

THE REMARKER

HONORING FORMER HEADMASTER

Hunt named to Holtberg Master Teaching Chair

By Bradford Beck

During the final faculty meeting of the 2013-2014 school year, Arnie Holtberg, the school's retiring headmaster, announced that photography instructor Scott Hunt had been appointed as the first holder of the Arnold E. Holtberg Master Teaching Chair.

"I think many of us have a whole lot of respect for Arnie, so to be the first person named to that position is really special, and for that person to be the one who chose me to fill that spot is also special," Hunt said.

The new chair brings the total number of master teaching chairs up to 17, all of which have been established by donations from alumni, parents and friends of the school to recognize excellence in faculty members.

Scott Hunt
Newest Master Teaching Chair



"It's a huge honor, for one, and it's a way for the school to recognize people who have had great success and who enjoy being in the classroom but might start looking at other options down the road," Hunt said.

The new master teaching chair was established when former Board of Trustees President Randall Fojtasek '81 announced that it had been endowed by the Meyers family and had been named in honor of Holtberg.

Hunt sees the teaching chair as a mandate to keep doing what he's doing, but it has also allowed him to reflect on his teaching and on what he can change.

"One of the things it has done is it's really caused me to kind of step back a little bit and think about how can I improve upon my A game," Hunt said. "Arnie always talked about striving and achieving, so you know you receive an accolade like this, that doesn't mean you can stop and sit back on your laurels and just soak it all in."

NEWS A NEW BEGINNING

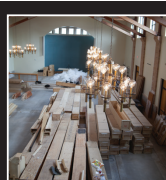
A look into the first 100 days of new Eugene McDermott Headmaster David Dini.

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LIFE THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Thousands of parts and hundreds of hours are going into the construction of the chapel's new organ.

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COMMENTARY LOCKED DOOR TO FITNESS

The Mullen Weight Room is now locked during school hours, keeping students from working out unless part of a PE class.

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Committed.
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'STRUCK BY LIVING'

Inspired by Julie Hersh's book, 'Struck by Living,' Jorge Correa found the strength to help his wife, Patricia Inda-Correa, in her battle with depression. Now, with his translation, Correa is helping countless others as they fight their battles.

A translator & lifesaver

"Struck by Living," an honest reflection of a personal battle with depression, was written by Julie Hersh, an advocate of mental health and parent of Daniel '13. With a Spanish translation, the book will now reach countless more people battling this disease.

Jorge Correa walks into Zale Lipshy Hospital, clutching his copy of *Struck by Living* in his hand. Inside, his wife is hospitalized and dangerously depressed. Every day, the community service director reads the book to his wife, Patricia Inda-Correa, translating the words into Spanish as he goes, coping with the devastating effects of depression as he goes. But today, her birthday, Jorge notices she is different. She's putting on makeup, changing out of the clothes she's worn for days, calling friends and asking them to visit. She's finally talking with her husband. It seems like the best birthday gift ever. But some of Jorge's friends warn him this may not be how it seems. *Don't be a fool, they say. She could relapse.* For a few weeks, Jorge sees the beam of light he so badly wants for his wife and himself. They're back at their house and getting back to their normal lives. Then one day, she can't get out of bed. She slips back into depression just as quickly as she got out. They're right back where they started, but that doesn't mean they've lost hope. Since that day years ago, Patricia has almost fully recovered from her depression.

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STORY WILL CLARK | ADDITIONAL REPORTING GOPAL RAMAN | PHOTOS MASON SMITH

TRANSLATOR AND LIFESAVER



MASON SMITH PHOTO

TRANSLATOR When his wife was hospitalized for depression, Jorge Correa read *Struck by Living*, translating it word for word into Spanish.

COVER STORY continued from page 1

A different happiness

“It’s like trying to move a huge boulder,” Jorge said. “We are all together, and we are happy we are together doing this, but the frickin’ thing is heavy. And it’s not moving and it’s going too slowly. It’s frustrating at times.”

Before her depression set in, Patricia led a happy life as a teacher at Hockaday.

“When I was working at Hockaday, we had a lot of friends,” she said. “I was not sick at that time, I had a lot of energy. We would have parties with our kids and our friends at home. We were such a happy family.” Then she started feeling tired and was not motivated to go to work. Jorge could only watch his wife’s mental deterioration.

“I didn’t know what was brewing in there,” Jorge said. “And then one day, she just wouldn’t and couldn’t get up, just stayed in bed all

day, sleeping.”

Patricia was happy, yet somehow depression found a way into her life.

The same happened to Julie Hersh, the author of *Struck by Living*. Hersh attempted suicide three times.

“I know I felt guilty about it because I had two healthy, beautiful kids who were pretty easy kids. How can I be depressed?” Hersh thought. “And it really has nothing to do with that. It’s really not a logical disease.”

When people have suicidal thoughts, often times that person’s problem-solving and decision-making skills are impaired.

“Usually, when people get to the point of feeling suicidal, it is because they have difficulty generating alternative solutions to

problems,” Director of Counseling Barbara Van Drie said. “Their thinking tends to spiral and they can’t see any other way out.”

