

Paul Satz-INS Career Mentoring Award, Sponsored by PAR:

Robert K. Heaton, PhD



Every neuropsychologist is aware of Dr. Bob Heaton's tremendous impact on our field, but not everyone may be aware of one particular aspect of his extraordinary career: that he is one of the most exceptional mentors in neuropsychology. Dr. Heaton is unparalleled as a mentor, and those whom he has mentored speak very highly of the commitment, patience, and encouragement he has shared with them over the years. Each of Bob's mentees considers him to be fundamental in the launching of their careers, and they share their joy in his receipt of this award.

Bob's academic achievements have provided an outstanding foundation of research studies for his mentees. He is author in a jaw-dropping number (over 400!) of peer-reviewed manuscripts, books, test manuals, and chapters, many of which have provided the foundation for neuropsychology research and practice. Even a cursory review of these publications reveals the opportunities that he has provided his students to serve as first or contributing authors, and the supporting role that he played in the career of many neuropsychologists, many who are now independent investigators as well. He has never

allowed his seniority to dampen his interest in involving students in his writing projects. His leadership and involvement in numerous NIH grants provided countless opportunities for students to leverage ongoing studies.

Bob's passion about scientific inquiry has led to his internationally recognized, groundbreaking achievements in normative neuropsychology and measurement of cognition and function. In fact, his innovative work spans the globe. Bob has mentored across national borders. He was instrumental in guiding the development of a neuropsychology Master's program in Zambia, where our profession is in its infancy, which included training students to collect normative data for the region. Through his HIV research collaborations, he has promoted the importance of culturally appropriate test adaptations and has helped train investigators to develop much needed regional norms, including in China, Cameroon, India, and Nigeria. His passion for improving the toolkit of our discipline led him to support countless master's theses and dissertations on topics related to the validity and precision of neuropsychological measures.

It is noteworthy that Bob has been a champion of gender equity and cultural considerations in neuropsychological assessments. In his quest for making "best practices" standard, he heralded the first effort for large scale normative standards that adjust for race/ethnicity. His courage in challenging the status quo and recognizing the limits of our discipline validated the interests of his students and provided a model for how we might tackle difficult challenges while maintaining high standards for intellectual and ethical integrity. Bob taught us how to conduct research ethically in all contexts, including in international work and among vulnerable populations. He taught us the rules of authorship and the importance of including all contributions, even relatively small ones, in resulting manuscripts.

Bob's dedication to mentoring is unparalleled. As the co-director of the SDSU/UCSD Joint Doctoral Program and a postdoctoral supervisor, Bob has been able to influence the lives of hundreds of clinical psychologists, not just those specializing in neuropsychology. As Vice Chair for Academic Affairs in his department, he makes himself available to mentor many dozens of junior and mid-career faculty members on navigating their academic advancement. His capacity to nurture the careers of students and colleagues at all levels is truly remarkable. He has trained hundreds of graduate students, as well as mentored many of us throughout our early careers. Despite his busy schedule, he makes himself available for consultation and collaboration. He always has time for us. He is our biggest advocate and provides meaningful advice when needed all the while recognizing that each of us have our own unique career paths. Nothing delights Bob more than learning about the success, both professional and personal, of his former mentees. As such, numerous current and former students gather annually for what has now come to be affectionately referred to as "Breakfast with Bob" at INS meetings.

Not only have Bob's students' own careers benefited from his mentorship, but they have learned from him how to mentor their own students, and they continue to do so in a wide variety of settings, including universities designed to serve undergraduate and graduate students, R1 institutions and clinical settings.

Finally, Bob's service to the International Neuropsychological Society has guided and inspired his mentees to become members who are active in the scientific program and leadership of the society. Through his broad networks of colleagues, he created opportunities for collaboration, sparked conversations that later led to internships, fellowships, and early career positions, and solidified INS as a welcoming home for all of us.