

eye ON PSYCHI

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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
RMPA Rocky Mountain Psychological Association
SEPA Southeastern Psychological Association
SWPA Southwestern Psychological Association
WPA Western Psychological Association

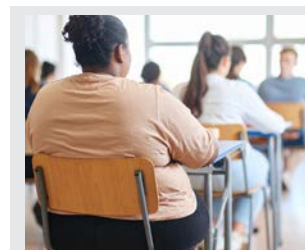
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"Sure of You": Count on Psi Chi to Be There for You Now and Into the Future

Jason Young, PhD
Psi Chi President

One of my first favorite storybook characters was Winnie the Pooh, a teddy bear who found endless ways to get in trouble. And in one poignant situation, Pooh's friend Piglet was overwhelmed by the uncertainties of life. As the exchange goes:

Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind. "Pooh?" he whispered.

"Yes, Piglet?"

"Nothing," said Piglet, taking Pooh's hand.

"I just wanted to be sure of you."

(Milne, 1926)

We all think of Psi Chi as an honor society that provides recognition for the superb work that you do. But your membership in this vaunted society is so much more than that—it's a relationship. Being "sure of you" applies to how you can feel about Psi Chi, the organization. Also, being "sure of you" relates to how the society works to support its members and help our members count on each other. It is ultimately the dependability of these networks, and the informational, social, and financial resources they can provide, that makes your membership so valuable.

As higher education heads into a period of cultural, political, and financial challenges, I want to focus your attention on a number of ways that you can be "sure of you" with regard to Psi Chi to help steer your student career toward your professional future.

First, Psi Chi has been around for 96(!) years, and its trajectory of developing and supporting student opportunities is growing exponentially. As Psi Chi gears up for celebrating our 100th anniversary in 2029, we have a number of ambitious initiatives to benefit students, not least of which are our [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate Scholarships](#), along with two relatively newer scholarships. These newer scholarships are open to both our undergraduate and graduate student members: the [Inez Beverly Prosser Scholarship for Women of Color](#) and the [Christian Ladd Hall Scholarship for Mental Health Advocacy](#). Given the changes in financial aid facing institutions of higher education nationwide, keep these and our other [award and grant programs](#) in mind for support. We allocate more than \$400,000 every year toward these financial opportunities and, for the current year, increased our allocation for regional travel grants by 15% to help meet increased demand by our members.

Second, Psi Chi's mission, goals, and values are solid and building strength. Among the most immediate folks to assist you and your chapter advisors are our regional Psi Chi Vice-Presidents, who are continually working to support local events and provide research recognition awards, convention travel grants, and regional convention programming. We also exemplify our commitment to helping our members' journey through our advisory committees, which are focused on [research](#), [diversity](#), and [global initiatives](#). Each year, these committees develop research projects, events,

and programming at the regional psychology conventions to provide resources and hands-on opportunities that tap into cutting-edge psychology issues. I have received personal feedback in the past indicating that these are among the most significant and valued benefits for our members.

Third, Psi Chi is continually innovating new benefits in response to member requests. Effective this semester, you can now obtain your Psi Chi certificate digitally, with an immediate online certificate emailed to you. See member dashboard (login required) <https://memberportal.psichi.org/> to obtain your certificate online. And, in the past year, we created the [Chapter Support Advisory Committee](#) to help Psi Chi become more aware of the needs of chapters, officers, and faculty advisors. Look for announcements from this committee in coming months to get involved in their effort to identify priority needs for your chapter and chapters like yours. Finally, going into the future, we are strengthening alumni networks that you can turn to for advice and social support as you develop your career plans.

The above are but a select sample of ways that Psi Chi is working to address key member needs and opportunities, all in the service of being "sure of you."

I want to end this brief message with a personal reflection on my role in Psi Chi for the coming year. I first served on the Psi Chi Board of Directors from 2007–2014 and found the experience exhilarating, both because of the opportunity to enhance existing Psi Chi programs, as well as to chart new directions for the organization (it was during my first tenure that the Psi Chi Board of Directors moved to expand from a national to a global organization to reflect the changing scope of the psychology field) and the valued colleagues I got to work and grow with. I ran for a second opportunity to serve on Psi Chi's Board of Directors to become even more active in helping students develop their professional careers and, as fate would have it, will be doing so during an especially challenging time for both the field of psychology and higher education in general.

I am proud to say that the magic of working with Psi Chi continues with stellar colleagues on both the current Board of Directors, consisting of myself, President-Elect Darren Bernal, Past-President Susan Becker, and regional Vice-Presidents Brittany Avila (Western region), Marcie Coulter-Kern (Midwestern region), Karenna Malavanti (Southwestern region), Rona McCall (Rocky Mountain region), Ingrid Tulloch (Eastern region), and Tammy Zacchilli (Southeastern region); a highly skilled and dedicated [Headquarters staff](#); and all coordinated by our multitalented Executive Director Marianne Fallon.

Ultimately, count on the Psi Chi staff and leadership to promote the stability, dependability, and dedication to our mission so that we all work together to help every Psi Chi member be "sure of you."

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2025 Psi Chi Diversity Article Award Recipients

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Psi Chi Awards and Grants

Every year, Psi Chi recognizes two individuals for publishing the best diversity-related article in *Eye on Psi Chi* magazine and *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*. Congratulations to the two latest recipients for their hard work publishing well-written, competent, relevant, original, and impactful articles! Thanks to Macmillan Learning for supporting this initiative.

Below, the two recipients explain why writing their articles was important to them. Take a moment to reflect on their dedication to creating equality and helping people honor and celebrate their identities. If you would like to help create a more socially just world, consider submitting your own diversity-related articles. Submissions are open year-round and are automatically eligible for consideration during next year's [Diversity Article Awards](#).



Read Dr. Mary Moussa Roger's
Psi Chi Journal article:

"Understanding Family Dynamics in a Cross-Cultural Sample: A Multi-National Study"

When I began studying psychology it clarified what I often felt growing up in America, which was that my family behaved differently from other people's

families. The level of closeness we had as a family suggested that members of our family should have more problems than we did. As I began to study theories of family dynamics, among other theories in psychology, there were often places where I did not see myself or my experience. Furthermore, when I taught Introduction to Psychology as a graduate student, I saw many students felt the same way. The idea of expanding psychological research to more diverse groups was not novel, but my experience scaffolded my motivation to incorporate diverse perspectives in my psychological studies. Thus, it was an ideal union to incorporate my dissertation project with Psi Chi's Network for International Collaborative Exchange, which would enhance the diverse recruitment of participants and collaborators. The resulting data demonstrated the experiences of many, that cultural experience adds significant nuance to family dynamics and that changing our measurement methods can enhance the theory we build and communicate to the world. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to put my values into my work!

Mary Moussa Rogers, PhD, (any/all) is a Lebanese American and an assistant professor of psychology at the University of South Carolina Aiken. Dr. Moussa Rogers received her doctorate in clinical psychology from Mississippi State University in 2021 and completed her dissertation through Psi Chi's Network for International Collaborative Exchange. Her research in the SHIPP (Systems, Health, Impulsivity, Parenting, and Prevention) Lab focuses on mechanisms of health risk behavior and developing prevention strategies across cultural groups.



Read Dr. Lori A Barker's
Eye On Psi Chi article:

"Representation Matters"

Given the current climate in the US and other places worldwide, a focus on diversity is more critical now than ever. There is beauty and strength in our diversity. Yet, there are those who want to silence diverse voices, take away

rights, erase history, and reverse 150 years of progress. We must fight against that. As psychologists, we are in a position to make a positive difference in the world, and we must. Our responsibility is to serve humanity—all humanity.

Lori Barker, PhD, is a professor in the Psychology Department at Cal Poly Pomona. She received her BA in psychology from Yale University and her PhD in clinical psychology from UCLA. Dr. Barker is also a licensed clinical psychologist with a private teletherapy practice in California.



From Research to Real Life: Using Psychology to Transform Lives and Build Stronger Communities

Shawn R. Charlton, PhD
University of Central Arkansas

In the United States today, the value of higher education is under sharper scrutiny than at any time in recent memory. Political debates, public opinion polls, and shifting enrollment trends all point to a pressing question (Brenan, 2023): *What is the true return on investment of a college degree?* For psychology, the answer lies not only in producing graduates with diplomas, but in cultivating citizens and scientists who can apply evidence-based thinking to the pressing issues of human

behavior (American Psychological Association, 2023). This means asking questions of real-world importance—and preparing students to think critically about those questions in ways that matter beyond the classroom.

Psychology is at its best when it bridges the laboratory and the real world, the research article and the general, popular press media outlet. At a moment when public trust in science is uneven (Tyson & Kennedy, 2024) and misinformation spreads at unprec-

edented speed (World Economic Forum, 2023), the discipline's role is both urgent and clear: to equip people with the tools to evaluate claims, weigh evidence, and apply psychological science to improve individual and collective well-being. These skills—core to scientific literacy—are also the strongest answer to higher education's critics, because they empower graduates to navigate and shape the world with discernment and purpose, creating psychologically healthier individuals and stronger communities.

This edition of *Psychology in the Headlines* continues the column's mission to illustrate the power of psychology to make individual and community impacts by exploring topics from the public sphere through the lens of psychological science. Each piece asks: *What does current research say about this topic? How can we use that knowledge to think and act more effectively?* In doing so, the headline authors model the habits of critical inquiry and application—curiosity, skepticism, and reflection—that define both good science and good citizenship.

The first essay, **Vacation or Bust? The Science of a Trip That Actually Recharges You**, explores a deceptively simple question: Do vacations truly improve our well-being? Drawing on meta-analytic evidence and cross-cultural examples, the authors show that the answer depends less on whether we take time off and more on how we vacation—especially our ability to disconnect from work and manage expectations. Readers come away not just with travel tips, but with a clearer sense of how psychological factors shape everyday experiences.

The second, **All by Myself ... And Loving It? The Surprising Psychology of Solitude**, challenges the prevailing narrative that being alone is inherently negative. Through self-determination theory, media analysis, and longitudinal research, the headline differentiates between loneliness and positive solitude, revealing how intentionally chosen time alone can foster creativity, calm, and emotional resilience. The piece also highlights how mindset can transform isolation into restoration, a skill increasingly important in our overstimulated and hyper-connected world.

In **Do We Really Need Each Other? The Psychology of Community and Health**, the focus turns outward to the social structures that sustain us. Here, the research is unambiguous: Meaningful connection is not just beneficial, it is vital to both mental and physical health. From community-based health interventions to Bhutan's national emphasis on “mattering,” the authors demonstrate how intentional, reciprocal relationships can function as a form of psychological medicine—one that counters the rising tide of loneliness and fosters resilience across the lifespan.

The series concludes with **Click, Think, Verify: Critical Thinking in the Digital Mental Health Era**, a deep dive into one of the defining challenges of our time: navigating mental health information online. Informed by studies such as Armstrong and colleagues' (2025) work on self-diagnosis among youth, the article examines how social media platforms amplify both helpful resources and harmful misinformation. The authors underscore the need for scientific literacy—not as an abstract ideal, but as a daily survival skill in a digital environment where misinformation can fuel anxiety, distort treatment decisions, and undermine well-being.

Taken together, these essays demonstrate that psychology's value is not limited to specialized research circles or clinical settings. The discipline offers concrete, evidence-based insights

into issues people care about—how we rest, how we relate to ourselves and others, how we build community, and how we separate fact from fiction in a noisy world. In each case, the authors apply psychological principles to real-life contexts, making the science accessible while modeling the critical thinking that higher education promises to cultivate.

In an era when the relevance of higher education is questioned, this is exactly the kind of public-facing, intellectually rigorous work that can help rebuild trust in both universities and the sciences they house. By training students and scholars to interrogate popular narratives, weigh evidence, and communicate clearly, psychology affirms its place not just in the academy, but in the public conversation about what matters most. These four essays invite readers to practice those skills—and to see psychology not as a set of abstract theories, but as a vital, everyday tool for understanding and improving the human experience.

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Vacation or Bust? The Science of a Trip That Actually Recharges You

Parker Hamilton & Shawn R. Charlton, PhD
University of Central Arkansas

We place high value on escaping the routine of school, work, and everyday life for a vacation. For some, that means adventure—rock climbing, kayaking, or hiking. For others, it's exploring new cultures. And for many, it's all about rest and relaxation. But does vacation actually boost psychological health?

Fortunately, research says yes—if we are intentional about how we take time off. Scientific studies have shown that vacations produce measurable physical and psychological gains (Grun von Julk, 2025). A recent meta-analysis by Grant and colleagues (2025) found that vacations improve employee well-being in ways that can last far beyond the trip itself. However, these benefits are shaped by key factors, such as how fully we disconnect from work and the types of activities we choose to fill our days.

One major psychological challenge for vacations is keeping our expectations realistic. Paris Syndrome (McClatchie, 2025) describes severe distress experienced by a small percentage of Japanese tourists when the reality of Paris doesn't match their idealized image. This disconnect between expectation and reality is common for people vacationing to exotic or idealized locations—and is an idea humorously skewered in Adam Sandler's 2019 *Romano Tours* Saturday Night Live sketch. Other destinations have their own unique psychological impacts. Jerusalem Syndrome (Ledsom, 2024) involves hallucinations, delusions, and other disruptions in some visitors to holy sites. Stendhal Syndrome strikes certain travelers overwhelmed by the beauty of Florence, causing heart palpitations, anxiety, and dizziness (Ledsom, 2024). While

linked to specific locations, these syndromes can occur anywhere with similar conditions—whether a clash between expectations and reality, intense religious engagement, or overwhelming artistic beauty.

So how can we maximize vacation's value? According to Tropiano (2025), one of the simplest—yet psychologically hardest—steps is disconnecting from our digital world. Michelle Shiota and Tamera Schneider of Arizona State University recommend five strategies for a mentally healthy getaway: (a) limit internet use, (b) set an away message that creates psychological distance from daily responsibilities, (c) establish personal tech boundaries while traveling, (d) reduce constant photo-taking to stay present in the moment, and (e) whenever possible, leave devices behind entirely (Tropiano, 2025).

Ultimately, a key predictor of vacation benefits is how completely we disengage from daily routines. Those who step away from work—avoiding not just emails but also negative work-related rumination—show the greatest gains (Grun von Julk, 2025). And ironically, given the proven value of detachment, we mention that both authors of this piece drafted the headline while on their own summer vacations.

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All by Myself ... And Loving It? The Surprising Psychology of Solitude

Shawn R. Charlton, PhD

University of Central Arkansas

For as long as I can remember, I've connected deeply with Whitesnake's 1982 rock ballad "Here I Go Again." There is something powerful in its balance between loneliness and strength, captured in the lines:

And here I go again on my own,
Going down the only road I've ever known.
Like a drifter I was born to walk alone.
(1987 rerelease lyrics)

David Coverdale's heartache over the dissolution of his marriage—and his determination to move forward—are woven into the song's lyrics and driving melody (Hutchinson, 2021).

In discussing time by ourselves, it's essential to distinguish negative loneliness—externally imposed and perceived as unwanted—from positive solitude—internally driven and intentionally chosen. The former breeds distress; the latter offers renewal, perspective, and space to breathe. Research grounded in self-determination theory shows that intentionally seeking time alone helps down-regulate high arousal, increasing calm and reducing stress (Nguyen et al., 2018). Positive solitude is also defined by autonomy, reflection, and freedom from external demands (Coplan & Bowker, 2021).

Thomas (2025) identifies several benefits of intentionally choosing time alone: opportunities to recharge, relax, reconnect, and recenter. Solitude can also spark creativity, encourage personal exploration, and foster emotional growth. Just 15 minutes of solitude, Thomas notes, can significantly reduce high-arousal emotions such as anxiety, offering a mental reset and greater clarity. It also provides space for emotional processing and innovation—benefits that often go untapped in our hyper-connected lives.

How we view time by ourselves shapes whether solitude feels nourishing or depleting. Rodriguez and colleagues (2025) found that media portrayals of being alone are overwhelmingly negative—

framing it as harmful 10 times more often than beneficial—which influences personal experience. People who hold negative beliefs tend to feel lonelier in solitude, while those with positive beliefs often feel more content and restored.

Longitudinal research reinforces this point. In a registered-report diary study, adults who spent more time alone reported lower stress and greater autonomy satisfaction on those days, with benefits building over time. Downsides such as same-day loneliness or reduced satisfaction appeared when solitude increased, but these were minimized when it was choiceful. Notably, there was no universal "optimal" ratio of solitude to socializing—motivation mattered more than time (Weinstein et al., 2023).

Author James Clear (2025) distills healthy solitude into a simple truth:

Go do things on your own so you learn to trust your mind ...
The person who is at ease within finds every other space larger
and more enjoyable.

Voluntary solitude—anchored in positive beliefs and intrinsic motivation—is not withdrawal from life. It is a deliberate act of self-care, a renewable source of creativity and calm, and a foundation for engaging more fully with the world when we return to it.

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Do We Really Need Each Other? The Psychology of Community and Health

Veda A. Charlton & Shawn R. Charlton, PhD

University of Central Arkansas

We are starting to recognize that community is not just nice to have—it is essential to psychological health and can function as a form of psychological medicine. As Kaplan (2025) explains, meaningful connection with others has measurable effects on mental and physical well-being, from reducing stress to accelerating recovery from illness. At a time when the “loneliness epidemic” is widely discussed, we must recognize that authentic relationships and shared experiences can counterbalance the anxiety, isolation, and other strains of modern life, fostering resilience and a genuine sense of belonging.

The benefits of community extend beyond casual interactions. Intentional, supportive networks can shape identity, offer emotional safety, and provide practical resources during life’s inevitable challenges. Kaplan (2025) suggests three ways to strengthen this “medicine”: (a) participate in groups or activities aligned with your passions or values to boost both connection and personal fulfillment; (b) create regular rituals—such as shared meals, book clubs, or walking groups—that maintain strong bonds; and (c) practice mutual support by both giving and receiving help, reinforcing trust and reciprocity.

Research reinforces this healing potential. Duplantier and colleagues (2025) describe their “Community as Medicine” program—a trauma-informed, group-based health coaching model rooted in lifestyle medicine. Over three months, low-income adults met weekly for sessions centered on four

pillars: physical activity, healthy meals, social support, and stress reduction. Participants reported significant reductions in depression, anxiety, and isolation, along with improved diet and increased physical activity. Qualitative feedback pointed to belonging, mutual support, empowerment, and shared progress as central to these gains, demonstrating that community-based interventions strengthen both mental and physical health.

Bhutan offers a striking national-scale example of prioritizing community for public health. Thorpe (2025) notes that by 2047, one in five Bhutanese will be over 60, making the prevention of social isolation as important as managing chronic illness. Guided by its Gross National Happiness philosophy, Bhutan emphasizes “mattering”—the sense of being valued by others—as a protective factor against loneliness, depression, and cognitive decline. Intergenerational initiatives, such as pairing adolescents with elders to build digital skills, strengthen mutual respect while expanding social networks and community-driven models like “Community as Medicine” are viewed as pathways for older adults to age with dignity, purpose, and connection while building strong, sustainable communities.

Ultimately, community is not an optional extra. It is a cornerstone of psychological health, a catalyst for physical well-being, and a resource we can—and should—cultivate with intention.

