon College, is currently completing the Pre-Clinical Psychology Program at Northwestern’s School of Continuing Studies, and plans to apply to Clinical Psychology PhD programs in the fall.

Eduardo Cristiano  
Intake Coordinator  
After working for Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc as their intake assistant, Eduardo Cristiano joined The Family Institute as an Intake Coordinator. He attended Northeastern Illinois University and hopes to complete his studies in Social Work in the near future. Eduardo enjoys babysitting his first baby nephew and adores animals, especially his Puggle, “Bella.”

Tania Gordon  
Intake Coordinator  
Tania Gordon is an Intake Coordinator. She received her Bachelor’s degree in Family and Child Studies from Northern Illinois University. Tania enjoys spending her free time cooking and trying new recipes.

Richard Hollingsworth  
Operations Assistant (Chicago)  
Richard Hollingsworth is very happy to have joined The Family Institute. He has an extensive background in billing and office support in order to assist everyone in the Millennium Park office.

Tamara Reed  
Director of Development  
Tamara (Tammy) Reed comes to The Family Institute with 11+ years of development, fundraising and public affairs/marketing experience, particularly in the realm of social media. Most recently, she served as the Director of Development at the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation. Tammy completed her Bachelor’s in Communications and African American Studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

ON THE MOVE

Kathleen McGloin  
Clinical Billing Assistant  
Kathleen McGloin was hired as a receptionist but assigned to the billing department. Her duties include data entry, benefits checks, providing encounter forms to the therapists and taking billing calls from clients.

Yadira Wardlow  
Education Coordinator  
Yadira Wardlow has moved from the Clinical Service Department to the Education Department. As the Education Coordinator, she organizes and assists with the administration of the Marriage and Family Therapy program.
The mission of The Family Institute at Northwestern University is to strengthen and heal families from all walks of life through clinical service, education and research.

An affiliate of Northwestern University, The Family Institute is a unique, innovative not-for-profit organization, governed by its own independent Board of Directors and responsible for its own funding. We have four staff practice locations, including Evanston, Chicago, LaGrange Park and Northbrook. For more information on our staff practice, please call 847-733-4300 or visit our website at www.family-institute.org.