

eye ON PSY CHI

FALL 2021 | VOL 26 | NO 1

Your Secret Decoder *to Graduate School* *and/or Career Success*

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Affect Your Mental Health
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ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychological Association
APS	Association for Psychological Science
EPA	Eastern Psychological Association
MPA	Midwestern Psychological Association
NEPA	New England Psychological Association
RMPPA	Rocky Mountain Psychological Association
SEPA	Southeastern Psychological Association
SWPA	Southwestern Psychological Association
WPA	Western Psychological Association

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Connect With Psi Chi

Ngoc H. Bui, PhD
Psi Chi President

President Biden wasn't the only one being optimistic about getting a handle on the pandemic by summer. When he talked about summer barbecues with family and friends and most Americans being vaccinated by July 4th (Ollstein, 2021), I felt a sense of hope that we could be "back to normal" by fall. For many of us, "normal" will be returning to campuses, getting our students back to classrooms, and coming back to our offices. But my hope faltered a little as the number of COVID cases continued to rise daily around the world, especially in the United States. What I must remind myself, though, is that if we were to go back into lockdown or return to social distancing requirements, we are more prepared now than we were over 17 months ago when the whole world pretty much shut down. This is because, while many of us were busy focusing on Zoom breakout rooms, stocking up on toilet paper, and making our own masks, research psychologists were busy studying how the pandemic has affected individuals' mental health and well-being. Although there certainly have been negative effects of the pandemic on businesses (Fairlie, 2020), schools (Burgess & Sieversten, 2020), and travel (Ugur & Akbiyik, 2020), researchers examined how individuals have maintained and increased their well-being during the pandemic. They discovered several different protective factors that related to increased well-being including psychological characteristics like gratitude and grit (Bono et al., 2020), personality characteristics like extraversion (Cooper et al., 2020), and demographic factors like being of older age (López et al., 2020).

However, if one is not "gritty," extraverted, or older, what can be done to help protect mental health and well-being? Fortunately, researchers also found that social factors such as the quantity and quality of social relationships helped people during the pandemic. Feeling connected to others related to greater well-being (Cantarero et al., 2020), and having larger social networks related to less stress during lockdowns (Nitschke et al., 2020). Greater social connection has also been linked to better physical health and lower mortality risk (Holt-Lunstad, 2021). What these studies have shown is that human connection has never been more salient or needed. Now more than ever, we need to build and maintain these connections with one another not just to survive, but to thrive.

I know that some of you may be wondering whether making a connection means having to interact with someone who is

on the opposite ideological or political spectrum as you. We are not only living through a pandemic, but we are also facing very divisive times in which people have great animosity and strongly negative and biased views toward those from opposing political parties (Luscombe, 2020). It is so divisive that surveys of Americans from various sources like the Voter Study Group and YouGov (Diamond et al., 2020) found that 33% of respondents felt violence of different levels was justified to achieve political goals and 71% of respondents in a Pew Research Center survey believed that there is stronger conflict between Democrats and Republicans than other groups (younger and older people, Black and White people, and rich and poor people; Schaeffer, 2020). Given these sentiments, it can be challenging connecting with someone who won't listen or sees you as their enemy. It is easy to connect with those who share your values and beliefs, but connections can and should be made with those whom we want to build a relationship, especially our family members, friends, coworkers, and classmates. Experts say that we need to be doing more listening and less convincing if we are to connect with those most difficult to reach (Smith, 2020), and our job as psychologists, psychologists-in-training, and psychology students is to work on how to understand and reach people, even though it may be hard.

When asked to choose a Presidential theme for the year, all I could think about was how much Psi Chi meant to me as an undergraduate student, helping me to make educational and professional connections, and how much more Psi Chi means to me now during this pandemic. For example, our chapter officers continued to reach out to members to hold weekly chapter meetings and host events including new member inductions and a virtual conference. They did not want to lose the community and support that students seek when they join our Psi Chi chapter at the University of La Verne. These connections have helped students through this difficult year and made me want to focus my theme on *connecting with Psi Chi. My goal is to have members (past, present, and future) interact and connect* with Psi Chi, the field of psychology, their fellow members, and their community. The "how" and the "when" for these initiatives will be rolled out over the coming year, but I hope after reading this article you understand the "why" of human connection and its importance in well-being, mental health, and feeling like part of a community.

As a preview, my goals for connecting members to Psi Chi will include the following:

- **Provide Networking Opportunities** with lifetime members, advisors, faculty, and speakers. Some ideas are to create and expand mentorship programs, hold Virtual Coffee Chats, and host convention social hours.
- **Promote Internship Opportunities** by reaching out to agencies and organizations to build and expand an internship database for members to use and contribute.
- **Prepare Future Psychologists** to lead in the field by offering research/clinical workshops and colloquia aimed at preparing future professionals. Alumni and Psi Chi partners can lead these workshops and colloquia.

I am a social psychologist who is somewhat of an introvert. I am fascinated by human behavior—individually and within groups. The irony is not lost on me that I don't like to be in groups, but I like to study them. I see my Presidential theme as a personal challenge to connect with as many members and partners in Psi Chi as I can, to listen more than convince, and to bridge more than divide. I hope you take up this challenge with me.

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Ways to Connect With Psi Chi



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Join the conversation by submitting articles to *Eye on Psi Chi* magazine, the *Journal*, or the *Psi-Chi-ology Blog*. We may even invite you as a guest on the *PsychEverywhere Podcast* or to host a webinar!

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Our Professional Organization offers a variety of ways to support the psychology community, achieve departmental service requirements, and develop your personal interests and goals.

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Each year, Psi Chi's Network for International Collaborative Exchange (NICE) conducts a guided, cross-cultural **CROWD research project**, which students and faculty, both within the United States and internationally, are invited to join.

Join IPALs

IPALs (International Partners and Leaders) is an exciting new program that connects Psi Chi chapters in meaningful and supportive partnerships.

Become an Officer

Consider running for an officer position in your chapter to make a positive impact on others and yourself. With many different officer roles, there is an opportunity for everyone.



Bandura, 2020 Summer Olympics (in 2021), and COVID, the Houseguest That Just Won't Go Away

SECTION EDITOR:

Shawn R. Charlton, PhD

University of Central Arkansas

Happy fall! The months since our last *Psychology in the Headlines* have been extremely eventful. For example: This past July psychology lost a giant with the death of Dr. Albert Bandura (December 4, 1925, to July 26, 2021). Bandura published his first article in 1953, “Primary” and “Secondary” Suggestibility, and never stopped contributing to the field (he had a publication this year: Bandura et al., 2021). Bandura’s [Google Scholar profile](#) indicates that his work has been cited an incredible 673,000+ times! In 2016, Bandura received a National Medal of Science from the United States (American Psychological Association, 2016). It is difficult to imagine psychology in the United States without Bandura.

The 2020 Olympics (but held in 2021, like a “Taco Tuesday, but on a Friday”) was full of wonderful personal interest stories (my favorite was of the two friends who accepted to [share gold medals rather than do a jump off](#)) and examples of psychology in action. I don’t think any psychology-focused story was bigger than Simone Biles’s withdrawal from the team competition and several individual gymnastics events for mental health reasons. Although mental health and sports is not a new conversation (check out [this great story](#) on the NBA’s mental health and wellness initiative), Biles’s decision brought international awareness to—and discussion about—the impact of mental health on physical performance and the need for better awareness and management of mental health in athletes, and everyone else (see Park, 2021, for more on this discussion).

Finally, the Delta variant. How I had looked forward to a 2021–22 academic year where we were moving away from COVID! But, just like that coworker who won’t stop interrupting our work or the visitor that keeps showing up at our dwelling despite the lack of invitation, COVID just isn’t ready to leave us be (my wife Veda and I are washing the masks that we pulled out of storage as I work on this article. Ugh). Yet amid the frustrations of the lingering pandemic, we continue to see how psychological science can help us understand and improve individual and community health including vaccine hesitancy (Murphy et al., 2021) and how pandemics impact social behavior (Meier et al., 2021).

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Predictors of Reaching the Olympics: Inspired by Quanesha Burks

Bradley Cannon

Psi Chi Central Office

Quanesha Burks said she feels like she is on a cloud. Raised by her grandparents in Alabama, her career began at a McDonald's to make money for her family. And yet, after much hard work and training, the 26-year-old recently qualified to represent the United States by competing in the long jump for the Summer 2020 Olympics in Tokyo!

What makes success stories like these possible? Or more specifically, what are psychological predictors of physical achievement?

Athletic success has been increasingly linked to personality traits. For instance, Allen & Laborde (2014) reviewed the literature, indicating how national or international competitors report **higher levels of conscientiousness but lower levels of neuroticism** compared to club or regional sports competitors.

Regarding young adults, Rullestad et al. (2021) completed a two-year longitudinal study of 1,225 Norwegian students in grades 6 through 10. They found that **"positive attitude towards physical education, perceived support from parents, if the student travelled to school in an active way (walk/bicycle), and also how the student rated his or her own health"** (p. 6) predicted being physically active after two years. The last three factors also predicted improvements of physical activity.

Comparing cognitive and noncognitive predictors, Duckworth et al. (2019) revealed the following. Of more than 10,000 West Point cadets, those higher in grit (defined as passion and perseverance for long-term goals of personal significance) were 54% more likely to complete Beast Barracks training. Physical ability assessed prior to training was also the best predictor of physical GPA. Overall, the noncognitive factors of **grit and physical ability** were better predictors of graduating from West Point than cognitive ability.

What does all of this mean for you? Psychologists like Carol Dweck have found that it is possible to change your personality through learning new habits, challenging your self-beliefs, and focusing on your efforts over your abilities (Cherry, 2021). So, for example, would you like to become an Olympic medalist? Striving for **these 12 psychological characteristics** identified in 10 Olympic champions might be a good place to start (Gould, 2002).

Quanesha placed thirteenth in the long jump, soaring 6.56 meters (21 feet, 6 inches). She says, "Never let other people dictate your success or how far you can go in life."

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Passion May or May Not Be a Contributing Factor in Judging Work Productivity or Full Potential

Seungyeon Lee, PhD

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Assume you have two outstanding candidates for an interview. One expresses great enthusiasm and passion for the job, whereas the other takes it as a social responsibility with prior engagements. Which one would succeed if hired? It wouldn't be surprising if you feel predisposed toward the first candidate, we all know that first impressions matter. However, the actual answer is more complicated and may depend on the person's ethnicity and cultural background. Passion is not a universal construct viewed by all individuals in the same way Americans frequently view it.

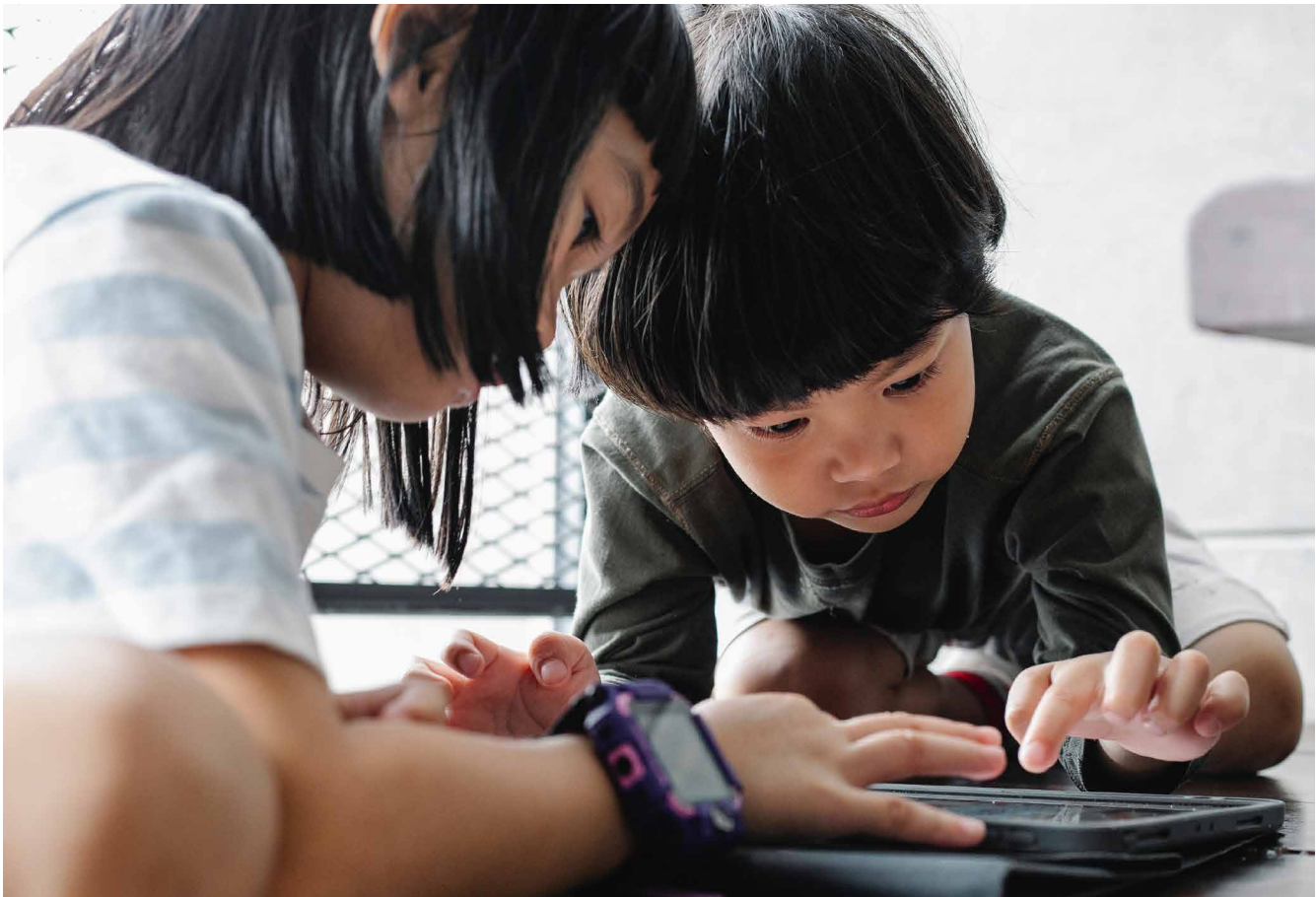
Li and collaborators (2021) posed a research question about whether passion is a good indicator in predicting individual achievement. In the United States and other West European countries, passion is recognized as a psychological construct and as the center stone of achievement. Employers and those in the decision-making process may rely on applicants' passion during oral interviews. What Li et al. (2021) found is that passion could be a strong predictor of achievement in countries that value individualism, but not in others.

In addition, Li et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between passion and achievement, using 59 countries with 1.2 million global high school students. They examined each participant's rating of interest, self-efficacy, reading, math, and motivation factors that help gauge their level of passion. Findings indicate that those who come from the United States, Australia, or countries that value individualism would be more likely to succeed in their academic subjects given a high level of passion. On the other hand, those who come from East (and/or Southeast) Asia, Columbia, or countries that value collectivism usually demonstrate their success when their interests align with family support.

The notion that people believe passion is the best predictor of achievement, according to Li et al. (2021), is actually biased—because one can look at passion as the main source of self-efficacy and motivation or as an integral part of the roles they must play. The researchers posit that motivation may take various forms, depending on where individuals live and what that area values. In fact, passion can also be independent or interdependent. The risk of overestimating passion in career decisions may need to be re-examined, which reinforces the importance of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I).

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To What Extent Does Screen Time Impact Children's Mental Health?

Merritt White Tate, Skylar McCombs, Emma Roberts, and Aubrey Wilson

With the now ubiquitous presence of technology and smart-phones, screen time's impact on children and their well-being is now a common parental concern (Oswald et al., 2020). This concern has only increased since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent rise in the number of children who participated in virtual learning during the past school year (Nagata et al., 2020). However, how justified are these concerns? What does psychological science have to say about screen time and children?

Evidence suggests that an association exists between mental health and screen time in children and adolescents. Oswald et al. (2020) found that symptoms of depression and anxiety, lower self-esteem, and other mental health issues were indicators associated with screen time. Similarly, Boers et al. (2019) found that increases in social media and television use resulted in increased symptoms of depression in adolescents.

Nagata et al. (2020) examined the relationship between children and screen time during the COVID-19 pandemic. They acknowledged that a higher accumulation of screen time may be an unavoidable reality among children whose parents are

working remotely from home since the transfer to virtual learning. Although large amounts of screen time are therefore necessary for students' learning, they note that it can be associated with health risks such as poor sleep and obesity.

However, all hope is not lost. Parents, educators, and health providers can help to mitigate the impact of screen time on children and adolescents. Oswald et al. (2020) suggested that increasing "green time," or time spent outside in nature, can help to mitigate the negative effects of excessive screen time. When outdoor activities are limited or unsafe, the Child Mind Institute (n.d.) suggests prioritizing other healthy developmental practices such as healthy eating, socialization with friends and family (even if virtual), and engaging in hobbies and creative activities. The most important tip that the Child Mind Institute recommends is above all, to be easy on yourself during this time. Screen time alone is not the only stressor impacting mental health right now, so it is also important to practice compassion for yourself and for others.

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Psychology Goes to the Tokyo Olympics

Shawn R. Charlton

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Olympic athletes amaze me. And those who performed at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics—held in July and August of 2021—lived up to my expectations. For example, the women’s 100-meter backstroke Olympic record was broken by Kylie Masse (Canada), then by Regan Smith (United States), and finally by Kaylee McKeown (Australia) in back-to-back-to-back heats. Incredible!

In addition to the outstanding athletic performances, I was also impressed by how present psychology was in the reporting of the 2020 Olympic games. Here are some examples of headlines from the end of July 2021 that featured psychology’s relevance to the Olympics:

- **“Why Bronze Medalists Are Likely Happier Than Those Who Win Silver”** (Romo, 2021): Highlighting psychological research from 1995 and a follow-up in 2020, Romo discusses the role of psychological comparisons in determining our reaction to events. Silver medalists may compare themselves to the gold medalist (oh what could have been!) while bronze medalists may focus more on the difference between being on versus off the pedestal.
- **“The Olympics Without Fans Is Harming Athletes’ Performance”** (Bender, 2021): As a spectator, it has been strange to watch the Olympics without the sights and sounds of cheering supporters. This oddity may have an even greater impact on the athletes who have perfected their performances in front of audiences. As Bender discusses in this article, even their mental performances typically include the crowd. This same theme was explored in a news article by Wong (2021).
- **“OK Not to Be OK’: Mental Health Takes Top Role at Olympics”** (Fryer, 2021): Although Simone Biles’s high profile withdraw from gymnastics competitions may be the most discussed (Longman, 2021), these Olympics saw a heightened

awareness to the impact and importance of mental health, including a more visible presence of sports psychologists and other providers. For one example of this increased presence, I encourage you to check out the [IOC’s #MentallyFit website](#) for an example of the changing dialog regarding mental health and athletic performance.

- **“Do Olympic-Level Achievements Make People Happy?”** (Pinsker, 2021). Psychologists have discovered that happiness is very complicated (and perhaps a little over valued). In this article, Pinsker explores some of the reasons why Olympic success may both contribute to and detract from athletes’ happiness (including more on observed differences in the happiness of bronze and silver medal winners).

These are just a sampling of how psychology has become a part of the Olympic games and athletics. Sports technology and science continue to produce improved athletic performance. Psychologists have a critical role to play in athletes succeeding in competition and thriving outside of it.

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Shawn R. Charlton, PhD, earned a BA degree from Utah State University (2001) and a MS and PhD from the University of California, San Diego (2006). His research interests explore decision-making in a variety of contexts. Research on professional development in higher education is a growing emphasis for his Behavioral and Social Decisions Laboratory.



Connecting Chapters With the IPALs Program

Carrie Brown, PhD
Western Governors University

Hello, Psi Chi Advisors! My name is Carrie Brown and I am a member of Psi Chi's International Advisory Committee. This committee aims to continue to expand Psi Chi's reach internationally and to connect chapters inside and outside the United States together. The International Committee has developed an exciting new virtual program called International Partners and Leaders (IPALs). In this article, I will provide you with the program details and how your chapter can become involved.

What Is IPALs, What Are the Benefits of Joining?

International Partners and Leaders (IPALs) connects Psi Chi chapters together to build professional and personal connections. When a chapter joins IPALs, they are paired with a chapter in another part of the world and together, the two chapters form collaborations and friendships, learn about all the great programs and resources Psi Chi has to offer, and gain professional development opportunities.

The Psi Chi International Committee piloted IPALs in 2020 and through that pilot, the inaugural IPALs connections were formed: Trinity Washington University (Washington, D.C.) with Universidad de Sonora (Mexico), and University of Central Arkansas with Universidad de Valle de Guatemala.

How Does IPALs Work?

Once your chapter applies to join IPALs (more on that later), you are paired with a chapter in another part of the world. We encourage you to reach out to the advisor of your paired chapter to learn about each other's chapters and how you want to work together as IPALs.

We suggest that you meet with your IPALs partner chapter once a month during the academic year, but this decision is up to you and your chapter partner. We also suggest that you and the advisor of the IPALs partner chapter take turns hosting your IPALs meetings through a virtual space that is accessible to all attendees (e.g., Zoom).

