

All Eyes On: Fred Shaffer

Professor enriches teaching with his experience abroad

BY KELLY KIESEL
Staff Reporter

Sixty-one-year-old professor of psychology Fred Shaffer is proud to call himself a teacher.

Shaffer, an only child, grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y., Michigan City, Iowa, and Fresno, Calif., moving to where his father could find better jobs and be near relatives after World War II. He attended Claremont Men's College, where a professor got him interested in psychology.

After college, Shaffer came to Truman State University in 1975 and has worked here ever since. Shaffer said he considers his two dogs and his 38-member research team to be his family. The team researches biofeedback, a kind of educational process for becoming aware of physiological functions of the mind and body using instruments that provide information.

Junior Jordan Fuller is the assistant lab manager for Shaffer's team.

Fuller said the job of Shaffer's team is to perform research for biofeedback, mostly in the area of heart rate variability. He said their research challenges assumptions held in the field, and that they hope their research has a

big enough impact on clinicians such as clinical psychologists to be used in their field.

When describing Shaffer, Fuller said research is his interest.

"He is committed and passionate about what he does," Fuller said. "He is extremely knowledgeable and has strong dedication to his students."

Shaffer is also the Board Chair for the Biofeedback Certification International Alliance. He said the mission of the BCIA is to certify professionals that meet training and education standards. He said most of the BCIA-certified professionals use biofeedback in clinical settings. Sixty-two percent

of them are mental health professionals, and many are medical professionals.

Judy Crawford, director of certification of BCIA, has worked with Shaffer for 10 years and said it has been an absolute pleasure.

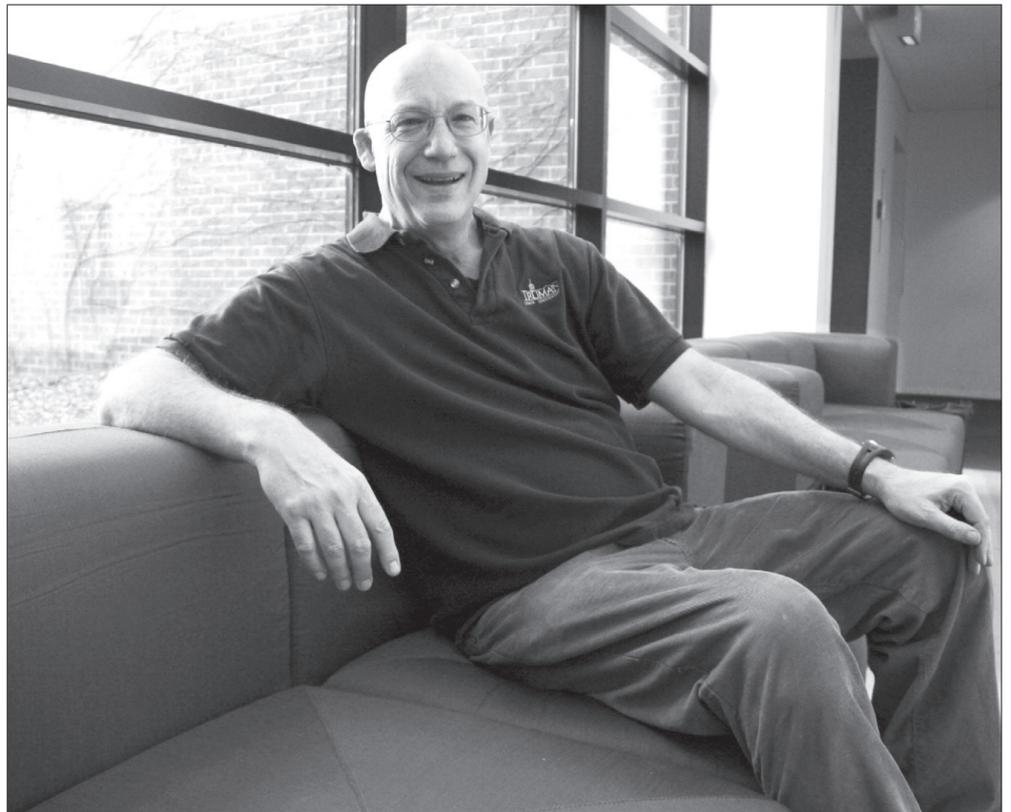
"He has brought the BCIA to a respected

level," Crawford said.