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Click, Think, Verify: Critical Thinking in the Digital Mental Health Era

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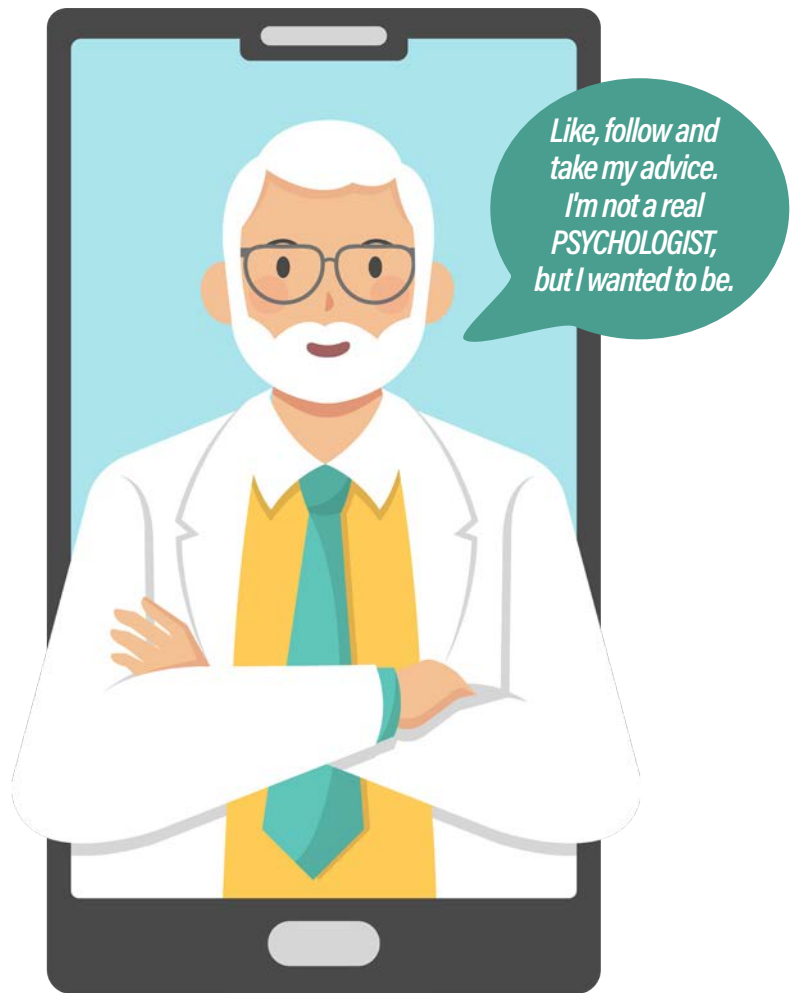
In an era when mental health awareness is trending—and hashtags reach millions in seconds—our access to information has never been greater, or more treacherous. The same platforms that spark openness and connection can also spread myths, distortions, and outright falsehoods. Navigating this digital landscape requires more than curiosity; it demands critical thinking, scientific literacy, and an intentional approach to what we consume and share.

Social media is a prime example of this double-edged reality. Sy et al. (2025) report that, while nearly 90 million posts carry the #mentalhealth tag, much of the content is misleading or inaccurate. Licensed psychologist Taisha Caldwell-Harvey warns that oversimplifying complex mental health issues or treating ordinary emotions as clinical disorders can lead to self-misdiagnosis or delay in seeking professional help (Sy et al., 2025). Armstrong and their research team (2025) found that young people entering treatment for mood or anxiety disorders frequently arrived with pre-formed self-diagnoses shaped by online content—diagnoses that often did not align with clinical assessments. While some felt empowered by this knowledge-seeking, others experienced heightened anxiety and confusion when their self-labels were challenged. Soroya and colleagues (2025) echo these concerns, showing that repeated exposure to unverified content can fuel “cyberchondria,” intensifying distress, especially among vulnerable individuals.

The risks are not limited to misinformation. Al Musawi and colleagues (2025) describe social media’s dual nature: While it can connect people with supportive communities, it also promotes cyberbullying, distorted realities, and upward social comparisons that erode self-esteem. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable, as their sense of worth is often tied to online validation. Passive use, like endless scrolling, is more harmful than active engagement and can contribute to compulsive use, anxiety, depression, and FOMO.

Beyond individual posts, the sheer volume and diversity of online information can overwhelm our ability to think clearly. Vaccaro-Witt and colleagues (2025) found that, during the COVID-19 crisis, conflicting messages from different sources amplified public confusion and stress. Posts expressing sadness, fear, or anger were linked to spikes in suicidal ideation, whereas those framed around solidarity and shared purpose promoted calm and resilience.

Peer support groups illustrate this help–harm balance. Treadgold and colleagues (2025) found that, while these spaces can empower and connect, they also circulate misleading advice—especially on chronic or life-threatening conditions. Although members sometimes correct falsehoods, such interventions are inconsistent. Platforms themselves can worsen matters: Jain and colleagues (2025) show that TikTok’s algorithmic feeds and infinite scrolling encourage problematic use, linking it to anxiety, depression, and sleep disruption. TikTok and other social media platforms are beginning to create crowdsourced tools to help identify and address misinformation, but it is too early to tell the full impact and utility of these tools (TikTok, 2025).



The takeaway is clear: information literacy in the digital age is not optional. Every scroll, click, and share shapes how we—and our communities—understand mental health. By questioning credentials, verifying sources, and prioritizing evidence-based information, we can protect our well-being and foster healthier, more truthful conversations.

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“Wednesday’s Child Is Full of Woe”: Exploration of Pessimism and Authenticity in *Wednesday* (2022) the Netflix TV Series

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Tim Burton’s (2024) creation, *Wednesday*, is a spinoff of *The Addams Family Values* (1993), focusing on Wednesday, a clever, gloomy girl. After Wednesday sought revenge on her brother’s bullies on the water polo team by terrorizing them with carnivorous fish, she is sent to Nevermore, an academy more suited to outcasts. The academy houses all those outside of the norm, including vampires, gorgons, sirens, psychics, werewolves, shape shifters, and Hydes! Unimpressed, Wednesday fights against her parents’ legacy, trying to find her way when perilous intentions threaten her, the school, and all the outcasts. Wednesday becomes tangled in a mystery well-suited for an aspiring Agatha Christie, making efforts to connect a red string to a killer on the loose, straining the already tenuous relationship between the academy and surrounding town. However, the town’s history extends beyond being her parents’ alma mater as her ancestral figure, Goody Addams, reveals the grim history of Jericho, the land beneath the town that seems to be soaked in outcast blood. Going against the grain is not always easy, but becomes necessary for survival for our undaunted protagonist, who finds herself an outcast in a school full of them. However, determined to get to the bottom of a mysterious disappearance with murderous overtones, every time the truth seems in grasp, a new twist leaves viewers guessing.

Being a “Raven” Among “Doves”: Defensive Pessimism

Wednesday discovers a psychic ability classified by her mother as being a raven, meaning her visions tend to have a darker disposition than the counterpart of being a dove. A natural pessimist tending to have a negative outlook can be hindrance or advantage. Defensive pessimism is a psychological strategy of harnessing a negative outlook to foster personal growth. By channeling negativity in this way, individuals can develop plans for worst-case scenarios in order to reduce anxiety (Verano, 2023). In the case of someone who feels particularly anxious, it is quite difficult to try to believe in the positive (Verano, 2023). Pitfalls of pessimism arise when it is applied too often and shapes a mindset that life is an endless series of setbacks, with the only reward occurring when the prediction of the worst-case scenario comes true to justify the pessimist (Verano, 2023). Wednesday is a child full of woe, an attribute that contributes to a disposition opposite to a people pleaser. A darker outlook becomes a barrier to developing new relationships, but the relationships she does make are deep and accepting of her gloom.

Humans brains are wired with a negativity bias to keep them safe from potentially harmful experiences (Verano, 2023). Our ancestors depended on this for survival (Verano, 2023). Pessimistic thinking often involves the assumption of persistent and pervasive negativity (expecting a negative outcome more than not (Wartski, 2024). Although having realistic expectations rather than extremely positive or negative is a good recipe for health and happiness, both do have their upsides (Psychology Today, 2019). Pessimists can make better leaders, particularly when there is a need to take a stand against a majority (Psychology Today, 2019). Their skepticism makes them more resistant to persuasive tactics like propaganda or false advertising (Psychology Today, 2019).

“Memento Mori”

Humans naturally avoid uncertainty and being in uncomfortable situations, but sometimes stepping out of one’s comfort zone is what it takes to learn, grow, and change (Cuncic, 2022). Being uncomfortable is actually a good thing because, in order to learn and grow, exposing ourselves to new situations, although scary, often proves to be less intimidating once we begin (Cuncic, 2022). It is important to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. It is a normal, healthy part of life that can’t be avoided when facing something new or different. Discomfort is sure to accompany these situations, prompting many to go with the majority to avoid the negative feelings associated with being the odd one out (i.e., shame, guilt, othered; Cuncic, 2022). However, this natural urge can be combatted by building up tolerance by becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable (Cuncic, 2022). It is no easy feat to access a new skill in stressful situations, meaning many are most likely to fall back on old habits, but a skill like this requires practice. Authenticity is the product of choosing ourselves with the possibility of pushback from others over avoidance.

Authenticity involves the ability to be introspective, looking to understand how to adhere to our own self-concept (Psychology Today, 2020). Authenticity has strong connections to self-esteem goals, achievement coping skills, and presents other psychological benefits (Psychology Today, 2020). Wednesday is not afraid to embrace her truth in herself; the process in which she acts according to her own beliefs is a show of her authenticity (Psychology Today, 2020). When people act in ways that violate this idea of their perceived self-concept, it can cause feelings of distress, anxiety, and guilt (Psychology Today, 2020). Authenticity helps us have positive self-concepts and self-efficacy, allowing the strength to make hard decisions (Psychology Today, 2020). Despite Wednesday starting to get pushback from others during her investigation, she knows that giving up now would completely violate her values. Continuing at the risk of losing her friendships, she knows she must push forward in order to get to the bottom of the case and protect not only herself, but all of Nevermore.

Conclusion: Glare Your Way to Success

Whether you’re a “dove” or a “raven,” practicing self-acceptance and leaving comparison to others behind helps prioritize true authenticity. The philosopher Aristotle claimed, “Comparison is the thief of joy,” and psychologists link negative effects to comparing the entirety of our lives to the best of someone else’s (NeuroLaunch, 2024). Wednesday doesn’t mind being an outlier, making no effort to conform to those around her, never giving in to

groupthink or peer pressure, trusting her own intuitions. It is hard to stand tall as a minority against the majority, but Wednesday makes it seem effortless with her blank expression. Authenticity requires embracing the uncomfortable and accepting the glares of others. Wednesday glares back by unwavering in being herself, but compels audiences as her sharp edges soften. Her new friendships present her opportunities to embrace the uncomfortable, stepping outside of her norm in a way true to her. All of Nevermore embraces their differences from each other, collectively being the minority against the majority. The lesson of Tim Burton’s creation is not to dress in all black or call on the dark forces, but to be authentic. Standing alone is better than dimming (or in this case, brightening) yourself to blend into an ocean of conformity!

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Finding Your Fit: Choosing the Work Environment That Works for You

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Nearly every day I meet with students and others preparing to enter the workforce. I work with them as they embark on their job search or begin to explore different career directions. I encourage them to think about what an ideal work environment looks like to them and to carefully consider what they truly want and need. I prompt them to think about what matters most to them in a job, in particular, on what aspects of a job they would

be willing to compromise and on what aspects they would not.

Not surprisingly, job hunters are typically willing to negotiate about the tangible aspects of a job: salary, title, health insurance, and vacation time. But when it comes to the less tangible aspects of a job, such as ability to do meaningful work, availability of growth opportunities, and work/life balance, they were less willing to compromise. In addition, over the past few years, especially since the experience of working from home during COVID, another factor has

emerged as a new kind of nonnegotiable for many: the ability to work remotely. One survey found that “nearly two-thirds of employees say that remote work is the most important aspect of a job” (U.S. Career Institute, 2024). In fact, many of those with whom I meet would prefer to work remotely 100% of the time!

This article isn’t meant to add to the ongoing debate about remote versus in-person work; we’ve all seen plenty of those comparisons and the pros and cons have been discussed at length. Instead, my goal is to help you make informed decisions about what kind of work environment truly fits *you* by guiding you to make thoughtful decisions about your preferences, your priorities, and ultimately, your career path.

There’s No Place Like Home (to Work)

The idea of working from home often sounds ideal—no commute, comfy clothes (maybe even PJs?), total freedom. It’s understandable why many people are drawn to it. But before deciding that a fully remote job is your dream setup, do you really know what working remotely looks and feels like day in and day out?

Since 2020, remote work has become a common part of professional life, especially in fields that don’t require hands-on work (Pabilonia & Redmond, 2024). But while it offers a lot of positive aspects regarding flexibility and independence, it also comes with specific demands and trade-offs that can affect how you learn, grow, and connect with others, especially early in your career. I encourage you to evaluate your needs and preferences to consider what will lead to the most success and to reflect on how remote work might actually function in your life.

Here Are a Few Things to Consider:

Home setup. First, do you have a dedicated, quiet place to work? Do others in your home respect those boundaries? Remote work requires physical space and mental separation, so you need to make sure you will be able to minimize any distractions. And for some, without clear signals that the workday has ended, it can be difficult to mentally leave work. This inability to clearly separate work and life has been linked to burnout and physical health issues (O’Connell-Domene, 2023). Having a distinct “workplace” helps separate work from personal life and creates clear boundaries.

Self-motivation. How self-directed and self-motivated are you? Remote work requires a high degree of self-management. You’ll need to manage your time, set your own structure, and stay motivated, often without much oversight. This can be very freeing, but if you thrive on frequent feedback, remote work may be more challenging than expected.

Productivity. Do you get energized being around others, or do you find that draining? Office spaces can be noisy and distracting, making it harder to focus. Another factor is that social fatigue, feeling exhausted after too much social interaction, can lead to burnout (Gulotta, 2024). For some, working alone all day might feel peaceful, but for others, it might be unbearable. This isn’t just about introversion versus extroversion; it’s about knowing how you recharge and recognizing what helps you stay motivated and productive.

Building community. Remote work can feel isolating for some, especially those who are new to a job or just starting out in their career. Many fully remote employees report feeling disconnected from their teams and less integrated into workplace culture (Rogers, 2022). Find out what a potential company does to build community. Learn how often the team gets together. Find out how independently

or collaboratively individuals on a team work. See if you can get a sense of the company vibe. Then really consider how you will build relationships in your role. You may want to look for companies with strong onboarding, mentorship, or team-building practices for both in-office and remote workers.

Professional growth. In-person work can offer growth and learning opportunities that are difficult to replicate elsewhere. Work isn’t just about completing your list of things to do. It’s also about learning how organizations function, building relationships, watching how others navigate challenges, and developing your own professional identity. Much of that happens in the “in-between” moments—the casual hallway chats, the impromptu brainstorming, or just being there to watch a manager solve a problem. Being in-person gives you more access to this informal learning (Henke et al., 2022) and increases your chances of receiving real-time feedback. These experiences can be foundational to how we grow at work (Eraut, 2004).

Visibility and opportunities. Being fully remote can also affect your access to mentors and visibility for advancement. In a remote setting, it’s easier to become “out of sight, out of mind.” You might miss out on chances to be seen or heard, and that might affect being chosen for opportunities simply because you’re not physically there. When you are in-person, you are more likely to gain visibility with decision-makers. You are also more likely to hear about stretch opportunities, which are challenging assignments or projects that push you beyond your current skill set. Research suggests that stretch opportunities are among the most powerful professional development tools, especially for growing and developing as a leader (Miller, 2019). So if you do work remotely, find ways to increase your visibility, such as keeping your camera on and speaking up when possible during online meetings.

Personal considerations. There may be other issues that matter to you that could affect your decision about where and how to work so that you are productive while still maintaining a good work/life balance. If you have a very long commute, you may need to factor the impact of additional travel time and added financial costs. If you are a caregiver or have health issues, you might need to be flexible about your working hours based on these other responsibilities.

By thinking through these issues, you can go beyond assumptions about what sounds convenient or appealing and get closer to what will actually work for *you*. Remote work can be empowering, but only when it aligns with your needs, personality, and stage of career development.

The Best of Both Worlds? Hybrid and Flexible Models

So far we have been considering whether or not remote vs in-person office work is best for you. However, there are a couple of other models to consider as well.

Hybrid work models. A hybrid work model falls in the middle and gives you a bit of both time in the office to connect with and learn from others, and time at home to focus without distractions. Key features of a hybrid work model include scheduled in-office days, location flexibility, and a focus on maximizing one-on-one interactions when in the office.



When it's done right, hybrid work can give you the best of both worlds, flexibility *and* connection. But the key is being intentional about how you set it up. To build relationships and stay in the loop, it helps to align your in-office days with your teammates whenever possible. That way, you're not just showing up to an empty office. It's also a good idea to have a plan for how and when you'll check in with your manager or team, whether that's regular meetings, quick updates, or scheduled catch-ups. Without a bit of structure, a hybrid schedule can quickly start to feel scattered or unorganized. A little planning will go a long way.

Flexible work models. Another modern approach worth exploring is the flexible work model. This arrangement emphasizes adaptability in both *how* and *when* work gets done. Rather than sticking to a rigid 9-to-5 structure, employees have the opportunity to shape their schedules to align with their personal and professional needs (of course, within the boundaries set by the organization). A hallmark of this model is customizable work hours, which can shift based on individual preferences or life circumstances. What truly defines a flexible work model, though, is that success is measured by outcomes, not hours clocked. This shift in focus empowers you to be more productive on your own terms while maintaining performance and productivity.

Once you have determined what factors and aspects of a work environment fit you best, you need to evaluate how well any opportunity you consider fits your needs. Rather than straight out asking if you can work remotely or if hours are flexible, which may come across like you're just looking to make things easier for yourself, ask the kinds of questions that tell you how the team actually functions to get a better sense of the work environment. You can do this by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions that will help you understand the company's day-to-day operations, communication style, and workplace culture. Possible questions you can ask:

- How do new employees typically get to know the team and learn the ropes?
- Can you describe what a typical day or week looks like for someone in this role?
- How does the team usually collaborate or communicate day-to-day?
- What tools or platforms does the team use to stay connected and manage work?
- How does the company support different working styles or preferences?

These kinds of questions show you are not just asking about where you'll sit or the hours you will work, but that you are thinking about how you'll connect with others and contribute to the company.

Final Thoughts: Find What Fits

There's no one-size-fits-all answer when it comes to choosing a work environment. Plus, what works for you now might shift over time, depending on your role, your lifestyle, or your goals. The important thing is to make intentional decisions, not just based on what sounds appealing (yes, working in PJs is great), but based on what will have the greatest positive impact on your personal and professional success.

Whether you're just starting out or considering a change, take the time to reflect on what you need to be able to do your best work. Be honest with yourself. Ask smart questions. And remember that finding the right fit isn't about choosing the trendiest setup, it's about choosing the one that supports your learning, growth, and well-being.

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Decisions, Decisions: Questions (and Answers) About Choosing a Graduate School Program

Julie Radico, PsyD, ABPP
Radico Psychological and Consultation Services, LLC

Jocelyn Turner-Musa, PhD
Morgan State University (MD)

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Does your brain feel like a browser with 27 tabs open, all labeled “Grad School Options?” If so, you’re not alone. With so many paths to consider, from PhDs to PsyDs to master’s degrees to dual degrees, the best options for you may lie hidden by details you didn’t even know to ask about. In this edition of our Three Heads ARE Better Than One series, our experts will help refresh your overwhelmed browser cache. Discover key conversations to have with yourself and potential grad schools that will help you find the programs that best align with your unique situation and goals.

Help me weigh the pros and cons of choosing a PhD or a PsyD program.

Radico: There are usually some consistent differences between these two degrees, but otherwise the differences tend to be dependent on

the program that you attend and the specialty in psychology (e.g., clinical, counseling) you pursue. My colleagues will hopefully add more nuance to this in their responses, so in broad brush strokes, PhDs tend to focus a bit more on research while PsyDs tend to get more training in clinical work. Again, this is program dependent. Nevertheless, the programs you consider should be clear about if and how they help you gain the required experience for future licensure.