During each IPALs meeting, you will have a topic to help guide the conversation. The topics you choose can be up to you, but if you would like guidance, IPALs offers a great "menu" of ideas and resources to help guide your meetings. The menu includes the following topics:

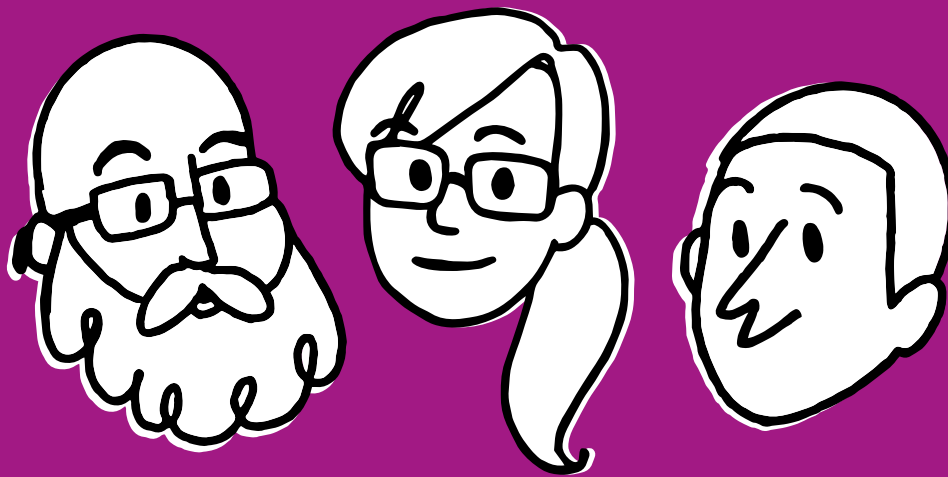
- research collaborations,
- graduate school applications
- service opportunities,
- diversity dialogues,
- book clubs and movie reviews,
- leadership development, and
- tips for advisors and officers in running a chapter.

How Can Your Chapter Join IPALs?

If your chapter is interested in joining IPALs, you can start the process by completing this brief [online application form](#). You can send questions about IPALs to Psi Chi International Director Dr. Brien Ashdown at international.director@psichi.org. For more information about IPALs, watch this short, [recorded webinar](#).



Carrie Brown, PhD, is a senior instructor in general education at Western Governors University (WGU)—an online university based in Salt Lake City, Utah. She has been working at WGU since 2017 and is an instructor for Introduction to Psychology and Human Growth and Development Across the Lifespan. Before working at WGU, Carrie was an assistant professor of psychology at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia. Carrie earned her PhD in experimental psychology from Saint Louis University, her master's degree in general psychology from Boston University, and her undergraduate degree in psychology from Emmanuel College. Her research interests include bicultural identity, parental racial and ethnic socialization, and acculturation. Ms. Brown was inducted into Psi Chi in 2001 when she was a junior in college. She has stayed active in Psi Chi by helping undergraduate students publish their research in the *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*. In 2020, she joined Psi Chi's International Advisory Committee.



Questions (and Answers) About Returning to Graduate School After a Gap Year

Julie Radico, PsyD, ABPP
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center

R. Eric Landrum, PhD
Boise State University (ID)

Scott VanderStoep, PhD
Hope College

What should students expect when retuning to school after an extended break? In the [previous installment](#) of this series, our three experts discussed the pros and cons of taking a gap year before going to graduate school.

Following up on that topic, they now share tips for returning to school after taking a year off (or longer).

First question: Are students who took a time off more likely to struggle with readjusting to academic life, studying, test taking, etc.?

Julie: This depends on the individual. Graduate school includes reading, studying, test taking, writing, presenting, and group work. All of these require a good level of maturity to be successful. Taking time away in which you are continuing to develop and grow may serve as an asset to your adjustment in graduate school. Development in critical thinking, research ability, interpersonal skills, and self-reflection can be very helpful in readjusting, and these are areas I would encourage you to focus on during time away from academics.

It is important to recognize that the future waits for no one. You will be expected to learn new technologies, programs, writing styles, and presentation modalities in your return to graduate learning.

Recommended reading: [Taking a Break: How to Transition Out of and Back Into Academic Life](#)

Eric: This is such an area where individual differences vary greatly. For some students, not doing anything academically (if that is the case) might result in real struggles when re-entering the academic

world at the beginning of graduate school. For others, it might feel like you haven't ridden a bicycle for a while; you might be a bit awkward at first but the skill and the muscle memory comes back quickly. What I recommend to my students who have a gap year or more is to stay connected in some way to psychology. Keep reading journal articles, volunteer locally for a cause that is psychology-related and meaningful to you. Find something that you can do that gives you the chance to flex some of those learning, memory, self-regulation, and communication skills as well as other skills.

Scott: That is a risk. It is a bigger risk if the experiences during gap/growth years are nonacademic in their daily schedules, expectations, or degree of intellectual engagement. The adjustment could also be more challenging to those who have been out of formal schooling longer. People who rejoin the academy as a midcareer decision will bring in more years of the rhythms and expectations of their old work life, which could create adjustment challenges.

I have heard of taking a year off before going to graduate school? But what if the costs/debt becomes too high along the way? Is it acceptable to take a year off *in the middle of my attendance in graduate school*?

Julie: Each graduate program is different, but you can elect to or sometimes may be required to, based on academic performance, take time away during your program. Financial considerations, including loan deferment and forbearance, are important when considering your ability to maintain good financial stability.

I would encourage you to have candid conversations about potential events requiring you to take time away from your program with your advisor or other leadership within your department as early and as often as needed. Time away from your program almost certainly guarantees a delay in graduation, which will likely further delay your full earning potential while you pursue licensure.

Recommended reading: **Crushed by Debt? Got Debt?**

Eric: So let's be clear that this was a sneaky way to get two (2) questions in. :) First, about debt—there are a number of researchers who document the costs and average debt for graduate students in psychology in the United States. A good place to start would be with the graduate school data provided at www.apa.org. When you are applying to graduate schools and when you are ultimately accepted to graduate school, you should be able to ascertain a very good estimate of the cost of tuition and fees. Yes, over a multiyear graduate program those amounts will increase, but the percentage increases will not likely be astronomical. The graduate program should be able to give you a good multiyear estimate; of course, you will have to factor in your lifestyle/living costs such as room and board, health insurance, transportation, and all the other necessary factors. In other words, the cost of graduate school should not be a surprise to anyone if they did their serious due diligence upon entering graduate school.

Now, to your second question about taking a year off in the midst of your graduate program; it happens. Life happens. For whatever reason, you might have to step away for a while. Whenever this is possible (and what I am about to suggest won't always be possible), try to plan this in advance. Work with your mentors, your thesis or dissertation advisor, the director of clinical training, or whomever the key individuals are and try to arrange for a sanctioned leave of absence. The analogy I can offer is like doing a study abroad; a study abroad experience planned well has all the approvals and course equivalencies in place before the event and a re-entry plan is clear. If you have to step away from your graduate education and you know this in advance, leverage the help of your graduate mentors and try to plan this with their help. If you have to leave in an emergency situation, then let the campus know as soon as you can, and when feasible, work on a tangible plan for your re-entry. Most of the time, graduate faculty want to see you succeed, and if they know what is going on, they can be advocates for their students and work to provide multiple routes and pathways for your success.

Scott: Procedurally, I suspect most universities would allow such a leave. What is more problematic will be how quickly you can re-enter the culture of the program. For example, will you be able to recapture the same clinical, research, or teaching assignments that you had before you left? If a student is enrolled in a master's degree, it is most likely a two-year program so I don't think taking a year off is wise; truth is, it will be finished before you know it, and your finances aren't going to change that much in two years. So blast on. If it is a doctoral program, most students will be funded, so finances should be less of a stressor (although no one gets rich on graduate assistantships). If the doctoral program involves you paying your own tuition (something that should be considered for precisely the reason that this question is being asked), then you might be forced to make the undesirable decision to leave. But I would not do that until all loan and scholarship plans have been explored. In short, do everything possible to avoid taking time off during graduate school.

As I take time off before pursuing graduate school, what all should I do to stay connected to the field in the meantime?

Julie: Get involved in local, state, and national psychology groups (e.g., Psi Chi, APA, APA Divisions, state psychological association). These groups are often very welcoming of students/hopeful students. Student memberships are sometimes free or very low cost. If you are not able to become a student member, you still may be able to observe meetings or attend gatherings where you can get exposed to potential mentors. Look on websites and don't hesitate to send an email to the staff or group leadership listed. The person you reach will likely be able to point you toward a potential mentor or meeting.

Additionally, I recommend working in the field of psychology. For example, working in a research lab or in a community mental health center in any capacity. Also, consider volunteer work (e.g., crisis text line).

Do your research on the faculty and their areas of interest within the graduate programs that you want to apply to in the future. Reach out to those faculty members to ask questions about getting involved or getting exposure to the program. Do **not** ask faculty general questions that you could find out by looking at the website. Instead ask more nuanced questions or share that you read a recent article that is related to their research and that you'd like to learn more about what they are doing/if you can volunteer to help.

Eric: You got it exactly right; stay connected in some way. This may depend on where you live, what resources you have available, the amount of free time you have per week, and so on. Read journal articles in your specialty area of interest. If you can, volunteer in some way related to psychology, especially in an environment that lets you continue to practice and hone your psychology-related skills. Read up on the graduate programs you are interested in, including their program websites. This might be a good time to invest in studying for the GRE if it will be required for your graduate school applications. When the graduate admissions committee asks you during an interview what you did during your gap year to stay connected to psychology, be sure you have plenty of meaningful answers to provide.

Scott: This relates to a question that another student asked about the benefits of gap/growth years. Specifically, the way to stay engaged is to find a job in the field—remember my former med-school-bound student who had two years of experience related to medicine. I spoke about her in [our previous article](#). This helped her gain admission, and might have been the one experience that clinched it for her. So, the most important way to keep engaged in psychology is also the way to make the gap/growth year increase your chances that it will help you gain admission. To break it down: If you take a gap/growth year, make it count toward your future.

Are there any special benefits or programs to support nontraditional students returning to graduate school?

Julie: This is program dependent, so I would encourage that you do a thorough reading of that program's website. I would first ask someone in the admissions office, but this could be a question to ask a faculty member if you **cannot** find it on the website.

Eric: I suspect that you will have to do multiple types of searches to determine the availability of resources targeted for nontraditional students. At the undergraduate level, “nontraditional” students are often defined as being aged 26 or older, but since graduate school appeals to so many students across many different career stages, a definition for “nontraditional” at the graduate school level is less uniform. No matter the interest group, there will be multiple search strategies. One approach will be to search for opportunities and scholarships that are school and program-specific; you may not be able to do this until you are formally admitted into the graduate program, and in some cases, there may be specific programs for second-year students, third-year students, and so on. There can also be statewide, regional, and national support programs that can be discipline-specific (targeted toward psychology graduate students) or programs targeted at graduate students from any discipline. For discipline-specific opportunities, I would recommend starting with the websites at APA and APS; each organization also has a graduate student organization that could be quite helpful here. For those broader opportunities, I recommend a typical Google search strategy but also contacting the experts in your institution’s Financial Aid Office, especially those individuals who work the most with graduate students.

Scott: I would explore scholarship and funding opportunities at the program, college, and university levels. I would also explore external funding opportunities from foundations, as well as civic and business organizations that offer support for graduate training for nontraditional students.



on the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Membership Board (2019–2021).

Julie Radico, PhD, works as a behavioral health specialist and assistant professor in Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center’s Family and Community Medicine Department. She is Board Certified in Clinical Health Psychology. She earned her doctoral degree in clinical psychology and master’s degrees (clinical psychology & counseling and clinical health psychology) at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Radico completed her postdoctoral fellowship in the department of Family Medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Currently, Dr. Radico serves



R. Eric Landrum, PhD, is a Professor in the Department of Psychological Science at Boise State University, receiving his PhD in cognitive psychology from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. He is a research generalist, broadly addressing the improvement of teaching and learning, including the long-term retention of introductory psychology content, skills assessment, improving help-seeking behavior, advising innovations, understanding student career paths, the psychology workforce, successful graduate school applications, and more.



the Soul: Christian Faith and Psychological Research.

Scott VanderStoep, PhD, is Professor of Psychology and Dean for Social Sciences at Hope College (MI). He received his master’s in social psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and his PhD from the University of Michigan. His research articles have largely been in the area of reasoning and problem solving, college student thinking, and psychology and religion. He is the coauthor of two editions of *Learning to Learn: The Skill and Will of College Success* and *Research Methods for Everyday Life: Blending Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* and editor of *Science and*

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2021 Psi Chi Macmillan Diversity Article Award Recipients

We thank Macmillan Learning for sponsoring this award, which recognizes authors for publishing outstanding diversity-related content in Psi Chi's magazine and journal.

Psi Chi Awards and Grants



Read Urvi's Eye on Psi Chi article:
**"International Social Justice:
 How Do I Make a Difference in My Country?"**

When asked about diversifying television, Shonda Rhimes, said "I'm normalizing TV." To borrow Rhimes' idea, it is important to focus on diversity topics because we normalize diversity when we talk about it. As an international student, I struggled to find ways to apply my doctoral training to make meaningful contributions to my home country of India, especially given the challenge of vast geographical distance. I wrote about international social justice in a pre-pandemic world, reflecting on ways cross national liaisons and learnings could be encouraged in psychology programs. Although much has changed in the world today, the need for international collaborations and global

cooperation has only proven to be vital. In my article, I suggest increasing discourses in international psychology, designing practicum/internships outside of the United States, fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity in graduate school, encouraging student led organizations, and increasing non-Eurocentric, accessible international conferences. When we change the way we learn about international issues, we change the way we perceive international collaborations. International social justice can go from being a niche area to a mainstream topic within psychology

Urvi Paralkar (she/her) is a doctoral candidate in counseling psychology at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, where she completed an MA in counseling psychology and a graduate certificate in women, gender, and sexuality studies. She received an MA in clinical practices in psychology from the University of Hartford and a BA in psychology from St. Xavier's College in Mumbai, India. Urvi's research and clinical interests center broadly on international students' emotional and vocational concerns.



Read Timothy's Psi Chi Journal article:
**"The Effect of Model Minority Myth Salience on
 White Americans' Perceptions of Black Americans
 and Their Support for Affirmative Action."**

The focus on the model minority myth (MMM; the belief that Asian Americans have a greater proclivity toward being successful than other racial minorities) and its implications acts as a corrective to U.S. intergroup relations research which has historically focused on a White-Black binary. There is no doubt that this binary plays a crucial role in understanding past, present, and future U.S. racism. However, a more nuanced understanding of racism that incorporates the lived experiences of Asian Americans and other minorities is necessary. As the article suggests, providing White Americans with information consistent with the MMM could serve as a convenient tool to manipulate interracial

dynamics, namely to justify social inequality and discredit systemic racism. By pointing out that Asian Americans are earning much more than Blacks and even Whites, political commentators might be able to persuade some members of the general public that American society is just, and that policies like affirmative action are not only outdated, but unfair for those who have succeeded with no government assistance. Given the prevalence of the MMM in the United States, more experimental research on this topic is critical. The present research is one step in this charge.

Timothy Lee is a social psychology PhD student at the University of Kansas (KU). He earned his BS (honors) and MA in psychology from Trinity College and KU, respectively. During his undergraduate years at Trinity College, Timothy worked with Dr. Robert Outten on a number of projects examining how members of historically advantaged groups maintain and respond to threats to their higher status positions. At KU he is currently studying and conducting research on intergroup relations topics with a focus on Asian American issues (e.g., model minority myth, perpetual foreigner stereotype) under the supervision of Dr. Ludwin Molina.

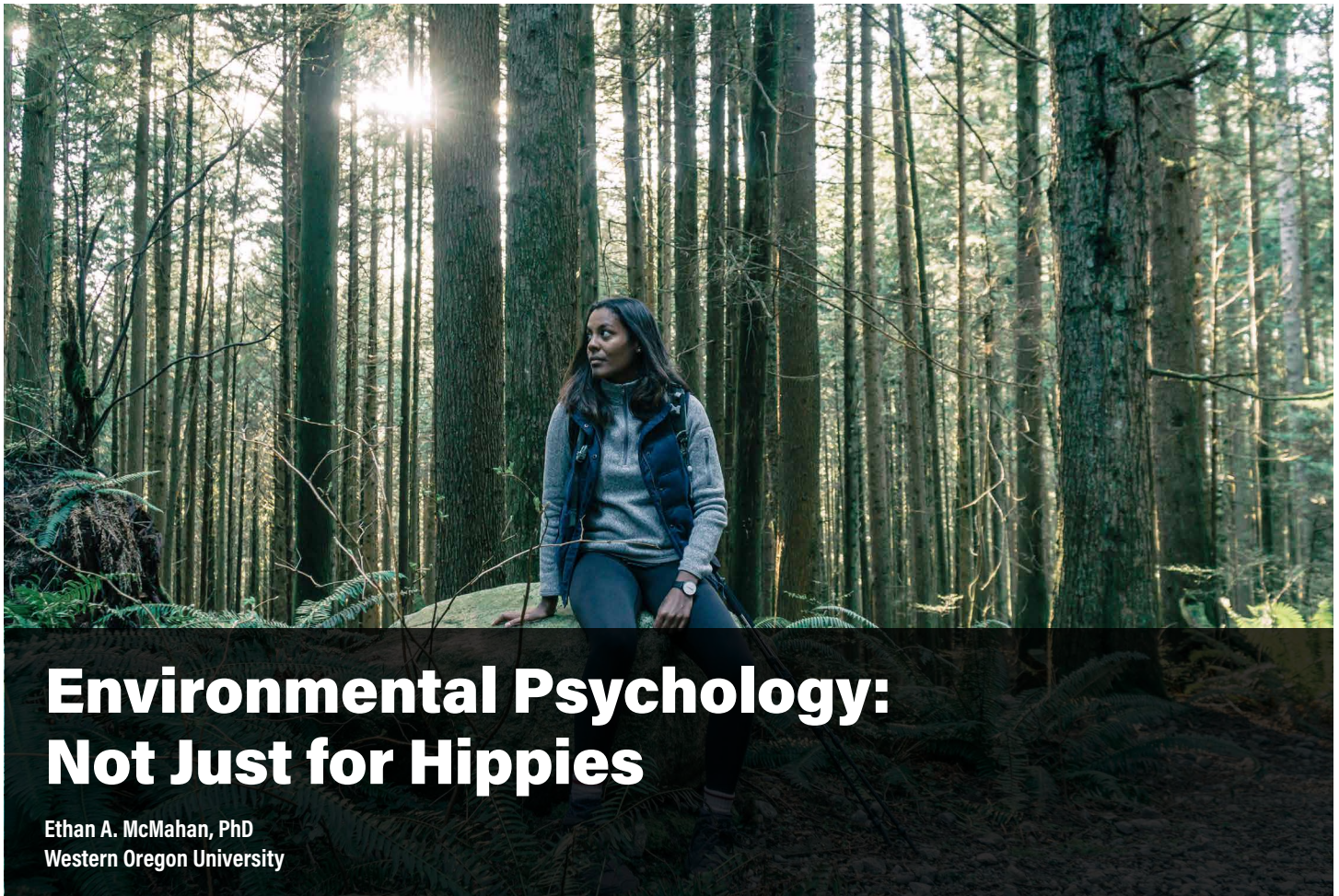


Read Brittney's Psi Chi Journal article:
**"Exploring the Complexity of Coping Strategies
 Among People of Different Racial Identities."**

As a future speech language pathologist, I aim to help individuals by facilitating the voice they deserve. Unfortunately, the voices that tend to be silenced or unheard are those from diverse backgrounds. The year 2020 showed us more than ever that diversity is a topic that must not only be acknowledged but also further researched. Knowledge has the power to bring positive change in a society that is increasingly becoming aware of the need to amplify the voices of marginalized individuals. Diversity research enables us to further understand the population of study and therefore helps inform culturally sensitive clinical

decisions when working with the population in all healthcare fields. Beyond healthcare, research on diversity influences the way we perceive and treat each other. My research on coping strategies among different racial identities will hopefully provide a small platform for these unheard voices, bring positive change to our healthcare system, and contribute toward achieving a society that practices cultural humility and treating others with more kindness.

Brittney Kawakami is a first-year first-generation graduate student in medical speech language pathology at University of Washington (UW). She received her bachelor's degree in psychology at University of Portland and completed a post-baccalaureate program to receive a second bachelor's degree in speech and hearing sciences at UW. She hopes to utilize her psychology background and passion for diversity by working with diverse, medically complex children in her home state of Hawaii. When she's not studying, she loves eating poke bowls at the beach, playing with her dogs, and spending time with her loved ones.



Environmental Psychology: Not Just for Hippies

Ethan A. McMahan, PhD
Western Oregon University

We have all met what we might call a “tree hugger.” And, even if you haven’t, you know who these people are. They wear sandals, may or may not shave regularly, smell faintly of patchouli, and often have a glazed expression of contemplative equanimity permanently plastered across their face. If they eat meat, which they frequently don’t, it is dolphin-safe, grass-fed, and/or cage free. They avoid using automobiles at all costs, in favor of more environmentally friendly modes of transportation, like a bicycle, their sandals, or the mule that they “pasture” next to their backyard chicken coop.

Now, before you think me too critical of these hippies, I should point out that I like hippies. I also wear sandals, I am a vegetarian, I’ve listened to way too much Dave Matthews Band, and the body lotion that I use is patchouli-scented ... and distributed in small batches from Vermont. I also like nature. I like being in nature. I prefer the natural environment to most built environments. When I go on vacations, I don’t go to the grand cities (though, they are quite nice); I go to the mountains ... or the coast ... or the desert. I find that I am happier in nature. Shoot, I’ve even hugged a tree. This is of course just my anecdotal observation of my functioning within a particular type of environment. But, there is also a great deal of empirical support for the notion that people are affected,

in a variety of ways, by their environments. We impact our environment (for better and worse), and our environment impacts us (for better and worse). We design cities, build places to live, and change the natural environment around us. Our cities, homes, neighborhoods, and green areas then influence the types of things we see, smell, and otherwise sense, as well as provide opportunities for engaging in particular patterns of behavior. We are engaged in a dynamic interplay with our environment, inseparable from it, locked in this dance. And, like good dancing partners, we influence each other’s form, movements, and characteristics.

For this edition of *Contemporary Psych*, we will be discussing environmental psychology. This interdisciplinary field examines the interplay of people and their environments and, more specifically, how our environments influence our functioning and shape us as individuals. Much of the research in this area focuses on the importance of natural environments for positive human functioning, as well as how humans can conserve, benefit from, and live in harmony with the natural environment. Given this, you might assume that this field is populated entirely by granola-eaters who manage to find a little bit of time for research when not touring with some inexplicably popular jam band. But, environmental psychologists do so much more than research on natural environments. Importantly, the “environmental” in

environmental psychology is defined broadly, including built and natural environments, social environments, and informational environments. Environmental psychology is concerned with all environments, not just nature. In other words, environmental psychology is not just for hippies.

