

1-11-2010

Monitor Newsletter January 11, 2010

Bowling Green State University

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Recommended Citation

Bowling Green State University, "Monitor Newsletter January 11, 2010" (2010). *Monitor*. 1775.
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Army enlists Pargament to build soldiers' spiritual fitness

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may ultimately affect as many as 35 percent of soldiers serving in Afghanistan and Iraq, researchers from Stanford University and the Naval Postgraduate School estimate in a September 2009 study.

Given the prevalence of PTSD and other health problems, a new program to help soldiers deal with issues before they arise is "an innovative step the Army has taken, one that makes good sense," says Dr. Kenneth Pargament, psychology.

He's talking about the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program, which is being implemented in an effort to boost troops' resilience. The program's developer, Dr. Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania, has articulated several types of resilience that are the subjects of Web-based self-improvement courses, including one on spiritual resilience created by Pargament and clinical psychology graduate students at BGSU.

A national leader in the psychology of spirituality, Pargament was asked to join the project by a colleague from the University of Miami (Fla.) with connections to Seligman. He went to Miami in May to meet with Army representatives, among them Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, the CSF program director. Cornum had been captured in Iraq and emerged from the experience convinced that soldiers should be trained to deal with stresses, Pargament said.

Even if they're not in combat, soldiers undoubtedly face major life stresses, he noted, citing separation from family and arduous training as challenges for anyone. The addition of combat presents more issues that should be anticipated, he said, although helping people be more resilient before they face life stresses hasn't typically been emphasized in America's treatment-oriented health care system.

With the Army's approval, and feedback this fall from West Point, military chaplains and ROTC cadets at BGSU, Pargament and the graduate students—who worked on the project in a class—developed the spiritual resilience material for the online presentation. "We're at the forefront of this kind of work, so we were able to move pretty quickly on it," he said.

The presentation starts by introducing soldiers to the idea of struggles of the human spirit and then offers training about resources that can be helpful when struggles arise, the BGSU psychologist explained. Spirituality is defined broadly so the material is applicable to people from different religious traditions, or none at all, he added.

Individual segments focus on such topics as making meaning out of challenging life situations; rituals, and how to use them as help in the midst of struggles, and how to access spiritual support—from chaplains and other resources—during difficult times.

Soldiers are offered actual resources that have been shown to help people facing profound struggles, based upon research at Bowling Green and elsewhere. For instance, research has indicated that those who can find some reflection and peace amid turmoil fare better, so one of the training segments discusses contemplation and meditation, Pargament said.

The CSF program will be introduced to 1.1 million active-duty soldiers, reservists and National Guard members. "We think there will be a receptive audience for it," Pargament said, expressing hope that the private, online nature of the program will help make it accessible and meaningful to participants.

"I think of it as a step in the right direction," with potential for many possible spinoffs, he noted. "It's an honor to Bowling Green that we were asked to contribute."

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Campus unites to 'jump start' enrollees

The University hosted the first-ever "January Jump Start" for new and returning students last Monday (Jan. 4). In spite of the wintry weather, more than 65 people took advantage of the "one-stop shopping" opportunity, in which faculty, associate deans and staff representing all the colleges and campus offices—from admissions to veterans' services—gathered to offer information and help students register.

Student employees from the Student Enrollment Communication Center escorted prospective students through the process. To accommodate all the visitors' schedules, the event lasted from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., in 101 Olscamp Hall.

The attendees represented all populations of students: new, returning, transfer, undergraduate and graduate, guest, nontraditional and veterans. They included 14 returning, six continuing, three graduate and 43 new students. Two of the graduate students are pursuing teacher licensure.

"It could not have been done better," enthused Victoria Arnatelli of Lima, who is returning to finish her Advanced Technical Education degree, an online program. "The moment I walked in the door, someone greeted me, they waited while I filled out the forms and then directed me to the next step. Everyone went above and beyond and was so courteous and professional."

"I appreciated the whole event and the one-stop shopping, especially with the snowy weather we had that day."

Recently laid off from her state job, Arnatelli said she also appreciates the new scholarship offered to returning students.

"It truly was a University-wide event," said Lisa Cesarini, interim assistant vice president for enrollment management. All the colleges except musical arts had new or returning students participating, but music advisor Richard Reece assisted other colleges with advising and registration. Other areas such as Non-Traditional Student Services and Teacher Licensure also helped out.

