

Newsletter

School of Social Science, Policy & Evaluation 2014



Dean Stewart Donaldson elected president of the American Evaluation Association

SSSPE received wonderful news early this Fall when the American Evaluation Association (AEA) announced its new president: our own Dean Stewart Donaldson! Dr. Donaldson is widely recognized as one of the most prominent leaders in the ever growing field of evaluation, and was honored with the AEA lifetime achievement award for his contributions to evaluation theory. A key innovator, speaker, teacher, mentor, and researcher of evaluation, he has helped shape how scholars and practitioners think about evaluation today. For over a decade Dr. Donaldson has served on editorial boards of core evaluation journals, including the *American Journal of Evaluation*, *New Directions for Evaluation*, *Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation*, and *Evaluation & Program Planning*. His work has transcended across borders, acclaimed at both a national and international level.

The AEA is an international association of professional evaluators that aims to assess and improve the effectiveness of a wide range of contexts such as policies, personnel, products, and private and public organizations across the globe. Boasting over 7700 members hailing from over 60 countries, the AEA's vision is to foster an inclusive, diverse, and international community of practice positioned as a respected source of information for and about the field of evaluation.

Thanks to Dr. Donaldson's leadership in this field, CGU has the largest graduate program in evaluation in the world. He has served as Director of the Claremont Evaluation Center (formerly the Institute of Organizational and Program Evaluation Research, IOPER) for nearly 15 years, whose mission is to influence the direction and effectiveness of organizations and social programs, facilitate constructive social and organizational change, and enrich the quality of life in communities and organizations. "This is a well deserved recognition for decades of dedication, leadership, and work by Dean Stewart Donaldson," said President Deborah Freund. "His election to this prestigious position acknowledges his role as an innovator in evaluation sciences and underscores his extraordinary accomplishments. He has brought CGU to world leadership in this field."

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Elise Fenn Wins Student Grant-In-Aid Award

Applied Cognitive Psychology student Elise Fenn was selected to receive a grant for her research by The American Psychology-Law Society Grants-In-Aid Committee (a division of APA) for her proposal, "Social Contexts for Detecting Deception: Factors that Moderate the Effectiveness of and Imposed-Cognitive-Load-Approach".

As student member of the association, Elise will receive an award of \$750 to fund her research.

Elise is interested in examining how the social context of an interview affects one's ability to appear truthful; for instance, is there a difference when being interviewed by a same- or different-race interviewer? "We predict that certain groups of participants

interviewed by someone of a different race will look more like liars, regardless of their actual veracity," explained Elise. "One explanation for these results is that liars and truth tellers who are interviewed by someone of a different race may experience more mental difficulty, causing subjects to appear as though they are guilty even when they are innocent."

Her future objective with this line of research is to develop interview techniques that "protect the innocent but catch the guilty." While current deception research has developed successful cognitive load paradigms that allow researchers to distinguish between liars and truth tellers, Elise pushes forward by examining the moderating role played by social context between interviewers and respondents.

Her mentor, Dr. Kathy Pezdek, sends out regular emails to her research lab encouraging students to stay active in psychological associations and apply for grants such as this one. The AP-LS Grant in Aid for Students accepts proposals for small grants to support empirical graduate research that addresses important psychological issues.

Marian Liu is Selected To Receive Ethnic Minority Dissertation Award



Developmental psychology student Marian Liu was chosen to be a 2013-2014 Ethnic Minority Dissertation Fellow in the College of Arts and Sciences by the University of San Francisco (USF). Each academic year, the USF Provost's Office invites scholars from underrepresented ethnic minorities to apply for the USF Ethnic Minority Dissertation Fellowship.

In this program, scholars are expected to complete their dissertation on a diversity related research topic, while teaching one course per semester in the school where they are placed. Through this program, promising scholars from diverse backgrounds become familiar with the responsibilities of a USF faculty member.

As a full-time faculty at USF this academic year, Marian teaches research methods on elder mistreatment and plans to finish her dissertation in Spring. She is exploring

protective factors against elderly financial exploitation, focusing on the role played by interpersonal relationships.

Much of her research at CGU examined social issues surrounding older adults. Marian aims to identify characteristics of resilient older adults. "Hopefully my findings will be useful in building prevention or intervention programs against elder financial exploitation," she explains. "I would like to investigate the process of interpersonal interactions in financial exploitation cases, and maybe work with victims recovering from the trauma."