History: Groovy Architecture and Rebuilding Stuff

Like in other areas of psychology, the topics that are addressed by environmental psychology are very old ... like thousands of years old. A more recent, but still old, famous example of this comes from Winston Churchill who said, “We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.” In this case, Churchill was arguing for the rebuilding of a space in a particular way following the bombings of World War II, but his argument succinctly gets at a central proposition of environmental psychology: We affect our environments, and our environments affect us. More broadly, this quote illustrates the fact that people have been discussing issues related to environmental psychology well before there was such a thing as environmental psychology. In fact, the field of environmental psychology emerged out of these discussions. Because of the destruction associated with World War II, many countries were required to rebuild critical components of their infrastructure including buildings, common spaces, and parks. Governments needed guidance for this task, and many research centers were established to provide this guidance. At these centers, researchers addressed questions concerning the effects of ambient noise on inhabitant functioning, optimal lighting levels, the differential effects of natural versus artificial light, interior space use, and so on. These centers, and the research findings that emerged from them, provided the foundation for a new field of environmental psychology (Canter & Craik, 1982).

It was not until the 1960s that environmental psychology emerged as a recognized field of scientific inquiry. In Europe, several environmental psychology programs and research laboratories were established at large universities, including the University of Liverpool, the University of Surrey, and the University of Cambridge. During roughly the same period, researchers in the United States were examining the effects of architectural design on building inhabitants with two of these researchers setting up the first environmental psychology laboratory in the U.S. at the City University of New York. It was around this time that the term “environmental psychology” was first used, and shortly thereafter the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* was established. As indicated above, much of the early research in this area examined the interplay of humans and the built environment, but as concern regarding degradation of the natural world and climate change came to the fore, many began to focus on the relationship between humans and natural environments (De Young, 2013). This broadened the scope of inquiry in environmental psychology, making it the field that it is today.

State of the Field: Fixing Bummers of Varying Degrees of Severity

Environmental psychology is a somewhat applied field. As indicated by the above history lesson, much of the research

conducted in this area, as well as the subsequent application of that research, is aimed at addressing specific problems. Do you need to rebuild a bombed-out government building but aren't sure how high you should make the ceilings in order to provide the subjective sense of grandeur that you hope to instill in the building's occupants? An environmental psychologist can help with that. Are you designing a new library for a college campus but don't know whether you should rely primarily on natural light (more windows) versus artificial light (more lamps), or for that matter, whether the type of light will have any appreciable effect on people's behavior when in the building? Research in environmental psychology can speak to that. Are you a therapist treating a patient with an affective disorder and wondering whether you should incorporate nature-based therapy in your treatment plan? Perhaps, but you should read the pile of environmental psychology literature on this topic to know for sure. The point is that much of environmental psychology is problem-focused and aimed specifically at optimizing human-environment interactions.

Additionally, environmental psychology examines human-environment interactions at multiple levels. This is the case for both the “human” part of this interaction (e.g., individuals, groups, societies) and the “environment” part (e.g., rooms, buildings, neighborhoods, cities). In fact, the environment part of the equation is defined so generally that it includes not only the physical environment, but also the social environment and the informational environment. So, environmental psychology is a very broad field that examines a number of different topics at varying levels of analysis (Steg et al., 2013).

With that said, certain topics have historically been of great interest to environmental psychologists. For example, research on place identity (i.e., one's incorporation of familiar environments into the self) and place attachment (i.e., one's emotional attachment to a particular place or environment) is particularly noteworthy, much of it focusing on which factors facilitate place identity and positive place attachments. Research shows that individuals tend to be more comfortable, show more positive psychological functioning, and take care of those environments they are particularly attached to and consider part of their identity. Another area of emphasis concerns how environmental psychology can be applied to the design, development, and/or modification of built environments, and environmental psychologists are often brought in as consultants on large-scale building projects. For example, the design of a new hospital may be informed by research on how certain floorplans (e.g., open versus tight) might impact the psychological functioning of occupants. Decisions regarding whether to turn an empty lot into a park-like greenspace may be influenced by research concerning the varied impacts of accessible greenspace and outdoor recreational areas on those who live nearby. And, as mentioned above, a particularly hot area of research right now focuses on how contact with natural environments and/or environments with natural elements (e.g., an office space with lots of plants) can positively impact people. Did you know that spending time in nature is associated with more positive mood and better cognitive functioning? If not, now you do. And perhaps you might now be interested in indulging your inner earth child by going outside and hugging a tree ... it might feel pretty good.

Training and Careers: Mostly Open Horizons ... Dig It

Can I vent for just a second? I hope you don't mind. Every once in a while, I get bored writing this section of the article. I include this section in every article for this column, and it is remarkably similar regardless of what area of psychology I am talking about. Want a career in cognitive psychology? Get a PhD. Want a career in developmental psychology? Get a PhD. How about clinical psychology? Get a PhD, specifically one in clinical psychology. Of course, this is not always the case, and there are almost always alternatives available to those who want to work in a particular area but don't want to commit to PhD-level training. But still, the fact is that for many areas of psychology, a PhD is required to be "at the top of the game." Fortunately, environmental psychology is a bit different. Sure, one should get an undergraduate degree in psychology or a related field. Of course, you already know that some level of graduate training will be beneficial and open up your options. Without a doubt, a PhD will be required for some jobs. But, because environmental psychology is so broad, focusing on optimizing human-environment interactions at multiple levels, someone with career interests in this area has a lot of training and occupational options.

Environmental psychology is an interdisciplinary field, and those working in the field come from diverse backgrounds. The vast majority of folks have some background in psychology, but other areas of emphasis differ depending on what topics are of most interest. For example, a professional who consults on building design may have a strong background in architecture or engineering. Another individual who is involved in city and/or neighborhood planning might have studied public policy and administration. A person who specializes in designing interior spaces to encourage positive functioning in those living long-term care facilities may have a background in gerontology, nursing, or medicine, more broadly. So educational backgrounds can vary, but expertise specifically in environmental psychology is certainly beneficial. To that end, many universities offer graduate training in this or related areas. For example, the City University of New York, University of Victoria, Cornell University, and UC Irvine, among many others, have established programs focused on human-environment interactions. My best advice to you, dear reader, is to determine what you are interested in and design an educational path that fits those interests. In a way, you will actually be selecting your environment, in the interest of optimizing your own personal human-environment interaction, as you pursue your interests in environmental psychology. That's what I call "meta-environmental psychology."¹

If what you have read here has piqued your interest in environmental psychology, I encourage you to review the additional readings and resources provided below. Perhaps make an afternoon of it. Light some incense, put your Chaco-clad feet up, grab a yerba matte, play some Phish radio on your Spotify, and tuck in to some articles on environmental psychology. That sounds, as they say, pretty far out, man.

¹ Actually, I don't call it that. I just made that up. It sounds good, though. Feel free to use it in conversations with your colleagues and peers. If it catches on, please make sure I get the credit.

Additional Reading

Environment, American Psychological Association Topics. <https://www.apa.org/topics/environment-population>
Society for Environmental, Population and Conservation Psychology, Division 34, American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/about/division/div34>
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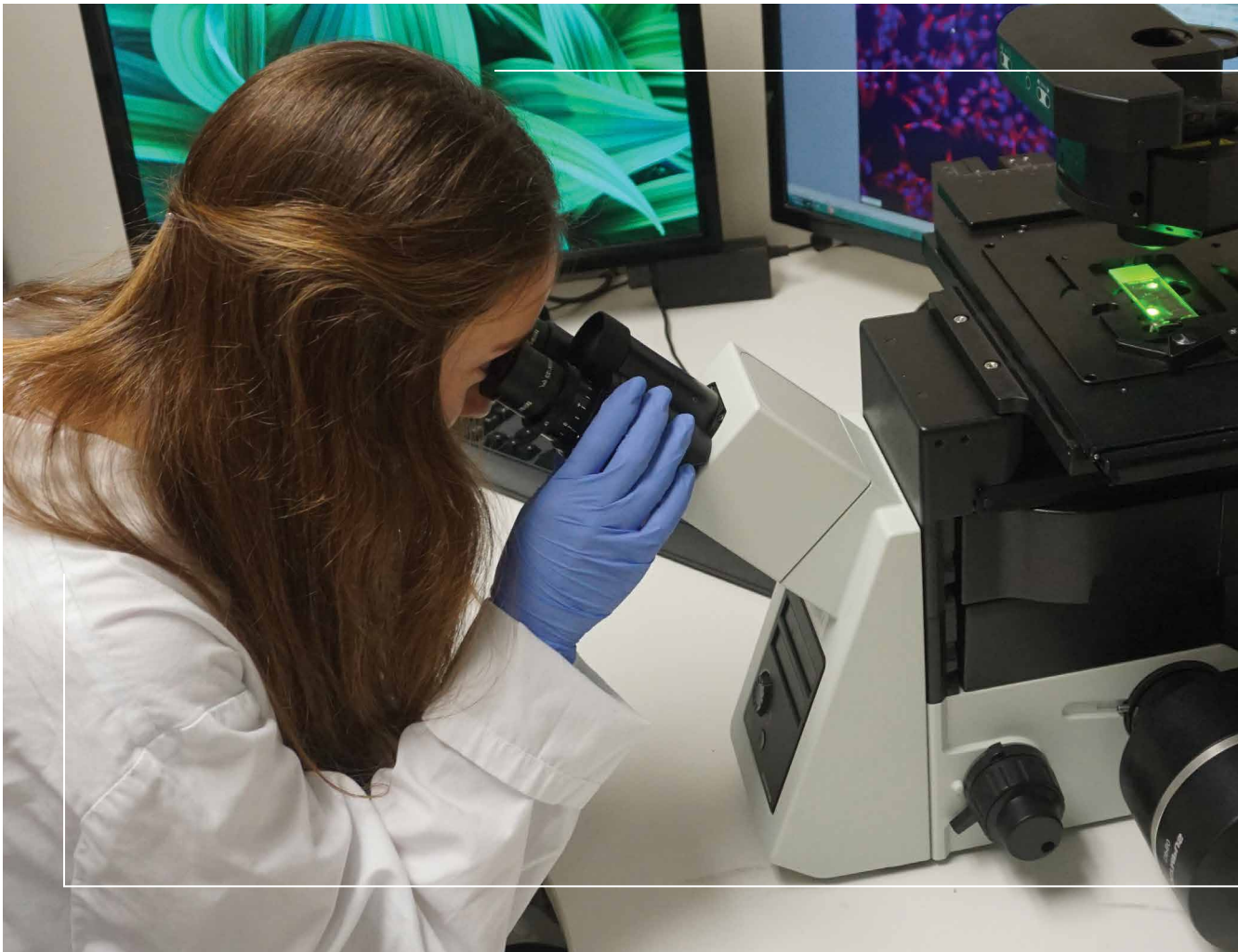
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What Skills Do Employers Seek? Four Perspectives

Paul Hettich, PhD
DePaul University

Truth is often a multiplicity of perspectives, and sometimes the more viewpoints and versions of events there are, the closer the reader gets to an overarching truth.

Susan Barker (British novelist)

One “overarching truth” you seek is the extent to which you will be prepared for your first full-time job after graduation, especially as the pandemic creates uncertainties about the workplace. By now you should know that **most hiring managers will be more interested in the skills you developed during college than in your courses or grades.** I have addressed the skills employers seek in several of my columns over the years, usually focusing on survey data gathered by an individual organization. However, the purpose of this column is to present the perspectives of four recent and different reports about workplace skills: one published prepandemic in 2018 and three during the pandemic. I want you to compare their outcomes and methodologies for the similarities and differences (Sounds like a final exam question, doesn’t it?), and use that information to guide your educational decisions. Perhaps then you will be in a better position to decide the “truth” about what you must do to prepare for a job and career.

Report 1: The Skillful Psychology Student: Prepared for Success in the 21st Century Workplace (2018)

A working group of the American Psychological Association (APA) Committee on Associate and Baccalaureate Education (CABE) was tasked to identify the workplace-ready skills that an undergraduate level curriculum could provide. Here is how they did it.

We researched for jobs in Indeed.com that featured the attributes of a psychology major (e.g., careful, skeptical) listed in the “[Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major: Version 2.0](#)” (APA, 2013). Additionally, we identified seven evidence-informed lists of skills desired by employers. Collectively, these sources represent hiring information from LinkedIn, an analysis of data in the Occupation Information Network, and domestic and global surveys of employers. A set of five skill domains with a total of seventeen skills emerged: (Naufel et al., 2019).

The 17 skills classified into five domains are arranged alphabetically in Table 1. However, before proceeding, you should download and read the brief description of each skill at <https://www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/transferable-skills.pdf> (Naufel et al., 2018) because the name of a skill does not necessarily convey its full meaning as CABE intended. In addition, we will encounter many of the same skill names in the other perspectives, and they may not match the descriptions intended by their authors.

TABLE 1	
APA (2018) Domains and Skills of The Skillful Psychology Student	
Cognitive	analytical thinking, critical thinking, creativity, information management, judgment, and decision making
Communication	oral communication and written communication
Personal	adaptability, integrity, and self-regulation
Social	collaboration, inclusivity, leadership, management, and service-orientation
Technological	flexibility/adaptability to new systems, and familiarity with hardware and software

Note. Adapted from The Skillful Psychology Student (2018) with permission.

Comments

These skills can be achieved in a four-year undergraduate psychology major and are in demand by employers. As you review the list, note those skills:

- most associated with the mastery of course content,
- developed through completing individual and group assignments,
- potentially developed through internships and work experiences,
- that promote personal and social development,
- that reflect the four skill-based objectives of the *Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major: Version 2.0* (scientific inquiry and critical thinking; ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world; communication; and professional development), and
- are in demand in your current or past employment or extracurricular activities.

The next two reports are directed to a wide audience of college majors not just psychology students.

Report 2: Resilient Skills: The Survivor Skills That the Class of COVID-19 Should Pursue, 2020

In this report from Emsi (a labor market analytics organization), resilient skills are described as the

skills that have either remained or increased in demand despite the economic shutdown and the fastest recession in U.S. recorded history... Resilient skills, like resilient people, flourish no matter what. They take a licking and keep on ticking. These will be the survivor skills for the class of COVID-19—indeed, for anyone searching for new or better employment. Resilient skills are the skills that graduates should highlight on their resumes and current students should focus on gaining. Resilient workers are what you might call “T-shaped.” As the name suggests, the T-shaped worker has broad interdisciplinary competence

combined with deep, narrow expertise. They are both generalist and specialist. To become this resilient, T-shaped worker, you need resilient skills. (Coffey et al., 2020, p. 4).

The authors sampled job postings available between March and August 2020 from diverse work sectors including business, education, government, healthcare, and technology/engineering. Postings data is “gathered by scraping over 100,000 websites, including company career sites, national and local job boards, and job posting aggregators. Postings for over 1.5 million companies are scraped” (Emsi, 2021).

We looked at March of 2020, when Covid/Shut-down had the most impact on decreasing jobs postings counts. There were a total of 3.4 million new postings that month. Which was on the lower end. (April ended up being even lower). We looked at each skill that was extracted that month (there are anywhere from 0 to hundreds of thousands of postings per skill and it is many to many relationship). We compared them to the average representation those skills had in “pre-covid” time frame December through February. For example, “Product Management” skill was in .4% of job postings before covid and then increased to 1.15% of job postings after covid. This list was manually curated and organized. (K. Kirschner, personal communication, June 30, 2021).

The skills were arranged into three broad categories with specific skills identified within each category. See Table 2.

TABLE 2		
Coffey et al. (2020) Classification of Resilient Skills		
Resilient Human Skills:	distinct human skills that separate humans apart from machines and artificial intelligence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication • management • leadership • problem solving • teamwork • critical thinking
Resilient Technical Skills		
Resilient technology (“tech”) skills	skills that help organizations make new products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programming languages • software development • data science and analytics • IT systems
Core business skills	skills that help organizations market and sell those products and operate a business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sales • marketing • accounting and finance • operations
Hard-To-Find Skills		
IT related skills	specialized skills in high demand in information technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certified information system auditor • certified information systems security • relational data bases • data compilation and data visualization • statistics
Business related skills	specialized skills in high demand in business occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business -continuity planning • governance • operational excellence • risk analysis and risk aversion
Miscellaneous	other specialized skills in high demand in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key performance indicators (progress tracking framework) • tableau (data visualization software) • interpersonal communication • persuasive communication • content creation

Note. For additional information, visit the [full report](#) (Coffey et al., 2020) or [my summary of the report](#) (Hettich, 2020).

Comments

- What do the resilient human skills and those contained in *The Skillful Psychology Student* have in common?
- The cross bar of the resilient T-shaped worker represents the generalist component (resilient human skills in this report), and the vertical bar the specialist component of an education. When you graduate, to what extent will your education be characterized as T-shaped?
- Although numerous business and technical skills were mentioned that may not interest some psychology students, remember that the job postings were also sampled from several sectors, not just business and technology.
- As a psychology major, do not be quick to dismiss the core business and tech skills. You may be surprised to learn that **57% of all undergraduate psychology majors enter the workplace after graduation** (APA, 2019a). For nearly half (48%) of these majors, their primary work activity is **management (31%) or sales and marketing (17%)**, (APA, 2019b)
- Did you notice that the authors regard **statistics** as a hard-to-find skill?

Report 3: Workplace Basics: The Competencies That Employers Want, 2020

The previous reports focused on specific skills employers seek. However, graduates are interested in other dimensions of the workplace, not the least of which are the intensity or extent to which their skills will be used and the earnings that accrue. Researchers from the Georgetown University Center for Education and the Workforce (CEW) collected data about these and other workplace dimensions using the following approach.

The methodology used in Workplace Basics is based on the Occupational Information Network (O*NET), a U.S. Department of Labor database containing regularly updated information about 1,000 occupations that represent the American labor market. Included in that database is information about 120 different knowledge areas, skills, and abilities (sometimes called KSAs) that combine to form competencies. The KSAs are derived from surveys of workers and analysts who are familiar with the occupations used by O*NET to describe the importance of KSAs for a particular job and the level of each necessary within the job. The Carnevale team organized the 1,000 occupations into 19 major categories based on their statistical similarity, and they used this data to calculate the demand for and the intensity of use of each competency (Hettich, 2021; Carnevale et al., 2020).

Carnevale et al. (2020) define competencies as “the knowledge, skills, and abilities that workers use in their jobs” (p. 3). However, several terms labeled as competencies are identified as skills in this and the other reports. [Visit here](#) for additional information about terms and methodology.

The researchers analyzed their data across the labor market on two variables of strong interest to graduates: competencies that are most important (in-demand) to an employer and competencies with the highest earnings associated with the intensity of

their use. These competencies are listed in Table 3 in descending order of importance (Carnevale et al, 2020; Hettich, 2021). Most competencies in high demand are those that also lead to the highest annual wages, except for sales and customer service. In contrast, engineering and physical science competencies may not be in high demand but are associated with high earnings.

Most In-Demand Competencies	Competencies With Highest Earnings Associated With Intensity of Use
Communication	Communication
Teamwork	Problem solving and complex thinking
Sales and customer service	Engineering and physical science
Leadership	Teaching and learning
Problem solving and complex thinking	Mathematics and computer science
Perception and attentiveness	Leadership
Teaching and learning	Teamwork
Vision and hearing	Perception and attentiveness
Digital technology	Digital technology
Business and economics	Vision and hearing
Mathematics and computer science	Business and economics

An additional concern is the interaction of competencies, education, and experiences required for a particular occupation on earnings. Figure 1 compares the mix of competencies required for success in three occupations: STEM, managerial and professional office, and healthcare professional and technical. The authors observed: “We find that each occupational group requires a different mix of general and specific competencies and occupations that require workers to use their general competencies most intensively yield higher earnings” (Carnevale et al., 2020, p. 22).

Comments

- Communication is ranked first in demand and first with high earnings associated with intensity of use, but the term is not defined in this study. However, review the many components of oral and written communication described in the Skillful Psychology Student as a possible source of meaning of the term. In which of those components are you strong? Which communication skills do you need to strengthen?
- Can you think of occupations where perception and attentiveness and vision and hearing would be especially high in demand and involve high intensity of use (above and beyond their obvious necessity in all occupations)?
- Note the importance of both general and specific competencies in each of the three occupations represented in Figure 1. If you plan to pursue one of them, what competencies do you need to strengthen before graduation?
- Log on to the [full report](#) and explore the other occupations profiled: education, community services and arts, blue-collar occupations, sales and office support, food and personal services, and health care support. See also my [summary of the report](#).

Report 4: Emsi Skills Data

The methodology described in the three previous studies reveals diverse and sophisticated sources of data. However, one untapped source was psychology graduates. To fill that gap, APA's Center for Workforce Studies (CWS) commissioned Emsi to identify the

most frequent skills performed by psychology graduates, including those with bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. According to Dr. Karen Stamm, Director of APA's Center for Workforce Studies, "Emsi's propriety skills database gathers information from resumes on job boards, digital profiles such as LinkedIn websites, and other data sources. The database contained 145 million profiles including 321,007 psychology bachelor's degree holders" (K. Stamm, personal communication, July 8, 2021).

Table 4 reveals the top 20 skills and percentage used by bachelor's level psychology graduates from a list of 92 generated by Emsi. Stamm emphasizes that the data represent the skills possessed by psychology degree holders (as opposed to the employer side or the skills that employers value), (K. Stamm, June 9, 2021, personal communication).

