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Fall 2020

## Department of Psychology Newsletter

Department of Psychology, Old Dominion University

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FALL 2020

OLD DOMINION  
UNIVERSITY

# PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

FALL  
NEWSLETTER



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It has been an interesting fall at ODU as we have dealt with the impact of the global pandemic on our teaching and research. We have met over Zoom, we have socially distanced when we were together, and we have helped keep one another safe. We have had to adapt our plans to changing contexts, potential infections, and changing guidance from Richmond. Thus far we look to be on track to have a successful fall with no COVID-19 infections among faculty and staff.

The disruption to our research has been substantial. So much research in psychology involves persons interacting in ways that are ill advised in the current context. Where possible faculty and graduate students are revising plans, adopting creative methods, and sifting questions to the work that can be done now. The need for our graduate students to adapt thesis and dissertation research to current realities is particularly acute.

All of that acknowledged, we continue to make progress in our mission to advance and disseminate the scientific understanding of human behavior, emotion, and cognition. Where possible data collection has continued, and classes are continuing in modified form. I can personally attest that teaching in under “COVID room caps” is a little strange. There is a great deal of empty space.

This issue of our newsletter is particularly focused on our current and former students. Their work, aspiration, and commitment to positive impact on the lives of vulnerable fellow citizens is inspiring. I hope you will draw as much hope and inspiration from their stories as I did.

George H. Noell, Ph.D., BCBA



Inspiring, mentoring, teaching, and supporting our students is a core part of our commitment as a department. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with such talented and dedicated students.

As we prepare as an institution to shift to all online learning next week in preparation for the holidays, I want to add our department’s voice to those of trusted public health scientists who are working to save lives. The data clearly show we are in for a very tough and dangerous period over the coming weeks. Please raise your vigilance, keep your distance, and wear your mask. Avoid gathering in doors with people you do not live with, where possible. The life you save may be someone you love. If we can limit the death and suffering in the coming weeks there is reason to be hopeful that 2021 will be a much better year, but we want to get to that better place with as many of us as we can.

In closing, the COVID-19 pandemic is a central challenge of this time. We will overcome it in the end as we have prior great challenges. Please remember masks and social distancing **save lives**.

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season,  
George

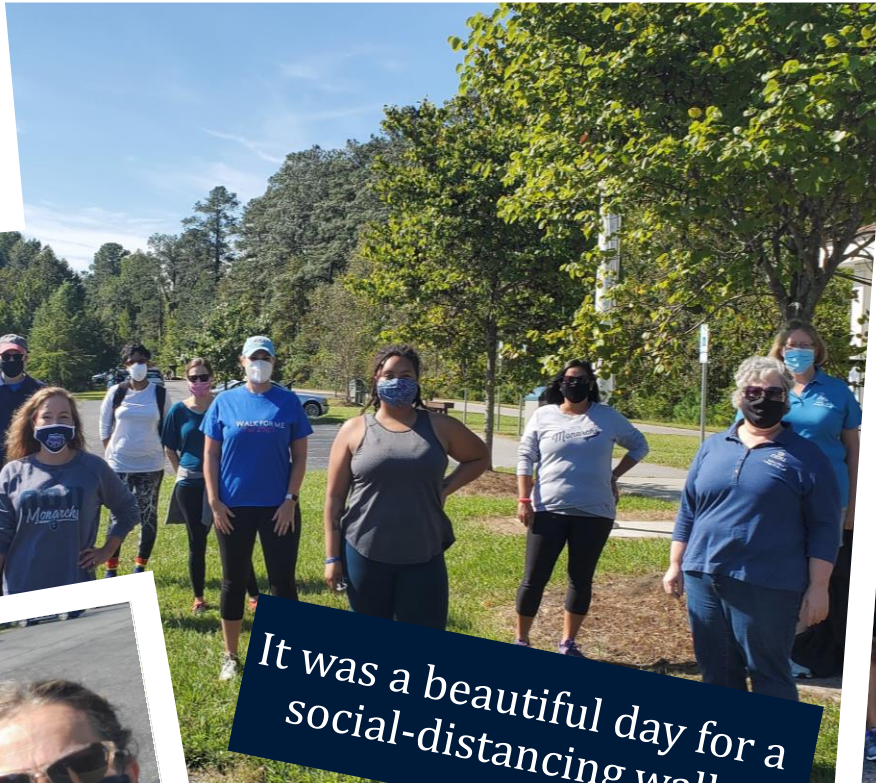
## Inaugural John E. Cash Memorial Scholarship Recipient 2020-2021

