

VOL. 6 | FALL 2022

IN THE LOOP

Updates for the ISPP Community

Greetings ISPP Community and Friends!

As I look out the window at the changing leaves, I am reminded of the old adage – “change is the only constant.” In our ISPP community, we have continued to experience change. As most know, earlier this summer we experienced the heartbreaking loss of our colleague, mentor, and friend – Dr. Chris Rector. I knew personally - from the more than a decade of working together - what a big role Chris played in our program and psychology training communities. But when we gathered to celebrate his life – I was even more in awe of the far-reaching impacts that Chris had on students, alumni, colleagues, and friends. Chris’s legacy lives on here at ISPP. During the NLU Fall Connections event, Chris was honored with a posthumous award for Excellence in Teaching. He had been nominated for the award prior to his death, and was so excited to be nominated. It was a fitting tribute to his passion for teaching and all of us who were blessed by that passion.



This fall we welcomed a new cohort of 33 doctoral students – which includes four international students and fourteen students from out of state. We are so excited to see the far-reaching legacy of ISPP. Many of our applicants mention their interaction with ISPP alumni (as teachers, mentors, therapists, and peers) as one of the reasons that they applied to our program. It’s you – our ISPP alumni – who represent the best of what this program is.

And lastly, we are thrilled to welcome two new core faculty to our program! I hope you’ll read on to learn more about our new colleagues. Dr. Lauren Smith joins us as Assistant Professor and the concentration coordinator for our Child and Adolescent concentration. Dr. Lucia Lopez joins us as Assistant Professor and Associate Director of Training. We are very lucky to have these two colleagues join our program!

Sending my best to our ISPP community,
Leah

Welcoming our new ISPP Core Faculty- Lauren Smith, Ph.D.!

Lauren Smith, Ph.D. is a new full-time faculty member at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology at National Louis University. She obtained her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin. While her degree is in school psychology, Dr. Smith's training and expertise are in clinical child psychology. Her areas of specialty include the treatment and diagnosis of trauma and stressor-related conditions in children and adults. She has received training to be certified in trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT), parent-child interaction therapy (PCIT), and child and family traumatic stress intervention (CFTSI), which are empirically supported treatments for trauma-related concerns in children and adolescents. You may access Dr. Smith's full faculty bio on our website, [here](#).

Please tell us about any work you do in the areas of advocacy, social justice, or working with underserved populations.

Since deciding to pursue a career in clinical psychology, I have always aimed my clinical efforts in providing services to underserved populations. Throughout my career, I have specifically worked with low-income, system involved, youth of color. My goal in launching psychology consulting firm, Creating Healing Interventions (C.H.I.), was to strategically partner with non-mental health professionals in the community to better inform healing and wellness for groups that may never have the means to work directly with mental health professionals. In doing this work, I specifically train non-mental health professionals to be responsive to their own wellness in order to have a positive impact on the wellness of the youth and families they serve, using trauma-informed culturally responsible practices.



I have been invited on numerous podcasts and organizations in the city to promote greater advocacy around mental wellness, and I am currently partnering with the city on a larger project to target the wellness of historically disenfranchised communities.

Do you have any advice for current or prospective students?

For current and those aspiring clinical psychology students, the best advice that I can give is to find mentorship early on in your studies. This is something I did not have, but wish I did. Mentorship is key to success both during and post graduate school. You will learn a lot of hidden gems that aren't readily discussed that can help advance you into a successful career. Additionally, mentorship can help with feelings of isolation and imposter syndrome, which are very common during the graduate experience.

Welcoming our new ISPP Core Faculty- Lucia Lopez, Psy.D.!

Dr. Lucia Lopez graduated with her Psy.D. in clinical psychology from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She currently serves as the new Assistant Director of Training of the Illinois School of Professional Psychology at NLU.

Dr. Lopez's areas of specialty include women's health, domestic violence treatment approaches, group therapy, and trauma work. She has experience working with patients across the lifespan, predominantly within community mental health and hospital settings. As a bilingual bicultural clinician, she has focused on working with underserved populations. When it comes to education and training, Dr. Lopez embraces the importance of diversity, inclusion, and mentorship. You may access Dr. Lopez's full faculty bio on our website, [here](#).

What do you see as major challenges or issues in the field today?

One of the major challenges we are seeing in the field due to COVID is the change of in person therapy services vs. telehealth or hybrid work. While it can be convenient both for the client and therapist, it also comes with new challenges to consider. Risk assessments are more difficult without the client sitting in front of you. Video vs. phone appointments allow for limited, but increased opportunities for behavioral observations. Depending on SES, age, tech savviness, or even preference, video is not always available and some clients opt for phone sessions. It increases the likelihood of having to call 911 to do a wellness check if a client is not agreeable to presenting to the nearest ED or abruptly disconnects from the session prior to full assessment and safety planning. If this is the model you are currently following, it is just important to know protocol at your sites so that you feel prepared around remote risk assessments and how to respond to different scenarios.



Do you have any advice for current or prospective students?

