

The Battalion

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A&M professor returns from Mediterranean island

By Susan Maguire
 The Battalion

A Texas A&M professor recently returned from a trip on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, but she wasn't there on a vacation — she taught other teachers about education.

Dr. Marla Stone, a visiting assistant professor of education and second recipient of the Fulbright Award for A&M's College of Education in 1990, received the award based on her outstanding service to the University.

Stone said her lectureship was made more challenging than usual because of the repercussions from Cyprus' civil war that ended in 1974.

Since the civil war, Cyprus has been divided between the

Dr. Marla Stone relays experiences teaching educators on Cyprus

Turkish and Greek Cypriots, with U.N. forces enforcing a cease-fire between the two factions.

"There is a physical line that each group must not cross," she said.

Stone began her work on the island last January and returned to the United States in July. She lived in the capital, Nicosia, and worked on both sides of the line.

She said she worked with the country's school supervisors and teachers.

Stone said Cyprus' school supervisors have more authority than their American equivalent school inspectors. Supervisors are in charge of everything from curriculum to evaluating the teachers, she said.

"I helped enhance the skills of

the country's supervisors," she said.

Stone said a major problem she faced was that the secondary school teachers are taught more about their subject area than how to teach, because they are sent abroad to learn their specialization and are not certified to be teachers. On the other hand, she said, elementary school teachers are taught how to teach in a three-year program, but are not authorities in their area.

"I tried to show them how to teach more actively," she said. "I initiated a writing program to revise their science curriculum, and I insisted that I have teachers on the committee."

"That's the first time that teachers were involved in any de-

cision-making."

Another problem, she said, was the lack of equipment and facilities that were available to the teachers.

"It's not a third-world country, but there isn't a lot of extra money," she said.

Also, the student-teacher ratio was very high, she said. On the Greek side of the island, there are 35 to 40 students for every teacher, and on the Turkish side, there are 50 or more student for every teacher, she said.

"It's an impossible situation for teachers," Stone said.

Still, she said, there is a 100 percent literacy rate on the Greek side of the island because everyone has to go to school. The rate is lower on the Turkish side because

the same policy is not strongly enforced, she said.

Stone said that language wasn't a problem for those she taught.

"For the most part, the Greek understood English," she said. "On the Turkish side, I dealt mainly with secondary school teachers and they have to teach lessons in English, themselves."

Stone arrived in Cyprus, which is 60 miles west of Syria, days before the start of the Gulf War.

She wasn't in much danger, she said, but the refugee population shot up.

"My main worry was finding place to live," she said.

Stone said she still is doing consulting with the supervisors and teachers and work is being done on the science curriculum revisions she began.

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Study

with their treatment.

"This is one way that Medicare can look at cost containment without sacrificing quality," Bame said. "That's the purpose of my research."

The faculty and patients of 56 units took part in the survey.

They responded to questions concerning five environmental factors: temperature, noise levels, amounts of personal privacy, decor and lighting.

Temperature drew criticism from both the patients and the staff. On the average, patients expressed concern over their inability to adjust the temperature. They complained of being too cold. While at the same time, staff members often felt too hot.

The issue of privacy cropped up often

on the survey of patients. Generally, patients wanted the option of deciding about whether to be left alone.

Many of the dialysis treatment facilities consist of reclining chairs lined up along the walls, dorm-style. The dialysis machine sits to one side. The design allows the staff to keep better watch over the patients in case of complications. In the case of a drop in blood pressure, facial coloring serves as an early indicator of problems.

According to Bame, this arrangement provides the patients with very little, if any, privacy during their three to four hour treatment.

Some researchers even criticized the noise levels and decor of the facilities, more so than the patients.

"What we think is that the patient simply becomes passive and puts up with the environment because they have to be there," Bame said. "If they're not there, they die."

Employees, on the other hand, can choose whether or not to find another job.

Health care centers have high turn-over rates. Bame said she hopes to discover whether a connection exists between a facility's poor design and a high turn-over rate. The answer could save health centers money in the long run.

"If you have a lower turn-over, you save a tremendous amount of money from not having to orient and retrain new staff," Bame said. "We want to find out, given all that's known about turn-over, is there

something with the actual design of the environment that may help lower the turn-over," Bame said.

Bame has teamed up with students from the College of Architecture to develop designs which would better accommodate both the faculty and patients of hospitals.

Rodney Hill, associate dean for Student Affairs of the College of Architecture, said many students designed patient chairs which incorporated individual radio and television controls into the chair. In another design, each chair had a personal computer mounted on the side.

"We tried to get the patients where they had their own variety, so it didn't become monotonous experience each time they came in," Hill said.

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Cooper

Cooper realizes, however, that study abroad programs can be expensive and not everyone can receive financial assistance. That is why it is important to form friendships with international students at A&M and take advantage of the international courses that are offered, he says.

The key concept that will dominate future international business relations is whether or not people from different countries can interact with one another comfortably, Cooper says.

Cooper, who has published more than 40 articles and eight books relating to international fi-

nance, says he is honored to be the first recipient of the Cullen Trust. He says the money will be used primarily for travel expenses and the hiring of graduate students.

Before joining A&M in 1975, Cooper was an associate professor and director of programs in accounting and finance at the Uni-

versity of Houston. He was also an assistant professor of accounting at Louisiana State University, and a lecturer in economics at the University of Texas at Austin.

His speciality is finance and his writing focuses on financial markets and international business.

Cooper says his primary concern, however, lies within the center and its future growth.

"Our participation has helped the center financially, since that where most of our funding comes from," Cooper says. "Most of it has put us among some of the best schools in the country."

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