

VOL. 3 | SUMMER 2021

IN THE LOOP

Updates for the ISPP Community

Greetings ISPP Community and Friends!

We are in the middle of the ISPP summer semester and this time of year always signals some endings and some new beginnings. We will soon be sending off a cohort of internship students, and celebrating our graduates – with a planned in-person graduation in October! We're nearing the end of this challenging year of teaching, learning, and providing psychological care via zoom. We have certainly grown a lot. I imagine many (if not all) of you are right there with us – as you learned to change the way you conducted your lives during this pandemic. While I have been impressed with the resilience and creativity of students, faculty and staff, clinical supervisors, and clients in managing these challenges – I am so excited to return to in-person classes. There are several students in our first year cohort that I only know as a box on zoom – what a delight to see folks in 3D again!

Speaking of new beginnings – as we noted in our prior newsletters, since arriving at NLU in 2019, we have been working towards APA accreditation for the full ISPP program. Last month, we hosted a very positive, virtual site visit with the APA accreditation team. We expect to be reviewed in the fall and have a decision by early winter....it's a long process! But we are moving forward and are eager to share news when we have it.

Lastly – we are excited to share some new additions to NLU.



This spring NLU opened the Unity Commons - a dedicated space for community and diversity; a place to host our collective work towards social and racial equality by exhibiting art, hosting speakers and events, and advancing courageous dialogues. Also recently opened - the Centro de Excelencia promotes excellence in Latinx student outcomes and building a more diverse and inclusive community. The Centro de Excelencia programming and resources include mentoring, fellowships, academic support services, student groups, support for undocumented students, and professional development events. Both are fantastic resources and we are delighted that these spaces and supports are available to the ISPP students.

I hope as you read this, you are enjoying beautiful late spring weather and starting to enjoy the pleasures of reconnecting with friends, family, colleagues, neighbors, and strangers in a 3D world. Our newsletter includes inspiring stories about ISPP alum Dr. Syeda Rahmani and internship-bound PsyD student Shannon Gray. Meet the new Dean of the College of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, and read more about happenings around campus. We hope that - come fall – we'll be back on campus and you'll stop by and see us!

Happy Summer!
Leah

ISPP Alumni Spotlight- Dr. Syeda Rahmahi

Dr. Rahmani, a 2020 graduate of ISPP, is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Benedict Psychological Services in downtown Chicago. She works from a framework of multicultural and liberation psychology and uses a strengths-based, multiculturally sensitive approach to understand individuals from a holistic perspective. She completed her internship at Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center in Waianae, Hawaii where she completed therapy rotations in a women's health clinic; in an adult, child, and family clinic; and in psychopharmacology and biological basis of severe psychopathology. She also administered psychological and neuropsychological assessment batteries.

As a part of this experience, Dr. Rahmani had the opportunity to do outreach work in the local (rural) and indigenous community including Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Asian populations. Dr. Rahmani received the Outstanding CRP Award in 2020 at ISPP for her CRP titled *Women's Experiences of Internalized Sexism*. Dr. Rahmani's graduate level experiences include a practicum in university counseling, at an inpatient trauma unit, and at a women's resource center. She is a member of Division 45- the Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity, and Race and of Division 35- Women in Psychology.

What is something interesting or unique you have been doing in the field?

This past year (2019-2020) I had the privilege of working with Native and Indigenous Hawaiians. As someone who works from a framework of multicultural and liberation psychology I found the value in integrating indigenous knowledge practices into my individual therapy sessions. I found approaching clients from a position of cultural humility allowed me to provide more effective therapy as well as raising my own awareness surrounding how to decolonize therapy.

Please tell us about a recent accomplishment that's meaningful to you.

Winning the Outstanding Clinical Research Project in 2020. My dissertation called *Women's Experience of Internalized Sexism* came at a time when the #MeToo movement had gained traction and international attention. I remember thinking about all the women whose voices would not be heard by the media but held just as much weight. Specifically, how triggering these conversations may have been to women collectively. This thought was validated when I received hundreds of responses to my questionnaire but only needed 10 participants. This stressed the relevance and importance of the topic. It is incredibly meaningful work to me and I continue to integrate it into my clinical practice when relevant.

What are the major challenges or issues in the field today?

A major challenge in the field includes dismantling and addressing the ways in which oppressive ideas seep into the clinical setting. Psychology has been historically linked to supporting theories and theorists who have perpetuated oppressive norms on marginalized and underserved communities. We do not speak enough about the ways in which psychology can be harmful or ineffective for marginalized people and why. Linked to this idea is the lack of consideration given to the sociopolitical context of our clients and the impact on mental health. These past few years in particular have raised questions of how politics can impact BOTH clients and clinicians. Therefore at a minimum I believe it is the obligation of clinicians in the field to analyze their own biases and stereotypes in order to be an effective unoppressive clinician.