I am Eneyda Nunez-Valencia a first-generation junior at Old Dominion University with a declared psychology major and a minor in business management. Currently, I am attending my fourth year in college while also expanding my research experience. I have been part of the T.A.R.D.I.S. research lab since fall 2019 where I continue to explore and learn the beauty of research. My interests include behavior in organizational and work situations, particularly among workers from marginalized backgrounds. As a first-generation and minority, it has been a great challenge to guide myself through college. Sadly, I cannot count on my parents' financial support due to both of them being located in Mexico. The John Evan Cash Scholarship is helping me to continue following my dreams and making my parents proud. Now I can focus more on developing my knowledge and research to be able to attend grad school in the near future. I am grateful to The John Evan Cash Foundation for supporting me through this difficult time and allowing me to succeed in my career at Old Dominion University.

## Eneyda Nunez-Valencia



# On October 6, 2020 The College of Sciences participated in the Walk for Mental Health and Education



It was a beautiful day for a social-distancing walk.



#AWalkForME

For more information visit [https://odu.edu/sci/news/2020/10/john\\_evan\\_cash](https://odu.edu/sci/news/2020/10/john_evan_cash) found an article written by Tiffany Whitfield and Maya Reid about the John Evan Cash Scholarship and this year's recipient Eneyda Nunez-Valencia.

# Spotlight on ODU Alumna Susan Ocean

Have you ever been encouraged to follow your dreams? I have.

I had a dream of supporting youth and families who have experienced trauma. While working on my associate's degree at Tidewater Community College, I was encouraged to follow that dream - and again while taking a Heartliving course with Dr. Cynthia Bischof. I was referred to Dr. Michelle Kelley, and despite a busy schedule, she agreed to be my advisor as I completed my undergraduate education at Old Dominion University. With Dr. Kelley's expertise behind me, I won the Alan L. Chaikin Psychology Honors Thesis Award. While studying at ODU, I worked as a research assistant with the Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters' Child Abuse Program, a regional Child Advocacy Center partnering with Eastern Virginia Medical School. CHKD's Dr. Carole Swiecicki and ODU's Dr. Kelley offered exceptional guidance, while further encouraging my dreams. They were instrumental in my building foundational research skills and passion for the science that guides my career. With their support, I earned a placement with the University of Montana's graduate program in clinical psychology.

I moved across the country and found another supportive community in Missoula, where I completed my graduate training at the University of Montana. I worked with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' Behavioral Health Department (Indian Health Service) and the University's Clinical Psychology Center (a sliding scale community clinic). I taught undergraduate psychology courses at UM and positive parenting courses with Families First. My dreams were again encouraged by Dr. Christine Fiore, my UM advisor, when she connected me with Youth Homes and the Dan Fox Family Care Program. In this important work, I learned to support the healing processes of foster and adoptive youth and their families - a special interest area of mine, as theirs is a very specific and especially painful experience of trauma. During my time in Missoula, I also fulfilled another dream when I met my son. We are currently a foster family, moving toward adoption.

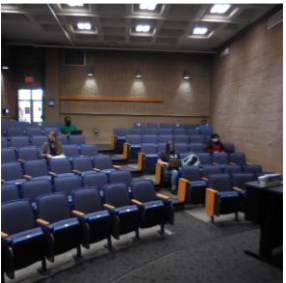
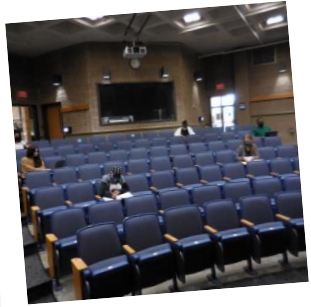
I have completed my doctoral degree with the University of Montana and am currently a postdoctoral fellow with the University of New Mexico's Community Behavioral Health Department. As a clinician, I work with UNM's ACTION Childhood Trauma Clinic (Addressing Childhood Trauma through Intervention, Outreach, and Networking). As a researcher, I work on a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant that partners UNM's program evaluation with community agencies in order to improve care provided to transitional aged foster youth.

I am grateful to have had so many exceptional individuals support me on my path and encourage me to follow my dreams. As someone who cares very deeply about the youth, families, and communities I work with, **I will always encourage others to follow their dreams.**



Susan Ocean, PhD  
September 11, 2020

## Classes on campus looked a little different this fall...



THE ODU  
SPIRIT  
REIGNS ON

Here Dr. George Noell is getting ready to teach his PSYC 351 Child Psychology course in the large lecture hall MGB 101.