Crawford said he inspires students to do better things.

After working with Shaffer, "people walk away feeling bigger than themselves," he said.

Shaffer's teaching of biofeedback has taken him overseas in an effort to expand his international certification. His travels include two trips to Hong Kong and one to the Netherlands. While in the Netherlands, he taught clinical



Amy Vicars/Index

Psychology professor Fred Shaffer has worked at Truman for 35 years and travels the world presenting at seminars.

applications of heart rate variability biofeedback.

"I believe that these experiences have made me a more effective Truman professor," Shaffer said. "Especially since they allowed me to steal some of my colleagues' best examples and demonstrations."

This spring, Shaffer will teach in Poland and present in Munich, Germany, where he will help professionals review for the BCIA written exam on biofeedback.

"I'll mainly talk about the anatomy and physi-

ology and the equipment we use to treat disorders and teach optimal functioning," Shaffer said.

Shaffer's wide range of interests expands well beyond the classroom. He has a growing wine cellar and extensive music collection ranging from AC/DC to Mozart. Shaffer said he has also developed educational software in the areas of biology and biofeedback since the mid-80s.

Senior Aaron Truitt is another member of Shaffer's research team. Truitt went

to Rome with Shaffer in April this year to present material at the Biofeedback Foundation of Europe meeting.

"He has a witty sense of humor, an easy-going personality and holds his students to high standards," Truitt said. "Working with him is a good balance of working hard and having fun."

Truitt said Shaffer has had one of the greatest influences on him while at Truman.

"It's great to have a level-headed adult in town

that will give me advice in the best interest of me," Truitt said.

When looking back on his life, Shaffer said he enjoys the impact of education.

"This is not a job, this is a mission," Shaffer said. "Education is one of the most important purposes a person can have."

Shaffer will continue to carry out this purpose as long as possible.

"I hope to teach until I can no longer do the work," Shaffer said.

Purple Fridays promotes school spirit with dye job

Truman's Purple Challenge urges 'Dogs to show school spirit

BY ALEX CARLSON
Staff Reporter

School spirit will soon go into overdrive for the faculty and staff, thanks to the Truman Purple Challenge.

With Truman's Purple Challenge voting, which took place Nov. 5, faculty and staff put their school spirit front and center. Students decided which faculty or staff member would receive a purple-colored hairdo on Nov. 12, in the Student Union Building.

The Purple Challenge was inspired by the concept used in Penny Wars, when different groups compete to earn the most

money for predetermined causes. It's through academics, athletics or other activities.

Instead of donating money, however, students who wore purple last Friday could vote from a pool of nominated faculty and staff members.

Football head coach Gregg Nesbitt won, with over twice the amount of votes of the runner-up. Nesbitt said his opinion of school spirit focuses on identity and the ability to support your institution, whether

"I would really like the efforts that our students are taking to make [Purple Fridays] integrated into our campus culture a little more."

Laura Bates
Multicultural Affairs Office

Purple Friday committee and her interest in the Penny Wars.

"I do think that student pride in the University, anything that can give a university a sense of identity, is important," Nesbitt said.

Junior Sarah Naji played a major part in the development of the Purple Challenge, which stemmed from her involvement in the Purple Friday committee and her

"With the Purple Challenge, we wanted to really show school spirit and awareness for Purple Friday," Naji said. "It's a good motivator for wearing purple and campus-wide involvement."

Naji and the Purple Friday committee have gathered many supporters and participants in the Purple Challenge. Laura Bates, director of Student Involvement and Campus Activities, has not only supported Naji and the committee's spirited vision but also was enlisted as a nominee in the challenge. Bates said the committee's Purple Challenge idea will promote school spirit, just as Purple Friday does.

"Out of this event, I think I want people to have a good time," Bates said. "I would really like the efforts that our students are taking, to make this integrated into

our campus culture a little more, to be recognized. I think they've taken some great strides, to be excited about being at Truman."

Senior Colleen Pace, another Purple Friday committee member, said she thinks the Purple Challenge is a great way for students to build school spirit.

"It's kind of hard finding school spirit at Truman, since so many students are so focused on academics," Pace said. "The Purple Challenge is definitely something for students to get excited about."

"It's fun, it's competition-based and we're pulling in such a variety of participants," Bates said. "That's what's cool to see, is that our campus community is coming together for something that really does join us all together, no matter what the simplicity of it is."

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