Research Spotlight

Psychology Department’s 100th Anniversary

During the 2015-16 academic year, the Psychology Department has been celebrating its 100th Anniversary with a series of events culminating in a two-day celebration of our Ph.D. graduates on May 20th and 21st. The department was founded as the Division of Applied Psychology by Walter Van Dyke Bingham in 1915, but in 1924 it became the Department of Psychology and Education. Interestingly, the first course in Developmental Psychology was not offered until 1966.

The Children’s School originally served as the Child Development Laboratory for the Margaret Morrison Carnegie College, the women’s college for Carnegie Technical Schools. During the 1968-69 school year, the vision of Dr. Ann Baldwin Taylor, the administrative support of Dr. John Sandberg, and a grant from the Esso Foundation converged to provide space and funding for the program to move from a house on Margaret Morrison Street to its current location and to expand from approximately 12 to 45 preschool children. At that time, the school functioned as a site for teaching experience and behavioral observation, and it was the hub of the Early Childhood Cooperative Teacher-Education Program. In the 1970-1971 school year, the school’s name changed to the “Children’s School,” as a purposeful reminder if its commitment to the progressive education principles of John Dewey. When MMCC closed in 1973, with the administrative support of Dr. Erwin Steinberg, the school became part of the Department of Psychology. Dr. Taylor continued as the director until her retirement in 1993, at which time Dr. Sharon M. Carver (CMU ’86) returned to the university to assume the leadership role.

As the Children’s School approaches its 50th year of excellence and innovation as an early childhood laboratory school, we pause to appreciate our strong roots in developmentally appropriate practice and to affirm our commitment to all aspects of our mission, including active involvement in preschool and kindergarten education, developmental research, undergraduate teaching, and training of both pre-service and practicing educators. We applaud the educators, administrators, and faculty whose vision, dedication, and creativity have contributed to making our school environment into a caring community with opportunities for vibrant learning at all ages. Many thanks to Carnegie Mellon, the Dietrich College, and the Psychology Department for making it all possible.

For more information on the Psychology Department’s 100th Anniversary, see the commemoration web site at http://psy.cmu.edu/100years/index.html.