

At Your Service

By Kelly de la Rocha, photo by Dan Epstein

ACAP staff, from left:
Sheila Zaretsky, Ph.D.;
Vicki Semel, Psy.D.,
executive director;
Patricia Bratt, Ph.D.,
Charles Pumilia,
Psy.D.

A Helping Hand to a Better Life

ACAP OFFERS COURSES, COUNSELING, AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A change for the better. Those words have a nice ring to them, don't they?

We could all use a little positive change in our lives, perhaps in a relationship, career, or our outlook on life. But putting change into motion can be challenging, even intimidating.

That's where the Academy of Clinical and Applied Psychoanalysis (ACAP) comes in, providing ideas and direction to area residents who want change—but don't know how to begin.

"We help people become creative problem solvers," explains Patricia Harte Bratt, ACAP development director. "We guide them toward becoming more resilient, better able to cope with stress, manage the world around them more effectively, and discover more fulfilling lives."

ACAP is a nationally accredited clinical training program for mental health professionals—and indeed, it does offer professional training.

But community outreach is also a key part of the organization's mission. To that end, ACAP offers personal and professional development seminars and workshops to the public. Whether you're a mom struggling to balance home and work, a

teacher challenged by difficult students, or a construction worker curious about a new career path, there's a workshop for you at ACAP.

"People from every walk of life take our courses," remarks Bratt. "Anyone who wants to learn more about him or herself, reach new goals, or deal better with difficult people and situations is welcome."

Learning Tools to Use Now

Courses range from single sessions to multi-day events. Many are free—and all take place in a warm, supportive environment. Monthly open houses showcase the various course offerings.

"We help people develop concrete tools that they can apply in their lives right away," Bratt says. For example, they may learn to understand motivation, solve problems creatively, or confront difficult people and situations in a more constructive way.

The courses are experiential and interactive. "They're fun," Bratt says, adding that attendees are consistently enthusiastic about the workshops. "They find them to be rewarding, eye-opening ex-

periences. They gain new ways of viewing problems—and tools for dealing with them."

If a group setting isn't for you, ACAP also offers individual counseling through its North Jersey Consultation Center. Explains Bratt, "People can see a highly trained mental health professional for a fee that's affordable to them."

Another facet of ACAP is the Community Resource Partnering Network. The network, which ACAP helped create, combines the forces of more than 50 nonprofit community service organizations in an all-out effort to provide more comprehensive services to area residents.

Bratt is delighted to be part of ACAP, a group that produces positive change in the lives of so many.

"I just love it when we run a program and you see someone who 'gets it.' Suddenly, a light bulb goes off and they're able to improve their lives," she says. "It's great." ▲

**Academy of Clinical
and Applied Psychoanalysis**
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