

Professor Bella DePaulo to Lead AASP's Board of Academic Advisors

Much of AASP's work is rooted in research and educational projects involving a wide range of academic disciplines. That is why the creation of a Board of Academic Advisors has been on the organization's wish list for quite some time.

That wish leaped off the drawing board and took its first step into reality recently when Professor Bella DePaulo accepted our invitation to become Chair of the Board of Academic Advisors of Spectrum Institute, the research and policy division of AASP.

"I've envisioned Spectrum Institute becoming a functioning Spectrum division of AASP, attracting scholars who are interested in research and education involving single and unmarried individuals, couples, and families," said Thomas F. Coleman, founding director of AASP. "Our work needs to have a solid foundation which an Academic Advisory Board can help to provide."

Our new Development Director, Candace Kavanagh, saw this as a priority for 2002 and took the initiative to travel to Santa Barbara to personally invite Professor DePaulo to accept this important leadership position.

"Professor DePaulo is a top notch scholar who will be able to attract other professors to join her on the Academic Advisory Board," said Kavanagh. "She will create a think tank which will lend greater credibility to our work."

The immediate goal of the Academic Advisory Board is to create a research forum for academic leaders across a wide spectrum of disciplines, including psychology, law, political science, sociology, theology, history, philosophy, education, communications and economics. The Academic Advisory Board will provide continued leadership to and expand AASP's on-going role of holding the largest collection of accurate information regarding unmarried Americans.

The nonprofit corporation now known as AASP was formerly known as Spectrum Institute. Since its initial incorporation in 1989, Spectrum Institute has conducted a series of



Professor Bella DePaulo

Bella M. DePaulo is a social psychologist with a B.A. from Vassar College and a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

Dr. DePaulo has authored more than 100 professional publications in her career. She has been studying the place in science, society, and social life of people who are single. She is the President of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology, and the recipient of numerous professional honors and awards.

Dr. DePaulo is currently a Visiting Professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

public policy studies focusing on marital status and family diversity. These studies were done in cooperation with a variety of government agencies and elected officials. Spectrum Institute arose from an earlier unincorporated association known as the Family Diversity Project which was created in 1985. Attorney Thomas F. Coleman has been the key executive in each of these research organizations and will continue to lend his legal expertise to this new Academic Advisory Board.

The activities of the Board of Academic Advisors would include:

- Studying the status and treatment of unmarried individuals, couples, parents and families in contemporary society
- Examining the causes and effects of marital status discrimination
- Gathering current demographics about unmarried America
- Developing a clearing house for academic information across these areas
- Promoting the establishment of singles' studies courses at colleges and universities
- Encouraging scholars to pursue research in these areas
- Encouraging scholars to publish relevant and timely articles in academic journals
- Assisting non-profit agencies and public officials in conducting public policy studies
- Being available to the media to provide background information as stories are developed
- Making presentations at academic conferences
- Holding its own periodic national conferences
- Supervising college interns as they conduct research and providing them with advice and direction
- Working in tandem with other development efforts within AASP and universities, seeking grants to support the efforts listed above

University professors, students, and others who are interested in obtaining more information about the new Board of Academic Advisors may contact Dr. Bella DePaulo by e-mail at: bmd@virginia.edu, or depaulo@psych.ucsb.edu. ∞∞