PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

Foundation for Education and Research in Biofeedback (FERB): Accomplishments and Appeal

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Attendees at last year’s Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback (AAPB) meeting are aware of the excitement and energy of the meeting, in large part stemming from increased student attendance. To encourage this, and as an investment in the future of our field, the Foundation for Education and Research in Biofeedback (FERB) awarded 21 student travel scholarships and three student research grants. In the past 2 years, the number of both awards per year has more than tripled.

FERB was established by AAPB to encourage interested students to devote their research energies to biofeedback and to become involved with like-minded professionals and researchers at AAPB’s meetings. Those of us involved with FERB are convinced that support for student involvement is vital for the future of our field. We hope that you will agree.

The following graduate student dissertation research grants were awarded by FERB in 2015:

- Ms. Donna Schuman, University of Texas at Arlington. Title: The effects of a single heart rate variability biofeedback session and mHealth on posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in OIF/OEF combat veterans: A pilot study.
- Mr. Mark Stern, California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University. Title: Autonomic impact on neurocognitive performance: A randomized controlled trial
- A joint AAPB/ISNR-RF grant was awarded to Mr. Robert Guiles, California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University. Title: Psychophysiological markers of trauma: Investigating the absence of vagal brake in veterans with a history of interpersonal trauma

Additionally, students from all over the United States were awarded student travel scholarships in 2015. Awardees were:

- Bridget Asplund, Alliant International University; Carolyn Huntly, Alliant International University; Robert Guiles, Alliant International University/CSPP; Yoko H. W. Tsui-Caldwell, Brigham Young University; Mitchell Davis, California State University at San Marcos; Mark Stern, California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University; Cherifer Cruz, California State University San Marcos; Cosima Hoetger, Central Connecticut State University; Laura Gremore, East Carolina University; Christina Bochicchio, East Carolina University; Brandy Miceli, San Francisco State University; Jasmine Mitose, San Francisco State University; Andrea Meckley, Saybrook University; Tommy Baryliski, Truman State University; Marissa Fabbri, Truman State University; Daniel Owen, Truman State University; Alexis West, Truman State University; Christopher Williams, Truman State University; Christopher Zerr, Truman State University; Yao Wang, University of Louisville.

As can easily be imagined, such a great increase in student support has put a commensurate burden on FERB’s resources.

Tax-deductible contributors at the following levels will be acknowledged in the 2016 program brochure and a poster at the Seattle meeting, at the following levels: $50 (bronze), $100 (silver), $500 (gold), $1000 (platinum).

FERB also gives AAPB members an opportunity to honor someone who has mentored them in an important way. With a $250 contribution to FERB’s Honor a Mentor program, members can honor a teacher or supervisor who has had an important influence on their professional career. Honorees will be notified, and will be publicly recognized at the AAPB meeting and on the AAPB website.

To participate in this program, visit the following website: http://www.aapb.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3691.

FERB gratefully acknowledges the following donors for the past year:

Platinum level: Mary Lee Esty, Annie Umbricht, Richard G. Soutar, Paul M. Lehrer, Scherehazade S. Shamsavari
Bronze level: Robert Conder, Leonardo Gomes, Howard Hall, Kurt McKinley, John K. Nash, New Mind Technologies, Jan Newman, Erik Peper, Edith Schneider, Mark S. Schwartz, Behavioral Medicine Research & Training Foundation

The following mentors have been honored:

2014 Mentor Tributes
Dr. David Shapiro, Professor Emeritus, UCLA School of Medicine

David Shapiro is one of the first biofeedback researchers. At a time when most psychologists thought that autonomic activity could only be controlled by classical conditioning, he demonstrated operant control in a series of elegant experiments, and published some of the first papers on clinical applications. Since then, his prolific research has laid the groundwork for the entire field of applied psychophysiology. He also has been a beloved mentor to several generations of psychophysiology researchers and clinicians through his teaching at Harvard and UCLA, and has mentored the work of several leaders in our field. His manner has always been unassuming, but his standards have always been uncompromising. He always demonstrated a supportive belief in his students and their abilities, and encouraged them to follow their own paths, while providing needed help and guidance. All who have worked with him, who have been mentored by him, and who have been inspired by his pioneering research owe him a great debt of gratitude.

—Dr. Paul Lehrer

2015 Mentor Tributes
Dr. Eleanor Criswell, President of Hannah Somatic Institute, The Novato Institute

It is seldom that any mentor will take a profound interest in your future work that would stay with you in your professional career on every level of your development over a 25-year span. Dr. Criswell is not only an internationally well-known professional for her work on somatic and biofeedback but also an incredibly powerful mentor that transcends her own image to her students by making visible what is invisible and in my related work with children supporting the benefits of diversity in our community of professionals; what we can do if our thoughts are more diverse. It is in her humble qualities with her selfless contributions that our program in Mexico succeeded. The high political profile in the professional groups in Mexico gave us the reigns to train with the making of transparency as good practice and policy. Our practice of ethics applied in the government program despite some difficult times but ultimately we prevailed. Our standards and practice remain the same for U.S.–Mexico border states through our University of Guadalajara (CUCS) program. CEU offered for the professionals in our program.

—Dr. Shari Shamsavari

FERB is a very low overhead organization and acknowledges the substantial support given by members of its board, by AAPB, and by the Kellen organization. But more is needed in order to continue the current level of support.

Members of the FERB board of trustees are: Paul Lehrer (president), Aubrey Ewing (secretary treasurer), Francine Butler, Fredric Shaffer, Doil Montgomery, Michael McKee, Richard Harvey (ex officio), Shari Shamsavari, Stuart Donaldson (ex officio), and John Arena.

Consider your donation before December 31 so it may be a credit on your 2015 taxes.

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