We come into this field because we want to help people. A lot of us tend to be naturally empathic, understanding, curious, and caring. We continue to build on these throughout education and training. However, it is also important to note that internal boundaries with ourselves should be a priority from the very start. As we come into a field to care for others, it can be easy to forget to prioritize caring for yourself or even feel guilty about it. I often remind myself of burnout, to challenge and re-frame some of that guilt. We need to practice what we preach or will preach in therapy to clients. You can't pour from an empty cup and as you consider or take this journey on, it is important to make a commitment to yourselves to prioritize self-care and to pay attention to your mind and body.

In Memory of Dr. Christopher Rector



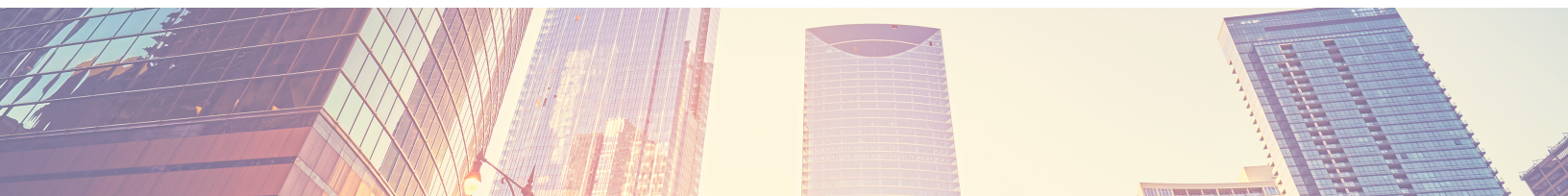
We are deeply saddened by the death of a beloved member of the ISPP community, Dr. Christopher Rector.

Chris Rector was core faculty and Director of Practicum Training at ISPP from 2009 until his sudden death in June 2022. He supported the program and the students through many difficult times, and always did so with a smile and a song refrain to suit the mood. Chris was also a dedicated clinician and researcher. But it was the classroom – a space that he really loved to be in – where he truly shined. Chris helped teach and train hundreds of students and future psychologists. I don't think it's possible to quantify the number of people's lives that Chris has impacted through his teaching, his clinical work, his research and presentations, his mentorship, and most importantly as a dear friend. He is deeply missed here at ISPP and in the broader psychology community.

If you would like to contribute to a charitable organization in Dr. Rector's honor, here are two that we recommend, both of which represent causes/organizations that were dear to Dr. Rector: [Voices of Children](#), which supports the psychological and physical needs of children impacted by the war in Ukraine, and [Asian American Psychological Association](#) – donations "support the training and improve the pipeline of APIDA/AAPI clinicians, educators, researchers, advocates in training who are coping with Pandemic/coup/Anti-Asian violence during grad school, as well as other AAPA initiatives."

"Everyone must leave something behind when he dies, my grandfather said. A child or a book or a painting or a house or a wall built or a pair of shoes made. Or a garden planted. Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die, and when people look at that tree or that flower you planted, you're there. It doesn't matter what you do, he said, so as long as you change something from the way it was before you touched it into something that's like you after you take your hands away." - Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451

Because of Dr. Rector's passionate involvement with ISPP and our psychology community, we have been changed for the better.



ISPP Community Gatherings

All Community Gatherings are held on Tuesdays at 1:45 PM.

October 11th – Dr. Lauren Smith presents on her research and clinical work

November 1st- November 1st
Community Psych Student and Community Organizer Raphael Kasobel talks about the US political process, the upcoming election, and what you can do.

November 15th – 4th Year PsyD student Christina Wawrowski – offers a clinical presentation working with a client with trauma-related concerns

December 13th – End of the Year Celebration

ISPP/ NLU Graduation

The ISPP/NLU Graduation was held in June. 12 ISPP students graduated with their Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology. Congratulations!

Dr. Lorenz Angeles
Dr. Erica Baxter Nehotte
Dr. Olivia Beers
Dr. Azalea Di Nardi
Dr. Nieves Esquivel
Dr. Yarone Grabiner
Dr. Maja Jakovljevic
Dr. Taylor Levitt
Dr. Sarah Netzky
Dr. Brittany Quinn
Dr. Megan Whitaker
Dr. Angelina Witbeck

New Member of the ISPP Community!

Introducing the latest addition to the Newberry crew- James Beckham Newberry, Born June 29, 2022.

Congratulations to Drs. Kristen and Jackson Newberry!



Photos from the 2022 Doctoral Hooding Ceremony!



ISPP Student Spotlight- Hilary Hines

Hilary is a 5th-year student in the Psy.D. program at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology (ISPP), on internship at a therapeutic day school in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

How did you get interested in psychology?

My interest in psychology started back in high school. I had a very eccentric psychology teacher whom I admired and then I started reading the material and found it fascinating. My original thought when going to college was that I wanted to practice somewhere within psychology and the law, but my undergraduate degree ended up being in simple psychology. I pursued my master's in forensic psychology getting back to my original idea of psych and the law, but my training experience was on the fringe of forensic psychology; when I entered my master's program I wanted to work in a prison, when I left, I wanted to work at the VA and help veterans. Thus, this trajectory led me to ISPP and a doctorate in clinical psychology, and surprisingly my training experiences have been with children..a group I said I would never work with! It was a winding path, but that's how I found and stayed with psychology.