However, to add even more nuance, there are programs in applied psychology (e.g., industrial organizational psychology) in which the curriculum will look very different compared to a PhD or PsyD program in clinical or counseling psychology and may not transition you into licensure. So, take a close look at the coursework that is being offered by the programs that you are considering.

Turner-Musa: In weighing the pros and cons of choosing a PhD or PsyD program, you must first understand the difference between the programs and then decide what is best for you. As mentioned, a PhD

program involves more research while PsyD programs focus more on direct services, which often involves training in clinical, counseling, and school psychology programs. Depending upon what subfield you pursue, a PhD may allow you to work as both a researcher and practitioner. For example, if you are interested in clinical psychology, a PhD allows you to work with clients, teach, and/or do research. With a PsyD, you are a practitioner and less likely to be engaged in research. Other things to consider are time and money. With a PhD, you will need to complete a dissertation, which can add time to the degree, typically 4–8 years. A PsyD typically takes less time to complete 4–6 years. PhD programs may provide more funding opportunities than a PsyD program. These may include tuition waivers and stipends for teaching and research assistantships. Whatever you choose, do your research to determine what is best for you.

Prinstein: I have written about PhD vs. PsyD programs elsewhere, but perhaps more important is to consider whether you are attending a nonprofit school (e.g., schools with many majors and football teams), or a for-profit school that may be called a “university,” but does not have a typical array of doctoral programs. For students in health service psychology (i.e., clinical, counseling, and school), do your homework and make sure the place you attend has a reasonably high rate of students passing the national licensing exam and that your student debt will not be overwhelming to address after graduation.

Should I seek out a master’s program, a doctoral program, or possibly a doctoral program that will also grant me a master’s degree along the way?

Radico: Finding your answer to this question is important. Being able to answer these questions may help you in your exploration (though this is not an exhaustive list):

1. Why are you pursuing a graduate degree?
2. What do you want your career, overall, to look like?
3. What do you want your day-to-day work to include?
4. What financial considerations do you need to consider?
5. Who can/do you want to talk to as you explore graduate school?

Turner-Musa: I agree with Dr. Radico. Answer these questions to help you make an informed decision about which degree to pursue. Another thing to consider is your undergraduate academic record (i.e., grades and coursework). If you are interested in a doctoral program in psychology, most top-tier programs require an undergraduate GPA of 3.5 or higher and completion of certain courses. If your GPA is lower than this and/or you have not completed courses required for the program, completing post-baccalaureate course work or a master’s degree may make you more competitive for a doctoral program.

Prinstein: The answer to this question may change dramatically in the next few years for health service psychologists. Over a dozen states now have created viable pathways for psychology students with master’s degrees to practice psychology in most of the same ways as someone with a doctoral degree. More states are likely to follow, and national organizations have started to create model licensing acts that will help standardize the areas of practice for those with master’s vs. doctoral training. The American Psychological Association has begun accrediting more master’s programs in health services psychology as well. Flash forward 10 years: The master’s degree may become a very attractive option for

students who want to offer evidence-based psychological services in many or most states around the country.

In undergrad, some students acquire multiple minors or even dual majors. Are opportunities to “double-down” like this also possible in graduate school? And if so, would you recommend it?

Radico: There are some programs where you can obtain more than one degree. For example, JD/PhD programs, where you could obtain a juris doctor (JD) and a doctor of philosophy (PhD) degree (e.g., in psychology). I know some psychologists who have done such programs. Some work for the government and some do primarily clinical work. If you are interested in such programs, I encourage you ask to speak to alumni to hear about their experiences and see the type of work you may be able to do upon completing the program.

Turner-Musa: In addition to programs mentioned, other programs include MD-PhD, MPH-PhD, MSW-PhD, and MBA-PhD programs just to name a few. For example, an MD-PhD program provides training to become a physician-scientist. Someone with an MD-PhD can be found providing direct services to patients and in a lab doing research to improve patient outcomes. This is also known as “translational research”—from bench to practice. My recommendation, do your research and decide what is best for you given your interests and career goals.

Prinstein: It’s possible, but rare. The doctoral degree is rigorous and time consuming, and it offers remarkable versatility in what you can do after graduation. Many feel they are able to accomplish all they want with just the doctoral degree in psychology. Of course, a deep interest in medicine, public health, or law, for instance, may be a great reason to pursue a dual degree.

Where can I find grad programs’ student retention and dropout rates? And if I don’t see this info online, is it acceptable to ask for it?

Radico: I do not know if *all* programs make such information accessible to applicants. I will lean on my colleagues to help provide clarity here. I was able to find out this information about the program I graduated from with a quick online search.

Additionally, the American Psychological Association (APA) has resources you may find helpful as you consider graduate school. Of note: You may need to be an APA member to access some of the materials.

Graduate School: [Resources for students](#)

Accredited Programs: [Database of APA-accredited programs](#)

Turner-Musa: Most universities have an Office of Institutional Research (OIR) or similar office that may provide data on graduation, retention, and drop-out rates. My home institution’s OIR has an interactive dashboard available to the public that allows anyone to assess this information. These offices may also include data on time-to-degree completion providing the median time it takes to complete the degree. Some program websites may also include this information along with testimonials from current students and alumni. If you don’t see this information and are curious, it is okay to ask.

Prinstein: If it is a clinical, counseling, or school psychology program, and it is accredited, it must be posted for you to see on their website as part of accreditation requirements. If the program

is not currently or provisionally accredited, beware. For programs outside of health service psychology, it is OK to write to the training director or current students to ask for this kind of info.

How should I go about ranking graduate programs' reputations within the field?

Radico: This will likely depend on your priorities on the order in which you rank program information. For example, decide how you would prioritize the following: graduation rates, internships the students have matched into, and how many of the students are licensed within 2–3 years. Many factors contribute a program's reputation. My colleagues can help you consider this further.

Turner-Musa: Several resources available rank graduate programs on several criteria. For example, *US News World & Report* provides an annual list of top-tier psychology programs. The list is based on survey data from faculty at peer institutions. I have completed the survey on several occasions. I also recommend that you consider your own interests and what you deem to be important in a graduate program. One thing to consider is employment status of alumni, "Where are they now and what are they doing?" This too may be an indication of the reputation of the program.

Prinstein: Program rankings don't mean much, so don't get preoccupied with them. Just as important is the productivity of the faculty member you will work with as a primary mentor and her/his reputation in the field. I would definitely recommend a productive, well-regarded mentor at a lesser-known school over a poorly matched or unproductive mentor at top school. If you must consider school rankings, however, remember that individual rankings (e.g., #17 vs #18) are meaningless, while differences in the quartile (the top 25% of programs vs the schools in second quartile) may be somewhat useful.

Do you have any tips for ensuring that graduates in a particular program have historically been able to find relevant jobs after graduation?

Radico: Programs would hopefully be able to share information with you on where their graduates are working. You may also be able to find general workforce data elsewhere (e.g., [The American Psychological Association](#)).

Turner-Musa: You would have to check with the program. Many graduate programs provide information about the status of former students on their websites. If not, they should be willing to share. In addition, you can check the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) to get an idea of the job outlook for psychology majors. You can filter by geographic region. While this does not specifically address your question, it does provide a general snapshot of the job market in psychology.

Prinstein: I agree.

Should I disclose during the application process if I have competing priorities in life (e.g., children) that might cause me to need more time to complete my degree?

Radico: Ask questions to learn of the accommodations offered by the program and how they support students who are off cycle in the coursework. It is up to you to decide if you want to disclose why you are asking such questions, but it is certainly okay and

important for you to know if the program is a good fit for the realities of your life.

Turner-Musa: I agree with my colleague. Ask questions to learn how the program and the university supports graduate students. If you have competing priorities, it is important for the program to understand your concerns. This provides you with an opportunity to make an informed decision about whether the program is the right fit for you.

Prinstein: You do not need to disclose any of this information in your application but of course you can ask questions if you would like, and it may help you find a place that will be supportive for your life holistically, not just your professional life. Most programs tend to be quite willing to help you succeed and will nurture you throughout this time in your life.

If I am accepted into multiple programs, how long can I safely wait before I must make a decision or risk forfeiting both invitations?

Radico: Programs will likely give you a timeline in which you need to respond with your acceptance.

Turner-Musa: Once you know the timeline for accepting the decision, you can always contact the program with questions that may help in making the decision.

Prinstein: In health service psychology, there are some guidelines you can find from CUDCP (Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology) to help you. No one should pressure you, but to avoid a log jam, it really is professionally considerate to hold no more than 2 offers for more than a couple of days. As offers are made as early as December or January for many programs, holding onto many until April will just delay the process and require someone else to wait for months until they have updates on their own candidacy.



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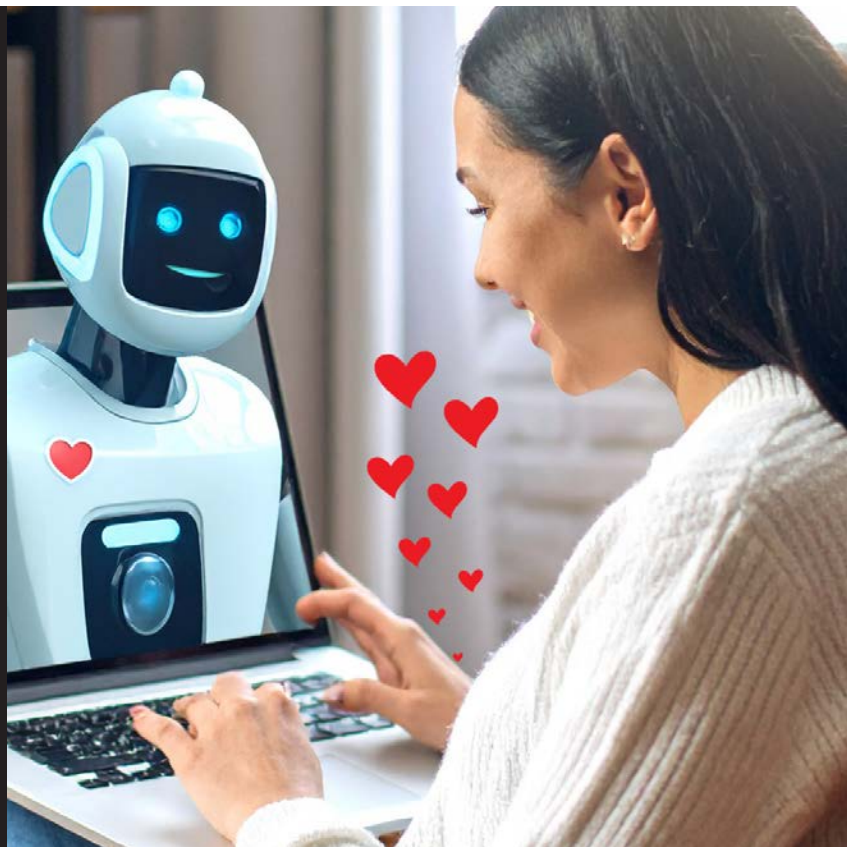


TAKE THE NEXT STEP TOWARD GRAD
SCHOOL SUCCESS



Cyberpsychology: Explaining Why People Fall in Love With Robots

Ethan A. McMahan, PhD
Western Oregon University



Hello Dear Readers. Recently, I read a news story published by the BBC documenting a case of an individual falling in love with a chat bot. There are couple of things in the previous sentence that are notable. First, my reading of stories published by the BBC clearly indicates a high level of internationality and sophistication on my part. Kudos to me. Second, but *perhaps* more important, somebody actually fell in love with an AI “companion.” The individual in question reported feeling a strong emotional connection to and romantic feelings for their preferred AI platform.¹ This is not an isolated incident. A recent piece in the *New York Times* (that I also read ... with a monocle) describes several similar cases, with reports of such events increasing as this technology becomes more ubiquitous. You probably have some questions now. For example, you might wonder what it is about AI that encourages these feelings. What is it about human psychology that makes these seemingly irrational feelings toward an inanimate object a real possibility? Fortunately, there is a field within psychology that addresses these and many other related questions. That field is cyberpsychology.

Cyberpsychology is a rapidly emerging area of inquiry that sits at the intersection of psychology and technology. It involves the study of how humans interact with and are affected by technology, especially the internet and digital media (Connolly et al., 2016). Cyberpsychologists explore psychological phenomena related to

¹To be clear, I’m not judging. I once felt love-like feelings for a Snickers bar, but those feeling quickly dissipated after I ate the bar. Love is fleeting, I suppose.

online behavior, virtual environments, social media, gaming, AI, and emerging technologies and seek to understand how relevant technologies influence cognition, emotion, identity, behavior, relationships, and mental health. What sets cyberpsychology apart from software/application research and development is its emphasis on the *human experience* in digital spaces. It’s not just about the technical design of apps or software but about how users engage with and are psychologically shaped by digital technologies.

Now, in news and media outlets, numerous stories document the variety of ways humans are impacted by interaction with modern technologies and the online environment (I have read them, typically while wearing an Italian-made suit). In some cases, these stories illustrate the dangers of engagement with these technologies, such as those documenting the negative effects of social media on adolescent mental health. In other cases, they may document the more ... ahem ... interesting phenomena, such as the emergence of inexplicably popular internet trends (e.g., the cinnamon challenge ... Google it). Regardless, the existence of these cases brings into relief the relevance of cyberpsychology to modern life. So, with that, let’s dive into an article that you can refer to later when trying to impress your own readers.

Fancy-Pants History

Though the roots of cyberpsychology can be traced back to the early days of the internet (i.e., the mid-20th century), the field began to coalesce in the late 1990s and early 2000s as the digital

revolution gained momentum. The proliferation of personal computers, the rise of the World Wide Web, and the explosion of online communication platforms provided fertile ground for psychological inquiry. Early studies focused on topics like online anonymity, internet addiction, and virtual communities, often spurred by the novelty of new technologies. These laid the groundwork for understanding behavior in virtual environments and introduced a variety of new concepts, such as the online disinhibition effect, which focuses on why people sometimes behave more freely or aggressively online when compared to real life. The emergence of social media, interactive platforms, and user-generated content provided cyberpsychology new and fertile ground for further inquiry. Researchers began to explore the psychological effects of platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and later Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. In recent years, the field has expanded even further to include human-robot interaction, digital therapy, AI ethics, and the psychological implications of metaverse technologies.

Hifalutin Jobs

As digital technologies have grown in complexity and reach, so too have the career opportunities within the field. Cyberpsych professionals in academia, tech, healthcare, and public policy, among other domains, are—as we speak—attempting to understand and shape human experience and interaction in online environments.

Many cyberpsychologists work in universities or research institutions conducting studies on topics like digital well-being, online education, or social media use. These roles typically involve publishing papers, presenting at conferences, and teaching. Tech companies (e.g., Google, Meta, etc.) hire cyberpsychologists to enhance user experience (UX) by studying how people interact with digital products. These professionals ensure that apps, websites, and devices are intuitive, accessible, and psychologically sound. Some cyberpsychologists are involved in cybersecurity, because understanding human behavior online is crucial for building effective cybersecurity strategies and preventing cybercrime. These cyberpsychologists may analyze phishing behaviors, online radicalization, or digital trust. Additionally, understanding the psychology behind online behavior is invaluable in digital marketing, and marketing-oriented cyberpsychologists may examine how users respond to advertising, website layouts, or personalized content. Finally, as digital technologies raise complex ethical and legal questions, many cyberpsychologists work in tech policy development and advise on issues such as digital rights, misinformation, and algorithmic bias. These folks may work for government organizations, international agencies, and/or advocacy groups.

Snooty-Puss Education

Has reading this article made you feel more sophisticated? I hope so. Are you reading it while holding your coffee cup with your pinkie pointed outward just so? You definitely should be.² Are you now wondering, what else might make you seem more sophisticated, as well as lead to an exciting career in a field that is on the cutting edge of psychological inquiry and technological advancement? If so, I might suggest going into cyberpsychology.

Very broadly, becoming a cyberpsychologist typically requires a strong foundation in psychology, followed by specialized training

²Unless you prefer tea. In which case, you should have been drinking with your pinkie out this whole time. Oh you fancy, huh? (Drake, 2010)

in digital or technological contexts. Getting a bachelor's degree in psychology, cognitive science, or human-computer interaction is a common starting point. But, a master's or doctoral degree is usually required for advanced careers in cyberpsychology. Several universities now offer dedicated cyberpsychology programs, though students can also pursue traditional psychology degrees with a digital focus. In addition to psychology, aspiring cyberpsychologists benefit from cross-disciplinary knowledge in areas such as computer science and data analysis (for tech and research roles), design and UX principles (for industry jobs), and communication and ethics (for policy and public-facing roles). It should also be explicit that, because of the rapidly evolving nature of these technologies, continued professional development is a requisite for success in the field.

A Refined Conclusion

Cyberpsychology was, at one time, a niche academic interest. This is no longer the case. As online technology, social media, and AI have become central to everyday life, cyberpsychology has correspondingly become central to our developing understanding of modern human experience. And, the digital landscape continues to evolve rapidly, bringing new areas of inquiry and opportunity in cyberpsychology. In particular, issues regarding human-AI relationships, ethical algorithms, and digital mental health are moving to the forefront. We need people to people to address these issues and answer the relevant questions. We need more cyberpsychologists.

I recently read an article in *Business Insider* (while sniffing cognac out of the appropriate glassware) that summarized a slew of studies finding that people love cat videos. Apparently, the bulk of the empirical evidence supports this notion. People prefer online cats ... over all other online animals. With this in mind, lastly, we need cyberpsychologists to address why an animal of few positive qualities has maintained such popularity within digital environs. There is a great deal of opportunity here, I suspect, because that is a knotty question indeed.