Jorge’s son, Andrés, was concerned about his mother’s condition as well. He heard about *Struck by Living* on NPR and recommended the book to his father, not knowing Hersh was involved in the St. Mark’s community.

“I was seeing parts that had to do with Dallas, but I had no idea that the author was even in Texas,” Jorge said. “Then I realized she was talking about St. Mark’s and I was like ‘What the...’”

After reading the book, Jorge was able to better cope with the new challenges he and his wife were facing.

“[Patricia] wasn’t alert,” Jorge said. “But if I could do it in her language first, it would be more natural. I had it all in my mind because I was reading it. I don’t know how many times I’ve read it now, but that’s how it started.”

Since the book made such an impact on Jorge’s life, he decided to return the favor to Hersh by writing an official translation of the book in Spanish—a process that took nearly three years.

“Oh, I’ve gotten all kinds of requests to get the book in Spanish,” Hersh casually mentioned to Jorge at a school-sponsored function.

Jorge said he’d do it, but Hersh didn’t really expect him to tackle the enormous task.

When she realized he was serious, she insisted on paying him.

“No, no, no, this is my gift back to you,” Jorge told her.

Since the translated book would reach mostly Mexican populations, Hersh gave Jorge’s translation to some of her Mexican friends, Emilio and Monica Pimentel, to “Mexicanize” it.

Just as it took a community of writers and devoted people to translate the book, it takes a community to help a loved one overcome depression.

“I think the biggest thing that helped me from taking my life was that there were people there,” Hersh said.

Van Drie agrees that while it may be difficult acknowledging

the support, the community is an important component to recovery.

“I think that’s the hardest thing,” Van Drie said. “Being in a culture that prizes self-reliance, seeking help and gathering support around us is sometimes hard for people to do. It’s important to use the support of professionals and our community.”

Through the influence of her book, Hersh was able to connect with all kinds of people and truly impact the lives of her readers.

“I’ve had teenage kids that look like goth characters come out and say, ‘I feel like your book was written for me,’” Hersh said with a laugh. “Really? I’m a plain, boring, suburban soccer mom and I remind you of yourself?”

Patricia was able to establish a concrete connection with Hersh during her ordeal since she was in the same hospital and saw many of the same things as Hersh.

“There were many things I was believing at that time that she lived also,” Patricia said. “I felt close to her. She described things I was going through at that time. It was something that I could understand better about myself because it was a similar experience.”

Connecting with Hersh and opening up about her condition was a critical part of the path to healing for Patricia.

“When you realize that you are sick with depression or feeling down,” she said, “I would say that you need to talk to somebody and share that experience. You don’t have to keep it to yourself.”

As her ordeal progressed, Patricia gradually did get better, and now she feels much better than when she was battling the worst bouts of depression.

Hersh says the most important thing for a depressed person is to keep trying. The most important thing for that person’s

10^{TOP} MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

Julie Hersh uses these tips when giving advice on how to deal with depression based on her experience and professional medical advice.

1 Sleep—get the right amount. Most depressed people report sleep problems, insomnia often accompanies suicide.

2 Nutrition—if needed, take Vitamin D supplements. Add in fish oil for Omega III fatty acids.

3 Exercise. If injured, compensate with another form of exercise. For more information, read *Spark* by John Ratey.

4 Be aware of the impact of alcohol and drugs. Take medication if prescribed. If you have a tendency to be depressed, alcohol or illegal drugs only compounds the impact of depression.

5 Feed your brain with courses that excite you. A happy brain is a more productive brain.

6 Avoid romantic relationships that exclude friendships. Make friendships with people outside of romantic relationships.

7 Get a mentor. Someone 10 years or older can act as a sounding board when problems are small and easily solvable.

8 Allow time for introspection. Call this prayer, journaling, meditation or chill time.

9 Plan proactively for a health crisis and know the signs of depression. Know where the counseling center is and learn about the signs of depression so you can recognize them in yourself or others.

10 Remember that your value is more than what you do. Try to remember that you have value just in being. This lesson humbles us, yet frees us to pursue our passions in the same instant.

family and friends, she says, is for them just to be there.

For Hersh, her family and friends were stubborn enough to keep helping, keep pushing, keep supporting her until she got better.

Jorge read her story and knew he had to do the same.

Thanks to his efforts, Patricia is well on her way to recovery, even after suffering through a potentially deadly mental disorder.

“I am happy now,” Patricia said. “Not as happy as I used to be, but I feel good about myself and I think that I’m doing well. I feel happy now, but it’s a different happiness.”

STRUCK BY LIVING / DECIDI VIVIR

Quick facts



MASON SMITH PHOTO

• *Decidi Vivir* is Jorge Correa’s Spanish translation of Julie Hersh’s 2010 book.

• *Decidi Vivir* comes out Oct. 23.

• Julie Hersh, who has become a nationally known advocate for mental health, is the mother of Daniel Hersh 13 and the wife of Ken Hersh ‘81.

• The book describes Hersh’s account of depression and her recovery using electroconvulsive therapy.

• A copy of each version of the book is available in the Green Library.

‘Depression doesn’t come alone. It has many other powerful tentacles and it is like a dark animal that reaches out to other people, as well. Family, friends, work, everything.’

JORGE CORREA