This past year was a tough one for all of us. I often describe the Department of Sociology and Social Work at JSU as having all the trappings of family. This year really demonstrated how much we all love each other. I won’t get into many of the specifics, but this definitely was the toughest year I have experienced in academia. When one is hired on in an academic department, the reality is that if everyone does their job, we end up working together for decades. During that time ‘life’ happens. People get sick; pass away; get married; divorced; and all other aspects of life that we often talk about in our sociology classes. This year we seemed to get a little bit of everything. Lots of tragedy, yet, all the while it appears that we came out of things stronger than ever. At times we appeared frazzled but when the time was needed, we all stepped up to the plate.

As the headline reads, change is definitely in the air. Dr. Friery retired after 36 years. Big shoes to fill, but we hired a great sociologist, Dr. Erin L. Rider (mentioned below). She is a wonderful person, and complements the sociology faculty, program, and JSU in general. That is a crucial element for the success of any academic program. Dr. Friery was the consummate ‘friend’, and we are looking forward to that atmosphere continuing with Dr. Rider. We are also excited about her specialties as they correspond to what is occurring right now in the United States. She has specialties in disasters as well as immigration. Most importantly however is that she is incredibly gifted, and the students will benefit from her expertise. We will begin
having classes in the areas of disasters beginning in the Spring, and hopefully a class on immigration in the May term.

With the retirement of Dr. Friery there will be some shuffling of classes and changes in the curriculum. Be sure to check the changes here to the curriculum. Dr. LoConto will begin teaching the SY 499 Senior Sociology Seminar course. We will be offering SY 222 Honors Introduction to Sociology beginning this Fall. Dr. Hudspeth will be offering a few more online courses, with SY 310 Marriage and the Family being offered this past Summer online, and will do so again in the Spring. A new theory course, SY 428 Contemporary Social Theory will be offered in the Spring semesters. SY 427 has been changed to Classical Social Theory. Everyone agreed there was simply too much information to cover in one semester. So now students will have the opportunity to go more in-depth into the various theories and theorists with Dr. Deshotels.

Welcome Dr. Rider

Arriving via U-Haul truck from Texas, Dr. Erin L. Rider is the newest addition to the JSU family. Dr. Rider grew up in the suburbs of Seattle, got her bachelor’s degree from Eastern Oregon University, and then moved on to Texas Women’s University in Denton, Texas to earn her Master’s and Ph.D. - Dr. Rider has published on mass rapes occurring during war, and is currently doing research on asylum seekers. She also has planned research on the BP oil disaster and its impact on families and communities in the fishing industries. Dr. Rider has an interesting teaching style, definitely Socratic. She throws out ideas, students respond, and then an interesting dialogue begins. Throughout the process, everyone learns. During her interview this past Winter, Dr. Rider presented on what had happened in Haiti, but tied that in with Hurricane Katrina. She effectively demonstrated that natural disasters do not impact everyone equally. It was a great learning experience. Currently, we have Dr. Rider slotted to teach Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, Deviant Behavior, Theories of Gender, as well as two new courses on disasters, with the other on immigration. Stop by and see her some time and say hey. She’s located in BH 324.

Sexual Assault Prevention Training Coming to JSU?

Dr. Deshotels recently has been doing research on sexual assault and the impact of prevention training has on college students. She was kind enough to help us understand why and how she became involved in this area.

What was your motivation for this issue? “Not only does research show that college age women are at great risk for sexual assault (estimates are that 25% of women will be
victims of rape or attempted rape since the age of 14), but my personal experience in the classroom and working with students on campus has revealed sexual assault and domestic violence to be all too common. Indeed, in one class of 35, I only had two students who had not directly experienced domestic violence or sexual assault or knew someone in their immediate family who had. This motivated me to address the issue of violence against women by working to prevent it on our campus.”

How did you begin the research? “Research shows that prevention of violence against women requires changes in the culture and norms that enable violence. Research has also found that bystanders play a huge role in either preventing or allowing violence to continue. I began addressing the issue with student athletes (male and female). We are lucky here at JSU to have many students both male and female who have high moral standards. The most effective way to combat issues of violence has been found to give these students the encouragement and tools necessary to stand up for what they know is right. This will prevent those who are perpetrators of sexual assault from thinking that sexual assault is not only acceptable but a way to enhance their prestige. It will also prevent those who are victims of sexual assault to encourage the kind of respectful behavior that is necessary for a safe campus. The sexual assault prevention training for athletes showed significant change in attitudes as well as in the knowledge of the laws surrounding sexual assault.”

What are you planning to do from here? “While the training showed significant positive change, there are still issues that need to be addressed. Therefore, I am working to have mandatory sexual assault prevention training for all students at JSU. Athletes are an important starting place because of their influence on other students. However, they are only a part of the larger population. In order to truly have long term significant change towards a safe campus we will need to educate all students on how to prevent sexual assault.”