The Health Psychology Student Association and their advisor Dr. Cassie Glenn having a little fun by showing their ODU Spirit during a recent Zoom Meeting.



... and so did student group meetings.

# Undergraduates gave Zoom presentations at the Military Psychology Summit October 16, 2020

Psychology majors **Sean Cox** a senior, and **John Lokke** a sophomore, were two of a handful of students selected to present their research as part of a three-day online conference titled the Military Psychology Summit.

## Sean Cox

*“The Impact of Belongingness on the Relationship  
Between Moral Injury and Posttraumatic Cognitions”*



## John Lokke

*“Social Support and Military Identity  
as Predictors of Posttraumatic Stress  
Disorder Symptoms “*

## Alicia Milam

A second-year student in the VCPCP program was mentor and co-author on their first poster presentations.





# William Jimenez, M.S.

Industrial/Organizational Psychology Doctoral Student

"Conferences in the time of COVID-19: Presenting meta-analytic research conducted with advisor Violet Xu and Xiaoxiao Hu (Associate Professor of Management at WVU) at the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Southern Management Association (#SMAatHome) in October. Although it's unfortunate that it wasn't safe enough to hold the conference in St. Pete Beach, Florida, I had a very enjoyable time attending my first SMA, and I thought it went very smoothly for a virtual conference. I also appreciated the opportunity to get dressed up during these pandemic times."



"Attending a fun session following my presentation: a Chianti Classico tasting!"

# NEW ALUMNI 2020

Congratulations to the following doctoral students on completing their **Master's Degrees**:



**Melissa Colangelo** - Clinical - October.



**Charlotte Dawson** - Clinical - September.



**Cody Parker** - Human Factors - October.



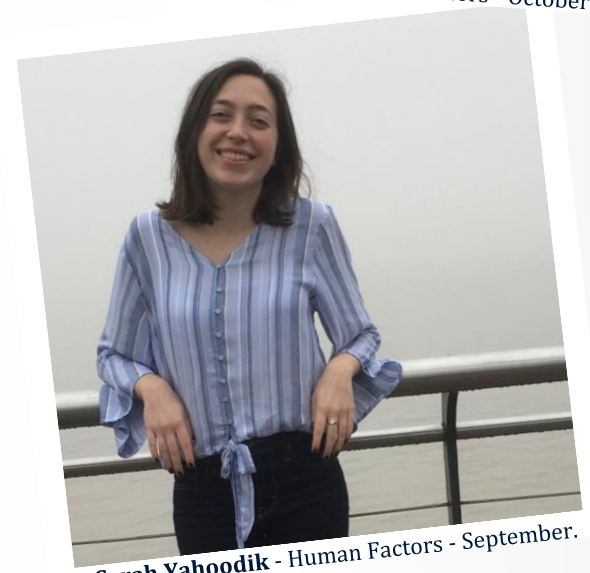
**Jamie Macchia** - Clinical - June.



**Rachel Davies** - Clinical - September.



**Laurel Brockenberry** - Clinical - August.



**Sarah Yahoodik** - Human Factors - September.

# Alumni News

Psychology Department 2016 Ph.D. alumnae **Ralitsa Maduro** and **Brynn Sheehan** received news that their joint proposal on *“The Impact of Masking Policy Variation on COVID-19 Positive Rates: Evidence of Race-based differences”* involving a quasi-experimental study of masking policy and COVID-19 had won the first round in the American Heart Association data challenge.

**Congratulations  
Ralitsa and Brynn!**



**THANK YOU** for your continuing interest in the Psychology Department. Your contributions to the Psychology Department go to support research and teaching activities.

The Psychology Department has several funds for student awards, scholarships and general purposes. These include:

**Alan L. Chaikin Psychology Honors Thesis Award** is given to the undergraduate student with the most outstanding honors thesis.

**Elizabeth C. Guy Outstanding Psychology Student Awards** are given to the graduating senior with the most outstanding service to the department and the most outstanding academic accomplishments.

**David L. Pancoast Memorial Dissertation Prize** is given to the clinical Ph.D. student with the most outstanding dissertation.

**Department of Psychology Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award** recognizes a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Psychology who has demonstrated exceptional instructional quality as evidenced by students and faculty.

**Department of Psychology Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor of Record Award** recognizes a graduate student instructor of record in the Department of Psychology who has demonstrated exceptional instructional quality as evidenced by students and faculty.

Your contribution can support any of these awards or the General Gift Fund that is used where the need is greatest.



Please make checks payable to  
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Old Dominion University  
Psychology Department  
Mills Godwin Building, Room 250  
Norfolk, VA 23529-0267