From classroom to community: Two generations listening to veterans

Timothy Carroll, Psychology masters student, and Dr. Larry Schor, associate professor of Psychology, come from different generations and backgrounds, but a calling to serve humanity brought them together.

Schor supervised Carroll’s recent internship with a behavioral health care organization in the Carrollton community that serves people with mental health and substance abuse issues.

“My constellation of gifts tends toward being in relationship with people. I care deeply about human struggles,” said Carroll.

His tending toward caring for people was ignited by professors in the University of West Georgia’s Psychology program—one of only a few that embraces a humanistic approach to the study and practice of psychology.

“What a gift it is for me to be able to learn from Larry [Schor] and Mark [Kunkel]. Learn to echo, amplify and truly celebrate the lives of the people I work with.”

The next project on Carroll’s horizon will allow him to work alongside our nation’s veterans residing in the Carrollton area. Carroll’s father, now a General in the U.S. Army, served during the Persian Gulf War in the early 1990s and recently returned from a tour in Afghanistan.

“My experience as the child of a deployed soldier decades apart has instilled in me an understanding that the demands of war extend into the family. Even those who are strong sometimes struggle with carrying the weight of the absence of loved ones at war,” said Carroll.

Schor, also a licensed professional counselor and Disaster Mental Health Counselor with the American Red Cross works closely with veterans. After the Vietnam War, he volunteered helping returning soldiers complete employment paperwork—listening to their stories of war.

“This is something I can do. Be present to their struggles,” said Schor.

Schor collaborates with William Liggin, UWG Psychology alumus, Vietnam veteran, and co-founder of the Atlanta-based nonprofit Veterans Heart Georgia which hosts “Just Listening” circles. The circles are an experience in “deep listening and presence […to] explore healing from the wounds of war.”

Schor and Carroll hope to work with Liggin to expand Veterans Heart Georgia’s Just Listening circles to Carrollton as a resource for veterans in the area.
Spring is always a wonderful time in the academic year, especially in beautiful Carroll County and at UWG—named by the Arbor Day Foundation a “Tree Campus USA.” This spring’s air feels tinged with a little more electricity than usual—filled with more celebrations and occasions for community engagement.

We welcomed over 120 visitors to the Antonio J. Waring, Jr. Archaeological Laboratory open house. Many brought artifacts—some by the tubful, for identification; others enjoyed a mock dig aided by volunteers from the Carroll County Boys and Girls Club teen program.

Mass Communications Assistant Professor Deon Kay spearheaded a film screening at the Carrollton Cultural Arts Center. In collaboration with groups across campus and the Atlanta Film Festival, a series of 10 “shorts” were introduced as part of the Community Leaders on Campus event. True to our ongoing effort to serve humanity and do public good, we asked several of these leaders to talk about how the University can honor community. The topics of their talks were as diverse as they were engaging!

Look for the talks to be posted online this summer and the event to become an annual occasion to further the community-campus connection.

April also brought celebrations of student, faculty and staff achievements during Honors Day. This year, the College introduced a new award to honor an Outstanding Community Member. Chad Houck ’01 ’03, Owner of Carrollton’s Irish Bred Pub, was selected because of his outstanding service to the Carroll community, the College of Social Sciences and students across the University.

It is truly a gift to be located in such a beautiful and vibrant community. We look forward to supporting and creating even more collaborations.

**Giving to COSS**

Consider making a gift to the UWG College of Social Sciences.

Suggested levels of support:
- $250
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Please contact Erin Brannon, Administrative Manager, for more information. 678-839-5172 or ebrannon@westga.edu

*Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

**College of Social Sciences asks the Community Relations Council...**

**Why are you passionate about the Carroll community?**

**Dr. Jack Birge, Physician**

“Because I’ve lived 54 years of my life here. Being part of its growth and development has been a privilege. The University has been an important part of that growth and I am proud to continue my involvement.”

**Leonard Woolsey**

Times-Georgian

“Because I can think of no better place to work, play and raise a family.”

**Timothy J. MacMillan**

Attorney

“Because it feels like home.”

**Community Relations Council**

Ms. Vicki Anderson
Dr. Jack Birge
Ms. Amanda Camp
Ms. Jan Gibbs
Ms. Mildred (Bunny) Godard
Mr. Steve Gradick
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Dr. Ben Steere, assistant professor, works closely with a team of anthropologists to preserve and understand the Cherokee community in the Southeastern United States.

Steere collaborates with research teams to survey and locate archaeological evidence of important Native American settlements located in western North Carolina. The team’s findings have helped “rediscover” mounds which date to the Mississippian period. These mounds are important landmarks on the Cherokee cultural landscape, and in some cases were used as foundations for public buildings and the homes of chiefs.

Steere developed a passion for indigenous archaeology through his collaborative research with the Eastern Band of Cherokee—Cherokee whose descendants avoided or escaped forced removal in 1838. “In addition to being rewarding academically, it’s the right thing to do. We can use archaeology as a tool to give communities like the Cherokee new information to understand their past,” said Steere.

Steere plans to involve students in research with the Eastern Band and preservation of Cherokee heritage.

Dr. Pam Hunt turned her passion for music into an academic pursuit: using the jamband subculture as a case for teaching social psychology.

“Being a Deadhead [Grateful Dead fan] influences how I deal with contingencies that sneak into life. So, when a publisher refuses to read my manuscript, I find love in the rejection and a new direction in the face of being shunned,” said Hunt.

Despite early rejections, the fieldwork she began in 2001 has recently been published. The first edition of “Where the Music Takes You” will be released in August.

Hunt expects the book will be a welcomed supplementary text in social psychology or subculture courses. The real life examples make the book accessible to many. She looks forward to understanding how her students use the book and bring new knowledge to the subject.

“We are often socialized to think that we only learn from certain people—teachers, clergy—but that is so limiting. I appreciate learning from my students in addition to teaching them,” said Hunt.
National Endowment for Humanities award leads to course about freedom

Dr. J. Salvador Peralta, assistant professor, received a National Endowment for the Humanities award to create a course that questions ideas of freedom. “Enduring Questions: What Does it Mean to be Free” will be open to all undergraduate students and will challenge assumptions about self, politics, society and the relationship among these. The question of freedom arose during his childhood in his native Nicaragua after experiencing two wars. While under a dictatorship and increasing restraints on citizens, Peralta questioned what it really means to be free. “The grant is about individuals exploring what freedom means to them and how that knowledge affects the community as a whole,” said Peralta.

In the course, students will engage in conversation about the topic of freedom and answer questions about limitations from multiple perspectives. Students will also participate in cultural arts activities to provide alternatives to the meaning of freedom.

Jenks chosen for elite program in terrorism studies, defending democracy

Dr. David Jenks, department chair, was selected to participate in a 10-day intensive workshop on combating terrorism through education in Israel this summer. The program, hosted by the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, gives professors insight into the changing world of terrorism threats.

“Terrorism remains the greatest threat today to the world’s democracies, including the United States and our allies around the globe,” said Clifford May, president of FDD.

Through the course of study, Jenks will participate in classroom and field exercises led by academics, diplomats, military and intelligence officials, and politicians to learn about the latest trends in terrorists’ ideologies, motives and operations, including how democracies can defend against them. “I am honored to be chosen for this prestigious award. I have no doubt that studying terrorism in Israel will certainly benefit not only me, but our students in the department, across the university and into our communities,” said Jenks.