We look forward to see where this will lead. We know the JSU administration is committed to providing a safe learning community.

The Mid South Sociological Association is in Baton Rouge!

This year the Mid South Sociological Association is having their annual meeting in Baton Rouge from October 13th through the 16th. It has been seven years since the MSSA last held a meeting there. The theme this year is:
“Sociological Perspectives: Essential Science to Understand Health and Eliminate Health Disparities.” Baton Rouge looks to be a good time as it is not far from where Dr. Deshotels grew up; plus, three of our former students are now doing graduate work at LSU, so it will be an opportunity for us to catch up with some old faces. And as always discussing and presenting the latest research is the main reason for attending. We always leave motivated to do more research. Several of our students will be joining Drs. LoConto, Deshotels, and Rider for the trek. Faculty from research universities are always interested in talking to our students. Dr. LoConto is currently the Vice President elect and Dr. Deshotels is the Chair of the Membership Committee, so we are heavily invested in the association. For those interested in joining us in Baton Rouge, contact Dr. Deshotels (tdeshotels@jsu.edu).

Dr. Deshotels with some of the gang in Lafayette.

Program Review

If Dr. LoConto appeared more stressed than normal last year it was due in part to the sociology program review that is occurring last year and this year. Though Dr. LoConto collects data every year for the university on the state of the sociology program, every seven years there is another review which requires bringing in two sociologists from other universities to review the data. Last year Dr. LoConto wrote a report with assistance from Dr. Fagan, complete with 33 tables and gave it to the university March 1. The first
week of November, Dr. Amy Chasteen Miller from the University of Southern Mississippi and Dr. Jackie Eller from Middle Tennessee State University will be visiting the campus talking with administrators, faculty, and students as part of the review process. They will each write a report for the university.

The Friery Retirement Party

On June 10th, about 120 people gathered for the retirement party of Dr. Rodney Friery. Alumni from four different decades showed up at the Alumni House to share in some good food and some very good interaction with old friends. Guest speakers were JSU President Dr. Bill Meehan, Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Rebecca Turner, retired sociologists Drs. Lester Hill and Ken Adams, sociologist Dr. David LoConto, Department of Sociology and Social Work, Chair, Dr. Mark Fagan, and then of course Dr. Friery. Prior to Dr. Friery giving flowers to nearly every female attending, he stated, “Someone said it’s the destination, not the journey, but here at JSU I found both.” It was a touching sentiment that characterizes 36 years of service to not only the university, but to the students. The fact that so many people attended, with as many more writing to apologize for not being able to attend, it was easy to conclude that Dr. Friery has touched the hearts and minds of thousands of people. As Class of 2004 alumnus DeWayne Cuffie said, “The man is a legend in my book.” That sentiment was felt by those in attendance, as well as thousands of those who have had the honor of knowing Dr. Friery.

Goodbye Old Friend

A dear friend of ours passed away on Monday, April 19, 2010. Dr. Hugh Boyd McCain Jr., 64, spent 30 years at JSU being a constant that held together the sociology program and department for years. Aside from being a great sociologist, Dr. McCain was a good person. He cared about everything and everyone. He was definitely a great role model and
continues to do so. A native of Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. McCain was born on July 8, 1945, to Hugh B. McCain, Sr. and Dorothy Johnson McCain. He graduated from Sylvan Hills High School in Atlanta in 1963. He earned a B.A. in biology, an M.A. in sociology and PhD. in sociology from Emory University. He married Gail Bernadette Zimmerman in 1971. Their daughter Carisa was born in 1979. Prior to coming to JSU, from 1971-1975 Dr. McCain taught at the University of Richmond. During his tenure at JSU, he served as sponsor of the Sociology Club. Dr. McCain valued the importance of education and was an enthusiastic and dedicated professor who took a personal interest in his students' welfare and success. He not only taught courses, but served as an advisor and helped students seek employment after graduation. He was someone who was constantly and continually working on his lectures, preparing for classes, updating data, and remembering that he was being paid to provide a service of expertise in the field of sociology to those that came through the hallowed halls of Brewer. A dedicated family man, Dr. McCain was also a lifelong lover of history, enjoying traveling to sites of historic importance with his family. He was an avid reader. He loved dogs, and they loved him. Committed to social justice, he volunteered his time and talents to those less fortunate. He served as a board member of Second Chance in Anniston, AL. After retirement, he devoted more of his time to service to his community. He volunteered with Mobile Infirmary Auxiliary, Mobile Historic Preservation Society, Society of Saint Stephen at Dauphin Way United Methodist Church, and Meals on Wheels. He was a former member of Jacksonville First United Methodist Church and member of Dauphin Way United Methodist Church. Survivors include his wife, Gail Zimmerman McCain; daughter and son-in-law, Carisa Bernadette McCain Anderson and Paul Anderson; grandchildren, Ashlie and Matthew Anderson; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, Bernice and Carlyle Cox and Gary and Catherine Zimmerman; nieces, nephews and cousins. We will miss his kind and gentle ways. As a tribute to Dr. McCain we are issuing a yearly scholarship in Dr. McCain’s name of $400. Contributions to this scholarship can be made through departmental secretary Gail Childs at gchilds@jsu.edu.