Resources

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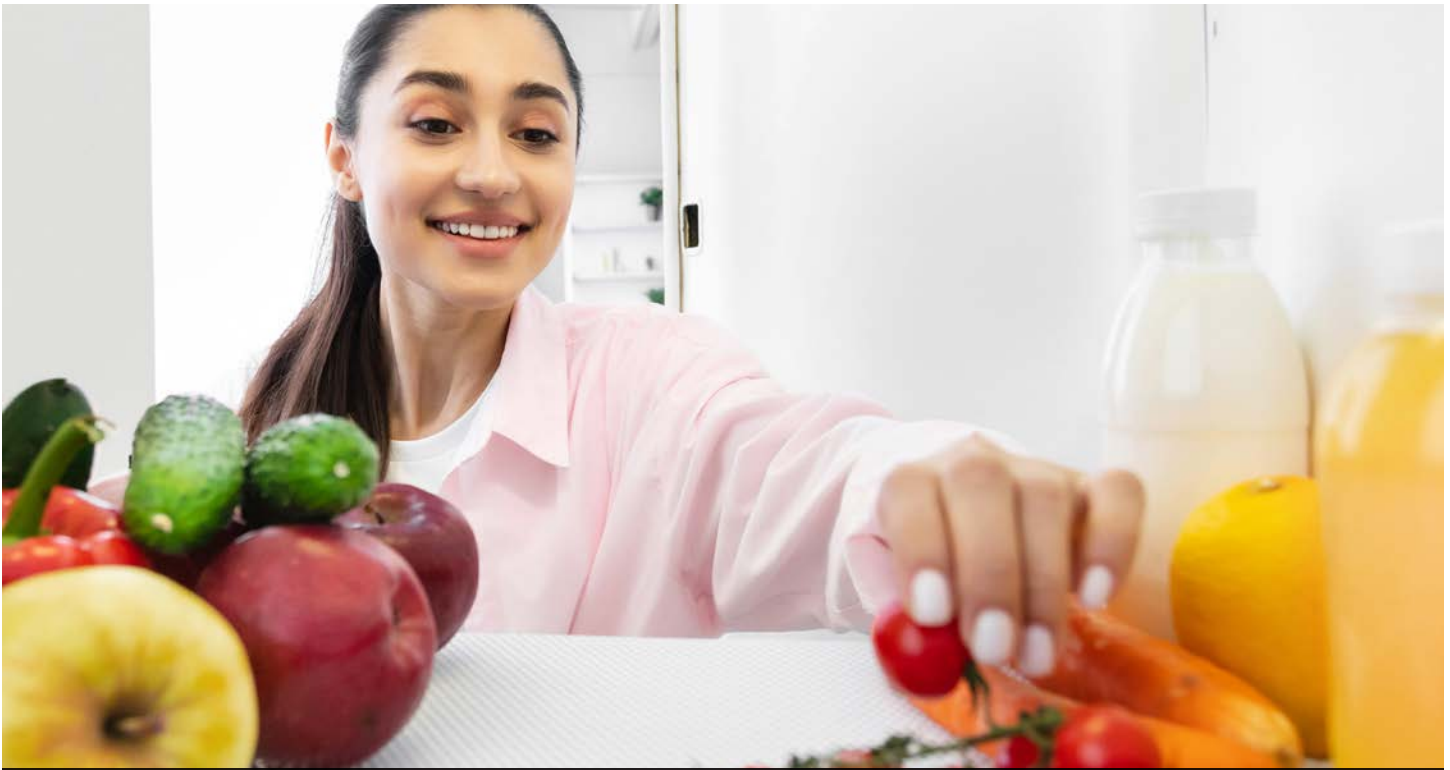
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Insights and Strategies for Building Good Habits

Ronald Stolberg, PhD
Alliant International University

The start of a new school year is accompanied by a lot of changes. Some of the positive changes include the opportunity to make new friends, take classes you are interested in, and every semester completed gets you one step closer to graduation. A new school year also has some challenges associated with it. Schedules change a lot, which could result in less free time (e.g., exercise, socializing, sleep), the ability to work and make money, and even self-care can suffer.

Whenever we make a significant change in our life, we are tasked with creating new habits that help us be productive and successful, and we try to avoid habits that hinder us or make it less likely that we will be successful. Have you ever wondered how we break bad habits and start new ones? What does it take for a new behavior to be established as a habit? The following reviews some of the theories about effective strategies to build good habits and extinguish bad ones.

One of the first theories is really a rule of thumb or anecdotal, but it is called the 21/90 rule. The 21/90 rule suggests that it takes 21 days (about 3 weeks) to make a behavior a habit, and 90 days for that habit to become a well-established lifestyle change. Obviously,

the number of days is different for every kind of behavior and person, but the idea makes sense. A few days of a new behavior is by no means a new habit. We all know how crowded the gyms are the first week or two of January and by February 1, they are back to normal. After about three weeks, the new behavior becomes routine and doesn't require a lot of conscious prompting. After about three months it becomes so well-ingrained that it is just part of who you are.

Another popular theory is called the 3-3-3 rule for habits. You will see that it is very similar to the 21/90 rule but adds another level. It suggests that the first three days are the hardest, requiring the most purposeful willpower and effort to maintain the new behavior or avoid the old one. After three weeks, the new behavior should feel more natural and become a part of your routine, which is when it becomes a habit. By the three-month mark, the behavior should be well-established and take very little thought or purposeful action to maintain. At this point, it is now just part of your life.

The following are the most common researched strategies to help build lasting habits.

Start Small

Almost every theory on forming habits and setting new goals starts with the warning to start small and to be reasonable. The biggest mistake you can make is to try to change your behavior too drastically or too fast. Instead of the new goal being “going to the gym everyday for an hour,” a better goal is to “increase exercise to at least 20 minutes five days a week.” Going to the gym every day for an hour may be where you end up in six months, but for the behavior to become a habit, it has to be reasonable, and it has to start small.

Use Reminders and Tracking Tools

It used to be that we simply made a to-do list on a piece of paper and drew a line through the goals or behaviors we achieved. You can certainly use pen and paper, but technology has made setting and receiving reminders very easy, and there are a ton of really fun apps available for your phone and computer. Search for apps called tracking tools, task managers, and to-do tools, and be amazed that there are hundreds of them. At least one or two will meet your needs. Some are as simple as setting a reminder to call your family every Sunday at 7 p.m. By setting a reminder, you are more likely to follow through, and after you do the behavior for a period of time (between three weeks and three months) it should just become a well-established habit. Reminders can be set for little things like “remind me to take a few minutes to just breath today” or for more important things like checking email, assignment due date, campus or class websites for any new school related tasks. Reminders and tracking tools help you be successful, then they keep track of your successes, which is very reinforcing for a behavior.

Reward Yourself

We tend to stick with habits that are somehow rewarding. We look for positive outcomes in life, and starting a new habit or achieving a goal is a big deal. A reward can be whatever you like and vary from free and easy to a bit more detailed and expensive. After an hour or two of solid homework, feel free to reward yourself with some screen time, or if your goal is something bigger, reward yourself proportionally. I happen to like a reward that involves a social component, so that one is next.

Make It Social

This strategy has a few different possibilities. First, if you plan your new behavior or habit around something that can be done with others, then you are more likely to follow through. Examples include going to class, meeting at the library, exercise, etc. If someone is expecting you or counting on you to join them, then you are more likely to comply and follow through. In addition, doing your new behavior with others should normalize it and reinforce that lots of people are trying to change their behavior into being more productive. Misery loves company after all. Finally, a way to reinforce the new behavior is to schedule it at a time that can be followed by social opportunities. “After we finish the project, why don’t we go out to (dinner, the park, the party, etc.)”

Organize for Success

Your environment (home, vehicle, backpack, desk, etc.) plays a critical role in your behavior change. If your goal is to eat healthier



food, then you have to have healthy options readily available. Bring a snack, pick a place to eat with healthier choices, and make sure to have nuts, fruits, and vegetables in your food pantry. If you rush to class and forget important things, then organize yourself before going to bed. Have chargers, books, laptop, etc. packed up and ready to go before going to sleep. Set aside the clothes and food you are going to need too. By structuring your surroundings for success, you are more likely to follow through with your goals.

Be Patient

Remember, we started this column by sharing that three months or more is needed for new behaviors to really take hold and become unconscious good habits. Most people simply give up on their habits too soon for them to become routine. There are no shortcuts, and new habits require slow and steady progress over several months. Tracking tools (mentioned above) are a good way to monitor progress that you might not even be aware of consciously. Feel free to review and adjust your new behaviors so they meet your goals and are achievable.

Finally, building new habits isn’t about being tough or strong. It is about being purposeful and making small, intentional changes that can be repeated and reinforced. Start with one or two habits, pick easy ones to begin with, and celebrate along the way. Then when you have confidence in your ability to change, introduce more difficult behaviors you want to reinforce.



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How to Start Your Career With a Boss Who Mentors: Recommendations for Success

Christopher Leonard, PsyD, and Layna Adams, MS
Wichita State University (KS)



Although your first boss should not “make-or-break” your career, a good boss will send you on the right trajectory. The transition from working a job or internship to starting a career in psychology can be exciting but intimidating. As a clinical supervisor of over 10 years and an early career master’s level therapist, we have experienced firsthand the positive benefits of having a boss who is a mentor during this transition. Therefore, we believe having a supportive first boss who will help you achieve multiple early career goals is essential. A mentoring boss can also help you get onto the right path for achieving your long-term goals and ensure a smooth entrance and transition to advanced practice in your field.

While we often hear the term “mentorship” in relation to academia, mentorship must also be our focus as we continue forward into finding our first boss upon graduation. The benefits are great. To experience the benefits of having a boss who is a mentor, there are several steps to take while starting your career. As two mental health professionals who have been fortunate to have mentors throughout our careers and education, we would like to share recommendations that have helped us succeed early on. These recommendations highlight things to look for in your first boss and things you can do to be successful in starting your career with a boss who is a mentor.

Choose a Boss Interested in Your Development

The search for a boss who is truly invested in your growth and development within your first role must occur long before the interview process starts. It is important to build your confidence in asking the right questions in an interview. However, you might wonder “what are the right questions?” Well, no matter what your interests are or what goals you have in your career, you must assess if your boss is focused on helping you develop as an individual or simply getting a position filled. To determine this, you should ask questions related to mentorship and what being a mentor means to them. One study found that new employees often feel more supported in their organizations when

their mentors engaged in role modeling and public endorsement of their mentees to other important members of the organization (Baranik et al., 2010). Therefore, it would be beneficial to discern if the boss demonstrates such behaviors and if acknowledgments are integrated into the work environment. You should observe their interpersonal style and inquire about their leadership style by planning to ask questions alluding to these characteristics. Questions like “What values do you want to see in your team?”, “How do you help your staff grow?”, or “How do you ensure team members feel valued for their contributions?” These questions and other similar questions will help reveal how a boss models desired behaviors and acknowledges their team.

When looking for a boss who is likely a good mentor, it is also important to evaluate their interest in engagement with training and professional development opportunities that their organization may offer. Engagement in these events signifies an interest in establishing an environment where all employees are provided with the opportunity for growth and are given the ability to establish connections. A mentor who actively participates in such programs not only sets an example of continuous learning but shows a commitment to fostering a culture of mentorship. In

this kind of environment, employees are encouraged to increase their knowledge and build meaningful relationships both within and outside the organization.

Bridge the Organization’s Growth With Yours

Once you have accepted a position, begin looking for ways your personal goals can align with the company’s mission or department goals. Finding ways to further your department’s goals in connection with your personal goals will create a motivational incentive for all parties involved to invest in your growth. By aligning your aspirations with the organization’s mission, you will become more engaged in its success and find a stronger sense of purpose in your work (Lynn, 2023). Exploring ways your goals can support your organization may require some “out-of-the-box” thinking. However, once your goals and the organization’s mission are aligned, growth and advancement become synchronous. While the organization benefits from your increased productivity and innovative thinking, you can advance toward your own career goals.

Achieving this reciprocal growth requires continuous effort and good communication. Regularly check in with your boss to ensure you are on the right path





and seek feedback on how your goals align with the department's needs. For instance, if your goal is to develop a research project while your department's focus is on community outreach, you could propose a project for researching community needs and provide insights into enhancing your organization's outreach strategies. This approach contributes to the department's goals, while allowing you to build your expertise and establish yourself within your career interests. By actively seeking ways to blend your personal interests with the organization, you create equal opportunities for both you and your organization to achieve and improve impact.

Look for a Boss Who Supports Your Goals

A boss focused on growth has short-term and long-term goals in mind and so should you. Your growth should not be contingent on your ability to stay in one position. Finding confidence in yourself and your goals, combined with knowing management cares for the team members, makes communication easier. Communicating your short-term goals and identifying how they intersect with your long-term goals is important. Acknowledging this entry

position is likely a first stop in your career will help you define your short-term goals more clearly. Finding a boss who serves as a mentor will be someone who guides you in identifying these potential points of intersection between your long-term and short-term goals. Bosses who support your goals will also be with you along the way to support you.

A boss who mentors you will help you focus your goals on maintaining and managing current responsibilities. At the same time, they will encourage you to seek out new opportunities that further your growth and the organization's mission equally. By balancing responsibilities, you demonstrate both reliability in your current role and initiative in contributing to new opportunities. Likewise, engaging in both giving and receiving feedback encourages a culture of growth, which is mutually beneficial (Calkins, 2023). Finding a boss who offers constructive feedback is key to both personal and professional growth. Receiving feedback not only helps refine your skills but also strengthens your organization by fostering an environment of continuous development, collaboration, and support.

Know Where You Want to Be, and the Experiences Needed to Get There

When looking for a mentor in your first boss, it is crucial to clearly communicate your goals and the support you need to achieve them (Eby & Robertson, 2020). To do this successfully, you must take time to reflect on your aspirations and determine actionable steps to reaching them. Understanding where you want to be in the future is important, but so is identifying the specific experiences, skills, and opportunities you will need. These experiences could include expanding your network or developing leadership skills. Areas to consider when defining what actionable steps to take to gain these experiences could involve proposing projects, professional development, or attending networking events. By having a clear idea of what you need, you can be proactive in your approach to creating these experiences with the support of your boss.

A strong mentor-mentee relationship thrives when both parties have a shared understanding of the path ahead, making

it essential to know where you want to go and how you might want to get there. Providing clarity ensures that your mentor can guide you effectively, helping you navigate challenges and seize opportunities as they arise. Additionally, being reflective, open to feedback, and adaptable will help you. Adopting this mindset with a boss ensures your growth is both impactful and aligned with your future aspirations, while creating a collaborative mentorship dynamic that supports your development.

Seek a Boss Who Gives You the Freedom to Stretch on Your Own

A first boss focused on development will provide opportunities to explore how you as an individual connect to the field you are entering, but you also play a pivotal role in deciding what your first experiences will be. Do not underestimate the talent and knowledge you already bring to a position, as this will help you succeed in times of unfamiliarity. When you find confidence in your skills, you are likely more willing to take on new challenges and seek more freedom to explore how you want to fit into your position. By embracing the opportunities for development that come with new challenges faced, you will gradually build expertise and experience (Bairstow, 2024; Mitchell et al., 1999). A supportive boss is there to help you learn from those challenges while not allowing you to be set adrift. The goal is that trusting in yourself becomes a guiding skill to help you navigate your career with more resilience and adaptability as you continue advancing forward.

Having the freedom to explore your own potential within a position is important. As previously indicated, a boss who is with you along the journey of growth and independence is even more impactful for your early success. Thus, you must look for an organization and boss whose mission aligns with your interests and values. Finding this fit is fundamental to ensuring there will be continued freedom to create your own chances for success. Remember opportunities for growth can be found anywhere. So, while you should take advantage of preexisting opportunities in the organization to develop, a good mentor will help you explore new experiences.

What If This Is Not the Case for You?

Although we believe the recommendations we shared are highly beneficial in guiding your professional development, it's important to us that we recognize this may not be everyone's current experience. Some bosses may not provide as much focus to your personal growth, or they may not have the resources to offer the freedom or type of mentorship you desire. If this is the case, it is essential to assess your options and decide how to move forward in your career. Consider seeking additional mentorship from someone other than your boss, such as colleagues in your department or industry-specific networks. Additionally, you can challenge yourself to take initiative in creating and investing in your own growth opportunities, such as volunteering for new projects, attending professional development events, or pursuing networking opportunities. Whatever the situation, it's important to advocate for your personal and professional growth, as well as make choices that align with your aspirations.

Closing Thoughts

A good mentor will not only help you discover your goals but will also support and encourage you to expand and explore new possibilities as you work toward achieving them. Having a first boss who is a mentor

can influence where your career leads to in the future. Although mentorship may not always be offered, seeking it out is crucial when the opportunity is not automatically provided. Finding a mentor in your first boss allows you to openly engage in exploration of your path to achieving early career goals. Mentorship shapes the trajectory of your career by providing essential guidance and feedback, helping you navigate growth opportunities and the challenges of the professional world with confidence. Ultimately, having a mentor as your first boss not only improves your experience but also provides you with the tools needed for long-term success. By carrying forward the guidance you received, you can become a great mentor yourself, passing on the knowledge and support that helped shape your own career.

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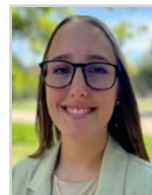
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Body Inclusivity on Campus: The Creation of a Student Club

Kimberly J. McClure-Brenchley, PhD, and Natalie S. Byrd
St. John Fisher University (NY)

In what ways do students struggle with their bodies on college campuses? For most, the immediate struggle that comes to mind is eating disorders, and with good reason: Recent data estimates that 28% of college students are at eating disorder risk (Daly & Costigan, 2022). However, one struggle that is often overlooked is that faced by students with larger bodies. What do you do when the desk in the classroom is too small to maneuver your body into? Do you feel like you belong on campus when the collegiate apparel in the bookstore only goes up to a size XL? And that's nothing to say of the regular negative judgment that higher weight people receive everywhere, on and off campus alike. Whether eating disorders, weight stigma, body image concerns, or more, bodies occupy a considerable amount of college students' attention.

Why Does It Matter?

The problem of body size issues goes far beyond what college students are thinking about. Eating disorders have a significant negative impact on physical and mental health, but even disordered eating that doesn't reach the level of a clinical eating disorder diagnosis can compromise cognitive ability and social functioning (e.g., Ridout et al., 2015), which is especially relevant to college student well-being and attainment. And those with larger bodies regularly experience stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination that can lead to mental health issues (Emmer et al., 2020) and compromise the educational experience (Nutter et al., 2019). In these ways, and more, much of the student population is affected by body issues.

Body size also represents an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) concern that is often overlooked in higher education (Dufur & Fox Okeke, 2024). Higher weight individuals are generally not afforded formal protections against discrimination like many other identities (e.g., Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act), despite over 40% of American adults being considered higher weight (Emmerich et al., 2024). Subtle messages within institutions of higher education tell higher weight students that they don't belong. At our institution, we've heard numerous stories of students who felt this way. Here are just a few of their stories:

"[She] was unable to fit into the new desks and it made her so embarrassed that she left and skipped the class."

"My boyfriend loves to feel a part of the community by buying sweatshirts and shirts that promote the [university] name... but he rarely can find clothes in the bookstore that are a 2x and above. He wishes that they would have a larger selection so he can wear things other people do."

"She has stopped attending class in person because she finds it difficult to be comfortable enough to learn in those chairs for an hour and twenty minutes."

"He was embarrassed because he could not sit in the chair and had to sit separately from the rest of the class."

"They have gone to the school weight room to simply workout and just from them being there, they received several dirty looks and laughs towards them."

Considering rampant eating disorder psychopathology, weight stigma, and simultaneously few EDI efforts on college campuses, it is easy to see how students need more than their colleges are offering.

A Potential Solution

Supporting students with body size issues is complex and requires a multipronged approach at all levels, but one avenue to foster inclusion for all is through student-led initiatives such as student clubs. Not only can existing college infrastructure for student clubs be leveraged, but student clubs offer a longer-term solution than other similarly geared programs such as *The Body Project* (Stice et al., 2019). In other areas of diversity, affinity groups have been shown to help marginalized students feel

belonging and engage in meaningful discourse (Alicia & Johnson, 2021; Ali, 2017; Miller & Vaughn, 2023). A student club can offer a similar function to an affinity group in the sense that it is an inclusive space for students who share common experiences or concerns. However, while traditional affinity groups are often centered around identity, a student club can be open to all who instead share an experience or interest surrounding body size concerns.

At our institution, two Psi Chi members (including coauthor Natalie) led the charge to create such a student club. The mission of *The Body Talk* is to provide the student body with a diverse and inclusive community focused on building awareness of body positivity and size diversity. Its goal is to facilitate discussion of systematic issues regarding body size and engage in activities that help change norms while strengthening community connections for all students. Through interactive meetings and community engagement, *The Body Talk* seeks to work toward changing the cultural norms surrounding body size at the university and beyond.

Club Activities

The interactive meetings of *The Body Talk* provide a welcoming environment where a sense of community and belongingness is centered. In addition to supporting body positivity and size diversity, meetings and events often include painting, mindful yoga, writing, and other activities that are often integrated into mental illness and eating disorders therapies and prevention. However, it is important to note that a club of this nature is distinct from general mental health groups, eating disorder advocacy, or peer therapy. It is designed to focus primarily on general body positivity, size diversity, and challenging the thin ideal, rather than on treatment or personal recovery. Despite this, club activities that help challenge thin-ideal internalization often lead to positive changes for its members, including lower body dissatisfaction, eating disorder symptomatology, and negative mood states (Stice et al., 2019).