Comments

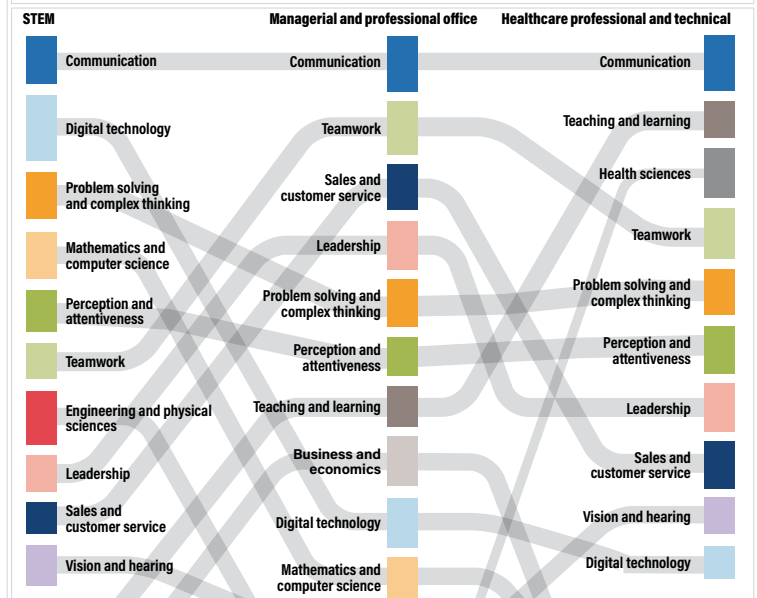
- Which skills are common to all four reports? To three and two of them? What specific steps can you take now to learn or strengthen the common skills *prior* to graduation? As an aside, regard Microsoft as forms of communication.
- Note the inclusion of several skills not identified in previous lists that are normally not associated with a psychology program (e.g., sales, event planning, operations, and team building). They could be learned "on the job," or in other settings. They may go by other names such as client services (for customer service) or tutoring and training (for teaching). What is the significance of this observation?
- When I advised new students, I often asked why they wanted to study psychology. A frequent answer was "to help people," a response that I (and other teachers) considered naïve because there are numerous ways of helping people. Considering that customer service was the most frequently named skill (57%) used by bachelor's level psychology graduates, perhaps it was I who was naïve.
- The Emsi skills are performed in a variety of workforce sectors, including business, health care, education, government, science and technology, and others. What does that mean for your career and job planning and the coursework and related experiences that you should acquire before graduation? Which skills could you wait to learn during your first one or two jobs?
- How do you react to psychology's ranking of 15th and its substantially lower usage compared to the skills ranked higher? Research is ranked seventh on the list. What is the implication of its ranking for your career planning and job search activities?
- Compare the methodologies of the four reports and speculate on the extent to which they could have shaped their respective findings. What are the strengths and limitations of each?
- In what ways have the four perspectives influenced your views about what you need to do to prepare for the workplace?

Discussion

The four skills perspectives generate more discussion than space permits here. However, it is important to emphasize that

FIGURE 1

Carnevale et al. (2020): Competency Mix for Three Occupational Categories



Note. Adapted with permission from Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce analysis of data from US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2014–18, and U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Occupational Information Network (O*NET) 24.3 Database, 2020. Note. Height of boxes represents the relative demand for each competency. STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

TABLE 4

APA (2021): Frequency That Skills Are Possessed by Baccalaureate Level Psychology Graduates

Skill	Percentage
Customer service	57%
Leadership	49%
Microsoft Office	49%
Management	48%
Sales	41%
Microsoft Excel	40%
Research	36%
Microsoft Word	36%
Microsoft PowerPoint	35%
Public speaking	34%
Event planning	24%
Communications	23%
Time management	22%
Operations	18%
Psychology	18%
Teaching	17%
Teamwork	16%
Team building	16%
English language	16%
Spanish language	14%

Note. Source: APA, 2021, *Emsi skills database* [unpublished special analysis]. Adapted from "Datapoint: A Psychology Major Opens Doors," by J. Conroy, L. Lin, and K. Stamm. (July/August, 2021), *Monitor on Psychology* 52(5), p. 21. The data for bachelor's graduates is used here with the permission of Dr. Karen Stamm.

the skills common to all or most perspectives are *general and transferable* (e.g., the Skillful 17, resilient human skills, and some in-demand competencies and Emsi alumni skills). They represent the crossbar of the T-shaped worker; the vertical piece is your preparation for a specific occupation or career either during college, in a graduate or professional program, or on the job. You should strengthen these transferable skills throughout your psychology major, other coursework, extracurricular and job experiences, internships, and other formal and informal interactions (e.g., conversational skills) during college. They will help prepare you for the workplace *if you act* on opportunities where they can be practiced. However, do not expect that all skill-building activities in college automatically transfer to work settings, especially where the organizational culture and operating procedures that differ from college play a major role in your ability to adapt and succeed.

Chances are that psychology's ranking of 15th in the Emsi data is still bothering you. Given the numerous courses you completed, why wasn't psychology more important to the Emsi bachelor's level respondents? It helps to remember that the major goal of a psychology program is to prepare individuals for the profession of psychology. That goal requires a graduate degree in psychology, which requires a relatively comprehensive curriculum for preparation in its sub-fields. So, if you want to use more psychological theory and concepts in your career, consider applying to a graduate program in psychology. In fact, 14% of psychology majors earned a graduate degree in psychology. Another 28% obtained a graduate or professional degree in a non-psychology field, and 57% entered the workplace with a bachelor's degree (American Psychological Association, 2019a). But some pundits and professors argue that bachelor's level graduates cannot obtain satisfactory employment. Yet, these graduates worked in 88 (68%) of the 129 different occupational categories; 46% were somewhat satisfied and 39% were very satisfied with their jobs (American Psychological Association, 2019b). In an undergraduate program, bachelor's level students are introduced to the basics of several of psychology's content areas which graduate students may pursue in greater depth. You may not directly apply in your job the concepts, theories, and research you mastered (in for instance, an undergraduate psychology of learning or social psychology course), but your general knowledge (horizontal bar of the T-shaped worker—preparation) contributes to the broad perspective on human behavior that you can apply after graduation; a perspective that your friends in accounting, nursing, and technology (vertical bar preparation) will not have. In short, you do not need to use all the knowledge and skills acquired in your major to succeed. One highly respected psychologist, Jane Halonen (2013), maintains, in a classic *Eye on Psi Chi* article, (and most other teachers would agree) that

A good liberal arts education should provide a passport into the professional work world. From my vantage point, psychology may be one of the strongest liberal arts majors students can choose to help them prepare for the challenge of professional employment (p 11.)

Make those words a fifth perspective in your search for the "truth" about your workplace preparedness.

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AUTHOR NOTE: The author is grateful to Dr. Karen Stamm for her assistance in preparing this article.

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DO YOUR BIRTH CONTROL PILLS AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR?

An Interview With Sarah Hill, PhD

Bradley Cannon
Psi Chi Central Office

A woman goes to her gynecologist for contraceptive protection. She is examined and prescribed a particular birth control pill. The gynecologist probably also gives her some instructions for taking this medication and then says, “Do you have any questions for me?”

And of course, she probably *does* have some questions—good questions that deserve thorough answers—but unless she prepared a list in advance, then she probably can’t come up with them all on the spot. So instead she says, “No, I think that answers everything,” and she goes on her way.

A couple months pass by when something happens that she didn’t expect. After taking the birth control for a while, she starts to notice some changes. For example, maybe she feels like she is “in a fog,” more depressed, or unable to control her emotions. She wonders if this might have something to do with her new birth control pills, but here’s another unanticipated

hurdle: She also finds herself hesitant to even ask about this and question her doctor’s decisions. After all, isn’t the birth control pill widely hailed as some sort of revolutionary game changer for women everywhere?

Today, I have the honor of seeking answers to these questions from Dr. Sarah Hill, an expert in women’s health and sexual psychology. A psychology professor at Texas Christian University, Dr. Hill received her PhD in 2006 at The University of Texas at Austin. She is the author of *This Is Your Brain on Birth Control*, and her work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Scientific American*, *The Washington Post*, *Today*, and *many others*.

Dr. Hill has spent most of her career studying women and health hormones. She even published research on the effects of women’s hormones on their psychology and decision making. And yet, like many women, it never occurred to her that her hormonal birth control might be influencing her brain too!

When she went off of hormonal birth control after almost 12 years, she felt as if she woke up from a dream. She says, “I felt deeper, brighter, I was more vibrant, more energetic—I just felt like a different person. And as I was experiencing this shift from a one-dimensional, black-and-white drawing to a vibrant, 3D color, animated world, I started researching if leaving my birth control pill was responsible for this change.”

Dr. Hill explored the research literature at that time and learned that hormonal birth control can have a full range of psychological effects on women that she had no idea was even possible. Just as surprising, this information wasn’t readily available to women, so she decided to “take that into her own hands” by writing an entire book on the subject. Her goal of this publication and her related efforts is simple: to inform women about the range of effects from the birth control pill so that they can weigh the costs and benefits of each type of birth control strategy.

Hi, Dr. Hill. Thanks for speaking with me.
First, let's talk about the controversy: Why are women often hesitant to question the birth control pill?

I think the reason for this is because the birth control pill for women has probably been the biggest force in terms of our ability to achieve the types of educational and political independence from men that we have currently. By allowing women to determine if and when we have children, the pill has allowed women to plan and, for example, know they will be able to graduate if they are going to college. By removing the possibility of an unexpected pregnancy from women's horizons, the pill has really allowed us to dream bigger and achieve more than our great grandparents would have ever imagined.

I think that women, especially older women who knew what life was like before the birth control pill, tend to be the staunchest defenders of raising criticism about it or even suggesting that it is anything other than completely perfect. But it has really been an important force in women's rights and our ability to achieve.

What psychological effects do birth control pills cause on women's brains?

There's a whole range. For the last 20 years, researchers have made great strides in terms of understanding the effects of hormones on women in psychology and behavior. For example, we know that hormones play an important role in

- our moods,
- sexual desire,
- who we are attracted to,
- our ability to feel bonded and connected to our partners and other relationship partners, and
- our ability to regulate our emotions.

Only very recently have researchers begun to look at the way that hormonal birth control influences all of these processes. But because we know internal hormones play a role in behavior, it suggests that hormonal birth control can also



influence all of these processes. In the last decade or so, a growing body of research has found that hormonal birth control does in fact seem to have important consequences for everything from who women are attracted to as romantic partners, to their sexual desires, to their ability to regulate stress, to their mood, and even to their ability to remember things in their environment. The effects of hormonal birth control in women's psychology is pretty broad. In the next 50 years as the research becomes more advanced, it is my guess that we are going to find that these effects are far more pervasive than what we know right now.

Despite the potential "negative" psychological effects, women on the pill are still more likely to attain higher education and career advancement, right? What are some other "positive" effects?

Hormonal birth control and just birth control in general is obviously very good for a woman's ability to plan, make goals, and feel confident that she will be able to achieve those goals. But at a sort of biochemical level, birth control pills can also have some really positive effects on women's moods in particular. A lot of research indicates that, for some women, hormonal

birth control pills can increase the risk of depression and anxiety, but in other women, evidence shows that it can have the exact opposite effect and can be very therapeutic in terms of mood stabilization. For example, for women who suffer from severe premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD), a fairly substantial body of research has now found that hormonal birth control keeps these women's levels of hormones really stable and constant across the cycle. This is actually therapeutic in terms of preventing them from reaching those lows psychologically that women tend to reach right before their periods.

Considering this range of effects, do you advocate for the birth control pill or are you against it?

Really, I am an advocate for information. I'm not pro birth control, and I'm not against birth control. Instead, I am very much for women learning as much as they possibly can about hormonal birth control and the range of psychological side effects that it can cause. That way, each woman can take that information and make the most informed decisions possible for her health. There is not a one-size-fits-all answer to whether hormonal birth control will work for an individual woman. That is something she has to decide.

If someone decided not to take the pill, what are some other healthy options that she should consider?

Let me start by saying that there aren't nearly enough alternatives, and I think we need to put more pressure on contraceptive research. Too little investment is being made in looking at safe and effective nonhormonal means of regulating fertility. That is criminal given that fertility regulation is so important to a woman's ability to educate herself and contribute to the economy. I think this is something that should be taken more seriously by research and development in the pharmaceutical companies.

Based on what is available now, **non-hormonal copper IUDs** prevent pregnancy by creating an inflammatory response in the cervix that prevents implantation. Many women have had success and felt satisfied with this nonhormonal option.

Of course, barrier methods like **condoms or the diaphragm** can be used

in conjunction with **fertility awareness method**, which essentially involves tracking where you are in your cycle and then using a barrier method or abstaining **from sexual activity** during times when conception is possible as a means of regulating fertility. Fertility awareness method can be a little intensive in terms of keeping track of your body temperature, your cervical mucus, and some of these other things, so that is really something I would only recommend to women who know that they understand it enough to be able to do it. For women who are motivated to do that correctly, it is like 98% effective. As an example, an app called Natural Cycles allows women to track their cycles using basal body temperature, and it is actually FDA approved due to its effectiveness when it is done correctly.

A **contraceptive gel** called Phexxi also recently came out. It is almost like a **spermicidal gel**, but it works a little differently. Although some people report a discomfort with it, that is another alternative for women who are tolerant to it.

Why should men take interest in this topic?

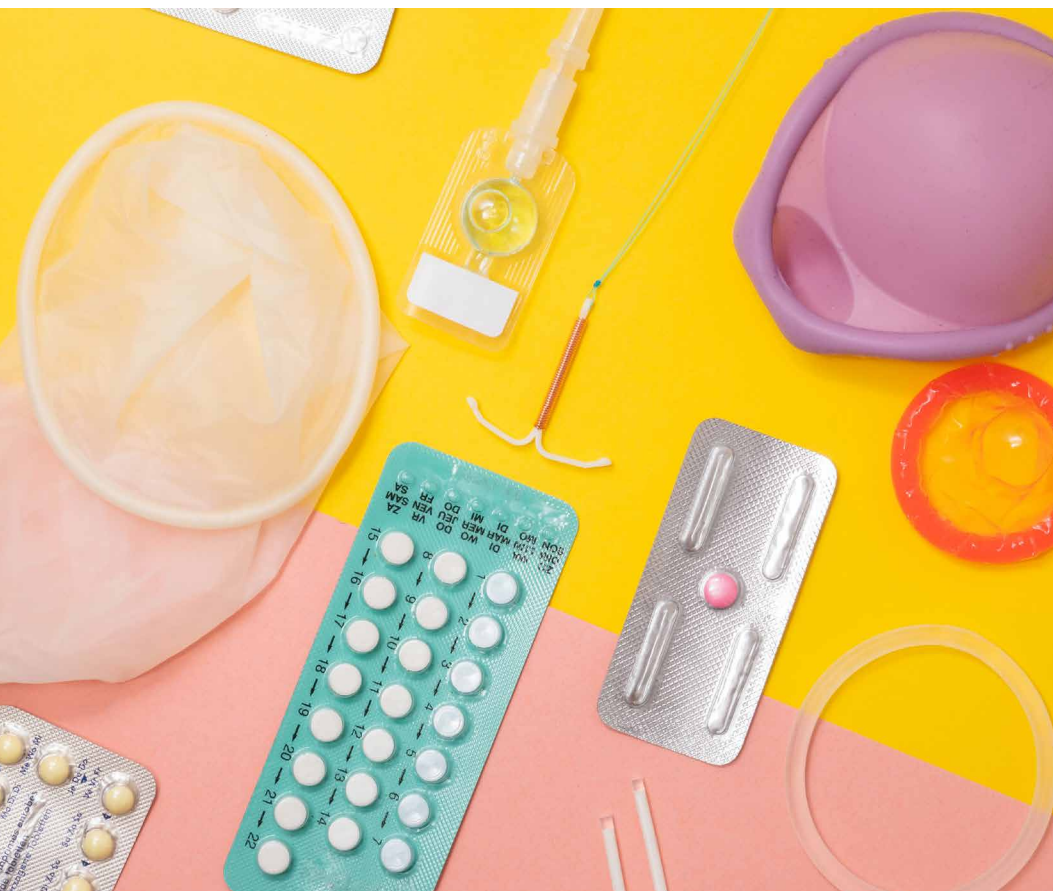
It takes two to tango, and birth control is definitely a two-partner problem that needs to be negotiated in the context of the pair bond. Men absolutely should care about how fertility is being regulated within the context of their relationship. There aren't many options for men. Right now, it is either condoms or nothing—otherwise, it is all on women to shoulder the responsibility of birth control. I think men should care about what their partner is doing, whether their partner feels good about it, and see how they can contribute to the fertility regulation within their pair bond.

Unfortunately, women have a lot more to lose when birth control doesn't work. Women are the ones who get stuck with the consequences of unsafe sex in that they can become pregnant and are asymmetrically affected by sexually transmitted infection. Because of this, women are almost de facto going to be the ones who feel the most responsible. Even if there was a male birth control pill, I think most women would feel more comfortable taking it instead. If a woman is with a partner on the pill who accidentally forgets to take one and she ends up pregnant, I can imagine that would cause all kinds of problems within the relationship. So I do hope this is something that men care about and play a role in, even if this just involves them being supportive as their partner tries to navigate and find their best birth control strategy.

The psychological effects caused by birth control pills isn't a new issue. Why do you think people are starting to talk more about it?

When I was younger and on birth control, the world was a different place. Like many, I grew up as a very passive consumer of whatever was given to me. I never took any time to sit and reflect on whether something was good for my body. I would get a prescription from my doctor, and I wouldn't think twice about it. I would just take it and assume that they knew what was best for me.

But we live in a day now where tampon manufacturers have to put where they are sourcing their cotton from on the



box. Consumers are a lot more wary and savvy about what they are putting in their bodies, and I think this is a really healthy change for society. Because of that, there is also a sort of cry for more natural alternatives to things that we have been doing medically in the United States. I think the tide has changed, and that is a good thing.

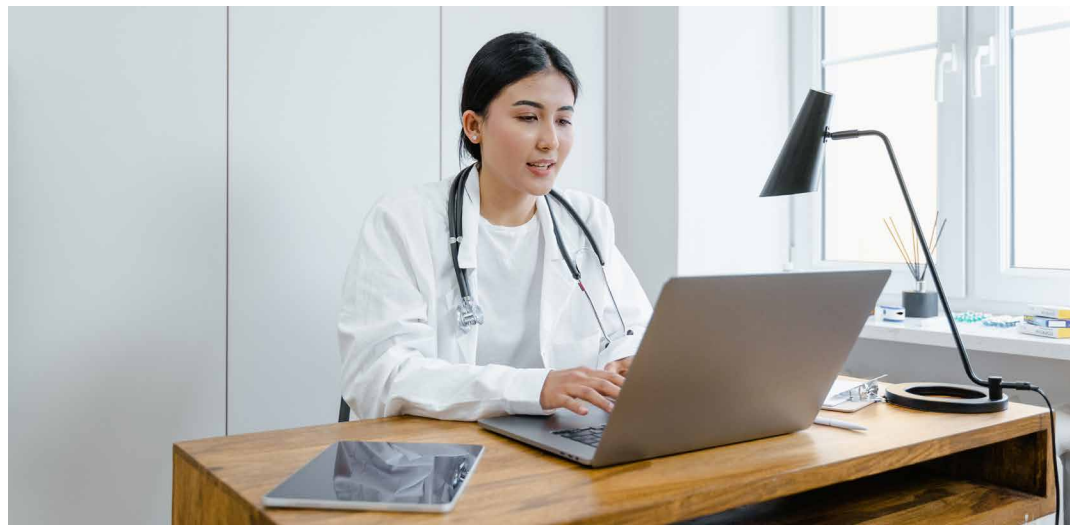
What are some good questions that women should ask their gynecologist before starting on any birth control prescription?

I love this question. I think to start with, I would have women ask, “Why this one?” Try to understand the decision-making that went into a particular prescription. What is informing the doctor’s choice of giving it to you?

I would also ask what generation of progestin is in it, which is the synthetic progesterone in hormonal birth control. There are four different generations of progestin. Each one is manufactured by something a little different, and they tend to have different psychological effects. I would want to know which one I am on, so if it doesn’t feel right for me, I can make sure that I am switched to a different type of progestin. I don’t know that doctors make that connection very often because a lot of times I hear of women who were on a second-generation birth control and then they were put on another second-generation progestin-type birth control. That doesn’t make any sense at all when really a lot of the psychological side effects that we see tend to be related to the progestins in the birth control.

If women have a history of sexual dysfunction or mental health disturbances such as depression or anxiety either in themselves or in their families, then I would also bring that up to your doctor. I would hope that the physician would be making these kinds of considerations when prescribing hormonal birth control.

Women can go on different types of treatments. They can go on something called a triphasic treatment, which is where they receive changing levels of hormones across the weeks that they are on the pill, or a monophasic treatment, which is something where the hormones stay consistent. My last piece of advice is for women with a history of PMS or



PMDD. They should discuss their history with their doctor and ask that are on a monophasic treatment. Also, if you have history of PMS or PMDD, maybe even consider going on one of the treatments like seasonale or seasonique, where you are on a nonstop treatment for three months before you have your sort of break through bleed period. Those tend to be more therapeutic for women who have a history of PMS and PMDD than the multiphasic treatments or even the monophasic treatments that go cycle by cycle.

Do you have any tips for undergraduates interested in entering this area of research?

Apply to my research lab! And follow what you love. There is a huge need for research in this area, so for women who are really interested, find someone to work with. Get yourself trained and go out and make some noise in the literature. There is so much that we need to know about how hormones and hormonal birth control influence women’s brains and their psychology. I look forward to seeing a groundswell of researchers who will tackle some of the biggest problems and questions in this area.

What questions about birth control would you like answered next?

We don’t really know how any one individual woman is going to respond

to any one formulation of birth control. When women are looking for a birth control that feels good to them, it is completely trial and error. Most women will try several formulations before they find one that they like.

I would really like to see more research into making better predictions about how individual women are going to respond to specific formulations of hormones. Looking at things this way, just to give an example, there is really good reason to expect that the way women respond to different formulations of birth control will probably be influenced by the different genetic polymorphisms that they have for things like estrogen receptor density or progesterone receptor density. So looking at how different polymorphisms on the genes associated with these types of receptors and how women respond to different formulations of the pill would be a really great step. Right now, trying to determine what will work best is an art, not a science, so I would like to get a better handle on that for individual women.