Scholarships

Many students are not aware that we have scholarships that the sociology program oversees: The Hugh Boyd McCain Scholarship, the Mulder Scholarship, and the WISE Legacy scholarship. Earning these scholarships is an honor, and looks wonderful on a resume’. Below is a list of the scholarships. For further information and specific requirements for each scholarship, contact Dr. Deshotels (tdeshotels@jsu.edu).

The Hugh Boyd Scholarship is planned to begin this coming school year. General criteria appear to be the same as the Mulder Scholarship, however, we will be meeting early in the school year to hammer out the details.

The Mulder Scholarship originated from former JSU sociologist, Gweneth G. Mulder. She served 15 years in the Sociology Department at Jacksonville State University, five of those years as Department head where she exhibited the highest professional example. Throughout the years she encouraged personal growth in students, faculty and administration. On April 16th, 1987 The Sociology Department Faculty at JSU
unanimously named a bi-annual student scholarship. In recent years, the award has been given to one sociology major and one social work major. Awards have been $100 per semester.

Students must be majoring in Sociology or Social Work at JSU and must have completed 12 hours of courses in either or both areas at JSU in the Department of Sociology and Social work.

Students must have a GPA of 3.50 or more for courses offered in the Department of Sociology and Social Work at JSU and an overall cumulative GPA of 3.00 or more.

The award cannot go to the same individual more than once; prior recipients are not eligible. Also, students must be enrolled in classes during the semester that the scholarship is awarded.

The selection criteria for the scholarship (GPA above a 3.5 in the major and 3.00 cumulative) will be the initial criteria for selection of recipients. Campus and community activities will be considered. If none of the applicants have the appropriate level of scholarship, or activities, no scholarship will be awarded for the semester in question.

The WISE LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP was motivated through the notion of ‘paying it forward’. Specifically, several WISE members were the recipients of scholarships that enabled them to complete their academic goals. One member in particular upon leaving an abusive relationship towards the end of her undergraduate program was on the verge of quitting school because of finances. A scholarship awarded to single women allowed her to finish her degree. Another member was awarded an anonymous scholarship which enabled her to finish her undergraduate degree. Based on these histories, WISE members wanted to not just give back, but to also create a legacy of giving back that would extend beyond a ‘one-time’ scholarship.

In addition, many times scholarships are partly or solely based on academic performance. While this focus is important, it also has the potential to exclude some of our most motivated students. This scholarship is designed to address this gap. In addition, given the high rate of sexual violence in our society in general and in our community in particular, WISE members elected to reward students not based on scholarship but rather based on their activism specifically focused on ending violence against women. Therefore, the WISE Legacy Scholarship rewards students in good standing at JSU who can demonstrate, through a competitive essay contest, a history of working to end violence against women and a coherent plan to do so in the future. The hope is that the recipient, just as the creators of this scholarship are doing, will also 'pay it forward' in some future capacity. The first WISE Legacy Scholarship awarded $700.00 dollars to Ms. Martha Waco in the Fall of 09.

I. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicants must provide an official documentation from Jacksonville State University
proving that they are a student in good standing with the university during the semester of
application and receipt of the scholarship if awarded.

2. The WISE Legacy Scholarship must be used to support academic efforts at
Jacksonville State University. The award may be used in whole or in part towards any of
the following: tuition, books/supplies, housing, or meal plans.

3. The winner of the WISE Legacy Scholarship will be expected to volunteer a minimum
of 15 hours with a local non-profit agency that supports efforts to end violence against
women, during the semester in which the scholarship is awarded.

II. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1) Fill out the application form completely and sign.
2) In an essay format, clearly explain the following:

• What would the eradication of violence against women look like to you?
• What have you personally done to help end violence against women?
• How will you work to end violence against women in the future?
• How will this scholarship assist you in achieving these goals?

3) Essays MUST be typed using 12 point font, and submitted with completed application
information (below). Essays MUST also include a cover sheet with ONLY the
applicant’s student number to identify them. The applicant’s student number should also
be placed in the header of each page of the essay. If applicable, essay pages should be
numbered. Essays should not exceed 1500 words.

More Photos from the Friery Retirement Party

Dr. Friery and Dr. Fagan
Organizers Robyn Snider, Jonathan Adams, and Gail Childs

Drs. Turner, Meehan, and Friery
Lots of Alumni!!!!