Many types of club activities can engage students and serve the club's mission. Tabling at campus-sponsored events, such as a club involvement fest or health-related events like National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) week or National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) week, is



an effective way to engage undergraduates with the club's mission. Even simple activities at these events have increased club participation, such as inviting students to write one thing they love about their body in exchange for a body-positive sticker or pin. Additionally, there are many opportunities for club meetings and events to have an element of fun while aligning with the club mission. For example, *The Body Talk* has hosted "Ignore Body Talk" nights that included activities like flower bouquet making and bracelet making, with an emphasis on self-affirmations rather than negative body talk. Other meetings might involve writing letters to one's younger self on how to work on body image (similar to activities conducted in effective dissonance-based programs; Stice et al., 2019), or troubleshooting issues on campus for those in larger bodies, like those in the stories shared above. Not only do these events promote body positivity, but they also foster a supportive size diverse community and challenge norms around a thin ideal. There are also many avenues for community engagement, such as community speakers, collaboration with other on-campus organizations and clubs, and local fundraising walks.

Tips for Starting Your Own Club and Events

If you are interested in planning body-related events as part of Psi Chi or even starting your own campus club like *The Body Talk*, here are some things we've learned along the way to help get you started:

- Work with your campus' health and

wellness center. They likely have numerous resources to help get you started and recognized on campus.

- Reach out to local graduate students whose research focuses on topics such as body image, eating disorders, stigma, or size diversity. They might welcome the chance to be a guest speaker for your event in exchange for gaining presentation experience.
- If you are starting a club, clearly articulate what the club is and isn't. For example, you do not want to be mistaken as an eating disorder advocacy or peer therapy group.
- Seek out club leadership and members who will put your commitment to inclusion into action. It is important that diverse college majors, gender and racial identities, body sizes, and other identities are represented.
- Understand that the stigma surrounding size diversity and eating disorders may result in some push-back to planning events or starting a club of this nature. However, also know that the very purpose of these activities is to challenge this stigma, and it is a worthy fight.

To learn more, please visit <https://osf.io/7kt94/> or contact kmclclure@sjf.edu to view the club constitution, mission and vision statement, and involvement plan for *The Body Talk* at St. John Fisher University. We hope that sharing our documents will help guide others in creating a body club.

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Natalie S. Byrd is a recent graduate of St. John Fisher University (SJF), where she was a first-generation undergraduate psychology and honors student. Natalie graduated a year early as summa cum laude, was an active member of SJF's Psi Chi Chapter, and served as president and cofounder of the student club, *The Body Talk*. Natalie was also heavily involved in independent research and research assistant roles both at SJF and at the University of Rochester. She is currently a first-year doctoral student in the Developmental Psychology PhD program at The Pennsylvania State University, where she will continue her line of research on relationships and loneliness.

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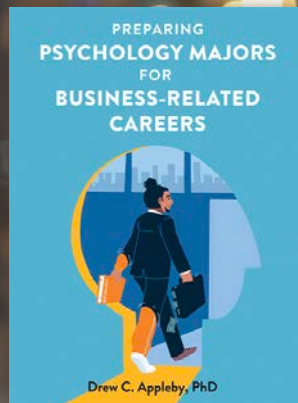
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Beyond “Publish or Perish”: Why You Should Consider a Faculty Position at Teaching-Focused Institutions

Laura P. Naumann, PhD
Nevada State University

When I was a graduate student, I knew there was an implicit (and sometimes explicit) expectation that I should be pursuing faculty positions at “R1s” or research-intensive institutions. As much as I enjoyed the research process, I saw many of the young, untenured faculty in my graduate program putting in late nights and stressing about getting papers out to secure their tenure. At the same time, I was really enjoying my role as a teaching assistant (TA) and felt excitement from preparing activities and mini-lectures for the course sections I supervised. I longed for the day where I could be the “instructor of record” and have the autonomy to design my own syllabus and curate the topics and research studies I would teach about. I also enjoyed supervising and mentoring students on their honors projects because I had received the same support when I was an undergrad. When the time came to apply to faculty positions, I chose to apply to institutions that prioritized the undergraduate learning experience such as regional public universities and small liberal arts colleges.

This article explores what it means to work at a teaching-intensive institution, the skills required, and how aspiring psychologists can prepare for a meaningful academic career that goes beyond “publish or perish.”

What Are Teaching-Focused Institutions?

Teaching-focused institutions include community colleges, baccalaureate colleges (predominantly undergraduate institutions), and master’s-level universities. They are classified under the Carnegie system according to the degrees they grant and their emphasis on teaching versus research (see Table 1). These types of schools prioritize the student learning experience and value instructors who use active learning, inclusive practices, and diverse assessments to engage students.

At teaching-focused schools, teaching is central to your role. Faculty responsibilities include course preparation, direct instruction, grading, curriculum development, and use of learning management systems like Canvas, Blackboard, or Moodle. Psychology faculty are expected to teach foundational courses such as

Introduction to Psychology, Statistics, Research Methods as well as courses in their subfield. Psychology faculty may also be expected to supervise student research projects for capstone courses, honors theses, or other federally funded programs like the TRIO McNair Scholars Program.

Why Choose to Work at a Teaching-Focused Institution?

Careers at teaching-focused institutions offer a fulfilling alternative to research-intensive positions. These positions are highly rewarding due to close student relationships and the ability to shape the next generation of thinkers, counselors, and researchers. For example, the best moments of my job have been when students have the “a-ha” moment making connections between course concepts and their own lives. I still keep in contact with some of my students from over

a decade ago and love hearing about their graduate acceptances or job offers.

Another consideration is that teaching-focused institutions typically have lower research expectations. On the one hand, the path to tenure is less stressful because it does not require a constant stream of publications. On the other hand, some scholarship is still required for tenure, and your institution may have few resources to support social scientific research. Some faculty transition to conducting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) which investigates effective pedagogical practices. Some faculty also engage in grant-writing to secure resources necessary to conduct their research or write proposals that support undergraduate experiences.

Table 2 presents the pros and cons to help prospective faculty weigh the multifaceted realities of a teaching-centered academic career.

Table 1
Teaching Load by Institution Type

Institution Type	Teaching Load (Courses/Year)	Research Expectation (%)
Community Colleges	5-5 (10/year)	Little/no research expected (0-10%)
Baccalaureate Colleges	4-4 (8/year)	Emphasis on teaching, some research (10-20%)
Master’s-Level Universities	3-3 (6/year)	Balance of teaching and limited research (20-30%)
Research-Intensive (R1)	2-2 or fewer (4/year)	Heavy research, minimal teaching (70-90%)

Table 2
Pros and Cons of Working at Teaching-Focused Institutions

<p>Rewards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong student relationships Teaching autonomy and creativity Attainable tenure without a heavy publication burden 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High teaching loads (4-4 or 5-5 models) Time constraints for scholarship Heavy service commitments, especially care work with students
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedagogical innovation Online teaching flexibility Mentoring first-generation and underrepresented students 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased pressure to adopt online modalities without adequate support Shrinking budgets and political scrutiny of higher education



Teaching Portfolio Checklist

- Teaching philosophy discussing
 - approach to student learning
 - evidence of inclusive practices you use (e.g., transparent assignment design; grading and late policies; student feedback)
 - courses as instructor of record or teaching assistant
 - list of courses you can teach
 - documentation of pedagogical workshops, trainings, or awards
- Sample syllabi
- Assignment descriptions
- Examples of student work or feedback
- Student evaluations (with qualitative comments)

Tips to Prepare for a Teaching-Focused Career

1. **Teach!** Take steps to gain as much instructional experience as you can while in graduate school.

This includes serving as a teaching assistant, giving guest lectures, teaching a summer course, or working as an adjunct instructor once you have earned your master's degree. When possible, explore opportunities to hone your instructional craft by teaching in hybrid or online modalities that make education accessible to more learners. Consider keeping a journal of things that worked and what you might change or improve for the next time you teach the lecture or course.
2. **Seek professional development.** Faculty at teaching-oriented institutions take the art of teaching very seriously. They are excited to try new activities and change or adapt their instructional practices to best serve their students. Nurture this value of continuous growth by attending professional development workshops or conferences to improve

your instruction and course design. Many regional psychology conferences offer a teaching preconference where like-minded colleagues share exciting trends and techniques specific to the teaching of psychology. Faculty can publish their impactful activities and assignments in the *Teaching of Psychology* journal coordinated by the Society for Teaching of Psychology. Which activities or techniques speak to you and your instructional style? These answers should help shape your philosophy or approach to teaching.

3. **Develop a teaching portfolio.** First and foremost, search committees at teaching-focused institutions care about your teaching practices and philosophy. The best way to showcase this is with a well-prepared teaching portfolio that includes a teaching philosophy statement, sample syllabi, course assignment descriptions, and student evaluations (see Checklist above). In your teaching statement, you should discuss your approach to teaching and goals you have for your students. Support your philosophy by describing example activities or

assignments that you use in your classes and discuss how you reflect on and evolve your instruction based on student feedback. At my current institution, my colleagues and I are particularly impressed when candidates discuss the strategies that they use to support diverse learners, such as using universal design principles, transparent assignment design, and responsive late submission policies.

If you enjoy teaching and supporting students, a career at a teaching-intensive institution offers a rewarding path that centers on student engagement, inclusive pedagogy, and educational impact.



Laura Naumann, PhD, has been faculty at Nevada State University, a teaching-intensive, minority-serving institution since 2013. In her classes, she likes to connect course material to real-life examples to help students see the relevance of psychology in their daily lives. Dr. Naumann was

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A New Roadmap to Facilitate Career Success for Your Students: APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major

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Could you use recommendations to improve your students' learning outcomes and career readiness? The *APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (Version 3.0)* has you covered (American Psychological Association, 2023). The current version of the guidelines, which

will be referred to in this article as *Guidelines 3.0*, is the culmination of almost two decades of work by APA's Board of Educational Affairs. *Guidelines 3.0* offers five educational goals and student learning outcomes for psychology programs to enhance their curriculum and plan effective assessment. This article makes a case for your psychology program

to overtly emphasize how students can use *Guidelines 3.0* to be competitive and successful in the workforce, especially by focusing on Goals 3, 4, and 5.

Five Goals to Success

Guidelines 3.0 recommend that psychological science programs meet five broad learning goals. These include Content

Knowledge and Applications (Goal 1), Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking (Goal 2), Values in Psychological Science (Goal 3), Communication, Psychological Literacy, and Technology Skills (Goal 4), and Personal and Professional Development (Goal 5; APA, 2023). The first two goals are considered the heart of all psychology programs because these two goals provide majors with the foundational knowledge and skills they would need to understand essential concepts and theories, and the skills to investigate psychological phenomena, design their own research, and evaluate quantitative and qualitative findings. These abilities are what one would expect from a graduate of a psychological science program.

What appears to not be consistently emphasized in psychology programs are ethical and socially responsible practices, technology and communication skills, and career readiness. Ethical and socially responsible practices are particularly important in the psychological sciences as there have been incidents of faked data and unethical practices in the field (Enserink, 2011). One of the most famous cases of unethical behavior in psychology is of Diederik Stapel, a Dutch social psychologist who admitted to faking data in dozens of his research publications, which led to his dismissal from his university (Bhattacharjee, 2013). Furthermore, technology and communications skills have become vitally important with the advent of artificial intelligence (AI). Although AI can do a lot of things, humans are still needed to sort through the communication and provide their understanding of nuance and interpretation of information, which is something AI machines cannot do (Nierman, 2014). Students who can adapt to the innovative tools at their disposal will be successful and valued employees, and these skills become even more relevant in these current times of change and uncertainty.

Relevant Goals for the Workforce

Although all five goals of *Guidelines 3.0* are important, three goals in particular will help students be competitive in the workforce. **Goal 3** of *Guidelines 3.0* implores you to teach students values in psychological science. This includes

engaging in ethical standards in their work; interacting with diverse people from different backgrounds, abilities, and cultural perspectives; and applying what they learn to improve their communities and the quality of life for themselves and others. Employees with these skills can be trusted to uphold high standards in their work, which organizations see as critical to meeting their mission of implementing socially responsible and ethical business practices (Wiernik & Ones, 2018). Also, if an employee has the skills to work with diverse populations, not only can this add creativity and innovation to their work, but these skills can enable organizations to meet their missions more effectively (Morris, 2023).

Goal 4 of *Guidelines 3.0* encourages you to teach students to effectively write and present their work, as well as be adept at using technology to express themselves. Employers are seeking a workforce that can handle the demands of the changing technological landscape of business and be able to articulate their mission clearly to their customers or constituents, which makes communication and technology skills very valuable (Gray, 2024). Additionally, an employee who can communicate clearly and effectively can convey their needs and the needs of their organization, which is important in negotiations or in advocacy work.

Finally, **Goal 5** of *Guidelines 3.0* asks that you teach students to learn time management, be self-aware, build strong project management skills, and be willing to learn and adapt to new technologies needed for their field. Self-regulation, which includes self-control motivation and setting goals, are positively related to task performance (Wehrt et al., 2022). Programs that reinforce these skills in students will help their graduates be more productive in their chosen careers. Moreover, these technologies most likely will include AI. Although this article does not attempt to argue for or against the use of AI, we must recognize that AI tools will be used in a variety of workplace settings more frequently in the future (Babashahi et al., 2024). Successful employees are those who are willing to coexist with AI (Zirar et al., 2023), develop their technological and professional skills, and use the tools available to them effectively and appropriately.

Call to Action

For psychology majors to be relevant in the 21st century workforce, and for students to see value in the major, it is essential that your psychology programs provide students a clear roadmap. This roadmap should show explicitly how the courses students take in psychology align with the specific *Guidelines 3.0* goals that will make them ready for careers in the field. Programs can demonstrate the value and relevance of the major by creating a curricular roadmap that clarifies for students which courses in their major address which of the *Guidelines 3.0* goals and learning outcomes and how these learning outcomes are assessed. Students can then determine whether they have achieved these skills or need to continue their training or coursework to be ready for the workforce. Furthermore, students should know how these skills are assessed so they can gauge their development and progress in building these skills.

Another way your psychology programs can help students see the value of their degree is to address Goal 5 of *Guidelines 3.0*, which emphasizes personal and professional development. APA's Board of Educational Affairs recommends that faculty discuss with students the diverse paths for those with a bachelor's degree in psychology, which can highlight the flexibility and usefulness of the major. This can be done in a variety of ways, including using the Center of Workforce Studies Data Tool (<https://www.apa.org/workforce/data-tools/degrees-pathways>) to show various pathways from a bachelor's degree in psychology, inviting alumni in the field to share with students their career exploration experience and the skills they found critical to their success, and creating a careers in psychology course that includes both of these suggestions.

Another way your programs can support students' professional and personal development students is to encourage them to attend professional conferences in the field where they can explore careers and learn about industry innovations. If institutions have limited resources to attend professional conferences at an external location due to travel costs, hotel, and registration fees, a psychology program might invite leaders in the industries that interest their students to discuss current trends and research and host a mini conference at their own insti-

tution, which would require less financial resources. Leveraging the expertise of the faculty on the campus and the knowledge of professionals in the surrounding communities would be cost effective, and exposing students to professional presentations and networking opportunities will enhance their experience in the major.

The current times necessitate a nimble and adept workforce to tackle the variety of issues that face our communities and citizens. Preparing psychology majors with the tools they need to meet these challenges should be your psychology program's mission and goal. Using *Guidelines 3.0* can be a place to start.

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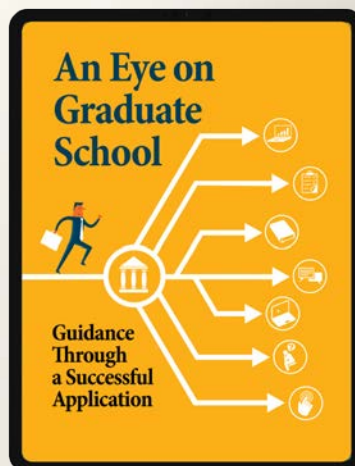
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Families in Crisis?

Preparing Mental Health
Professionals for the Challenges
of Modern Family Systems

Tony D. Crespi, EdD, ABPP
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Families and couples are facing unprecedented crises. As illustrated in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Miller and McCaw (2019) noted that intimate partner violence is a significant public health problem. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control (2024), 41% of women and 26% of men experience physical or sexual violence or stalking by an intimate partner. This suggests that 61 million women and 53 million men experience aggression by an intimate partner with 16 million women and 11 million men first experiencing this violence as teens.

Looking more closely, intimate partner violence does not only impact heterosexual relationships. Rolle et al. (2018) reported that 61.1% of bisexual women, 43.8% of lesbians, 37.3% of bisexual men, and 26% of gay men experience these situations. Tragically, the implications of intimate partner violence are not isolated to the incident itself but can have implications for adult development as these situations can result in the development of depression, anxiety, as well as posttraumatic stress disorder in both partners as well as family members who witness or hear these situations. Still, this only provides a glimpse of facets challenging families.

Notably, too, 1 in 6 families are impacted by alcoholism. Lipari and Van Horn (2017) found that 17 million children live with a parent with a substance abuse disorder. Impactfully, Hurcom et al. (2009) explored the extent to which drinking effects nondrinking family members, indicating that individuals are dramatically touched by alcoholic family interactions. Crespi and Rueckert (2006) indicated that clinicians involved with families are concerned that children of alcoholics can experience widespread problems, noting that education and continuing education within this area can have important consequences in helping this vulnerable population.

From family violence to alcoholism, families are facing a blustery sea of trials. Still, while large numbers of individuals pursue careers in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, or clinical mental health counseling, not all students complete the in-depth education and training within the family treatment arena imbedded in marriage and family therapy programs. Profoundly, while a licensed psychologist or licensed professional

counselor may engage in the *practice* of marriage and family therapy, not all practitioners possess the depth and breadth of knowledge and training inherent in the *profession* of marriage and family therapy, sometimes lacking a full understanding of the connections and intricacies embedded in complex and disrupted family systems.

This two-article series examines challenges facing families from the perspective of a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT). Although some students may not elect to complete a planned LMFT program, this outline uses LMFT's educational facets as guideposts for those interested in working with families and family systems as a practice specialty, providing benchmarks for coursework, continuing education, as well as clinical supervision. Fundamentally, this article can serve as a lighthouse for those seeking to navigate a career path that illuminates the darkness for families enduring critical challenges. Akin to a ship able to adeptly manage storms when all crew members work in tandem contributing their knowledge and skill, so a skillful family therapist can help families stay afloat when facing a difficult storm.

Families in Crisis

In a critical look at family therapy, Goldenberg et al. (2017) noted that a classic conceptualization of nuclear families is no longer germane as family constellations have changed with single parents, reconstituted families, families with single-sex parents, and children raised by grandparents all emerging in growing prevalence. Gladding (2015) reported that, by 1970, 1 in 10 families was led by a single parent with the number of single-parent families remaining unchanged in two decades. With approximately half a million children born annually to parents out of wedlock (Gladding, 2015), and with 2 million marriages annually in the United States involving at least one partner who was formerly married, the challenges of blended families alone are significant.

Vespa et al. (2013) noted that more than half of African American children live with single parents. Remarriage, too, is common. Lamidi and Cruz (2014) noted that approximately 69% of divorced women and 78% of divorced men remarry. Fundamentally, then, families have and are changing, and marriage and family therapy can best be

accomplished with this kind of data in hand, helping to better position clinicians to help families navigate family storms, regardless of (sea or wind) conditions.