Employment

For job seekers (mostly positions for postdocs or licensed professionals) – be sure to check out the [ISPP job board](#) – and feel free to share with others.

We share any job openings that come our way here. Updated regularly – so check back often. This can be particularly helpful for students looking for postdoc positions during the internship year!

Congratulations to Azalia Torres-CLAVE Doctoral Fellow!

The [CLAVE Doctoral Fellowship Program](#) is designed to develop and support a network of promising diverse ethnic/racial heritage doctoral scholars traditionally underrepresented in higher education, with priority given to individuals of Latinx background. The program's goal is to increase Fellows' professional networks, writing capacity, and financial and professional knowledge base. Various supports are provided toward this end through the CLAVE Graduate Student Resource Center and the CLAVE Faculty Mentor, including significant financial assistance for tuition, individual and group mentoring, writing assistance, professional development, and networking. Recipients of this Fellowship will also have opportunities in starting in their third year as a Fellow to (co-)teach a graduate-level course and/or participate in research in collaboration with NLU faculty members.

Congratulations to our 2021-2022 Interns!

Congratulations to the students who participated in the APPIC Internship Matching Program- 100% of the students who applied matched. Our students will be interning in FL, IN, IL, KS, OH, NC, PA, TX, UT, and VA. Best wishes for continued success!

Carolina Arboleda | Erica Baxter
Brittany Burkes | Azalea DiNardi
Nieves Esquivel | Yarone Grabiner |
Shannon Gray | Maja Jakoljevic |
Lekai James | Steven Jennings |
Taylor Levitt | Monika Malinowska |
Stephanie Morris | Travis Musich |
Sarah Netzky | Viviana Perez |
Megan Whitaker | Angelina Witbeck

Welcoming Dr. Kelli Johnson!

We are thrilled to announce that, as of July 1, 2021, ISPP will be part of the new College of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences at NLU. Leading the new college is the newly hired Dean – Dr. Kelli Johnson! Some of you may know Dr. Johnson from her leadership in the National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSP) or from her role even closer to home. Dr. Johnson is the former Director of Training at ISPP, Schaumburg.

Dr. Johnson earned a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Miami and- in addition to ISPP, Schaumburg, has worked at the University Counseling Center (UCC) at Florida State University, the University of Illinois- Chicago, and The Chicago School of Professional Psychology at Xavier University of Louisiana. Dr. Johnson previously served a 3-year term as President-Elect/President/Past President for the Association of Chicagoland Externship and Practicum Training (ACEPT); and as a member of the Executive Committee of NCSP in her role as Chair of the organization's Ethnic Racial Diversity Committee (ERDC). She is an active accreditation site visitor for the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) as well as the American Psychological Association (APA), and serves as a Mentor for the APA Interdisciplinary Minority Fellowship Program (IMFP). Her interests include multicultural competence in clinical and supervisory practice, intersectionality, social responsiveness in psychology, professional identity development, and mentorship. We are so happy to welcome Dr. Johnson back to Chicago and to the ISPP Community and we look forward to her leadership!

ISPP Student Spotlight- Shannon Gray!

Shannon is entering the fifth year of the Psy.D. program at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology (ISPP). He earned his M.A. in Clinical Psychology from ISPP Chicago, a M.S. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Phoenix, and his B.A. in Psychology from Argosy University.

He is an extern at Rush Neurobehavioral Center, where he provides neuropsychological services to children, teens, young adults, and adults. His clinical research project (CRP) is a phenomenological study investigating faith based counseling approaches versus traditional psychotherapy in the African-American Protestant population. Shannon is a veteran, having served in the United States Air Force as a Public Health Technician from 2007 to 2016. Shannon will be going on an APA accredited internship to the Ohio University Counseling and Psychological Services in Athens, OH.

How did you get interested in psychology?

My interest in psychology formally came about in 2010. I always had an interest in social sciences and believed that I would pursue some form of social work after completing my undergraduate degree. My plans changed midway through my degree program. I transferred schools and decided to finish my BA in psychology.

Can you tell us about your transition from your previous career into psychology?

I served in the United States Air Force for approximately 10 years. During my time in the Air Force, I went on to complete my master's degree in counseling psychology.

In 2016, I was presented with the opportunity to exit the military and pursue my goals of receiving my master's and doctorate degrees in clinical psychology at ISPP.

If you'd like to share, please tell us about any work you do in the areas of advocacy, social justice, or working with underserved populations.

A personal value of mine has been furthering my education and advocacy of underserved populations.

I have attempted to do so by attending group conferences (e.g., Taviscot, IPA, and APA Conferences), working with minority individuals/groups at practicum, and through the completion of my clinical research project. My CRP is entitled: *Faith Based Counseling Approaches versus Traditional Psychotherapy: A Phenomenological Evaluation of African American Protestant Experiences.*

Please tell us about a recent accomplishment that's meaningful to you.