Tell us about your training experience.

As I mentioned above, my training experiences at ISPP have been with children. Throughout my academic career, I wholeheartedly said I would never work with children, but I tend to find the practicum experiences that are meant for me even if they aren't originally high on my list. I completed my diagnostic and therapeutic practicums within a therapeutic day school.

Many do not know what that is-(I certainly did not)- but it is a fast-paced unpredictable environment where students are provided support and safe spaces to work through their emotional and behavioral difficulties. This was a place that outside of the field of psychology I would not thrive in and would actively avoid, but there is something about working with these kids and the appreciation and connections you make with every single one of them even if they aren't on your caseload that makes everything worth it.

Do you have any advice for prospective students?

My biggest piece of advice is to try things you never thought you would, work with kids/adults/insert whatever population you've been on the fence about here. You truly never know until you try. It can be scary, but you can also learn a lot about yourself and find which types of training experiences you mesh well with. Of course, have caution and don't skydive if you have a phobia of heights, but just dip your toe in and see what happens

Another piece of advice, which seems impossible given all the assignments and responsibilities, but make time for yourself and have self-compassion. Make sure to set aside time to be with friends, family, pets, or whomever you have as support. Take the time to read for fun, game, draw, paint, go for a walk, or do whatever brings you joy. It is possible; I was once a first-year thinking that I had to give up everything, but I am writing this as a 5th year and I promise you, you can do it. You just have to be patient with yourself and the process.



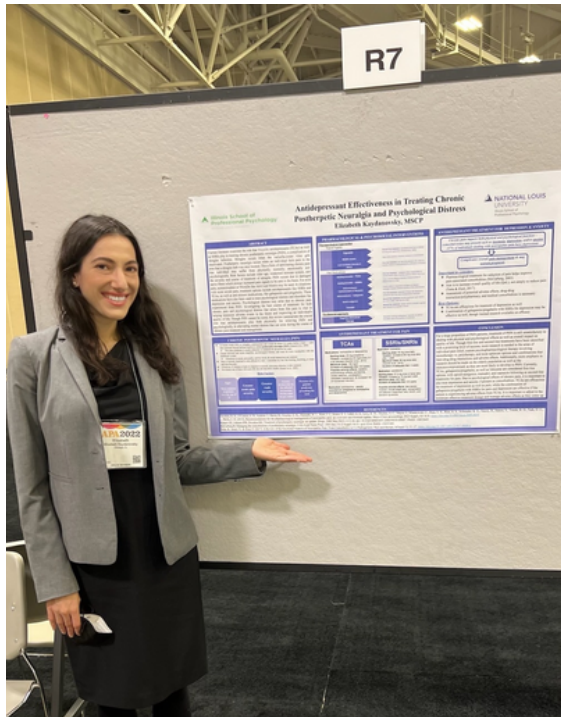
Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

This is always a tough question to answer, ideally, I would love to be employed and working on paying off my student loans. I think I will certainly still be within the Chicagoland area, possibly working with school districts to complete diagnostic assessments to determine special education service eligibility.

Or perhaps I'll be working at a private practice with some fellow ISPP alums specializing in diagnostic assessments for schools and doing some therapy with the veteran population. I think my experiences and my skill set are so different from each other that I would love to find a good combination of the two, but I guess only future me will know for sure how it all pans out.

Psy.D. student, Elizabeth Kaydanovsky, presented at APA!

ISPP student, Elizabeth Kaydanovsky presented at the APA conference in August 2022. Her poster was Antidepressant Effectiveness in Treating Chronic Postherpetic Neuralgia and Psychological Distress.



Fall Term AIWG Meetings

Join the Antiracism and Intersectionality Work Group (AIWG) for a critical conversation about racism, antiracism, allyship, white identity, and how that impacts you as a clinician or future clinician.

Meetings will be held every Wednesday night from 7-8 PM CST.

<https://nl.zoom.us/j/92136874153>

ISPP Alum, Dr. Winley K, was quoted in the APA Monitor!

Dr. Winley K (class of 2020), is a licensed clinical psychologist in North Carolina and founder of the Water Your Fire Wellness Collective. Dr. Winley's clinical and consulting work centers working with BIPOC and LGBTQ-GNC people providing psychotherapy, educational workshops and training, and DEI consultation.

In the July/August 2022 issue of The Monitor, Winley was interviewed and quoted for an article on gender-affirming care. From the article "Society sees transgender individuals as people who are breaking a societal norm, said Winley. However, transgender folks "exist all throughout history. It's just someone decided, mostly through colonization, that this is how things are supposed to be and anything outside of [cisgender people] is not normal." Furthermore, the fact that transgender people make up a minority of the U.S. population doesn't take away from their humanity, said Winley. "Transgender folks may not be what you deem the norm, but they are still valuable, they still matter, they still exist."

To read more of what Winley shared, check out the full article

Santoro, H. (2022, July/August). Advocating for transgender and nonbinary youths. *Monitor on Psychology*, p. 47-55. Retrieved from Monitor on Psychology July-August 2022 (apa.org)