As families change, members often experience a degree of fear involving the formation of both new relationships and a new constellation. Goldenberg et al. (2017) noted that there can be difficulties as new relationships are formed. Gladding (2015) reported that 4% of the population in the United States of America identify as either gay or lesbian. LaSala (2013) noted that, when a gay child is living with a same sex partner, not all parents are supportive as the acceptance of a same sex identity is more difficult to deny. Gates (2013) noted that approximately 3 million LGBT parents are raising some 12 to 15 million children residing in nontraditional families.

Exploring Each Family's Dynamics

To help families, therapists need to understand changing family dynamics as well as the importance of counseling and psychotherapy skills targeted to system issues and family dynamics. Family interaction patterns, as example, can challenge assumptions and biases. As illustration, a spouse with an alcoholic partner in a drunken stupor who is unable to report to work may engage in codependent behavior by calling an employer reporting their partner ill. Fearfully recognizing that otherwise they risk potentially volatile behavior as well as a potential loss of household income, the behavior is unhealthy but understandable. At the same time, a child watching this interaction may elect not to bring a friend home from school for fear the friend witness the after-effects of drinking. The nondrinking spouse and child are developing codependent but plausible behaviors in reaction to the alcoholic and alcoholic behavior. Thinking of the storm potentially swirling in moments of drinking, family members are often hoping to navigate a course that will not amplify the family storm but somehow guide their family vessel safely, thus increasing their chance of surviving family turbulence. Viewed in this way, a clinician can better see and view the family. From a single lens of one participant, though, the reality of the family's dynamic and turbulent life is lost. Sometimes you



can't see the best course through the fog of dysfunction.

To better understand the above example family's circumstances, mental health professionals are encouraged to consider the following questions from a marriage and family therapy and family studies lens:

- What is the family's story?
- What is each person's experience?
- How does each person explain and justify behavior?
- For the child, do they recognize why they elect to be alone rather than have friends?
- How does each person—including the alcoholic or abuser—explain behavior?
- What patterns of behavior have become, well, predictable? In some families, the drinker or domestic abuser may rationalize drinking or abuse, noting that they would not need to drink or assault their partner or child if some family members were different!

Applying a Strengths-Based Lens

Family therapists strive to help families and family members adopt a strength-based perspective, seeing behavior and change from a functional rather than

dysfunctional viewpoint. Rather than blaming individuals, behavior is seen in a larger family systems view where behavior is often an adaptive reaction. Rather than seeing someone as possessing pathology, the family is viewed in its entirety, demonstrating a more complex interactive series of behaviors where each may drive another facet. A strength-based lens minimizes blaming and pathologizing using family strengths. A parent or grandparent confined to a wheelchair and no longer able to contribute physically may now offer sage advice or teach skills like cooking—transforming feelings of uselessness into a renewed sense of purpose and positive contribution. This kind of perspective draws on strengths, helping to create an overall stronger family unit.

- What strengths can be seen in each member of the family?
- What strengths can be seen in the family unit?
- Is a strength perspective vs an emphasis on pathology driving family and clinical thinking?
- What is the family's belief system about life?
- Does the family view drinking as a personal weakness or from a disease model?

Identifying Cultural Views

When we think of culture, realize that there are numerous cultures that marriage and family therapists interact with, including Hispanic or Latino families, Asian American families, Native American families, as well as Arab American families. Within each culture, there are differing views on personal accountability, openness to discussing problems, as well as the experiences of shame that can keep families isolated so others aren't aware of their family problems.

- What cultural variables impact the family?
- Does culture impact acceptance of therapy?
- What cultural variables impact a systems perspective?
- How do cultural variables impact the family issues?

Defining Shifting Roles

Shifting from an individual perspective to a family system perspective is a critical facet to family therapy and to a family systems orientation. Many clinicians view this as a paradigm shift necessitating a different view and lens from looking at an issue as an individual's problem.

- Is the dominant view that of the alcoholic or abuser, or one of a family problem where each person has changed behavior and view arising from that family problem?
- What are individual and family roles?
- What individual and family boundaries dominate?
- Have family relationships shifted over time?
- Do generational influences enhance or impede functioning?
- How does the family organize the world, and does this impact how the family views behavior and their conclusions about the world?

Analyzing Patterns and Circular Causality

Understanding family patterns and functioning is a cornerstone to family therapy. Rather than viewing the world in terms of linear causality where one event causes the next event and so forth, the family therapist

thinks in terms of circular causality. Instead of looking at events in terms of A causing B in the family, they view it from the perspective that A causes B and B causes C, so a family therapist is viewing the connection connecting this loop. In this view, many facets are operating at the same time without a single cause. Ongoing interactions cause problems rather than a single event. This means change is not singular in nature but more of an ongoing systemic process. Sometimes people are caught in loops. Some loops are positive. Some negative. Listening carefully to families talk about themselves can help therapists see and hear multiple perspectives driving interactions. There is no single patient. The family is the patient.

- How and why did patterns evolve?
- What is guiding the system?
- How is the family organized?
- What are the boundaries—Are they permeable or rigid?

This highly simplistic introduction is intended to highlight a view of a family system rather than an individual. Families are living and breathing systems moving in circular patterns through time. A change in one area effects another. Patterns develop over the family's life. They need not be orderly nor sequential. Aspects merge. Arrangements and rearrangements change and evolve. Cultural variables have impact. But seen in this systemic fashion, therapists can assist in a novel way. Moreover, each member's own family contributes added complexity. Divorce touches every family and touches everyone across generations. So do affairs. So does the loss of a family member. Single life is typically short. Family effects linger and continue. Hurt from issues such as an affair or divorce as well as abuse or alcoholic tendencies can last for decades and potentially remain unresolved. Each fact can create a constant storm for family members that can affect them for years until a marriage and family therapist with the right skills can help navigate the storm to calmer waters. To better understand and support individuals, integrating principles from Marriage and Family Therapy can help.

For therapists—whether a licensed psychologist or licensed professional counselor—a family systems perspective utilized by a licensed marriage and family therapist can offer an engaging perspective

avoiding blame or pathologizing behavior. Our forthcoming article, “Exploring Education and Career Paths in Marriage and Family Therapy,” outlines specific classes and training around which family therapists are trained. Although not all readers will pursue a planned program, it offers a model for education—continuing education—and supervision for those with a keen interest in helping families.

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Bit by the Research Bug: An Interview With School Psychologist Alanna Marras, EdS, NCSP

Elisabeth Barrett, Psi Chi Headquarters



Alanna Marras has an MEd in intervention services and is an educational specialist in school psychology. From her earliest days as a psychology student at Bethany College to her current role as school psychologist and leadership in the Ohio School Psychologists Association, Marras’s journey reflects her deep passion for research, advocacy, and student support. Through early involvement with Psi Chi, meaningful research experiences, and specialized graduate training, Marras carved a path that blends education, psychology, and service. Her story highlights not only the diverse opportunities within the field of psychology but also the importance of finding purpose and staying connected to professional communities like Psi Chi throughout one’s career.

Journey From Undergraduate Research to Graduate School

Marras fell in love with psychology as an undergraduate—particularly child development—having always been passionate about people with disabilities and excited to explore the world of psychology. She found school psychology to be the perfect intersection of education and psychology and knew it was where she was meant to be. Through her coursework at Bethany College, she gained a broad understanding of human development and dove into research, recognizing that research experience would be a critical component of her graduate school applications. Marras reflected on how thankful she felt to have professors who supported her in presenting and publishing research to help set her apart during her senior year.

While in graduate school, Marras said she was fortunate to be selected to present at the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Convention. “Psi

Chi funding played a meaningful role in supporting my early career,” she explained, attributing her ability to attend and present to receiving the Psi Chi Graduate Research Award. This award allowed her to travel from Ohio to San Antonio, where she gave four poster presentations. The following year, she presented six posters and one paper in Chicago. Marras noted that university funding is often limited, so receiving the Graduate Research Grant was especially impactful. She added, “Psi Chi was really able to get me there, and then I was bit by the research bug. I continued through my internship and third year as a graduate student, and I was able to keep working through some new and different specialty interventions.”

Marras ultimately identified her mother as her greatest inspiration for entering the fields of psychology and research. “My mom is the best person in my entire life—my absolute hero. She’s been a special education teacher and intervention specialist my entire life. This is her 39th year practicing, and I knew I wanted to work with people with disabilities. That was a very natural leeway into my field,” Marras shared. She knew she didn’t want to be a classroom teacher or a speech pathologist, and found that being a school psychologist allowed her to blend her interests. “Finding that understanding of kids is really, really rewarding. I get to work every single day with students with and without disabilities. To be able to understand how to help them best and support their cognitive and academic needs, as well as their behaviors, is the perfect marriage.”

Marras likened her role to being her students’ “aunt,” explaining, “We get to work on things and do things together, and then I get to send them back to the classroom teacher. I get to build their skills—working on social skills and academics—and help teachers learn how to best support them. It really is the perfect

combination of working with students with disabilities without being in the classroom full-time, all while using my research background.”

Education and Intervention Training

Before becoming a school psychologist, Marras majored in psychology at Bethany College (WV). She was inducted into her local Psi Chi chapter as a sophomore and quickly became both treasurer and president. Bethany College’s small size contributed to a close-knit chapter environment. As Marras noted, “We were able to do really cool research and go to different conferences and conventions through the college.”

After graduating from Bethany College, Marras earned her master’s degree in school psychology from Youngstown State University (YSU). In graduate school, her research and applied work focused on interventions and techniques. She implemented Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) strategies and anxiety interventions using video self-modeling. This technique involves creating videos of students successfully performing tasks to reduce anxiety and reinforce self-efficacy. She also applied math interventions using an app called Splash, which helps build foundational arithmetic skills, and studied classroom management strategies.

One prominent classroom management system she used was the color wheel, which she described as “a classroom management system that helps students understand different rules for the classroom in that space.” Traditionally, the system uses red, yellow, and green, but Marras noted that color connotations can be behaviorally loaded—red for “bad,” yellow for “okay,” and green for “good.” Therefore, she emphasized customizing the color scheme to be more neutral and student-friendly.

The color wheel’s goal is to help students efficiently understand how to self-regulate and modify behavior across three levels:

- The lowest level represents free time.
- The middle level may involve independent or partner work with limited talking.
- The highest level is for direct teacher instruction.

Reflecting on her training, Marras said, “We were fortunate that YSU had a private school for students with autism on campus, so we were able to work on the color wheel system in inclusive settings.”

Marras credited her early research experience at Bethany with preparing her for the daily problem-solving required in school psychology. “Every single day as a school psychologist is researching and trying to identify different problems and solutions. You get to be a detective,” she explained. “You’re finding new and different ways to approach situations and better serve specific populations—or the population as a whole. That was a very natural step into the field of school psychology, having had a strong research presence starting in my sophomore year. From 2012 to today, I’m still doing the same thing—just on a very different scale.”

To become a school psychologist, Marras explained, a person must hold at least a master’s degree. Many professionals also earn an educational specialist (EdS) degree, considered midway between a master’s and a doctorate. Marras completed a three-year training program at YSU. The first year focused on foundational coursework, the second combined additional coursework with practical field experience, and the third consisted of a full-time internship under a supervising school psychologist. “It helps us understand what consultation and collaboration looks like on an everyday basis,” she explained. This has proven essential, as Marras spends much of her workday communicating with students, parents, teachers, and other service providers as part of a collaborative team.

The (Not So) Day-to-Day Life of a School Psychologist

When asked to describe a typical day, Marras laughed. “That is a kind of comical question. I will tell you no two days are the same. No two days are even similar—which is part of the fun of the job. Everything is different.”

She begins each day by greeting students and engaging in informal social skills

discussions, such as how to have appropriate conversations. After that, her schedule varies and may include:

- Conducting three-year reevaluations or initial assessments for special education eligibility, which include academic, cognitive, social-emotional, behavioral, and adaptive behavior assessments.
- Performing Section 504 evaluations for students with medical conditions who may need classroom accommodations.
- Communicating with families to discuss evaluations, concerns, or student progress.
- Leading academic or behavioral interventions, including social skills groups or executive functioning training.
- Consulting with teachers to support students academically and behaviorally.
- Providing individual or group counseling sessions, followed by report writing.

Ohio School Psychologists Association: Statewide Advocacy for the Field

In addition to her role as a full-time school psychologist, Marras has been actively involved in the Ohio School Psychologists Association (OSPA) since graduate school. A point of pride for Marras is that OSPA is actually older than the National Association of School Psychologists. “The heart of school psychology started in Ohio,” she said, noting the organization is now entering its 82nd year.

Marras’s leadership journey with OSPA began as a student representative. She then served as the scholarship cochair, helping award funding to graduate students pursuing school psychology. “That was really important to me,” she emphasized, acknowledging the national shortage of school psychologists.

She later served as nominations and elections cochair, encouraging participation in both state and regional associations. Ohio is divided into 11 regions to ensure equitable support across the state. As of last year, Marras became president-elect, and this year she is serving as president. “We are constantly advocating in the statehouse for sustained and increased third-year internship funding, addressing shortages of school psychologists, strengthening mental and behavioral health services in schools, collaborating with other state associations to support their needs, and more.”

OSPA has also expanded its outreach with the Future School Psychologists of

Ohio Group, which engages undergraduate students—and now even high school students—to raise awareness and excitement about the profession.

Marras’ Relationship With Psi Chi as an Alumna

Marras continues to stay connected with Psi Chi through alumni emails and resources. “I think what’s really neat about Psi Chi is all the different resources provided to members,” she shared. “I haven’t been an undergraduate member for years, but I still love reading the emails and exploring the resources. It helps me continue building my skills and expanding my understanding of psychology.”

She currently has a letter from a clinical psychologist treating one of her students on her desk, highlighting the importance of understanding various branches of psychology. “Psi Chi continues to foster that collective dynamic by providing a variety of resources, helping members explore different fields, and sharing research updates,” she said. “Whenever I get a Psi Chi email, I think, ‘What can I learn today?’ That’s what’s neat—this membership is for life. I still have access to publications and research databases that I wouldn’t have access to otherwise.”

Find Your Passion

Psychology is a vast field, and Marras encourages students to take the time to discover where their passion lies. “It doesn’t always have to happen in undergrad,” she said. “It can be at any point in your life. There are so many directions you can take. Members from my graduating class are all in the helping professions but doing such different jobs. It’s amazing to see us all come from the same background, take the same classes, and end up pursuing very different passions.”

She concluded by noting that the field is constantly expanding: “Sometimes, the things we’re passionate about haven’t even been created yet!” This sense of limitless possibility is what makes psychology both an exciting and ever-evolving field for those willing to explore it.

Alanna C. Marras, EdS, MEd, NCSP, is a licensed and nationally certified school psychologist serving Aurora City Schools and Kent City Schools. She is the current president of the Ohio School Psychologists Association. She has served as an adjunct professor in Youngstown State University’s School Psychology Program. Alanna’s professional interests include multitiered systems of support, positive behavioral interventions, crisis prevention, and training future school psychologists. She is passionate about fostering student success through collaboration, evidence-based practices, and advocacy.

Chapter Activities

Submission Guidelines

With more than 1,100 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.psiichi.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
RMPPA	Rocky Mountain Psychological Association
SEPA	Southeastern Psychological Association
SWPA	Southwestern Psychological Association
WPA	Western Psychological Association

EAST

Assumption University (MA)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In October 2024, the chapter hosted an Internship Night to inform psychology students about potential internship opportunities. The chapter invited internship employers representing different fields in psychology to visit campus and share what kind of opportunities they provide. The chapter also invited students who had previously completed an internship

to share their experiences and advice. This event helped students connect with these organizations and provided valuable information on the right and wrong way to secure an internship. The chapter is actively planning next year's event to make it even better and attract more student attendees.

SOCIAL EVENT: In October, the chapter held a pumpkin painting event! Similar to previous social events, it was able to generate a lot of underclass student engagement. So many students attended that the chapter ran out of pumpkins

and so attendees started painting rocks! Regardless of the object being painted, students seemed to enjoy the event. Students engaged in conversation about their personal psychology concentrations and current internships. Feedback indicated that people would be interested in this event for next year (with more pumpkins, of course!).

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In February, the chapter celebrated Random Act of Kindness Day with its annual Positive Post-it event. This year, Post-its with motivational quotes were



(Above) Pumpkin painting with Assumption University (MA).

(Right) Assumption University (MA) Chapter officers celebrating at the fall Induction ceremony.



purchased, which were a big hit! Members decorated the Post-its and added special sayings to each, ending with “From: Psych Club/ Psi Chi” to further promote student engagement. Then, members put the messages around campus. This is a great event to host when people are busy, but still willing to meet for a short time. While generating their positive messages, students connected and chatted about their midterms and various courses. Just like last year, this event was a

success, and the messages can still be found across campus.

Bay Path University (MA)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: During the spring 2025 semester, the chapter conducted a supply drive to benefit the Darrell Lee Jenkins Jr. Resource Center in Springfield, MA. Two carloads of supplies including food, games, and books were donated. The center’s founder, Juanita Batchelor, tragically lost her son, Darrell, to gun violence. This afterschool program for youth

ages 5–17 helps support those who have been impacted by gun violence. In addition to the afterschool program, the center also provides additional services and resources to help families heal from trauma.

Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In spring 2025, under chapter president Jamilla Perez-Hosein, the chapter again hosted a vigorous series of 14 activities for the Fordham community. Several of these

explored diverse career options for students, featuring nine expert speakers: Kevin Moncayo, Joshua Feinberg, Ethan L. Chazin, Jamilla Perez-Hosein, George D. Stokes, Brittany Perez, Nathalie Fineus, Yashawini Kataria, and Anqi Zhang.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: On March 3, at the annual Arts and Sciences faculty supper, Dean Robert Hume surprised two psychology professors with the 2025 Outstanding Teacher Award, based on student nominations: Molly



(Above left) Bay Path University (MA) Psi Chi students deliver donations to the Darrell Lee Jenkins Jr. Resource Center. From left to right: Dr. Diane Hall (advisor), Savannah Sideri, Juanita Batchelor (program founder), Graciana Phillips, and Gina Valante.

(Above right) On March 3, two Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY) psychology professors—Molly Zimmerman and Harold Takooshian—were surprised to receive Fordham’s 2025 Outstanding Teacher Awards.

(Center) On May 14, the psychology faculty hosted a presentation about Psi Chi and 50 years of co-curricular psychology activities at Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY).

(Below) On April 25, the Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY) chapter induction.

Zimmerman (Rose Hill campus) and Harold Takooshian (Lincoln Center campus). On April 10, Professor Dinesh Sharma hosted a forum on the history of psychoanalysis. On April 26, Professor Ani Kalayjian hosted a forum on “genocide prevention at the United Nations” with a video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tmXucmPQsA. On May 3, several Fordham students and faculty presented their research at the 53rd Hunter College Psychology Convention. On May 14, the monthly psychology department faculty meeting included

a PowerPoint message on 50 years of curricular psychology and Psi Chi activities at Fordham. (Video: <https://youtu.be/E8fwHrnWU3o>). The chapter is now planning its annual alumni reunion for June 20, 2025.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On April 25, the Fordham-Lincoln Center (NY) spring induction of 13 new members heard a message by Professor Kevin Ambrose.

Messiah University (PA)

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On December

6, 2024, 11 new members were inducted into Messiah University’s Psi Chi Chapter: Tristan Brown, Kiersten Burch, Paul Calcagno, Emily Caulfield, Anna Clement, Kayla Greener, Nicholas Hall, Felicity Rhodes, Victoria Sobrevilla, Alaina Stansfield, and Heidi Swartley. It was a candlelight ceremony with a reading of the rituals, followed by refreshments and an informal celebration.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In partnership with Paxton Ministries, the chapter conducted interviews with the residents of Paxton and began a service project

based on experiences related to the mission statement of the organization. The goal of the interviews was to help Paxton identify how they are succeeding in fulfilling their mission statement and identifying areas for improvement.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Members set up and conducted tutoring sessions and office hours to assist Messiah’s psychology students in Introduction for Psychology, Writing for Psychology, Statistics for Psychology, and Abnormal Psychology classes. Students reviewed

(Right) Messiah University (PA) members at the induction ceremony.