I was recently accepted for an internship at Ohio University Counseling and Psychological Services. This will allow me an opportunity to work with college students and pursue goals of working with diverse clients and utilize various orientation approaches (i.e., ACT, SFBT, CBT, and couples therapy).

Do you have any advice for prospective students?

One of the biggest keys to my success is being able to remain focused on the present, while keeping an eye towards the future. Because our program is so fast paced, we are required to remain focused on the day-to-day rigors while also planning our next steps. All of our classes fit together to prepare us for the scientific capstone and our work in the field!



What has been the most challenging aspect of your training?

Recognizing my personal limits. As with everyone within our field, my goal is to assist those with whom I work with. Recognizing my personal and professional limits, self-care, and goal maintenance assist me in achieving this goal.

What are your professional goals?

Working with underserved populations will always be a primary part of my mission, regardless of career destination. Recently I have begun to think about a private practice that works exclusively with persons from minority demographics using culturally informed treatment approaches. Creating space to address age and gender differences, socioeconomic status and opportunities, spirituality/faith, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and physical limitation and disabilities are all essential areas of concern for me.



ISPP Summer Community Gatherings

May 11th: Acceptance and
Commitment Therapy- ISPP
Assembly

May 18th: Trauma Concentration
and Research- Dr. Sandra
Zakowski

May 25th: How to Develop an
Effective CV- Angelina Witbeck

June 1st- Intern and Graduate
Send Off and Awards Celebration

June 8th- Health Service
Repayment Program- Dr. Ericka
Mingo

June 15th- Post Doctoral
Information- Dr. Kristen
Newberry

June 22- Town Hall

Zoom Link:
<https://nl.zoom.us/j/99735517267>

Congratulations to first year Psy.D. student Elizabeth Kaydanovsky on her recent election as the IPAGS secretary!

IPAGS is the Illinois Psychological Association for Graduate Students. It was created to promote the education of graduate students in matters relevant to clinical and academic training. It also informs the professional community about graduate student activities.

For more information and to become a student member, please visit:
<https://illinoispsychology.org/ipags/>.



Now seeking student ambassadors!

ISPP Enrollment is looking for current students who would be interested in volunteering to become student ambassadors. Student ambassadors will play a role in new student recruitment, including assisting with interview days, orientations, and other prospective student activities.

To sign up:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PSYT5YY>

ISPP Assembly News

ISPP Student Assembly is a newly established council-like organization that is aimed to make a positive impact for the ISPP community. In its inaugural year, the dedicated student executives as well as guests of ISPP Assembly have worked hard and hosted monthly didactics, coordinated social and volunteer events, provided support corners for students, served as student liaisons, and much more!

ISPP Student Assembly has a goal of maintaining a strong tradition of excellence within ISPP's new home at National Louis University.

If you are interested in participating in this organization, the meetings remain active throughout the summer and are open to all students.

The organization is seeking executives for the 2021-2022 school year and will be accepting notifications of interest on a rolling basis. Please contact current president Chrystiana Jones at CJones96@my.nl.edu to express interest and for more information about what each position entails.

CRP and Writing/Research Meetings

Summer meetings are every Monday from 12-12:45pm.

All are welcome anytime! –

Link:

<https://nl.zoom.us/j/99619241893>



Summer Term AEWG Meetings

The Antiracism Education and Work Group (AEWG) will meet every Wednesday night from 7-8 PM CST.

Join us for a critical conversation about racism, antiracism, allyship, white identity, and how that impacts you as a clinician or future clinician. All are welcome!

<https://nl.zoom.us/j/93726762086>



APA Accreditation Update

Thank you to the many people – students, alumni, faculty, site supervisors, administration, staff – who participated in and/or supported the ISPP APA Accreditation visit on May 4th and 5th. Across the two days, the site visitors met with more than 140 people associated with the program – that's amazing dedication and support!

Noteworthy Alumni News!

Congratulations to Dr. Laura Meyers! She is taking a position with Dayton Children's Hospital, where she will be the Pediatric Psychologist with the Hematology/Oncology team. Dr. Meyers is a 2013 grad of ISPP, Chicago.

Looking for your CRP?

Many of the CRPs from ISPP Chicago and ISPP Schaumburg have been relocated to the NLU campus. If you would like us to ship yours to you for a small shipping fee, please contact Laura Zuniga lzuniga4@nl.edu after July 1st, 2021.

Zoom Reunion for the Fall 2001 Incoming Psy.D. Class

Did you enter the PsyD program at ISPP in Fall of 2001? In honor of your 20 year anniversary, alumna Dr. Helen Fronshtein and Dr. Gulin Guneri are hosting a Zoom reunion! Mark your calendars for Friday, September 10, 2021, at 6pm CST.

Please join us- and if you're in touch with any alums who began in the Fall 2001, please pass this message along to them. If you have any questions or comment about this event, feel free to email Gulin Guneri at gulinguneri@gmail.com or Helen Fronshtein at hf243@nyu.edu