Dr. Sarah E. Hill earned her PhD from the University of Texas and she is currently a researcher and professor at Texas Christian University. Her research on women, health, and sexual psychology has garnered more than half a million dollars in grant funding and has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Scientific American*, *The Economist*, and many others. Most recently, Sarah has authored, *This Is Your Brain on Birth Control: The Surprising Science of Women, Hormones, and the Law of Unintended Consequences*, which has been published in several languages around the world and featured on TV shows like *Today* and Great Britain’s *This Morning*.



How **COVID-19** Transformed the Grief Process



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Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, over the past months, individuals have and continue to experience grief over loved ones and a sense of loss over normalcy. With over four million deaths across the world, thousands have lost family members, friends, or loved ones to the novel coronavirus (John Hopkins University, n.d). Whereas the term “bereavement” refers to the actual experience of losing a loved one, grief represents an individual’s natural response to the loss itself (Goveas & Shear, 2020). When derailment occurs during the grieving process, it can lead to the development of prolonged grief disorder (PGD). PGD is described as a condition in which an individual experiences persistent and pervasive yearning or memories related to the deceased accompanied by grief-related pain that results in an impairment of functioning and exceeds a time frame expected by cultural, religious, or social norms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). PGD is associated with many risk factors, such as the experience of a sudden, unexpected, or traumatic death. The condition can also be developed when traditional grief rituals are absent (Castle & Phillips, 2003) and when social support is lacking (Lobb et al., 2010). As the

pandemic continues to unfold, medical and mental health practitioners expect increased rates of PGD attributed to the psychosocial changes related to COVID-19 (Eisma et al., 2020).

Psychosocial Considerations of COVID-19 on Grieving Practices

COVID-19 has impacted the circumstances of many deaths and the context in which individuals have died. The pandemic has been compared to natural disasters and catastrophes due to its secondary stressors, high death tolls, socioeconomic disruptions, and increased need for social support. The aforementioned risk factors increase the likelihood of impacted individuals developing PGD symptomatology, especially if they had pre-existing conditions such as history of anxiety, depression, insecure attachment, and previous loss or trauma (Goveas & Shear 2020). In many cases, death by the coronavirus disease can be unexpected and occur suddenly. When these deaths take place in healthcare settings such as hospitals or clinics, individuals have to face restrictions and sanitary regulations imposed by institutional and/or governmental authorities. For example, healthcare settings in the United States

have placed strict regulations on visiting those who are ill and, in some instances where visitation is allowed, it is severely brief and with limited social interaction. Due to this, at the time of death, those at the sides of the person passing are likely to be medical personnel, support staff, and/or chaplains, but not family members. Furthermore, the idea that an individual’s loved one is suddenly dying in social desolation can result in difficulties with comprehending the reality of a loss.

Along with the burden felt by being unable to attend to the dying person, a disruption occurs in rituals that are oftentimes performed to help mourners in a social context. Since the onset of the pandemic, many have found themselves coping with death in a distanced manner. The regulations imposed by the virus have led to mass graves, direct committals, enforced cremations, minimal rituals, and emotionally untenable limitations on mourners (Maddrell, 2020). For example, in many countries of the world, the nature of funeral arrangements has been altered to comply with sanitary regulations and social distancing restrictions. This has led individuals to conduct burial ceremonies and events through virtual modalities, minimizing social interaction and support between family, friends, and loved ones during a time of grief.

In addition to robbing individuals of the opportunity to seek physical and social comfort from loved ones, the ordinances imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic have been merciless and indiscriminate of faith and culture. In most cases, cultural and faith-based practices such as washing and preparing the bodies of the deceased for burial are no longer allowed. In some religions, such as Christianity and Islam, the general practice is to bury the dead as soon as possible, followed by several days of condolences spent with loved ones. Additionally, in countries where cremation is mandatory for those who have passed due to COVID-19, embalming and open casket viewings have ceased. Such is the case for India, whose population is predominantly Hindu and views embalming as part of faith-based rituals. Most Hindus also consider that submerging the ashes of a loved one in the waters of the Ganges ensures salvation for the deceased (Frayer et al., 2020). However, government guidelines from this country now prohibit this ceremony.

Moreover, in instances where private viewings are allowed, these opportunities are generally offered solely to immediate family members, leaving other relatives and loved ones with a sense of inability to bid farewell. Places of worship that usually hold congregations or services honoring the deceased are no longer allowed to carry out these practices in many countries. In some religions, such as Catholicism and Christianity, these services are considered essential practices related to the afterlife of the deceased. Therefore, the absence of these events in places like Latin American countries can represent an interruption in grieving, as well as in the process of achieving the afterlife. Overall, throughout the world, sanitary regulations and social distancing measures have prevented individuals from seeking physical and emotional comfort during their time of grief.

Travel restrictions imposed by the government have also caused obstacles in individuals' grieving process. Due to the increasing number of deaths caused by this pandemic, funeral houses and mortuaries are finding themselves overwhelmed and unable to pick up bodies in a timely manner (Goveas & Shear 2020). These sites are also trying to ensure that social distancing practices are being followed along with ensuring ventilation and

Whereas some may still underestimate the threat of the illness, others may use denial to reassure themselves that the death of a loved one will not disrupt their life.

regular disinfection is being conducted while attendees are in and out of their venues at an increasing rate due to the high rise of deaths (Burrell & Selman, 2020). It is important to note that funerals are an imperative component of religious and cultural mourning practices that may provide the offering of social and psychological support to the bereaved. In addition to all discussed above, individuals are finding themselves with a ubiquitous fear of contamination which is exacerbated by the constant reminders of death rates and horrific stories distributed by the media.

The Kübler-Ross Grief Model During COVID-19

One of the most well-known, researched, and accepted grief models is the one introduced by psychiatrist Kübler-Ross in which she illustrated the different stages that individuals may experience while grieving (Kübler-Ross & Byock, 2019). Whereas it is important to note that Kübler-Ross adapted the model and explained that these stages are nonlinear, it is also necessary to consider how COVID-19 might have transformed the grief process for individuals around the world. The following are the stages described by Kübler-Ross along with possible considerations related to the pandemic.

Denial. Denial is a conscious or unconscious rejection of facts and information related to the situation concerned such as the passing of a loved one (Weiss, 2020). Denial is considered a defense mechanism, meaning it is needed for survival. Nonetheless, it can be dangerous for individuals to become locked at this stage and refuse to accept or cope with reality. During these difficult times, people can use denial not only to cope with the death of a loved one, but also to manage the overall stress brought by the pandemic. Whereas some may still underestimate the threat of the illness, others may use denial to reassure themselves that the death of a loved one will not disrupt their life. In this sense, denial is not only used to cope with the harsh reality that a loved one died, but also as the mind's mechanism of avoiding negative emotions to manage other stressors related to the pandemic.

Anger. This stage is described as a coping mechanism, as well as masking emotions following effects of denial and isolation (Axelrod, 2016). Individuals experiencing loss or death may use anger to adapt to negative emotions such as sadness and pain. Anger may also be used to cope with residual changes brought by loss. Although not all individuals may experience this stage of grief, others may linger in it (Axelrod, 2016). Once the person's anger begins to diminish, they may begin to use rational thinking and consider what is actually causing the negative emotions experienced. Amid the pandemic, many individuals may encounter anger related to losing a loved one unexpectedly to the novel disease, as well as due to loss of employment and housing. All of these psychosocial circumstances may result in people experiencing a sense of lack of control and/or power, which can ultimately lead to emotions associated with anger, such as irritability and frustration.

Bargaining. Bargaining is considered a reaction to feelings or thoughts of vulnerability and helplessness associated with loss (Gregory, 2020). This stage is often seen as a way to regain control and postpone the inevitable. In addition, individuals in the bargaining stage often ruminate on possible actions they could have taken to help or save a loved one. It is common to remember and recall times spent with the deceased and think of possible situations that might have



been handled in a more positive way. People also tend to make assumptions of circumstances playing out differently and leading to a less emotional or painful state. Individuals whose family members or friends are sick with COVID-19 may seek to bargain with religious deities and even medical personnel with the hope of saving their loved ones.

Depression. During the grieving process, following rumination of all possible outcomes, individuals begin to face the harsh reality of the current situation. Oftentimes, when reality sets in, the loss of a loved one is abundantly clear, and the sadness is unavoidable (Clarke, 2020). Individuals in the depression stage tend to isolate themselves from others, as well as feel the loss of their loved one more profoundly. People may also experience symptomatology associated with depressive disorders such as sleep disturbances, hopelessness, and thoughts of death. The psychosocial circumstances brought by the pandemic may aggravate these symptoms, placing individuals at risk for developing a depressive disorder and/or suicidal ideation.

Acceptance. Generally, the last stage of the grieving process is defined as the individual coming to a place of acceptance. Although during this stage

the person might have come to terms or understanding of their loved one's death, this acceptance does not eradicate all feelings of pain or loss. The individual may find themselves no longer resisting the reality of the loss and no longer attempting to make changes to the outcome (Clarke, 2020). Nevertheless, regret and sadness may still be felt, while denial, bargaining, and anger are less prevalent. The pandemic is still an on-going crisis and therefore, it may be difficult for individuals to reach the stage of acceptance in the grieving process. Throughout the world, many continue to experience loss and grief due to the novel virus, making it challenging to estimate when individuals will begin to regain a sense of normalcy.

Different Types of Grief

As previously discussed, the term grief is used to describe people's natural response to a loss (Goveas & Shear, 2020). Over the past years, psychological research has distinguished the varieties of the grief experience, highlighting phenomenological features and disruptions in functioning that may occur when individuals encounter death and loss. The following are several examples of grief that may be experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anticipatory Grief. The term anticipatory grief is used to conceptualize and describe the process that occurs when it is evident that a person is dying (Hemer, 2020). This means the individual has acknowledged the probable death of a loved one by experiencing phases associated with conventional grief. Oftentimes announcement of a terminal illness leads to anticipatory grief. However, due to the nature of the coronavirus, most individuals may be experiencing anticipatory grief since the declaration of the pandemic in March 2020. Individuals may be attentive to their health, anticipating possible infection for themselves and their loved ones. People may also be hypervigilant and expecting to experience loss when their loved ones or themselves have been diagnosed, hospitalized, or treated for COVID-19.

Complicated Grief. Complicated grief has commonly been referred to as an intense and debilitating grief that impairs an individual's ability to engage in activities of daily living (Center for Complicated Grief, n.d.). This type of grief stems from complications following bereavement. Complicated grief has also been used interchangeably with PGD. Since the onset of the pandemic, frontline workers, including doctors, nurses,

medical personnel, and law enforcement have become vulnerable to complicated grief and PGD due to the constant exposure to death. Other vulnerable populations include individuals with loved ones diagnosed with pre-existing conditions or chronic illnesses.

Cumulative Grief. Cumulative grief occurs when an individual experiences multiple losses at once, usually within a short period of time. These losses are not limited to death and can include loss of employment and housing as well as a sense of social isolation and disruption from daily routine. For example, students who have transitioned to online modalities may experience cumulative grief stemming from loss of peer support and interaction, inability to participate in extracurricular sports and activities, and practicum and internship displacement. Doctors, nurses, and medical personnel may also experience cumulative grief due to the high death rates from the pandemic (Lindberg, 2012). Similar to complicated grief, frontline workers' exposure to loss and death has not only been large-scale but also sudden, unexpected, and ongoing for over a year.

Mental Health Considerations

The COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on the grief process have exacerbated mental health conditions. Past literature has described how the unexpected death of a loved one is related to psychiatric disorders and elevations in the symptomatology of psychopathology (Keyes et al., 2014). This relationship has been attributed to the trauma experienced when losing a loved one suddenly. Due to the central role of close relationships through the lifespan, this loss is a stressful experience that can lead to the development of physical, cognitive, and emotional symptoms (Keyes et al., 2014). The psychological sequelae of death can impact an individual's overall sense of identity and functioning. Moreover, those with pre-existing conditions, such as individuals with diagnoses of mental illness may experience pathological responses to their interpersonal loss (Macias et al., 2004). Grief can worsen symptoms of anxiety and depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessions and compulsions, and substance abuse.

For individuals with anxiety

disorders, experiencing grief during these unprecedented times can trigger both physical and psychological symptoms including feelings of worry, intrusive thoughts, heart palpitations, gastrointestinal issues, and muscle tension (Stacey, 2020). Coping with the pandemic along with the loss of a loved one can overwhelm individuals due to the high levels of stress experienced during times of crisis and unanticipated changes. Similarly, those with depressive disorders may observe a magnification of symptomatology, including crying spells, insomnia, and hypersomnia, under- or over-eating, and suicidal ideation (Stacey, 2020). The risk for these individuals increases if they are experiencing other comorbidities, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse.

Moreover, people with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) often have experienced previous loss along with trauma. Grief can trigger these individuals' symptoms, which include vivid flashbacks, intrusive thoughts and images, and physical sensations such as nausea and sweating. The unexpected death of a loved one can become overwhelming for these individuals, as well as a reminder of previous trauma and a trigger for PTSD (Stacey, 2020). In addition, for individuals experiencing substance abuse, grief can act as a trigger for substance use. Literature has discussed the relationship between grief and substance abuse and how unexpected loss can lead to addiction (American Addiction Centers, 2020). This may occur because substances such as alcohol can be used as coping mechanisms for crisis. Cultural practices and traditions may also normalize the use of alcohol during times of grief and influence this behavior.

The exacerbation of pre-existing mental health conditions along with the experience of unexpected loss places individuals at a higher risk of developing complicated grief. Furthermore, observing loved ones experiencing a painful and unexpected death can lead to intense feelings of guilt and remorse, precursors of survivor's syndrome (Rivera, 2020). Those who lost loved ones to the novel coronavirus may consider and describe these as "bad" deaths due to their distressing nature or if the psychosocial circumstances violate cultural or religious expectations (Carr et al., 2020). During



times of COVID-19, constant media exposure to loss and death can also become a risk factor for individuals coping with mental health conditions. Media exposure including social media has been described as a salient contributing influence in increased stress levels related to the pandemic, as well as a factor that can intensify pre-existing anxiety and depressed mood (Hong et al., 2020).

Recommendations for Practitioners

Mental health providers will most likely continue to observe a rise in cases of complicated grief along with comorbidities such as depression, anxiety, trauma-stress related disorders, and survivor's syndrome. Therefore, mental health practitioners must assess for these conditions as well as identify interventions that can facilitate a patient's process of coping with the traumatic experiences brought on by COVID-19. Clinicians working with patients overcoming grief should engage in activities that map out and reconstruct strenuous circumstances while validating the patient's feelings and normalizing how their grieving process has been disrupted by the pandemic (Boelen et al., 2020). Practitioners should also attend to emotions associated with negative memories and consider the potential impact of distortions in cultural practices and traditions.

Studies examining the grieving process have indicated that patients will often resort to minimizing distressing thoughts related to the deceased; however, this may ultimately lead to exacerbation of symptomatology (Bryant et al., 2014). Although reminders of distress may evoke memories of loss, when practiced in a therapeutic setting grief-focused cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) may assist in profound emotional processing. This modality allows patients to express thoughts and images to ameliorate emotional pain and encourage emotional processing. Furthermore, assisting patients in envisioning an interaction with their deceased loved one can help them communicate last words and sentiments that they were unable to, thus alleviating negative emotions such as guilt and remorse. Imaginal conversation may also be beneficial in providing a space to bid farewell to the deceased in circumstances where this was

not an option at the time of death, such as in cases where individuals are unable to attend funerals or participate in rituals.

Conclusion

Overall, additional research should be conducted and focused on both revising current treatment modalities and developing new strategies for the heightened rates of PGD and other types of grief experienced as a result of COVID-19. Treatment modalities should also consider and address cultural factors related to different mourning practices. Lastly, it is important to note that mental health practitioners will most likely also be experiencing grief and other psychosocial COVID-19-related circumstances similar to their patients. The pandemic is not only an unprecedented event but also a collective experience that has universally affected individuals. As the world continues to learn more about the impact of COVID-19 on psychological well-being, it is imperative to remember that those examining these effects may also be experiencing them.

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Leading and Engaging Employees

Applying the **INSPIRE Engagement Model** During Pandemic Times



Patricia Denise Lopez, PhD
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As an industrial-organizational (I-O) psychology professor and consultant, I teach and apply psychological principles and research methods to enhance the work experience and performance of individual employees, teams, and organizations as a whole. As a psychology undergraduate, I became interested in this branch of psychology because I realized the significance of work in people's lives. Adults spend at least a third of their lives working—about 90,000 hours. Consequently, questions about how to motivate people and ensure peak performance at work are particularly important to leaders, especially when statistics show that only about one-third of American employees are engaged in their work. Moreover, during this pandemic period, a recent survey revealed that the proportion of actively disengaged people who are thinking of quitting or looking for other jobs is increasing (Harter, 2021).

Focusing on employee engagement is

critical because it correlates with multiple indicators of organizational success (e.g., lower employee turnover, higher productivity, higher revenue, higher levels of customer service and satisfaction, better team performance, greater organizational creativity and innovation, lower accident rates, and lower absenteeism). It has been estimated that a single disengaged employee can cost a company approximately \$3,400 per \$10,000 in salary in lost productivity (HRcloud.com, 2021). Indeed, organizations spend millions of dollars annually on employee engagement initiatives and leadership development programs. I-O psychologists often help leaders and organizations identify, plan, and implement the most effective interventions to motivate, engage, and retain their workforce.

A few years ago, I collaborated with organizational performance consultant and coach Dr. Pearl Hilliard who was equally passionate about this topic. The result of our partnership was a book that took a scholar-practitioner approach to engagement, applying theories from psychology and leadership, and

incorporating empirical research from the academic, consulting and industry realms. We combined these with our own consulting experiences providing practical tools, tips, and resources for leaders and employees.

In this article, I will share our definition of engagement, and briefly describe our seven-component INSPIRE engagement model. I will also include additional thoughts on how to apply the model in light of the unique work issues arising from the current pandemic. Specifically, the biggest change has been the shift to remote work, which significantly impacted the ways in which employees communicated and collaborated with others inside and outside the organization. Many employees, particularly working parents, faced work-life conflict and exhaustion—not just from the myriad of online meetings but the feeling of having to be on-call 24/7 (Teevan et al., 2021). The pandemic also ushered in major occupational health and safety concerns, layoffs, and other cutbacks, and a pervasive sense of ambiguity about the future.



Employee Engagement

Employee engagement can be defined as an individual state characterized by “enthusiasm, inspiration and positive energy, psychological empowerment, and the sense of being fully connected with one’s work and other people” (Hilliard & Lopez, 2019, p. 3). This definition builds on the most widely researched academic model of engagement, which characterizes engagement in terms of high vigor, dedication, and absorption at work (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Engagement is an active and involved state of thinking, feeling, and behaving in contrast to job satisfaction, which is relatively passive. That is, satisfied employees are not likely to complain about their work conditions or pay; neither are they going to be as excited, productive, innovative, and committed as truly engaged employees would be.

The first step to enhancing employee engagement is defining and measuring it. I-O practitioners get an organizational baseline by utilizing a well-designed employee engagement survey. Upon

collecting the data, I-O practitioners use quantitative and qualitative analysis to identify the key drivers of employee engagement (i.e., organizational factors with the strongest predictive relationship to employee engagement levels within a specific organization). Based on the research findings, I-O psychologists work with leaders to set goals and implement relevant initiatives; they then monitor progress through post-surveys, interviews or focus groups, and actual work outcomes.

The Hilliard and Lopez (2019) text includes a survey that measures employee engagement (as opposed to job satisfaction). It also provides a manager self-assessment and team member assessment of seven sets of leadership behaviors related to employee engagement. This approach allows leaders to use the survey results to identify key behavioral strength and developmental areas within their specific teams. The leadership behaviors are organized using the INSPIRE acronym (Ignite, Nurture, Strengths, Performance Management, Inclusion, Relate, and Empower).

Applying the INSPIRE Engagement Model

1. Ignite employees through positive communication and meaningful work.

Engaging leaders communicate the purpose of the team and align it with the organization’s vision and mission in a meaningful way. They create a sense of excitement by leveraging their team members’ “spark plugs” (i.e., the aspects of work that excite them). They are active listeners who create a trusting and supportive environment for their team members. During pandemic times, leaders should step up communication efforts to keep team members updated and hopeful, acknowledge employee needs, concerns, and challenges, and show appreciation for their resilience. Leaders should also pay attention to the use of appropriate communication outlets, helping employees know when best to use email, phone, video meetings, text, IM, and other modes so they do not get overwhelmed or miss critical messages.

A big challenge in virtual/hybrid work is finding ways for people to make informal connections similar to the water-cooler experience that is so important for collaboration and innovation.

Engaging leaders also find ways to assign meaningful challenging work for employees that links with employees' personal values. Through a process of job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), engaging leaders collaborate with employees to modify job tasks, build in meaningful interactions with key internal and external customers, or reframe the context, meaning, and impact of the work so employees appreciate the value they bring to their organizations. In speaking to several organizations about engagement during the pandemic, job crafting was a major topic of interest.

2. Nurture employees by supporting career development.

Lack of career development is one of the main reasons people leave their jobs. Employees, especially Millennials, value jobs that fast-track growth and offer substantial career opportunities. Although responsibility for career development is three-way (the employee is the driver and the organization provides the support system), the leader acts as the coach and facilitator. Nurturing leaders engage in a multitude of behaviors, including getting to know each employees' skills and capabilities, discussing their career aspirations, providing challenging (stretch) activities and opportunities, increasing employees' visibility to different parts of the organization, and providing regular

feedback and support to employees especially related to training. This is particularly critical during pandemic times as employees worry about their own jobs and careers, and often require additional support with new technologies for virtual work, and possibly new skills as many organizations downsized and restructured.

3. Leverage employee Strengths.

Strengths refer to innate capacities of thinking and behaving, wherein the individual almost effortlessly achieves optimal performance. Employees experience greater enjoyment and achieve higher performance at work when they are able to utilize their unique strengths. When organizations focus on employee strengths rather than fixing weaknesses, employee engagement levels can reach as high as 73% compared to 9% in organizations where employees do not get to utilize what they do best on a regular basis (Rath and Conchie, 2008). Engaging leaders ensure that all team members know each other's strengths and are able to leverage these in meaningful ways. They strive to find the "best fit" between each employee's strengths and their goals, assignments, and opportunities. Being able to use one's strengths enhances self-efficacy that helps employees to thrive during difficult times.