"With people from offices like Disability Services, Student Money Management and the bookstore right there, we could just walk students over to get answers to questions or inform them of services they did not even know about," said Barbara Henry, assistant vice president for academic success.

BGSU is pulling together to boost enrollment and retention and is trying creative new initiatives such as Monday's event. "We have learned some lessons: remember to bring paper clips, highlighters and a stapler," Henry added humorously. "We commend the excellent work of ITS, facilities and our student employees for helping to create a successful first Jump Start."

University community to mark start of centennial year

A special gathering for BGSU faculty and staff on Jan. 29 will mark the beginning of the University's centennial celebrations. Refreshments will be served at 9:30 a.m. in the Lenhart Grand Ballroom of the Bowen-Thompson Student Union, followed by a program at 10 a.m.

Led by Larry Weiss, Centennial Commission co-chair, the program will honor the contributions of faculty, administrative and classified staff to BGSU's "legacy of excellence, future without limits."

More information will be forthcoming, but plan now to be part of the University community's "family" celebration.

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IN BRIEF**Faculty/Staff Night planned for men's basketball**

Plan to support the Falcons at a special Faculty/Staff Night for men's basketball at Anderson Arena.

The President's Office is providing complimentary tickets for faculty and staff to attend the BGSU vs. Central Michigan game at 7 p.m. Jan. 30. Faculty and staff members with a BGSU ID may pick up two free tickets each beginning today (Monday, Jan. 11), at the ticket office in Memorial Hall.

The number of tickets is limited; they are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Faculty and staff may purchase additional tickets at a special discounted price of \$4 each.

CALENDAR**Wednesday, Jan. 13**

Instructional Design Discussion, "Developing Critical Thinking and Writing Using Calibrated Peer Review," 1-2:15 p.m., 201 University Hall. Register at www.bgsu.edu/ctl/page10718.html.

Biological Sciences Seminar Series, featuring Dr. Karen Francl, Radford University, 3:30-4:30 p.m., 112 Life Sciences Building. Meet the speaker at the 3 p.m. social prior to the seminar.

Women's Basketball vs. Buffalo, 7 p.m., Anderson Arena.

Faculty Artist Series, featuring **David Bixler, jazz saxophone**, 8 p.m., Bryan Recital Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center.

Thursday, Jan. 14

Men's Basketball vs. Buffalo, 7 p.m., Anderson Arena.

Prairie Margins Reading, 7:30 p.m., Prout Chapel.

Friday, Jan. 15

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Workshop, "RefWorks: Bibliographic Management Software," 2:30-3:45 p.m., Electronic Reading Room, 142 Jerome Library. Register at www.bgsu.edu/ctl/page10718.html.

Saturday, Jan. 16

Women's Track and Field, BGSU Challenge, 11 a.m., Perry Field House.

Monday, Jan. 18

Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Classes canceled, offices closed.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Challenge, kickoff service event for the BGSU Centennial Celebration in which faculty, staff and students will come together in service groups to tackle challenges identified by and for local community agencies. For more information, contact CivicActionLead@bgsu.edu.

Continuing Events Through Jan. 30

Art Exhibit, "Character Project," Bowen-Thompson Student Union Art Gallery. Gallery hours are 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sundays.

Through Feb. 9

Art Exhibit, monoprints by Michael Beuglass, Little Gallery, BGSU Firelands. Gallery hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

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JOB POSTINGS

FACULTY

There were no jobs posted this week.

Labor Postings

<http://international.bgsu.edu/index.php?x=facinfohires>

Contact the Office of Human Resources at 419-372-8421 for information regarding classified and administrative positions. Position vacancy announcements may be viewed by visiting the HR Web site at www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/.

Employees wishing to apply for these positions must sign a "Request for Transfer" form and attach an updated resume or data sheet.

This information must be turned in to Human Resources by the job deadline.

CLASSIFIED

On-campus classified:

http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/employment/BGSU_only/page11151.html

Off-campus classified:

http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/employment/cl_staff/page11145.html

ADMINISTRATIVE

www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/employment/adm_staff/page11137.html

OBITUARY

There were no obituaries this week.