(Center left) Homecoming parade at Pennsylvania State University (pictured are Psi Chi members who walked in the parade).

(Center middle) Psi Chi students gather to celebrate the end of the school year at Purchase College, SUNY.

(Center right) University at Buffalo, SUNY students and Psi Chi members (left to right), Katy Szykowski, Manaal Azal, and Riley Godwin, presenting their posters at the sixth annual Western New York Undergraduate Psychology Conference.

(Bottom left) University at Buffalo, SUNY’s chapter officers and junior officers with a representative from the Career Design Center flashing a “horns up” at the end of their resume workshop event. Back row (left to right): Caleb Cudney, Lowell Santoro, Alexis Dimitroff, Leianni Byrd, Amanda Fox, Ed Brodka. Front row: Trishani Sudanandan, Katie Kremer, Gabi Filipksi.

(Bottom right) Psi Chi junior officer Caleb Cudney (right) passing a human brain to officer Katie Kremer (left) during University at Buffalo, SUNY’s Brain Museum Tour event.



the APA Publication Manual, gained new study skills, acquired methods for numerical interpretation and analysis of data, and were given feedback on their writing style.

Pennsylvania State University

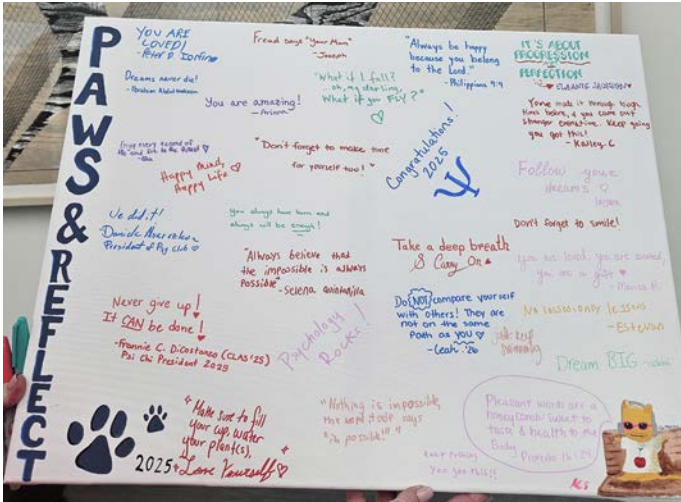
MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: During the fall 2024 semester, the chapter hosted Kat Blaque, an alternate lifestyle YouTuber who has been an outspoken advocate of polyamorous and Black transgender communities in recent years. Kat Blaque discussed a variety

of topics pertinent to her lifestyle and community on her YouTube channel. For Psi Chi's creator event, Kat Blaque opened up about her experience as a sexual assault survivor and her time as an advocate for alternative lifestyles. The event garnered a wide-range of support and collaboration from various departments and organizations—contributing to a more collaborative and safe space regarding sexual and lifestyle diversity on campus at University Park.

SOCIAL EVENT: Psi Chi members

gathered to walk in the annual Penn State homecoming parade. Events like these give the chapter an opportunity to integrate into the collegiate traditions at Penn State. While Psi Chi has its own community, the ability to continue to connect with the greater school culture holds a deep importance to many members. Notably, a great number of participants were willing to walk despite the rain. Parade walkers chanted “When I say ‘Psi,’ you say ‘Chi!’” which appeared to be a great hit among parade viewers. Members also

reported enjoyment in handing out candies to kids viewing the parade. **SOCIAL EVENT:** In the spring 2025 semester, the chapter branched out to global activism, wherein the chapter invited Porpora Marcasiano, a transgender activist known for her Nobel Prize-nominated advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community in Italy. For this collaboration, the chapter hosted a screening of the documentary *Porpora* (directed by Roberto Cannavò and produced by Vittorio Martone & Marilisa Murgia), followed by a Q&A with Porpora



(Above left) Canvas signed by University of Connecticut-Stamford psychology students.

(Above right) University of the District of Columbia Psi Chi Chapter Careers in Psychology and Mental Health Expo.

(Left) Inside Out 2: University of the District of Columbia Movie Night for Recruitment and Wellness.

(Right) Black History Month: Celebrating Culture and Identity University of the District of Columbia Event.

Marcasciano and Vittorio Martone, and a presentation of *Antologia*—Porpora’s acclaimed book, translated by Sandra Waters and Francesco Pascuzzi.

Purchase College, SUNY

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter gathered to celebrate the end of the semester with coffee and smoothies. During the gathering, members reflected on the most successful events of the year, and graduating seniors shared valuable advice with new inductees. Another successful year in the books!

Towson University (MD)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter hosted a Bingo Night at Brightview Senior Living as part of its community service efforts. Volunteers facilitated multiple rounds of bingo, assisting residents with visual or physical impairments by reading numbers aloud and helping move markers. Two main winners received chapter-sponsored gifts, and all participants received small prizes. Residents shared stories about their careers, families, and life experiences, and engaged warmly with students about their majors and hobbies.

There were some event challenges, like limited prizes and assisting residents with mobility or vision needs. The chapter relied on volunteers for support and adapted by offering additional small gifts to ensure inclusivity.

University at Buffalo, SUNY

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: The chapter hosted the sixth annual Western New York Undergraduate Psychology Conference. There were 50 student posters and five oral presentations. The conference also included lunch, a

keynote speaker, presentation judges, and certificates for the best presenters. Nearly 200 students, faculty, and guests from 12 different institutions (Alfred University, Buffalo State University, Cornell University, D’Youville University, Daemen University, Houghton University, Keuka College, Roberts Wesleyan University, Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Brockport, SUNY Fredonia, and the University at Buffalo) were in attendance!

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter organized a tour of the Brain Museum

(Right) The University of Pittsburgh (PA) executive board and Dr. Kucinski together!

(Below left) The University of Pittsburgh (PA) Psi Chi Chapter’s newly installed officers for the 2025–26 academic year.

(Below right) The University of Pittsburgh (PA) Psi Chi Chapter’s 2024–25 officers with their faculty advisor, Dr. Kucinski.



on the University at Buffalo's south campus. The museum houses nearly 90 brain specimens, including a collection of pathological cases that show conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, cerebral aneurysms, and hydrocephalus. The museum's curator, Dr. Christopher Cohan, regularly hosts tours of the museum. He concluded the tour by bringing out a real human brain for students to hold!

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In conjunction with the Career Design Center on campus, the chapter hosted a resumé workshop. The workshop covered

a wide array of topics related to producing a well-written resumé such as font size, how to make the best use of bullet and headings, and maximum page lengths.

University of Connecticut–Stamford

SOCIAL EVENT: To celebrate the end of the academic year and the induction of new members, officers and Psychology Club joined forces and hosted a great event for psychology majors and minors: "Paws and Reflect." This event took place May 1, right before the finals week, and offered pizza, snacks,

giveaways, and some encouragement for the last week of the year (and finals!). Over 60 psychology students assisted, spent some time relaxing, and helped to create this beautiful canvas as a great memory for the first annual Psychology End-of-the-Year Celebration.

University of the District of Columbia

RECRUITMENT: On October 10, 2025, chapter members held a movie night for *Inside Out 2* and to give background information on Psi Chi. The executive board welcomed fellow students and

provided the history and mission of Psi Chi. Then, everyone watched *Inside Out 2*. Afterwards, there was a discussion on mental health with some guiding questions.

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter led the Black History Month: Celebrating Culture and Identity event with the Psychology Program. There was an introduction of culture and identity, followed by the historian of the Association of Black Psychologists. The program ended with a discussion on identity with leading questions.



(Left) Lindenwood University (MO) Psi Chi Induction 2025.

(Center left) Lindenwood University (MO) Psi Chi officers making DIY Calm Kits.

(Center right) After passing out aromatherapeutic sachets of lavender, yoga instructor Theresa Mannion cleanses the space with rosewater and informs Beloit College (WI) students about yoga history.

(Below left) Following the yoga and breathwork session, pizza and clementines, and soothing tea, Beloit College (WI) attendees were taught by neuroscientist Dr. Allison E. Nickel about the importance of sleep for learning, retention, and safety.

(Below right) Yoga instructor Theresa Mannion leads Beloit College (WI) students in stretches.



CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: The chapter, with the help of a Chapter Activity Grant, provided a Careers in Psychology and Mental Health Expo. The program started out with panelists who provided background on their career development and the current services they provide related to mental health. The chapter also provided vendor education from some of the panelists' offices/organizations, such as the Center for Counseling and Wellness, The Accessibility Resource Center, Gold's Gym, the Wards 7 & 8 DC Prevention Center, and others. In addition, healthy

snacks were provided to round off the multifaceted approach to mental health.

University of Pittsburg (PA)

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The chapter hosted its Spring 2025 Induction this March! The chapter inducted 89 new members and hosted 152. The night consisted of dinner and refreshments, followed by the keynote speaker Dr. Binning, who discussed social belongingness in college and evidence-based interventions targeting barriers towards success in minoritized college students. Then, the chapter shared

the history of Psi Chi, hosted the candlelight ceremony, and installed the future officers of 2025–26!

MIDWEST

Beloit College (WI)

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter planned an April de-stress event for the student body to promote mental wellness, relaxation techniques, and a sense of community anticipating final exams. The chapter excitedly received a Chapter Activity Grant from Psi Chi and were able to buy reusable supplies such as yoga mats as

well as hire local yoga instructor Theresa Mannion to lead a two-hour breathwork and yoga session. The chapter also was able to provide an honorarium to neuroscientist Dr. Allison E. Nickel who presented neuropsychology findings highlighting the importance of sleep to the event's forty attendees.

Kansas State University

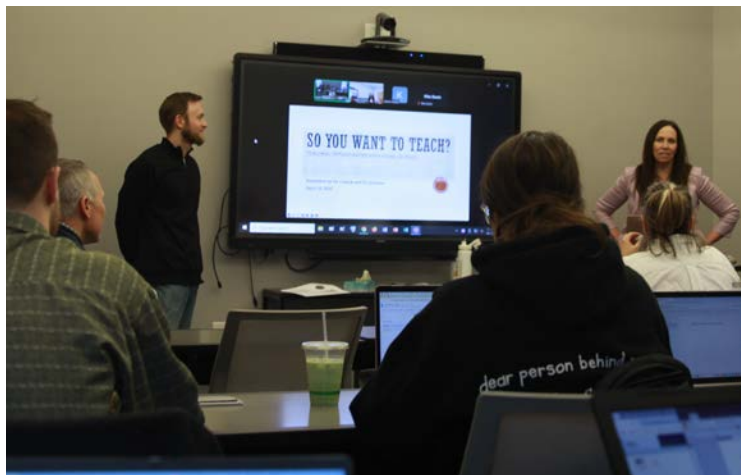
MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: A panel of psychology professors and graduate students held a Q&A on graduate school, answering audience questions.

SOCIAL EVENT: Personal statement

(Right) Utah State University students and their faculty advisor at lunch at the RMPA convention.

(Below left) Dr. Kevin Johnson and Dr. Kate Cusick leading a workshop on teaching opportunities at Michigan School of Psychology.

(Below right) Michigan School of Psychology attendees at the teaching workshop.



workshop career center representative, Chloe Edger, presented to members on best advice for graduate school statements. Students exchanged statements to workshop them.

Lindenwood University (MO)

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The chapter inducted 31 new students this spring—the largest cohort to date. The chapter hosted a small reception after the induction and invited all of the psychology faculty and students' family members. It is always a favorite event of the spring.

SOCIAL EVENT: Students made DIY calm kits, which had a variety of activities (e.g., affirmation stickers, fidgets, tea, chap stick). The chapter had enough supplies to make extra and passed them out around campus to share the love.

Michigan School of Psychology

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted an annual spring workshop titled “So You Want to Teach?” on teaching opportunities for MA or PsyD graduates. Presented on April 15, 2025, by members of MA and PsyD faculty, this workshop

included an overview of qualifications and essential skills needed to teach in various university programs. The workshop also discussed various pay structures, responsibilities, current job postings, and tips to navigate the job market. This dynamic and interactive presentation continues to be one of the most well-attended programs by students, faculty, and staff at MSP.

Missouri State University

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: Psi Chi hosted the Inclusive Education Challenge to promote cultural competence in

psychology. PsyD students shared insights on the importance of understanding diverse perspectives in research, clinical practice, and education. The event also launched a month-long February challenge, where members were encouraged to attend diverse cultural and educational events to broaden their awareness. Participants who completed the challenge had the chance to win a prize. The event inspired members to deepen their understanding of identity, culture, and inclusive practice.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted a Vision Board & Goal Setting



(Left) Metropolitan State University, Denver (CO) Psi Chi members and the faculty advisor volunteered to pack food bags for Denver Public school children. The photo is of everyone in front of a food storage truck.

(Below left) This year was special because Metropolitan State University, Denver (CO) Chapter had custom candles created for the ceremony and for students to bring home. The chapter raised enough money to rent a photo booth for new and old members to mark this special occasion.

(Below right) Metropolitan State University, Denver (CO) Psi Chi members who helped organize the event: Henry Rutherford and Justin Montoya (pictured with skeleton).



event to help members reflect on their personal, academic, and professional aspirations. Participants engaged in guided activities to clarify their goals and create personalized vision boards that captured their dreams and intentions for the year ahead. The event fostered community, creativity, and self-reflection, offering a space to set meaningful goals and visualize success. Members left feeling inspired and empowered to pursue their ambitions with clarity and purpose, both in their academic journeys and beyond.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter hosted a Street Clean Community Service event to give back to the local community and promote environmental well-being. Members came together to clean up nearby streets and public spaces, demonstrating the club's commitment to social responsibility and community care. The event provided an opportunity to build connections, practice service leadership, and make a tangible difference in the surrounding neighborhood. Participants left with

a sense of pride and accomplishment, knowing their efforts contributed to a cleaner, healthier environment for all.

Oakland University (MI)

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On April 8, 2025, the chapter celebrated new members during their annual induction ceremony (29 new members joined during the 2024–25 year). The event featured speeches by The event featured speeches by chapter president Breanna Muszall and vice president Sophia Vecchi highlighting the significance

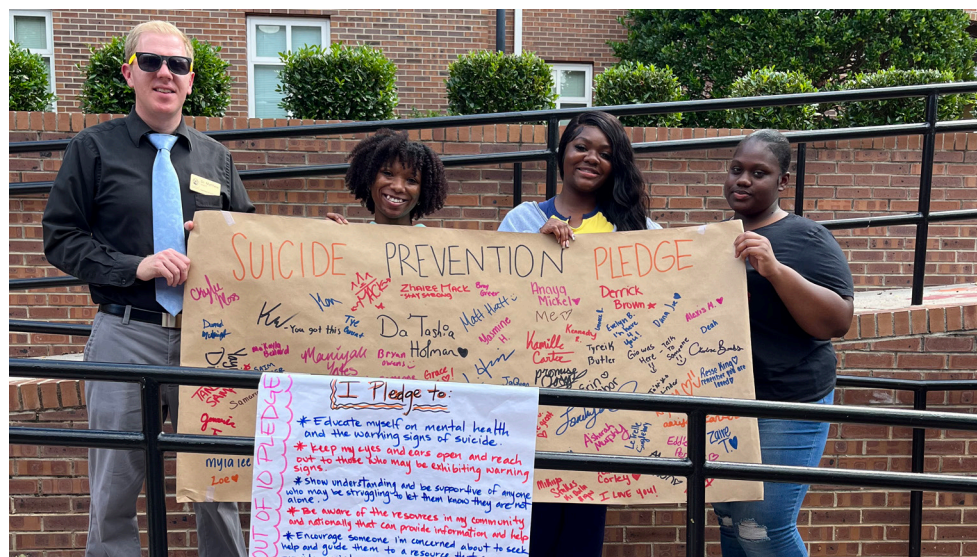
of academic excellence in psychology. Inductees were formally presented with their certificates by faculty advisor Dr. Rebecca Malatesta symbolizing their achievement. During the event, inductees and their guests enjoyed a light dinner.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: In October 2024, the chapter hosted a Clinical Mental Health Panel featuring experts from various fields: Dr. Andrea Kozak (associate professor of psychology, OU), Dr. Jim Hansen (professor of counseling, OU), Paige Freed, LMSW

(Right) Lexi Ramsey, Charleston Southern University (SC) Psi Chi member, cooking for LightHouse.

(Left) Juliet Armetta and Emma Bedenbaugh, Charleston Southern University (SC) Psi Chi members, cooking for LightHouse Women's Shelter.

(Below) Claffin University (SC) Psi Chi Chapter advisor and eBoard at the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month event that they hosted outside their cafe with the Suicide Prevention Pledge.



(social work), and Jessica Korner (director of the Applied Behavior Analysis Clinic at OU). Each speaker shared insights into their discipline and career paths. Additional faculty-led events included a graduate school preparation workshop (January 2025), a research assistant information session (February 2025), and a Careers in Psychology panel (March 2025). The year concluded with an April 2025 GRE prep session, equipping students with essential tools for graduate school success.

SOCIAL EVENT: Throughout the 2024–25 academic year, the chapter hosted various engaging social events to foster community and connection among psychology students. For example, the chapter organized a trivia night in October, a game night in January, and a Valentine’s-themed craft session in February. The chapter also spread holiday cheer by making cards for nursing home residents in December. These events provided students with opportunities to relax, build friendships, and engage in meaningful conversations outside the classroom.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter sponsored a Research Night featuring presentations by primary investigators, PhD candidates, and graduate students involved in research. Each presenter shared their research focus and highlighted available undergraduate research assistant positions. This event provided undergraduate students with a valuable opportunity to network and explore ways to engage in cutting-edge research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln as a research assistant. The

presentations represented diverse fields, including psychology, sociology, law, and neuroscience.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Metropolitan State University, Denver (CO)

SOCIAL EVENT: During the fall semester, the chapter hosted a Halloween event aimed at uniting the chapter and campus community. The theme focused on facing scary thoughts and highlighted



(Above left) Missouri State University Psi Chi members pose with their vision boards after the vision board event.

(Above right) Missouri State University Psi Chi members pose after their community service street clean.

(Bottom left) Missouri State University's flyer for Psi Chi's Inclusive Excellence event.

(Bottom right) Davidson College (NC) Psi Chi yoga session.

how positive psychology promotes well-being. The chapter screened the film *Split* and led a discussion on dissociative identity disorder (DID), comparing its cinematic portrayal with the clinical criteria in the DSM-5. Attendees also took part in small activities like painting pumpkins and socializing with fellow Psi Chi members. The event encouraged creativity, learning, and meaningful peer connections, reflecting the chapter's commitment to both academic and personal growth.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: This spring, Psi Chi members and their faculty advisor volunteered with the Food for Thought organization, packing hundreds of food bags for Denver Public School children to have food for the weekend.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The recent induction ceremony showcased chapter's strong teamwork. This year, the chapter also hosted the psychological science department's end-of-year celebration, making it a full team effort. The president laid the groundwork and delegated tasks

to ensure everything came together smoothly. One member made homemade candles as gifts for the inductees, adding a personal touch. Around 15 members contributed to setup, catering, funding, the slideshow, and managing RSVPs. Everyone collaborated, asked for help when needed, and supported one another to create a successful and memorable event for new inductees.

Utah State University

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: In spring

2025, the chapter members attended the 2025 Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Convention (RMPA). At the convention, members learned about new and exciting research in psychology, networked with others, and attended many student-specific Psi Chi-sponsored sessions.