4. Use effective and collaborative Performance Management practices.

Performance management refers to the continuous cycle of setting work objectives collaboratively with employees, clarifying performance expectations, and providing frequent feedback, coaching, and other resources to support high performance at the individual and team levels. Leaders who excel in performance management have more engaged, productive, and creative employees compared to those with ineffective performance leaders.

In a virtual environment, employees have more flexibility to manage their time, but often feel isolated and can be easily overwhelmed with work demands. Leaders can help by clarifying expectations, setting priorities, and helping employees set boundaries so they do not feel they are working 24/7. They should allow more time to provide feedback and coaching, either in a one-on-one or small group context.

5. Be Inclusive.

Social needs are fundamental to human motivation. For example, Maslow's hierarchy lists love and belongingness as basic needs following physiological and safety needs. More contemporary theories such as self-determination theory and Kahn's (1990) theory of personal engagement underscore the importance of close meaningful relationships and psychological safety to employee motivation and well-being. When employees feel included, trusted, and valued in their teams, they feel safer to express themselves fully and are thus able to stretch and contribute optimally. Inclusive leaders demonstrate openness and curiosity to the diversity of viewpoints and talents that their employees bring; they strive to be equitable in decision-making; and they are able to relate with empathy, thus creating high-trust and high-performance diverse teams.

A big challenge in virtual/hybrid work is finding ways for people to make informal connections similar to the water-cooler experience that is so important for collaboration and innovation. One strategy is to have portions of meetings with randomly assigned or pre-mixed breakout rooms so people can connect with colleagues they don't interact with on a regular basis. In general, many organizations are trying out different technology solutions to capture people's views and help them collaborate on activities and projects virtually.

6. Relate with authenticity and emotional intelligence.

Engaging leaders are authentic. They are transparent about their values, interests, preferences, and actions. They communicate and act with honesty and integrity.

Engaging leaders also act with high emotional intelligence, showing the capacity to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others. By so doing, they are able to create deeper, more trusting connections with their people.

The pandemic and the move to virtual work has combined to increase people's stress levels, which could negatively impact mental and physical health, work performance, and even personal relationships. Organizations



have provided new benefits such as virtual coaching, telehealth, and access to meditation and exercise apps to increase mindfulness and resilience. Leaders can help by listening, encouraging people to support one another, and finding ways to manage workloads and enhance efficiency. Perhaps most importantly, leaders should serve as good role models for managing expectations and balancing work and life. This could be as simple as being the first not to answer emails late at night or during weekends, signaling to employees it is ok to set boundaries.

7. Empower employees.

Today's employees desire autonomy and empowerment. The organizational literature has provided consistent evidence of the positive effects of empowerment on engagement, organizational commitment, extra-role or citizenship behavior, and team performance. But for employees and teams to be empowered successfully, leaders must ensure that these parties are psychologically ready, willing and able by sharing information, providing increased freedom and authority in decision-making, and giving feedback and organizational support. Employees need to understand the parameters under

which they are allowed to make decisions around their jobs and when they need to consult and coordinate with peers and supervisors.

Research by Keller et al. (2020) early during the pandemic has shown that high performing employees have access to four factors that support in their effectiveness while working from home: (a) support from the organization in terms of additional equipment, training, and guidance; (b) support from coworkers for exchanging challenges, advice, and assistance; (c) daily planning to help with time management and focus; and (d) taking appropriate time to relax and recharge.

Conclusion

The INSPIRE engagement model has strong underpinnings in research, theory, and practice and provides an evidence-based guide for leaders to enhance employee engagement and performance. The COVID-19 pandemic and the shift toward virtual work pose several new questions on how employees, leaders, and organizations as a whole can navigate this ever-changing landscape of work effectively. These provide ample

opportunities for I-O researchers and practitioners to conduct novel research, develop and test diverse approaches, and share best practices for engaging employees in a virtual or hybrid world.

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Your Secret Decoder *to Graduate School* *and/or Career Success*

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THE SOONER YOU READ THIS, THE **BETTER!**

Getting good grades is only a single component of several essential achievements that you will need in order to impress graduate school committees and/or future employers in the field of psychology. In some ways, completing your classes is the easy part of college because it is the part of your mission that will be handed to you on a well-organized platter. Your professors prepare a syllabus and assign each course assignment, which you are then required to complete. Sounds pretty straightforward, right? But beyond your ability to do as you are told by completing basic coursework in a timely manner, will you be able to demonstrate to future employers that you are ambitious, informed, thoughtful, outgoing, well-connected, and so forth? The purpose of this article is to share specific actions during your undergraduate years that you can take toward a psychology-related career path of your choosing.

Here's some good news: Gaining and documenting experiences necessary for advancing your career path doesn't have to be an intimidating process. **Do you remember when you were a kid and received a decoder toy** (or some other toy/activity that entertained you for hours)? You eagerly learned everything you could about this new favorite toy, all from the pure fascination of discovering exactly how it worked and how many hidden messages you could solve. Starting today, let's apply that same excited and thorough mindset to your career journey. With a careful eye, you can discover all sorts of fascinating opportunities for when you graduate.

How to Use Your Careers Decoder

Step 1: Get Instructions From Someone With Experience, Even If You Are Outrageously Shy

As early as possible, search for faculty members at your university who teach courses or conduct research in areas that interest you as related to your future goals. Most schools will have an online list of faculty in your department, so one easy way to get started is to research these people online a bit. Read some of their

articles and past projects, and use this information to choose one who you think shares your interests and goals. From here, ask this person for brief meeting to discuss the following:

- compliment them on their work,
- ask them if they have any advice for you to enter their field,
- see if they have any specific opportunities where you could assist them with their research, shadow them on the job, etc., and
- check for any readings they recommend for someone with your particular career goals.

For more tips on finding a mentor, **Dr. Ritzer (2018) shared specific qualities** to look for in a mentor such as specialty area, time, and enthusiasm. He also revealed three places to look for mentors and revealed tips for how to ensure that your mentorship isn't a one-sided relationship.

A word for introverts: If you are naturally shy or anxious, you might feel tempted to skip Step 1, but don't! If this sort of initiative seems unlike you, then please allow me to motivate you with what I think might work best: a reality check. Imagine how you may feel in a couple years when you have graduated and have absolutely no clue where to go from there. This really does happen to some graduates, and the gravity of this problem easily outweighs any slight nervousness you might have now about scheduling a 15-minute chat with a person who shares your passions in psychology, am I right? Get started on this now; you'll be glad you did later! One great tip is to find a buddy to go with you who might have enjoyed the professor's course and would enjoy the conversation (S. Spencer, personal communication, August 16, 2021).

Step 2: Prepare to Document Everything in Your Codebook

A CV, or curriculum vitae, is basically a document listing all of your accomplishments across multiple categories. Go ahead and create a blank CV today, which you will continue to fill in for the remainder of your career, not just during your undergraduate years. This will be your careers codebook! Unlike a resumé, which is typically a one-page spotlight of your

achievements, your CV will become significantly longer as you acquire more and more experiences. To make writing your CV as easy as possible, you can look up templates and examples online. In general, make sure that your CV includes sections for Education, Employment History, Research Experience, Publications, Conference Attendance and Presentations, Honors and Awards, Scholarships and Grants, Service, Licenses, Skills, Professional Affiliations, and References.

Writing your experiences into a CV will help you determine if you have any gaps that you should work on. Also, consider asking your faculty mentor if you can see their CV. This is a great opportunity to connect with this person, review a good example, and ask questions about what you see on their CV.

Remember to regularly update your CV. To ensure that you stay on track, set up a recurring calendar reminder. Your goal should be to add at least one new item to your CV every six months.

Step 3: See These Clues About Where to Begin

Job markets are constantly changing. Wherever you are in your academic journey, you cannot guarantee yourself a future career with 100% certainty. However, by increasing your preparedness, you can significantly boost your chances to obtain a career that you can be successful at and proud of.

Over the years, add as many items to your CV as you can. This will make applying for a future scholarship, graduate program, lab opening, internship, or job opportunity much less daunting. Although most job applications will not require a full CV, it is extremely handy to have this information readily available. Instead of starting each future application with a blank page, you will instead be able to quickly review your extensive CV in order to identify the most appropriate experiences to include on your resumé and application forms.

If you are already nearing the completion of your undergrad journey, it is possible that you didn't plan ahead in order to complete many or even any of the items that will be discussed in this article. Maybe you weren't putting your best effort into your education during the first few years of college. Or maybe you simply didn't meet the right mentor to

tell you that you needed to be obtaining out-of-classroom experiences all along (hence, the importance of finding a good mentor ASAP!). Whatever the case, it is okay. Take a deep breath and do your best to be productive with whatever time you have left before graduation. Start checking off all of the items on the lists above as quickly and efficiently as you can.

Of course, just like with a decoder, you probably won't need to decode every single letter listed below in order to solve the mysteries of your career journey. But certainly, the more letters you decode, the clearer many paths to success will become.

CHECKLIST:

The **OUT-OF-CLASS-ROOM EXPERIENCES** that you can complete right away for your CV will mostly consist of:

- ☐ membership in professional organizations
- ☐ membership involvement in any local clubs
- ☐ conventions/conferences attended
- ☐ Psi Chi membership (eligibility starts second semester of sophomore year)

Once you have some **PSYCHOLOGY-RELATED COURSES** and knowledge “under your belt,” you will also be able to begin adding experiences to your CV that take more time to complete:

- ☐ internship experiences
- ☐ leadership experiences (e.g., Psi Chi officer role)
- ☐ research lab involvement
- ☐ awards and travel grants
- ☐ research presentations
- ☐ published articles

Okay, are you ready to get started? Having completed Steps 1, 2, and 3 above (you have done these things, yes?), it is time to tune your decoder to Letter A. Let's begin!

A. Join Professional Organizations

This is possibly the easiest place to begin expanding your CV and acquiring skills that you'll need to advance through your career journey. Take an hour or so to search online for professional organizations that match your areas of interest. Many of these will offer special student memberships with reduced fees and other perks unique to student learners. The American Psychological Association and Association for Psychological Science are both appropriate for broad interests in psychology. You can also explore [this list of APA Divisions](#) and [this list of psychology organizations](#) identified on wikia.org. There are likely other organizations too, which a quick Google search or conversation with your precious faculty mentor will bring to light.

What you can gain from membership in professional organizations varies. Some of the most common benefits include

- access to career and graduate school information,
- discounted fees to attend conventions hosted by an organization,
- opportunities to learn from and network with professionals in your area of psychology,
- access to online webinars, and
- access to an organization's research journals.

By the way, if you aren't sure where you want to go with your career, then choose the organizations that seem closest to your current interests. It is perfectly okay to readjust your goals later. Simply join new groups as appropriate along the way. (As it so happens, [Drs. Sleight and Ritzer \(2019\)](#) recently shared numerous examples of people who found joy in switching to a different psychology-related career.)

B. Get Involved in Local Clubs

Local clubs provide many unique leadership opportunities that you can apply toward your career interests. Although you cannot officially join a Psi Chi chapter

until the second semester of your sophomore year (pending that you meet the appropriate membership requirements), you can certainly go ahead and participate in and offer to support your local chapter. Your psychology department may also have a psychology club that you can join as early as you would like.

If you don't see a club that is right for you and matches your interests, here is an effective solution. Find some other students with similar interests and make your own group.

C. Attend Conventions/Conferences

Academic **conferences** are typically small-scale educational events where professionals gather to share recent findings and network. On the other hand, **conventions** such as the annual APA convention are large-scale events with numerous speakers and rooms, often spanning multiple days. Big or small, these events allow you to meet students and professionals at other institutions, discover the very latest research, and learn outside of the classroom (Rudman, 2020). Check for any upcoming conventions in the organizations you join and do your best to attend because this is an automatic line for your CV and a great networking opportunity. You might even get to meet future employers or graduate school faculty.

Some conventions may be beyond your price range or located too far away. But fortunately, COVID-19 caused many organizations to begin offering virtual convention experiences, which will allow you to skip the expensive costs of traveling to conventions. Further, many organizations offer special student discounted rates to attend their conventions. When you attend, remember to set specific goals for your attendance, put down your phone, and leave behind a trail of messages to speakers and other attendees (Fleck, 2018). Dress professionally (but with comfortable shoes!) and plan your schedule in advance too (Zlokovich, 2013).

You may also be able to locate special travel or research presentation grants that will help you afford the costs of attending conventions. Grants not only get you where you want to go, but those acquired can also be added to your CV. For example, once you become a Psi Chi member, the organization offers a variety of travel

grants specific to undergraduate and graduate students (and faculty members too).

D. Become a Psi Chi Member

This is a big one! **If you are already a member**, congratulations! Go ahead and add “Lifetime Member of Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology” and the year you joined to the Affiliations section of your CV.

If you aren’t a member yet, I highly recommend that you become one (I am admittedly biased because I work for this organization, but seriously, it offers a LOT of membership benefits). Psi Chi is more than a single line on your CV and resumé, though of course that is a pretty good place to start. Our professional organization provides research awards, travel grants, scholarships, and more.

- Learn about psychology in Psi Chi publications like the one you are reading now,
- attend free live webinars,
- purchase eBooks at discounted rates,
- attend conventions,
- find jobs in our Career Center,
- run for officer positions to gain leadership experience,
- gain collaborative research experience, and
- see [other Membership Benefits](#).

I will talk more about Psi Chi opportunities later on in this article. If you have a Psi Chi chapter at your school, you can join as early as the second-semester of your sophomore year, or join anytime during your junior or senior years. Visit <https://www.psichi.org/page/JoinToday> for eligibility details.

E. Apply for Internship Experiences

Your job hustling restaurant tables on the weekend helps pay the bills. But does it introduce you to employers in your area of psychology and provide you with specific experiences that you can then demonstrate in order to advance toward your preferred professional career? Probably not.

Internships allow both of these benefits and more such as an opportunity to experience an actual work environment in the field of your choice. You may love this environment, you may find that it isn’t

the right fit for you, or you may discover unexpected skills or knowledge that you will need to develop while in college in order to excel. Better to know this now than to be caught off-guard later!

Dr. McMahon (2019) recently published tips for “[thinking outside the box](#)” when finding internships such as asking potential employers directly about existing opportunities or even offering to develop new internship positions. Some internships are paid, other are not. It is up to you to determine which ones will be most appropriate for you and **how** many hours you can dedicate to internships. Internships often result in full-time job offers because they allow employers to extensively test how interns fit within their organizations. I should know—I started at Psi Chi in 2013 as an intern!

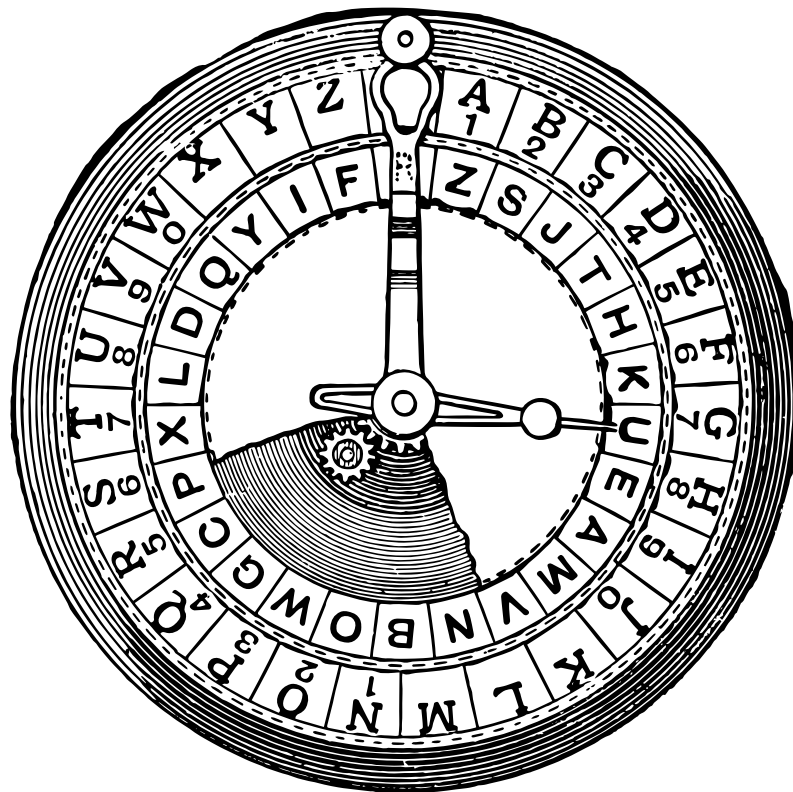
F. Acquire Leadership Experiences

Leadership isn’t just for extraverts. All students, [introverts included](#) (Hallisey, 2019), should focus on developing their ability to lead in a group. [Becoming a local Psi Chi officer](#) will enable you to demonstrate in graduate school and job interviews how you are able to guide

others in professional settings. What makes Psi Chi chapter management a perfect opportunity is **our** nurturing environment. Whether you have been leading local groups since middle school or this is your first attempt, our leadership resources and support from your local chapter advisor help set you up for success. Student officers will receive specific guidelines for officer positions, and Psi Chi content like [this article about sustaining an active chapter](#) (Kukucka, 2016) will give you many ideas to choose from to support your chapter.

Here is a pro tip that you might not have considered: Make your officer position work for you. To do this, think about specifically what skills or experiences you need to achieve your specific career path. Then, choose an officer position that will allow you to meet your unique goals. For example, if you are a media psychologist, consider running to be your chapter’s social media voice or newsletter editor. Or, if you hope to be a mental health provider, you could offer to become your chapter’s Help_HelpedMe officer who will share local mental health resources with fellow members and your community.

If you don’t see an officer position



from this list that you think would be appropriate for your professional goals, you can also volunteer to create your own officer role that is specially geared toward your interests. Think of it like this: If you are passionate about becoming a researcher in LGBTQI+ or some other specific area, then you could become a Chapter Event Coordinator who will organize a guest speaker event to educate your chapter and college on this topic. Responsibilities for this might involve choosing and inviting the speaker, securing a space on your campus for the event, and passing flyers out around campus to ensure that plenty of people attend. Hosting a concentrated event such as this will show your willingness to lead and look great on your CV and résumé!

G. Seek Out Research Lab Experiences

The more you understand about the research process itself, the better you will be at consuming and applying psychological science. Take research methods and other statistics courses as soon as you are permitted to do so and then check around for opportunities to help faculty on your campus with their research. This could involve reviewing the literature on a subject, supporting data

collection, helping with data analysis, or even offering your services during the writing and publishing process.

Dr. Jennifer Hughes and colleagues (2019) surveyed 765 psychology graduate faculty. They found that faculty of PhD programs expect their applicants to have extensive research experiences. Faculty of master's and that faculty of PhD programs in education, PsyD, and master's programs should have some experience, though it need not be as extensive.

To identify appropriate labs, check your psychology department newsletters and any other communications. Your local mentor (who I am sure you have acquired by now, if for no other reason than so I will finally hush about it!) should be able to point you toward opportunities, either with her own research projects or with other faculty at your institution. Psi Chi chapters sometimes host local events to promote lab opportunities on your local and nearby campuses. (If your chapter doesn't do this, consider volunteering to host this event for your chapter instead.) When choosing a professor or lab, plan ahead by asking yourself specific questions such as "Have I written, researched, or presented a specific paper or project that really interested me?" or "Do I have any personal interests that would be applicable to an area of academic

research?" (Shaw et al., 2018).

Speaking of research opportunities, Psi Chi also offers special collaborative research experiences that you can join. The annual **Psi Chi NICE CROWD project** invites students and faculty to participate in a cross-cultural project. Monthly **#PsiChiR Contests** also let you practice using the free R software for data analysis while competing for sticker prizes. See our latest **Research Resources**.

H. Apply for Awards and Grants

Your chances of receiving an award, grant, or scholarship may be better than you think—you won't know until you apply. Many potential sources of funding exist, if you know where to look. Your psychology department may provide financial resources, other professional organizations may offer funding, and certainly **Psi Chi bestows numerous awards and grants** each year. Your mentor who you acquired for Step 1 of this article will also likely be able to share opportunities with you that would be appropriate for your development stage and areas of interest—especially if you take the initiative to ask!

Some programs offer you money, others may provide prestige and yet another line for your CV. Some are also based on financial hardship, race/ethnicity, or other areas. For example, Psi Chi offers

- research awards to recognize outstanding **completed** research,
- research grants to fund **future** research,
- travel grants to support travel to conventions,
- diversity awards to promote diversity-related content, and
- chapter and faculty awards to recognize outstanding leadership.

It is up to you to identify these opportunities and keep track of appropriate deadlines. Funds to cover the costs of your education may also help to free up your time so that you can increase your focus on professional development. For example, Psi Chi offers scholarships for undergraduates and graduate students each summer.



I. Present Research

Presenting at conferences/conventions allows you to develop your presentation and communication skills. Not only will you have the opportunity to share about one of your research projects that you are passionate about, but you will also gain opportunities to answer questions from the audience that will help you polish your work and ensure that people understand what you did and found.

Submissions are due earlier than you might expect (sometimes as many as eight months before a convention), so make sure you check far in advance for appropriate deadlines. For example, the Eastern Psychological Association typically takes place in early March, and the submissions are generally due sometime in November. Some conventions may have extended deadlines for students such as the Southeastern Psychological Association, but these dates and details can change from year to year. See the latest on all **upcoming Psi Chi conventions**.

Psi Chi's Attending and Presenting at Conventions online resource contains detailed information and templates for **creating a poster** and **presenting at paper sessions**. Make sure that you follow the submission guidelines carefully. When **writing your conference abstract**, attempt to tell a complete story by briefly providing a problem, purpose, predictions, method, findings, and conclusions (Fallon & Green, 2018).

J. Publish Your Work

Whether it be an empirical research study or a literature review—don't be shy about submitting your work to publishers! Your psychology department may publish student-run journals, student articles in their newsletter, podcasts, blogs, etc. that would welcome **your** articles. Countless publications are also available elsewhere such as other organizations that you have joined. For example, *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research* publishes empirical research (student and faculty authors welcome) and *Psi Chi's blog* often publishes students' personal testimonials. If you aren't sure where to submit an article, try finding similar articles to see where they were published.

To increase the chances of **your work being accepted in a psychology-related publication**, make sure to follow APA Style guidelines, take the revision process

seriously, and remember to proofread and read your writing out loud (Hiner et al., 2016). Consider your audience and try to be concise, such as shortening and **modifying your thesis or dissertation for publication in peer-reviewed journals** (Ayala, 2018). Last but not least, write in a way that is not only informative, but also enjoyable. By hooking readers with a juicy lede and drawing them in through storytelling, all content can be **written with rigor and flair**—even in empirical articles (Fallon, 2018).

(Secret Message) Takeaways

When you were a kid, you probably put a lot of energy and excitement into decoding a somewhat fruitless Saturday-morning message such as, "Be sure to drink your Ovaltine!" By comparison, the results of building your careers codebook will be significantly more meaningful and complex. Imagine what personalized secret messages you might uncover with the support of your faculty mentor and a sufficient amount of experiences in your unique careers codebook/CV!

Here is a surprising truth. There is no one "right answer" for how to apply the experiences you will acquire through your careers codebook. Psychology degrees provide many, many career options (Appleby, 2018; Landrum, 2018). For example, maybe your CV will reveal key skills necessary to unlock a career as a clinical psychologist who specializes in helping people with disabilities. At the same time, you might have also made connections through your out-of-classroom activities that could result in a fantastic job opportunity as a human resources expert. So, which will you choose? As Dr. Landrum recently pointed out to me in an email, some students discover multiple career choices such as these and then struggle to decide which choice is best. However, consider for a moment that having multiple choices is actually a good thing because your first job need not be perfect, just okay. Trust yourself, and everything will work itself out in time.

Ultimately, how you decide to apply your CV experiences is up to you. The only way to find out what will happen next is to make decisions and then discover the results. Whatever your choices may be, I am sure they will be rewarding in their own right and lead to even greater opportunities down the road. Good luck!

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Bradley Cannon is Psi Chi's Writer/Journal Managing Editor. For the past eight years, he has been reviewing, researching, and writing content published in *Eye on Psi Chi* magazine, as well supporting Psi Chi's eBooks, journal, blog, podcast, email series, and social media. As you can imagine,

over these years he has read and reread a fantastic (and some might say absurd!) amount of graduate school and career advice articles—content written by diverse professionals at all walks of life who are each passionate about helping students obtain careers in psychology.

When Bradley learned that a cousin graduating from high school hopes to achieve a career as a forensic psychologist, he began to jot down an out-of-the-classroom-to-do list for her undergraduate years that would give her a solid careers foundation. After expanding that list a few times, receiving feedback from a couple experts, and adding an ingenious (not at all cheesy, he insists) decoder metaphor—tada! He is pleased to present this article to nurture your unique psychology-related career journey. He hopes you found the information to be useful.

SPECIAL THANKS to Drs. R. Eric Landrum and Stacie Spencer for reviewing this article in advance of publication.

Submission Guidelines

With more than 1,180 chapters, Psi Chi members can make a significant impact in their communities. Reviewing Chapter Activities in *Eye on Psi Chi* is a great way to find inspirational ideas for your chapter and keep in touch with your chapter after you graduate.

Activities are listed in the following categories:

- COMMUNITY SERVICE
- CONVENTION/CONFERENCE
- FUND-RAISING
- INDUCTION CEREMONY
- MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT
- RECRUITMENT
- SOCIAL EVENT

Share your chapter's accomplishments with others in the next issue of *Eye on Psi Chi*! Chapter officers and advisors are encouraged to visit https://www.psichi.org/page/eye_activity

Submission deadlines*

Fall: June 30
Winter: September 30
Spring: December 15
Summer: February 28

*Reports received (postmarked) after the deadline will appear in the next issue of *Eye on Psi Chi*.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACHS	Association of College Honor Societies
APA	American Psychological Association
APS	Association for Psychological Science
EPA	Eastern Psychological Association
MPA	Midwestern Psychological Association
NEPA	New England Psychological Association
RMPA	Rocky Mountain Psychological Association
SEPA	Southeastern Psychological Association
SWPA	Southwestern Psychological Association
WPA	Western Psychological Association

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

EAST

Assumption University (MA)

INDUCTION CEREMONY: In November 2020, the chapter hosted an annual induction ceremony for students who joined Psi Chi during the spring and fall 2020 semesters. A live ceremony took place via Zoom and was open to all family, friends, and Assumption community members, as well as current and previous members. The chapter was fortunate to welcome Dr. Amy Smith from Quinnipiac University as a guest speaker. Certificates and pins were mailed to inductees, and announcements were sent to each inductee's hometown newspaper.

SOCIAL EVENT: In September 2020, the chapter organized a fun event in hopes of providing a place to gather and socialize during the pandemic and to take a short break from the semester's demands. On a Saturday night via Zoom, members played the game Drawasaurus. The premise of the game was for a player to draw a photo, and the other players were to guess what was being drawn before time was up. The winners of the game received \$50 Amazon and Uber Eats gift cards.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In May 2021, Psi Chi raised funds for the Multiple Sclerosis Society by participating in

the virtual Walk MS: Worcester event. Despite the inability to have typical in-person fundraising efforts, the Psi Chi team managed to donate more than \$250 (and counting) to this cause. On the day of the event, members, advisors, and officers walked where they could (e.g., at home, on campus) and spread awareness for this event through social media.

Eastern University (PA)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: During the past year, COVID-19 restrictions left many people feeling isolated, forgotten, and helpless. The chapter organized a campaign for campus students to write letters of encouragement to senior citizens. The letters were sent to a local center for senior citizens to combat feelings of isolation. Writing the letters also benefited students who participated by giving them a sense of purpose beyond themselves.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted multiple speakers (one in December and one in February) on the topic of self-care and coping for students in the midst of COVID. These events were virtual, but well-attended, and incorporated many important strategies for helping students on campus to navigate the challenges of this year.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In March, the chapter hosted a self-care week for the campus. Each day had a different

theme and various self-care activities in which students, faculty, and staff could engage.

Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY)

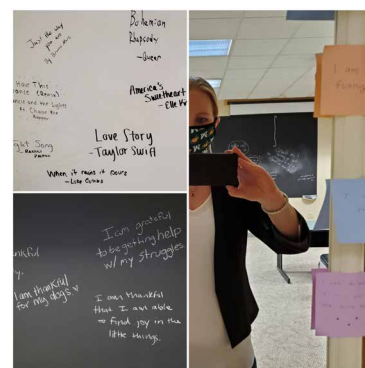
MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: Despite COVID-19, the chapter had another active semester in spring 2021. In cooperation with the Psychology Coalition at the United Nations (PCUN) and others, the chapter hosted a series of eight global webinars, applying psychological science to diverse issues in the United States and overseas: (a) on January 27, "The 90th Birthday of Florence L. Denmark"; (b) on January 28, a video and panel on "NGOs at the United Nations" with Leslie Popoff; (c) on February 26, a forum on "Food Insecurity and Global Health" with John R. Fraser; (d) on March 5, "The Global Challenge of Wrongful Convictions" with Jeffrey Deskovic; (e) on March 16, "Inspiring Heroism" with Philip G. Zimbardo; (f) on March 19, "International Day of Happiness" with Ambassador Hamid Al-Bayati; (g) on April 9, "Psychology in the Global Arena" with Irina A. Novikova; and (h) on April 24, "Human Rights and Genocide Prevention" with Ani Kalayjian. In the largest of these eight webinars, Dr. Zimbardo discussed his website www.heroicimagination.org with about 1,000 students and colleagues in 70 nations.



Above: Assumption University (MA) Chapter's fall 2020 induction ceremony.

Middle Right: Assumption University (MA) members participating in Walk MS.

Right: The Marywood University (PA) Chapter's self-care event.



Marywood University (PA)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: Due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines during the 2020–21 academic year, the chapter was challenged to create events and provide services that would be beneficial to chapter members and students interested in psychology. Officers thus decided to create an interactive resource on the university learning management system called, “Graduate School in Psychology and Counseling.” This page includes helpful information regarding different types of graduate programs and considerations for going to graduate school; explanations for how to create curriculum vitae and personal statements; tips for getting involved in research, attaining internships, and obtaining letters of recommendation; and videos for departmental faculty and advice from current graduate students. It has been utilized by current psychology students and will be maintained for future students.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The university holds a stress-buster week during the spring semester. As part of this dedicated week, the chapter hosted a self-care event, in which attendees were presented with evidence and instructions for four different socially distanced, self-care activities. These included a gratitude board, self-care song selection, negative

thought rip and toss, and self-affirmation mirror. Attendees also received a self-care goodie bag, which included campus and local resources and a shower bomb, bath facemask, flower seeds, stress ball, and brief descriptions of psychological research on different self-care activities.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Food insecurity is a growing concern on college campuses throughout the country. The university’s local response to this nationwide issue is the Pacer Pantry, a name chosen by Marywood students, to benefit students and staff who may struggle with food insecurity. Due to the closed campus from November 2020 through February 2021, the Pacer Pantry was running incredibly low on supplies. The chapter decided to host a drive for supplies and funds for the campus organization. Members successfully contributed over \$200 worth of supplies.

New Jersey City University

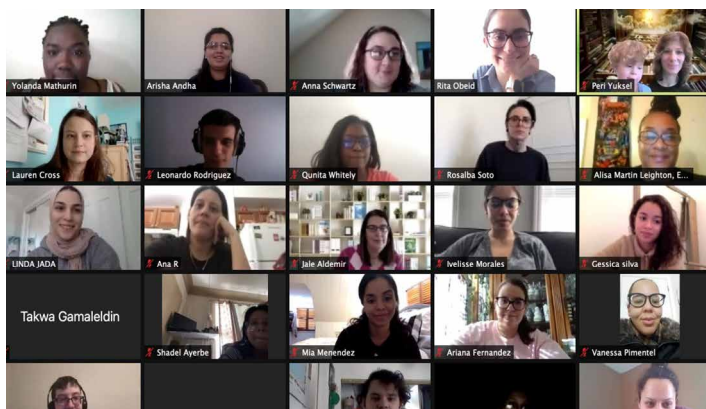
MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On February 4, 2021, the chapter and the Psychology Society hosted the PSYCH Star Speaker Series with special guest Dr. Rita Obeid, who joined from Case Western Reserve University. In this two-part interactive session, she provided an overview of the current state and controversies in the field of autism, moderated by Dr. Peri Yuksel (NJCU Department of Psychology). Dr. Obeid

discussed historical and contemporary diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and shed light on disparities in diagnosis and treatment of ASD among minority populations across cultures. She discussed two fields of thought, the medical model and the neurodiversity movement. Dr. Obeid’s own research has examined factors that predict stigma toward people with ASD, both in the United States and Lebanon. Her fascinating research in how diversity and culture shape perceptions and attitudes resulted in a very engaged participation of the audience.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On February 11, 2021, the chapter and the Psychology Society hosted the PSYCH Star Speaker Series with special guest Dr. Anna Schwartz (Northwestern University). In this two-part interactive session, Dr. Schwartz invited the audience to explore and discuss pressing issues in ASD: comorbidities, misdiagnoses, and psychiatric consequences of diagnosis and misdiagnosis, including a higher risk of suicide. Following Part 1, Dr. Schwartz led a nuanced discussion on the distinction and importance of identity-first vs. first-person language usage in the context of autism. Over the course of the two-part PSYCH Star Speaker Series, moderated by coadvisor Dr. Peri Yuksel (New Jersey University) the audience explored the controversies (and myths) surrounding autism,

from how it is represented, referred to, diagnosed, and studied, and why autism diagnoses are on the rise. Dr. Schwartz’ engaging talk functioned as a broad introduction to various topics in ASD research and served to counteract some myths and misconceptions.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On March 4, 2021, the chapter and Psychology Society hosted the PSYCH Star Speaker Series with special guest Joel Katz, MFA (professor of media arts, New Jersey City University). In this heartwarming multimedia presentation, he used clips of his 2011 film, *White: A Memoir in Color*, to discuss adoption, race, and attachment theory throughout his early journey of becoming an adoptive parent of two daughters. Joel Katz is a filmmaker and educator whose work encompasses documentary and memoir/essay form. His best-known film, *Strange Fruit*, about the history and legacy of the antilynching protest song first made famous by Billie Holiday, is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art. His recent film, *The #1 Bus Chronicles* (2019), profiles the lives of riders of the NJ Transit line that links Newark and Jersey City. Katz was awarded the 2020 Jersey City Arts Council Award in Film & Television and has been on the Advisory Board of the Black Maria Film Festival since 2011. Katz’s filmmaking website is onierafilms.com



Upper left: Ambassador Hamid Al-Bayati chairing a Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY) panel of six experts to celebrate “The United Nations International Day of Happiness.”

Upper right: Dr. Philip G. Zimardo speaking for a Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY) global webinar on inspiring heroes.

Middle: Dr. Philip G. Zimardo sharing with about 1,000 people in the Fordham-Lincoln Center’s (NY) global webinar.

Middle right: A certificate of appreciation presented by The New Jersey City University Chapter and Psychology Society to Joel Katz, a keynote speaker at the virtual PSYCH Star Speaker Series.

Lower left: Group picture of the New Jersey City University’s virtual PSYCH Super Star Speaker Series, hosted by Dr. Rita Obeid (Case Western Reserve University) and organized by Dr. Peri Yuksel (coadvisor; New Jersey City University) and Arisha Andha (president of NJCU Psychology Society).

Pillar College (NJ)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter sponsored the webinar called, “The Undergraduate Journey: Keys to Success.” This event took place March 11, 2021, and was geared toward empowering high school and undergraduate students for success in college. The event speakers were Mackenzie Williams and Chezvaugh Turner.

Williams is enrolled at the University of Rhode Island in the doctoral program, pursuing the degree in education policy and analysis evaluation with a full scholarship, and serves as the assistant director of student support services. She was the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship recipient for her undergraduate program at Providence College in New York.

Turner is a student at Capella University enrolled in the masters in social work program. She graduated from Brandman University with a BA in psychology. She is a domestic and sexual assault victim advocate and a member of the Navy’s cultural diversity team where she raises awareness on socioeconomic justice. She is a regular contributor to *The Jewish Journal* and has received numerous citations for service and volunteerism.

This webinar provided strategies for students to identify their strengths and overcome challenges, identify and overcome stress, stay motivated, exercise self-control, identify challenges in the college journey and beyond, and identify the skills needed for success in the job market. The webinar was engaging and hands-on. The recorded webinar has been adapted for use during student orientation, and as a resource for student engagement.

Rochester Institute of Technology (NY)

SOCIAL EVENT: Game night! Members played an online drawing and guessing game called Drawasaurus for a fun end-of-the-year activity. In this game the person drawing picks a word and draws it on screen while other players guess what is being drawn by commenting in the chat. This was a fun way for members to connect with each other and relax a little during a stressful time at the end of the semester.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter sponsored a talk by Dr. A. Eleanor Chand-Matzke. Her areas of interest include gender and body image, so she gave a talk about “The Effect of Mass Media on Body Image.” After her talk, members discussed some of their thoughts, personal experiences, and asked her questions about this interesting topic!

SOCIAL EVENT: Members discussed what their plans were for when they eventually graduated. A wide range of members attended from undergraduate first-year students to graduate students

in a master’s program. This allowed for a good discussion about different options members were thinking of taking such as going to graduate school or getting a job right after graduation. Members were able to share their personal experiences with each other to try and help other members who were not as sure of their future plans and were looking for advice.

Quinnipiac University (CT)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On April 7, the chapter hosted a virtual panel session featuring four alumni from the psychology program. This event was organized by Hannah Whitely (president) and Prof. Amy Smith (coadvisor), and was attended by around 20 students. The alumni invited to represent a variety of interests included a clinical psychology PhD student, a student who took two gap years and was preparing for entry into an MSW program, a student finishing her master’s in speech and language pathology, and a student who completed her MBA and was working as a human resources leader. The alumni shared their stories of how they became interested in each area and their top recommendations for things that students could do while still in college to make the most of their experience and best prepare for the future. Student attendees were encouraged to ask questions during the session and engage with the alumni through LinkedIn and via email after the session. Overall, the event was a success, and feedback from student attendees was positive. Chapter leadership thanked the alumni for attending by sending out gift cards to each one.

The College of New Jersey

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: The Graduate School Workshop was hosted in October 2020 via Zoom as six sessions regarding different topics related to graduate school. The topics were alumni panel, GRE prep, how to write the personal statement, how to create an effective resume and CV, how to find the best graduate school program for you, and how to master the interview. Student attendees were from all academic levels, as seniors who were currently applying to graduate school programs joined for last-minute tips and first-year students learned about how to make their undergraduate career effective for a successful application.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter organized a panel about clinicians’ views of diversity in their field in April 2021 called, “The Value of Diversity in Clinical Psychology.” There were four panelists: Dr. Bridget Mayer who is specialized in traumatic brain injury and disability; Emily Anne Mattek, LCSW, who is specialized in LGBTQ+ populations and trans*gender fluid youth; Ziad

Dilaimi, LCSW, who is specialized in Arab/Middle Eastern populations; and Shashi Khanna, LCSW, who extensively volunteers for the South Asian Support Group. Panelists explained their backgrounds and experiences, expressed their views on the importance of diversity, and answered questions.

Towson University (MD)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter hosted a virtual community service event for Valentine’s Day. Both members and officers created virtual Valentine’s Day cards, which were sent out to the residents at Gilchrist Hospice Center, located near Towson University’s campus. During this meeting, the chapter accrued 14 community service hours.

Trinity Washington University (DC)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: Although students were unable to gather in-person due to the pandemic, the chapter met virtually via Zoom. The first event, in October, was with Dr. Afiya Mbilishaka on “Psychohairapy.” She is a therapist, professor, researcher, and hairstylist. PsychoHairapy is a community health model created to secure space for Black women to address mental health and well-being through hair care. PsychoHairapy is grounded in traditional African spiritual systems

that are culturally relevant by focusing on relationships that promote healthy practices. The theory and the practice of PsychoHairapy includes training hair care professionals in microcounseling techniques, psychologists housing private psychotherapy sessions within the hair care setting, facilitating salon-based group therapy, and the distribution of psychoeducational materials and workshops to Black women. Students from other Washington, DC universities (especially an HBCU) were also invited. The goal for this activity was to recognize and celebrate the diversity of students and gain insight on contemporary holistic mental health practices. Flyers via email were sent out to spread the word about the event.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Members volunteered at the Franciscan Monastery Garden, which is located a mile from campus. This garden supplies fresh vegetables to local food banks in Washington, DC for distribution to families in need. Activities included picking vegetables, planting, pruning, weeding, etc. Because of pandemic restrictions, only three or four students could attend each weekly service time at the garden. The chapter participated with the goal to help members know each other better (members were able



**Pillar College
Chapter of Psi Chi
invites you to a webinar on:**

The Undergraduate Journey:

THE KEYS TO SUCCESS

MARCH 11TH, 2021 • 4:45 P.M. - 5:45 P.M.



MACKENZIE WILLIAMS
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Scholarship
Recipient



CHEZVAUGH TURNER
Recipient of the
National Society of
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Locations in Newark, Somerset, Paterson, Plainfield, and Jersey City, N.J.



Top: (From left to right) **Trinity Washington University’s (DC)** Dr. Deborah Harris O’Brien (chapter advisor; Psi Chi International President) with Denisse Santillan (chapter president) and Joicy Carvalho (chapter vice-president) after harvesting vegetables at a community garden.

Left: Flyer for the **Pillar College (NJ)** Chapter’s webinar, “The Undergraduate Journey: Keys to Success.”



Top: University at Buffalo, SUNY officers Cassandra Lyman (president) and Lauren Chu (social media voice) preparing for an induction ceremony.

Upper middle: New University at Buffalo, SUNY inductees (standing) at the first in-person induction ceremony in three semesters! For COVID safety measures, inductees and guests preregistered for the event, wore masks, and were socially distanced.

Lower middle: An Alumni Answers event at Wilkes University (PA).

Bottom right: Wilkes Wellness to SHS hosted by the Wilkes University (PA) Chapter.



to meet in person outside, socially distanced) and to help the local community during the pandemic.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: Dr. Nikeea Linder of the Kennedy Krieger Institute was a guest speaker and provided information about a paid summer internship seeking minority students interested in conducting research on maternal and child health and health disparity issues. The information session allowed students to ask questions and gain knowledge on the application process

University at Buffalo, SUNY

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: One area that psychology majors may be interested in pursuing is a career in K–12 education. Thus, the chapter hosted a virtual panel of various professionals in the K–12 field. Officers sent out emails to individuals from their respective high schools to recruit panelists. The final panelists included two high school social studies teachers, a high school English teacher, and a school counselor.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: During the season of “spring cleaning,” the chapter requested for students to donate gently used clothing items by dropping them off on campus. More than 200 articles of clothing were collected and donated to Hearts for Homeless, a local nonprofit organization in the western New York area.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: By the end of the spring 2021 semester, the COVID-19 pandemic had subsided enough that the chapter was able to host an in-person induction ceremony that met the requirements of the university’s COVID safety measures (e.g., preregistration, masks, and social distancing). The ceremony was optional so that students who were taking classes remotely far from campus and students who were hesitant to attend in-person gatherings were not required to attend. Inductees from the previous two semesters (spring and fall 2020) were also invited to this induction ceremony because the chapter was unable to hold in-person ceremonies during those semesters.

Wilkes University (PA)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: This past spring, members hosted Wilkes Wellness to SHS, which brought awareness and informed high school students of the importance of having good mental health. Members were aware of the implications of poor mental health and realized the detrimental effects of being unaware of the signs and symptoms of declining mental health, especially during a global pandemic. Therefore, members worked together to prepare and present a virtual PowerPoint presentation to psychology students from Scranton High School about ways to prevent, manage,

and improve poor mental health.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: During the past two semesters, the chapter hosted multiple Alumni Answers events, which allowed Wilkes University Psychology Alum to speak with members on information pertaining to careers within psychology, graduate school, PhD vs PsyD, and any additional questions chapter members might have. This provided members with resources, mentors, and additional tools to guide them to their path within psychology. In total, the chapter hosted three Alumni Answers events and plans to continue them in the future.