SOUTHEAST

Charleston Southern University (SC)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The Psychology Club and Psi Chi chapter collaborated

(Right) The Nova Southeastern University (FL) Psi Chi Chapter honored its student officers during the last meeting of the school year in spring 2025.

(Below left) Mike Mizer providing 1N5 contact information to members at Northern Kentucky University.

(Below right) Mike Mizer presenting to students and faculty at Northern Kentucky University.

(Bottom left) The Yerevan State University (Armenia) Psi Chi Chapter celebrated World Mental Health Day in October 2024.

(Bottom right) The Yerevan State University (Armenia) Chapter hosted its annual "Psychological Vernissage" in spring 2025.



to plan, prepare, and deliver a large meal for the Light House, a homeless shelter for women in Summerville, South Carolina. The meal included rice, enchiladas, brownies, tortilla chips, and salsa. The psychology department chair and Psychology Club faculty advisor, Dr. Christina Sinisi, hosted the evening of cooking for the members of the Psychology Club and Psi Chi at her home. The members divided duties to effectively execute a delicious meal for the home. The meal was delivered by the Service Projects chair of the Psychology Club.

Clafflin University (SC)

SOCIAL EVENT: In September, the chapter hosted a Suicide Prevention Awareness Month event to support mental health awareness on campus. Members handed out affirmation cards to students outside the cafe, encouraged participants to take the Suicide Prevention Pledge, and discussed available resources for mental health support on campus. The event aimed to foster hope, connection, and empowerment among students while emphasizing the importance of seeking help when needed.

Davidson College (NC)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter held a yoga session to help fellow students de-stress as the end of semester approached. Shea Heckman (vice-president and certified yoga instructor) led a group of students (and advisor Molly Flaherty) through a relaxing session on a beautiful day. The session was well-received by both new and experienced students!

Northern Kentucky University

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted a presentation given by Mike Mizer,

program manager for 1N5. The name 1N5 refers to the fact that 1 in 5 people experience mental illness. The mission of 1N5 is to prevent suicide by removing the stigma of mental illness and fostering mental health support. The meeting was open to anyone interested in the topic. The chapter provided pizza and snacks.

Nova Southeastern University (FL)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: At the chapter's last meeting of the school year, students from The Life Skills and Wellness Collaboration Group gave a



(Above left) The officers of the **University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez** Chapter had an informational stand featuring Psi Chi's mission, along with profiles of distinguished psychologists from Europe, the United States, Puerto Rico, and Psi Chi.

(Above right) The induction ceremony was held in a campus activity room at the **University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez**, providing an intimate and welcoming space for the celebration.

(Center left) Virtual and in-person **Texas A&M University-Central Texas** Psi Chi members take part in "Planting Self-Esteem" for International Boost Your Self-Esteem month.

(Center right) **Texas A&M University-Central Texas** Psi Chi members Ashley Haisler and Kristina Gorka show off their origami flowers.

(Bottom left) Panelists discuss their professional experiences at **Texas Christian University**.

(Bottom right) **Texas Christian University** audience engages with panelists during the event.

talk on “building a resilience burger.” They discussed resources for reducing stress and increasing resilience. Topics ranged from mindfulness to growth mindsets. The goal of this group is to improve students’ emotional wellness and academic functioning.

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The 22nd annual induction ceremony for the chapter was held in January 2025. The chapter inducted 114 new members and heard a talk by keynote speaker Dr. Jaime Tartar (President’s Distinguished Professor and psychology and neuroscience

department chair). Please see <https://honors.nova.edu/psi-chi.html> for more information about the chapter.

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: At the chapter’s first meeting of the school year, it was honored to hear from Dr. Scott Poland (<https://psychology.nova.edu/faculty/profile/poland.html>). Dr. Poland is an NSU Professor and the Director of the NSU Suicide and Violence Prevention Office. He shared prevention lessons from his extensive experience responding in the aftermath of 17 school shootings. Dr. Poland has testified about

school violence prevention before the U.S. Congress on three occasions and believes most school shootings should have been prevented. The title of his talk was “School Shootings: Lessons Learned for Prevention.”

University of Mary Washington (VA)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter invited four guest panelists with experience in the field of psychology to the annual Career Forum. This event provided psychology students with an opportunity to ask questions about

what they could do with a bachelor’s in psychology and about the panelists’ own career paths.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The chapter organized activities for all of the students on campus to celebrate this year’s Mental Health Awareness Week! On Monday and Tuesday, a banner signing was held in support of mental health awareness in the university center. Baked goods brought in by Psi Chi members were sold alongside the banner signing. Creativity Night was hosted on Tuesday, where students could partake in coloring

(Right) Wonderful Psi Chi members at Virginia State University dropped off collected school supplies to the amazing students at Cool Springs Elementary! It was such a joy to give back and pour into the little scholars who will one day change the world!

(Far right) Virginia State University’s event: Feel It to Heal It, an Inside Out-themed mental health workshop, gave students the tools to better understand and manage their emotions through hands-on activities and meaningful conversations.

(Below) Let It Pop and say goodbye to stress! Before finals hit, Psi Chi at Virginia State University and Miss Psi Chi invited students and faculty to write down their worries, pop those balloons, and let the pressure go.



and socializing with one another. On Thursday, the chapter's treasurer led a guided meditation to help students to unwind during a busy part of the semester. Finally, students were able to practice beginner-friendly yoga on Friday.

University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On April 25, the chapter held its annual induction ceremony, during which 19 undergraduate students and one professor were officially inducted into

Psi Chi. By fulfilling all the requirements established by the Society, these new members demonstrated their commitment to academic excellence and joined the mission of recognizing and promoting excellence in the science and application of psychology. Becoming part of the International Honor Society in Psychology marks a significant milestone in their journey as professionals.

RECRUITMENT: On June 10, the chapter participated in a welcome activity hosted by the Department of Psychology at the University of

Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, aimed at incoming psychology first-year students for the 2025–26 academic year. The event introduced new students to the Department and the various student associations affiliated with it, including Psi Chi. Several interactive dynamics were held to engage and welcome students to their new academic home.

Virginia State University

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In April, the chapter organized a school supply drive to support local youth. Members

collected notebooks, pencils, backpacks, and other essential materials from students and staff across campus. The supplies were then donated to students at Cool Springs Elementary School. This initiative aimed to reduce academic stress among children by ensuring they had the necessary tools to succeed. Members also engaged with the students during the delivery, promoting the value of education and emotional well-being. The event demonstrated the chapter's dedication to fostering supportive community environments.



(Above left) Valentine's Letters of Love to Oneself social event at San Diego State University (CA).

(Above right) San Diego State University's (CA) Hot Chocolate Run Community Service event.

(Right) National Women's Month flower bouquet making social event at San Diego State University (CA).

(Below) California Lutheran University's 2025 Psi Chi induction ceremony.



SOCIAL EVENT: In April, the chapter hosted the Feel It to Heal It Mental Health workshop. Inspired by *Inside Out*, the workshop invited students and campus organizations to explore emotional awareness and regulation. Participants engaged in interactive activities that taught strategies for managing emotions in healthy, constructive ways. Licensed professionals facilitated discussions on coping mechanisms and self-care. Attendees received certificates of participation, reinforcing their commitment to mental well-being. The event reflected the chapter’s mission to promote psychological health and resilience among college students,

fostering a culture of empathy and self-understanding.

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter hosted Let It Pop, a mental health awareness activity focused on stress relief before finals. Students and faculty visited the Psi Chi table to learn about the organization’s mission and initiatives. Participants received balloons and slips of paper, on which they wrote down their academic and personal stresses. After placing the papers inside their balloons, they popped them—symbolically releasing their worries. The event encouraged emotional release, self-awareness, and mindfulness, fostering a supportive campus atmosphere during a high-

stress period. Psi Chi continues to prioritize students’ mental well-being.

Yerevan State University (Armenia)

SOCIAL EVENT: In October 2024, the chapter celebrated World Mental Health Day (<https://www.y-su.am/en/faculty/73/articles/68315>).

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: In spring 2025, the chapter hosted its annual Psychological Vernissage to bring together psychologists, students, and representatives of over 20 psychological centers to exchange experience, cooperation, and new initiatives. The chapter organized this in cooperation with the YSU General Psychology Association and the Union

of Psychologists of Armenia NGO. (<https://www.y-su.am/news/75803>).

INDUCTION CEREMONY: The chapter is now preparing for its next induction before the biennial YSU psychology conference this October 10–12, 2025 (<https://psyarm.com/>).

SOUTHWEST

Texas A&M University-Central Texas

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter recently hosted “Planting Self-Esteem,” a creative and uplifting event designed to foster self-compassion and personal growth in recognition of National Self-Esteem Month. Members decorated flowerpots, crafted origami flowers,

(Top left) California State University, Stanislaus chapter members volunteering at the university’s annual Science Day event.



(Top right) California State University, Stanislaus Psi Chi members pose after presenting chapter pod research projects at the Psi Chi poster session during the Western Psychological Association convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada.



(Center) California State University, Stanislaus Psi Chi Chapter faculty advisor Dr. Gary Williams (pictured at left) and chapter president, Jen Frisk (pictured at right) induct new members.



(Below) University of California, Riverside Psi Chi’s Grad School Panel: Members gained insights from future psychology graduate students on applying to PhD and PsyD programs.



and filled their pots with handwritten affirmations. Online participants followed along by making origami pots and flowers, ensuring an inclusive experience. This interactive activity encouraged reflection on self-worth and positive thinking. The event successfully engaged members in a hands-on, therapeutic exercise that reinforced the importance of self-affirmation. Participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to connect and cultivate positivity, making it a meaningful addition to the chapter's programming.

Texas Christian University

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: A career panel took place on March

25, 2025, featuring professionals from various psychology-related fields. Dr. Kalima Charway from Texas Christian University discussed her work as a school psychologist, while Dr. Laura Eigel from Southern Methodist University shared insights into industrial-organizational psychology. Lauren Leising, a clinical psychologist and marriage and family therapist in private practice, and Dr. Robyn Trocchio from Texas Christian University, a sport and exercise psychologist, also contributed to the discussion. Attendees gained valuable career advice and perspectives from experienced professionals in the field.

WEST

California Lutheran University

INDUCTION CEREMONY: On April 29, 2025, the chapter held its annual induction ceremony, where 15 new members were inducted and a new chapter executive board was sworn in. Attendees included faculty from the Psychology Department, Tim Hengst (dean), Leanne Neilson (provost), Dr. John Nunez (president), as well as many family members and friends! The celebration included a catered welcome reception, a presentation of the history of Psi Chi, several speeches, and a traditional lighting-of-the-candle ceremony.

California State University, Stanislaus

INDUCTION CEREMONY: In May 2025, the chapter hosted its first Celebration of Psychology. Previous chapter induction ceremonies were only open to Psi Chi members. To make the recognition of new members more inclusive and to build upon the sense of community that the chapter has worked to foster within the psychology program, the celebration was opened to the campus community. Over 40 students, staff, faculty, and administrators attended the celebration. New members were inducted, and special recognition was given to the accomplishments of Stan State's varied psychology-related student and campus organizations.



(Left) University of California, Santa Cruz Psi Chi board members welcoming chapter members to the symposium.

(Below left) University of California Santa Cruz members left to right: Ethan Staneart (chapter officer), Kyla Spencer (chapter committee member), Anusha Kshirsagar (chapter president), and Olivia Neville (chapter officer).

(Right) Overview of the crowd listening at University of California Santa Cruz to the grad student panel discuss their academic journeys through grad school.



CONVENTION/CONFERENCE:

Throughout the 2024–25 academic year, the chapter, aided by several faculty research advisors, proudly supported four separate research pods in designing, implementing, analyzing, and presenting research projects. Each of these projects culminated in posters that were accepted for presentation at the Western Psychological Association convention, held in Las Vegas this spring. Over a dozen chapter members presented these and other projects, with chapter president Jen Frisk's poster earning a WPA Regional Research Award from Psi Chi Headquarters.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In March 2025, the chapter volunteered to

host science-related activities at Stan State's annual Science Day. Every year, the departments within the College of Science each coordinate separate activities to encourage community interest in the sciences. The Psychology Department developed activities and hosted four stations with the help of Psi Chi chapter members and officers. The chapter interacted with dozens of community members and families, highlighting the scientific principles behind the games and events.

San Diego State University (CA)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Chapter members attended a weekend of volunteering at the San Diego Hot

Chocolate Run. All proceeds raised from the Hot Chocolate Run support the Special Olympics, an organization that supports athletes with intellectual disabilities. They helped with runner gears, merchandise, and direction, and had so much fun connecting with runners, coordinators, and other volunteers, all while enjoying a very sweet hot chocolate experience!

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter had fun bringing out their inner florist and got to make small bouquets of flowers in honor of National Women's Month. Members incorporated the meaning of each flower into their unique bouquets to tell stories and share messages through the language of flowers!

SOCIAL EVENT: Members had a heartwarming social event to reflect on self-love and self-compassion. They wrote heartfelt letters to themselves and shared their experiences and reflections, discussing the importance of self-care, healthy relationships, and embracing one's own worth. Everyone was reminded that self-love is just as important as the love we give to others!

University of California, Riverside

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted a Graduate School Panel featuring current applicants and future graduate students pursuing PhD and PsyD programs in psychology-related fields. Panelists shared their insights on the

(Right) Early-morning volunteers from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Psi Chi Chapter pose in front of the balloon arch marking the start of the walk route.

(Far right) Later in the morning, more University of Hawai'i at Manoa Psi Chi Chapter volunteers gather for a group photo at the balloon arch as additional members arrive.

(Below) University of Hawai'i at Manoa Psi Chi Chapter volunteers take a group photo behind the swag bag distribution table.



application process, research experiences, interview tips, and personal motivations. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and gain advice to guide their own academic journeys. The event fostered a supportive space for students preparing for graduate school.

University of California, Santa Cruz

CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: This April, the chapter sponsored an Undergraduate Research Symposium—the first one at this institution since before the COVID-19 lockdown. The event was planned by undergraduate Psi Chi board members Ethan Staneart, Olivia Neuville, and Kyla Spencer. The Symposium featured Dr. Nicolas

Davidenko and six UCSC psychology graduate students. The event highlighted undergraduate students' research, with 10 oral presentations and 15 poster board presentations. This chapter looks forward to hosting this event annually to further contribute to psychological research, uplifting student voices, and providing opportunities to psychology students at UC Santa Cruz.

University of Hawai'i at Manoa

COMMUNITY SERVICE: On Saturday, April 5, 2025, the chapter supported the Autism Society of Hawai'i's annual Hele for Autism & Resource Fair at Ala Moana Beach Park. The event raises funds for

programs that support people who have autism and features live entertainment, games, and resource booths. The chapter initially coordinated roles in advance, but on the day of the event, members adapted quickly and filled in wherever help was needed. From setup to tear down, volunteers assisted with shirt and swag bag distribution, water stations, and cheering along the walk route. Organizers credited the chapter's flexibility and teamwork for the event's success!

University of Nevada, Reno

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: The chapter hosted a Graduate School and Career Panel that connected

undergraduate psychology students with graduate students and professionals in the field. Attendees engaged in both panel discussions and one-on-one networking conversations, gaining insights into graduate programs, research opportunities, and diverse career paths. The event fostered mentorship, encouraged meaningful dialogue, and helped students feel more confident in their postgraduation plans. Feedback highlighted its value in building community and supporting career development—advancing Psi Chi's mission of academic excellence and professional growth.

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter hosted a relaxing Painting With Psi Chi event



(Left) University of Nevada, Reno chapter president and vice-president smile proudly while showing off their paintings during the Painting With Psi Chi event. The event gave students a chance to relax and get creative ahead of finals week.

(Right) University of Nevada, Reno hosted a cheerful Cookie Decorating event where students took a break from finals prep to get festive and creative. This adorable gingerbread cookie—complete with snowflake eyes and holiday-themed buttons—was just one of many sweet creations made.

(Below) University of Nevada, Reno hosted a successful Graduate School and Career Panel in the Rotunda. Surrounded by natural light and stunning campus views, students had the opportunity to hear from graduate students and professionals in psychology.



to help students unwind before finals. Attendees enjoyed a creative break with calming music, art supplies, and supportive company. The event provided a fun and stress-free space to recharge, connect with peers, and prioritize mental wellness during a busy academic season.

SOCIAL EVENT: The chapter held a festive Cookie Decorating With Psi Chi event to offer students a sweet way to relax before finals. Participants decorated cookies, enjoyed snacks, and connected with peers in a fun, low-stress environment. The event promoted creativity, community, and a much-needed mental break during a demanding time of the semester.

University of Victoria (Canada)

MEETING/SPEAKER EVENT: Life After Undergrad is an annual event hosted by the chapter to provide undergraduate students possible career options they can do with a psychology degree. Since many students do not continue into graduate school, this event explores alternative possibilities for psychology alumni. Life After Undergrad had former undergraduate students recount their journey from graduating to their current careers. This year, the University of Victoria's social science co-op coordinator and social science career educator, Natasha Jamal and Darcie Gabruck, respectively, attended and

provided resources for undergraduate students to utilize.

SOCIAL EVENT: The newly renamed Psyche Soirée is the University of Victoria's annual banquet held at the end of the academic year to celebrate the achievements of psychology students. Following the Making Waves Undergraduate Research Conference in Psychology, this event promotes socializing with peers and faculty; with plenty of food, drinks, a silent auction, live music from undergraduate students, and more.

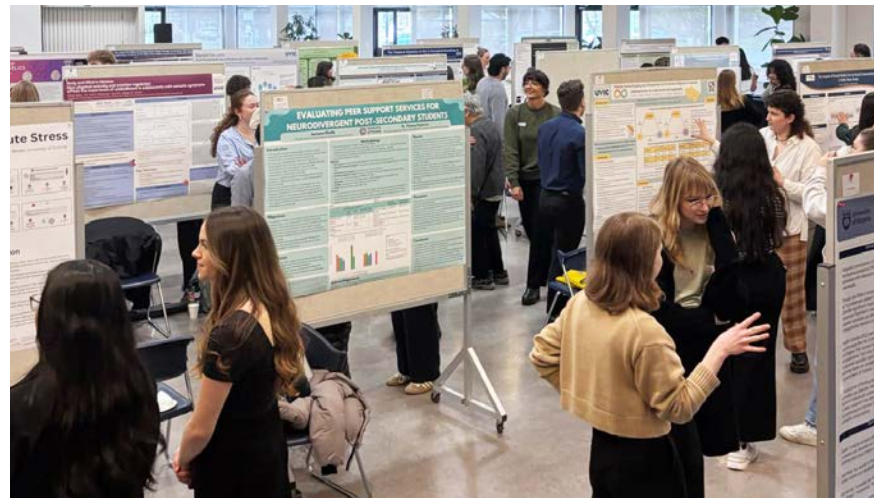
CONVENTION/CONFERENCE: The Making Waves Undergraduate Research Conference in Psychology is a free

annual event hosted by the University of Victoria's Chapter which promotes undergraduate researchers gaining experience presenting their findings. Undergraduate students from all over the Lower Mainland were invited to create poster presentations on a wide range of topics such as the correlations between yoga and ADHD or examining university diversity climate with a student's perception of belonging. This year, Dr. Natasha Wawrykow (from the University of British Columbia) at the University of Victoria presented her research on incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing into psychological research.

(Right) A group shot of the University of Victoria's (Canada) Psi Chi executives at the Psyche Soirée.

(Bottom left) Attendees eagerly awaiting the start of the Life After Undergrad event hosted by the University of Victoria's (Canada) Chapter.

(Bottom right) Attendees at the University of Victoria's (Canada) Making Waves Undergraduate Research Conference in Psychology discussing undergraduate research.



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