MIDWEST

DePaul University (IL)

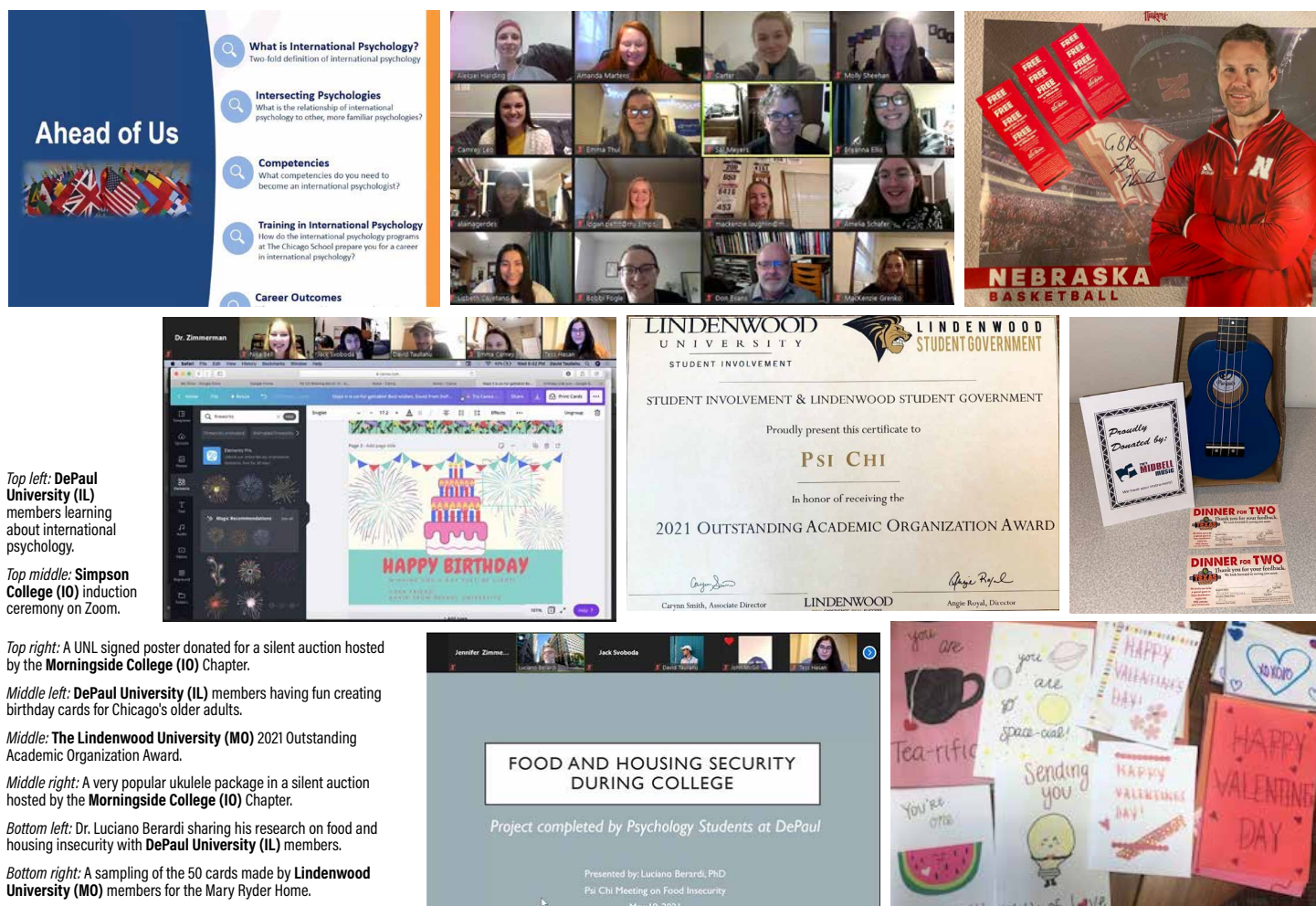
MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On April 21, 2021, the chapter hosted two renowned international psychologists to discuss the field of international psychology, their experiences, and to provide information regarding required training, optional degrees, and certification opportunities at the master’s and PsyD level at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. The guest speakers were Dr. Michael Stevens and Dr. Viviane de Castro Pecanha.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter is committed to giving back to the community. The rise in isolation and loneliness, especially among older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic, prompted the chapter to reach out and support this population. As a team, officers and advisors planned a service event to create birthday cards for Chicago’s older adults in collaboration with Little Brothers—Friends of the Elderly. Members, officers, and advisors gathered collectively on Zoom to create these cards. The cards were printed and delivered to the organization in person and will be given to older adults on their birthdays.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted Dr. Ralph Erber, professor of psychology, and Dr. Luciano Berardi, director of TRiO Programs and Access Research, both from DePaul University. Dr. Erber provided an overview of the honors program in psychology, as well as the benefits, eligibility requirements, and application process. Dr. Berardi presented his research on food and housing insecurity conducted within DePaul’s Center for Access and Attainment Lab. Dr. Berardi shared results from focus groups and two surveys and showed how these insecurities have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Also, he described the Center’s recommendations to increase services and promote existing ones.

Lindenwood University (MO)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter



Top left: DePaul University (IL) members learning about international psychology.

Top middle: Simpson College (IO) induction ceremony on Zoom.

Top right: A UNL signed poster donated for a silent auction hosted by the Morningside College (IO) Chapter.

Middle left: DePaul University (IL) members having fun creating birthday cards for Chicago's older adults.

Middle: The Lindenwood University (MO) 2021 Outstanding Academic Organization Award.

Middle right: A very popular ukulele package in a silent auction hosted by the Morningside College (IO) Chapter.

Bottom left: Dr. Luciano Berardi sharing his research on food and housing insecurity with DePaul University (IL) members.

Bottom right: A sampling of the 50 cards made by Lindenwood University (MO) members for the Mary Ryder Home.

had a productive year as it pivoted to virtual events. The chapter hosted a GRE preparation event, service events (e.g., making Valentine's cards for seniors, fundraising for redecorating a local Women's Shelter), and a university-wide event (e.g., hosting a psychology trivia night, chalking the campus for Domestic Violence Awareness, and welcoming a guest speaker on positive psychology).

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The chapter inducted 21 members this spring in a virtual ceremony. Despite longing for an in-person induction, members found Zoom induction to be meaningful in that more family could join from across the country as well as the ability to share more pictures and history of each inductee.

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: Members were also involved in presenting research. In the spring, six students presented at the Student Research Conference hosted on campus. Five members presented at the Virtual Midwestern Psychological Association convention. The chapter was also awarded the Outstanding Academic Organization from the Lindenwood University Student Government.

Morningside College (IO)

FUND-RAISING: The chapter hosted an annual silent auction virtually to raise money for chapter activities and support the local domestic violence shelter. Members solicited donations from local and regional organizations. Popular donations included a package donated by the Morningside Mass Communications department, which included the opportunity to be a guest DJ on the local radio station, a poster signed by the UNL men's head basketball coach, a ukulele, a signed Minnesota Vikings mini helmet, and tickets to a local waterpark. In sum, \$1,287 was raised and \$300 of those proceeds were donated to SafePlace.

Simpson College (IO)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter assembled 200 care packages for all students who had to go into quarantine because of COVID protocols. To create these care packages, the chapter leadership made a proposal for funding from Simpson's Student Governing Association. They were fully funded for this service project, and they worked with student services to have

the care packages delivered to those in quarantine.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter leadership sponsored a Zoom panel of senior students who discussed what it was like to be a psychology major, where their career paths were headed after Simpson, and how to get involved with first- and second-year students interested in majoring in psychology.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: Students had induction ceremonies in both fall and spring semesters via Zoom. Because of the virtual format, the students were able to have guest speakers easily attend both inductions. Both were very successful events!

University of Central Missouri

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Members took part in a psychology textbook donation to the University of Ghana-Legon. Members helped separate and organize textbooks, box the textbooks, and worked out shipping logistics. Psychology textbooks were donated by professors at the university and included a variety of areas in psychology. This event was inspired by Dr. Patrick Ament, who had taught at the

University of Ghana-Legon and noticed the lack of psychology textbooks. Dr. Ament then contacted Grant Decker (president), who organized the event. This project was funded by a Psi Chi Chapter Activity Grant.

University of Missouri-Columbia

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter organized a litter clean-up community service event through the city of Columbia. Although there have been difficulties in continuing service while remaining COVID-safe, the chapter found a compromise without the sacrifice of either. Nifong Park is now more pleasing for pedestrians with a smaller environmental footprint.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Although COVID-19 created challenges for the chapter and changed operations, leadership still was able to effectively plan and host service events for members. The chapter hosted a service event focused on providing mental health resources and next steps to getting help. To do this, the chapter had to organize the event sooner in order to complete paperwork outlining



Top left: **Drury University's (MO)** Alie Pasternak (president) posing with a carload of donated items such as clothing, food, and toiletry items for a local center for homeless veterans.

Bottom left: **University of Central Missouri** members with boxed textbooks to be shipped to the University of Ghana: (from left) Grant Decker, Courtney Luedloff, Jennifer Davis, and Jessica Butler.

Bottom right: **University of Missouri-Columbia** Chapter volunteers posing for a photo midway through a litter cleanup event.



against mental health. Members were asked to read a brief article about stigma and prejudice against mental illness and how to combat these biases. The resulting discussion covered topics such as how stigma against mental illness is affected by media representation and the lack of education around mental illness. The event allowed for members to share their experiences with stigma against mental health, which helped decrease feelings of isolation and provided useful information surrounding ways to end stigma.

Utah State University

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter worked hard to provide more opportunities this year to create a sense of community. Socials were hosted via Zoom that focused on game nights, getting to know people, and fun activities.

SOUTHEAST

Agnes Scott College (GA)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Students wrote gratitude emails to faculty and staff on campus because they recognized that 2021 has been a difficult year. They spent two nights writing these emails. They could not believe the responses they received back. Recipients cried and profusely thanked them. Some even wrote gratitude emails back. They had so much success with it that they encouraged other clubs to do the same project so that they could spread the kindness across campus. The Psychology Club and several other honor societies are doing the project. In addition, the College's Community Day for faculty and staff will do this as a project in May because they were inspired by Psi Chi.

SOCIAL EVENT: Officers gave a presentation about why animals are psychologically healthy for humans. They showed funny animal videos, played

trivia games about animals, raffled off prizes, and members showed their pets.

Davidson College (NC)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: One of the chapter's service projects this year was writing thank-you cards to every frontline worker at Davidson. Each worker received a personalized note about how much students appreciated their hard work keeping campus open and safe for students during the pandemic.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Members made cards for older adults and homebound individuals in the community. These colorful cards shared messages of hope and caring to help older adult neighbors combat social isolation during COVID-19. Students who made at least one card received ice cream as positive reinforcement.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The chapter hosted a virtual induction ceremony this spring, welcoming seven student members and four faculty members. Although the ceremony was different from previous years, the group enjoyed using virtual effects and filters to liven up the ceremony.

Milligan University (TN)

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On April 11, the chapter inducted seven members and also participated in their library's annual edible book event. Members decorated cupcakes in the shape of a brain.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: On April 15, the chapter hosted a gratitude event. Members sat outside the cafeteria and invited students to fill out thank-you cards for faculty and staff at the university.

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: At least two members presented research at SEPA in March.

a health and safety plan, which once approved by the university two weeks in advance, allowed the chapter to host the event. Leadership also knew that it wouldn't be easy for members and other students to attend the event in person. Despite these challenges, the chapter worked together to create a successful event. The officers created a health and safety plan in advance to ensure the safety of members while staying in compliance with the university. Additionally, the chapter provided accommodations for those who were unable to attend in person by providing the option of a mailed package of resources and buttons handed out at the event.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Adams State University (CO)

SOCIAL EVENT: With masks and social distancing, activities included recruiting new members, fundraising, homecoming week, a community service project, and a year-end picnic. For homecoming events, the secretary created a beautiful T-shirt design that represented both the university and Psi Chi. She also decorated a door in the Psychology Department with a likeness of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo in celebration of Dia de los Muertos and won first place for Best Overall Decoration.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The university is a designated Hispanic Serving Institution, and many student members are from

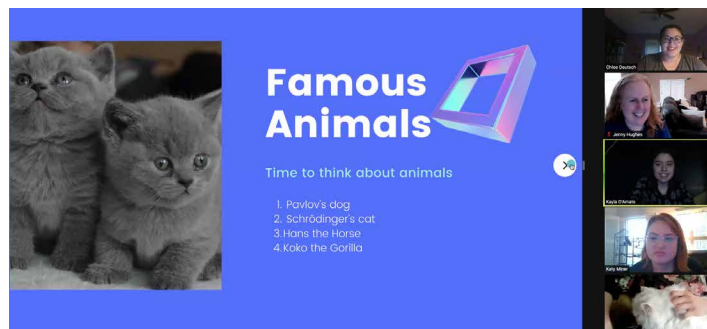
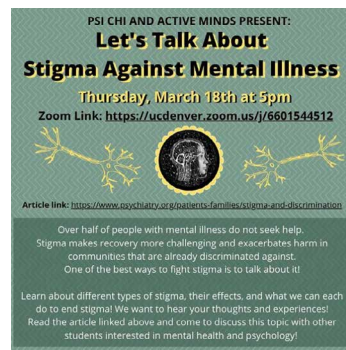
underserved communities. At the height of the pandemic, the chapter helped and gave back to the community. Members got together and made cloth masks with materials donated from members and faculty. The masks were donated to a local organization that provides services for displaced people and families.

University of Colorado Denver

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In an event called, "Graduate Students Are People Too," undergraduate students were able to learn directly from graduate students about their experiences choosing, applying to, being in, and transitioning after graduate school. Students asked questions to a panel of six diverse individuals studying everything from forensic psychology, to clinical health psychology, to neuroscience. Panelists were Ryan Farero, Esmeralda Adolf, Bahroze Rakeen, Brain Hager, Katie Berens, and Elizabeth Ortiz.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter sponsored an informational event around school psychology in which graduate students in the university's school psychology program, Heather Travis and Nicolette Bardos, presented information about their field and experience. Attendees asked the speakers questions about their career paths, the requirements for school psychology graduate programs, and their experience in the field.

SOCIAL EVENT: In collaboration with Active Minds, the chapter sponsored a Journal Club event to discuss stigma



Top left: A flyer for an event at the **University of Colorado Denver** in which current and former graduate students in various subfields of psychology answered questions about their experiences and career paths.

Top right: A flyer for Journal Club event at the **University of Colorado Denver** in which members read and discussed an article about stigma against mental illness.

Upper middle: Gratitude letter writing at **Agnes Scott College (GA)**.

Middle: The **Agnes Scott College (GA)** Chapter's Psi Chi Pet Party!

Lower middle: **Davidson College's (NC)** spring Psi Chi induction ceremony.

Bottom right: Handmade cards sent to older adult neighbors from the **Davidson College (NC)** Chapter.



West Virginia University

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter worked all year to find innovative ways to engage with members in virtual meetings, social activities, and even fund-raise during the pandemic. To celebrate the end of the academic year, the chapter challenged another Psi Chi chapter in the state, West Liberty University, to a virtual, Zoom-based Kahoot Psychology Trivia challenge in April. It was a spirited contest attended by both chapter advisors. In the end, the West Liberty University Chapter prevailed. Congratulations to them from WVU! We want a rematch, and to challenge other Psi Chi chapters in the future!

Yerevan State University (Armenia)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter finally managed to organize a personal meeting that took place on May 7, 2021. After difficult times caused by the war in Artsakh and COVID-19, it was a joyous event for everyone. The meeting was moderated by Diana Sargsyan (vice-president). The special guest of the meeting was Dr. Ani Kalayjian who spoke about the opportunities and benefits of membership in Psi Chi and welcomed five new members. During the meeting, issues were discussed on which the chapter will move forward.

SOUTHWEST

Hope College (MI)

FUND-RAISING: The chapter participated in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Michigan Chapter's virtual Out of the Darkness Walk. Participants watched the ceremony online together and masked up to walk around the campus and community.

Kansas State University

FUND-RAISING: On the week of November 29, 2020, the chapter hosted a social media fundraiser for Cats Cupboard, a campus food pantry for students. Chapter officers and members were invited to post flyers on social media and encourage others to donate for Giving Tuesday using a Tic-Tac-Toe card displaying different dollar amounts. The difficulty in this event was getting folks to donate and then getting the money to the food pantry. An in-person modality would have worked better.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On February 21, 2021, the chapter hosted its spring 2021 induction ceremony where current officers inducted new members into the chapter and went in depth about the benefits of membership. The last half of the event focused on members getting to meet each other and asking questions about how to get involved in the chapter. Officers also advertised that their leadership positions would be open for next year if folks were interested in applying.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On March 23, 2021, the chapter partnered with a campus professional development resource, the Career Center, to put on a professional presentation about the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). This presentation took place on Zoom and focused on educating students about what the GRE is, how to study for it, and what to expect on test day. Practice problems were worked through, and students asked questions at the end. Only eight students attended, so hopefully this event can be advertised better for next semester when it is hosted again.

Universidad del Valle de Guatemala

SOCIAL EVENT: Primary officers organized a virtual meeting through Zoom for chapter members to get to know each other and strengthen the team bond. The chapter chose activities for the meeting based on a group poll and included a verbal sharing game called "two truths and a lie," and a scavenger hunt. The activities included prizes for participants.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter organized a book club through Zoom meetings, focused on topics related to psychology. It was open for chapter members, psychology students, and interested community members. The first book read and discussed was *Art as Therapy Collected Papers* by Edith Kramer, and the discussion was led by chapter member Bianka Gribble. The second book was *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan, and the meeting was led by Dr. Dina Elias (faculty member at Universidad del Valle de Guatemala).

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter edited its first magazine issue, including small articles from alumni and current chapter members. These articles consist of relevant information about the chapter and psychology in general. It includes information about past activities, active members, and research essays related to eating disorders and psychotherapy. The primary editor was Isabella Estrada Arimany (president). The first issue was published online and shared through social media for anyone to read. The chapter recorded at least 43 reading visits.

University of Houston (TX)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In October 2020, the chapter hosted an online QPR Suicide Prevention training. QPR, or Question, Persuade, Refer, is a nationally recognized suicide prevention program designed to educate people on how to recognize and respond to the signs of suicidal thinking or behavior, persuade people at risk to contact appropriate resources, and identify referral options. A representative from the university's counseling and psychological services center conducted the training. In total, 17 members attended and became certified in QPR to prevent suicide on campus.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted two data analysis workshops to introduce members to the statistical programs Jamovi and R/R Studio. Members were introduced to how these programs function, how they are connected, how to access available data sets, as well as how to conduct descriptive and inferential statistics. This included creating basic plots and conducting correlations, *t* tests, and linear regression. Additionally, members were introduced to R Markdown for creating reproducible reports of their analyses that are shareable as HTML and pdf files. These workshops were also shared with other chapters such as the Pacific University chapter.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted a student research panel where recipients of awards from the University of Houston Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards (OURMA) discussed their experiences. This included a description of prior research experiences, finding faculty mentors, writing research proposals, and engaging in research programs during the summer or a concurrent semester of coursework. This panel was designed to encourage members to apply for these awards and provide insight oriented toward excelling with their applications.

WEST

University of Victoria (Canada)

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: Not even a global pandemic could derail Psi Chi traditions at the University of Victoria! Utilizing Zoom, Psi Chi board members, conference coordinators, and student volunteers successfully hosted the annual Making Waves Research Conference.

New and seasoned researchers from across Canada gathered online to present their research, including the host university's psychology honors class of 2021. Drs. Catherine Costigan, Daniel Bub, Stuart MacDonald, and Fred Grouzet concluded each conference day by thanking participants and guests alike. Presenters' recordings and posters can be found at: <https://makingwavesuvic.wixsite.com/mysite>

Top: The **Hope College (MI)** Chapter participated in the Virtual Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention walk for the fifth consecutive year.

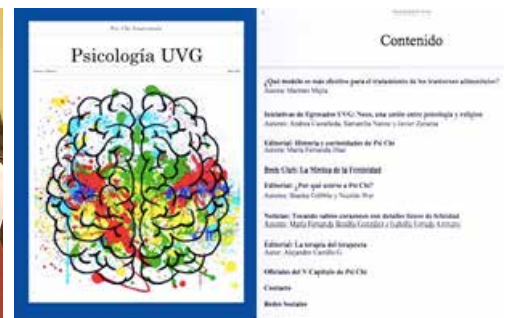
Middle left: **Milligan University (TN)** Chapter's edible book entry with psychology theme.

Middle right: **University of Victoria (Canada)** Psi Chi officers meeting in early April to discuss conference details prior to the start of the 2021 Making Waves Research Conference. From left to right: Anisa Nasser (copresident), Nicole Shisko (fundraising chair), Kelsey Thompson (copresident), Megan Jantzen (secretary), Jannell Walton (administrative assistant), Hannah Dupuis (membership coordinator/conference coordinator), Juno Liu (webmaster/conference coordinator), and Catalina Manders (event coordinator/conference coordinator).

Lower middle: **Milligan University (TN)** Chapter's spring 2021 induction ceremony.

Bottom left: A group photo at **Yerevan State University (Armenia)**.

Bottom right: The very first Psi Chi **Universidad del Valle de Guatemala** magazine issue.





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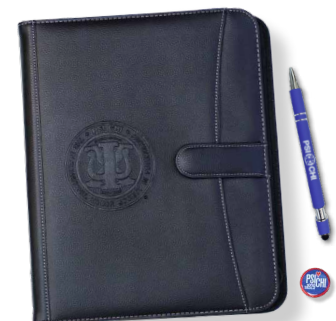
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