Hi Current Students, Faculty, and Alumni! 2020-2021 has been another great year for our program! Since everyone has experienced COVID together, it goes without saying that everything changed last March 2020 and still affects all of us in dramatic ways. Everything is still on-line (including our Wellness practicum), but we are hoping that many of our activities will be in-person in the Fall.

We still haven’t seen our 5 first years together in person! But, they have remained very enthusiastic—a big shout out for the resilience of this amazing class! Our 5 applicants for internship all placed at excellent sites (see placements later in this newsletter)! Nearly all of our 6 current interns have defended their dissertations and all have accepted post-docs that will start this summer or Fall.

Lots of changes and transitions! Drs. Pat Rupert and Maryse Richards have retired and Dr. Noni Gaylord-Harden has accepted a new position at Texas A&M University. We miss all three of these wonderful colleagues! I am very pleased to report that we have just hired two new clinical faculty: Dr. Zoe Smith, who is completing a post-doc in the Holmbeck lab and Dr. Byron Brooks, who is completing a post-doc at University of Chicago. We are delighted that they will join us this Fall!! We will also be conducting two more faculty searches in the next 2 years.

There have also been major changes at Loyola, in the Department, and in our program related to Diversity and Equity. There are important initiatives at all levels that will ultimately bring long-needed dramatic changes to our culture related to diversity and equity concerns. Last Fall, we hired a consultant to work with us and the Clinical faculty met weekly to continue to process important diversity-related concerns and move forward on proposed initiatives. We are all very excited about these changes!

In this newsletter, we have reports from each of our research teams, a list of all practicum, internship, and post-doctoral placements, news from our alumni, and a partial list of publications by students and faculty. We are very proud of our program, our current students, and our alumni! A big thanks to the editors of this newsletter!

I would love to get your feedback about this newsletter; suggestions for future issues are always welcome. Feel free to contact me at 773-508-2967 or gholmbe@luc.edu. Best wishes to all of you!

Grayson N. Holmbeck, PhD, Professor and Director of Clinical Training
Meet the First Years

The first years are excited to nearly be done with their first year of graduate school and are especially proud to have accomplished this entirely online while also in the midst of a global pandemic. While they quickly became pros at the virtual grad school life, they are eager to start on campus in the fall and get to know the students and faculty in person. Despite being online, they have formed a close cohort bond and are looking forward to this summer when they will all finally be living in Chicago and can hang out in person!

Sarah hails from Michigan where she just completed her first year of the program remotely! She graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in Psychology and Cognitive Science. In her time at U of M, she studied neurocircuit mechanisms of child and adolescent anxiety and OCD, and the intergenerational transmission of depression from a psychoneuroendocrinological perspective. She also worked alongside clinical psychology predoctoral interns at the University Center for the Child and Family in Ann Arbor. Sarah is so excited to work with Dr. Colleen Conley in the IMPACT Lab at Loyola. She is interested in studying the development of internalizing symptoms and commonly co-occurring disorders during acute life transitions as well as implementing interventions to promote well-being. In her free time, Sarah enjoys baking, cooking, playing with her dog, and reading.

Roxanna (aka Rox) was born and raised in Puerto Rico and is a proud boricua and afro-latina. Rox became a part of the diaspora when she left home to pursue her undergraduate studies at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, FL. During her time at FIU, Roxanna majored in Psychology with a minor in Biology, and conducted psychopathology and neuroscience research with minority youth and families at the Center for Children and Families. After graduation, Roxanna moved to NYC to pursue a Masters in Clinical Psychology at Columbia University. During her time in the “big apple”, Roxanna conducted research about childhood adversity, clinical outcomes, and neuroscience, as well as being part of a cultural neuropsychology research team at Columbia University Medical Center/NY Presbyterian Hospital. With a desire to implement a cultural lens to explore clinical outcomes of childhood trauma and stress in minority families and evaluate specific interventions, she joined Dr. Cate Santiago and the CASA Lab at LUC. In her free time, Roxanna likes to travel with her husband, attend group workouts, and indulge in ‘instaworthy’ eats.

Susana was born and raised in Chicago. She briefly moved away when she attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for undergrad, where she majored in Human Development and Family Studies. Following graduation, she worked at UIUC as a lab manager and project coordinator of the Illinois Twin Project in collaboration with Northwestern University. She recruited families of twins for studies testing genetic and environmental hypotheses about mental and physical development in children. Susana moved back to Chicago to attend Loyola and begin working with Dr. Cate Santiago in the CASA Lab. Her research interests include 1) child and family mental health outcomes and disparities among minority communities and 2) examining the unique stressors and trauma experienced by diverse communities to identify target areas for intervention. Outside of school (and pre-COVID), Susana enjoys travelling, hiking, and trying out new restaurants in the city.

Allison was born and raised in Miami, FL. She left the sunshine for her undergraduate years at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, where she majored in Psychology and minored in Cognitive Science and Philosophy & Bioethics. At Georgetown, Allison found her passion for neuropsychology and began an internship at Children’s Hospital, conducting neuropsychological research in pediatric concussion. After graduating, she stayed at Children’s National as a clinical research coordinator for a lab researching neuropsychological function in children with neurofibromatosis type 1, pediatric cancer, and hemophilia. Allison was extremely excited to buy a larger winter coat and move to Chicago to join Dr. Grayson Holmbeck and the CHATS Lab at Loyola! Her research interests include neuropsychological correlates of pediatric medical conditions, as well as the effects of neurocognitive function, family relations, and culture on medical self-management and adjustment in youth with chronic health conditions. Allison enjoys cooking and trying new exercise classes.

Gen grew up in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago and graduated from Loyola University Chicago with a degree in Psychology. Following graduation, she worked at NorthShore University HealthSystem in Evanston at the Gynecology Research Lab (GyRL) investigating the neurophysiological mechanisms underlying chronic pelvic pain conditions and the long-term effects of painful periods. At Loyola, Genevieve works with Dr. Rebecca Silton in the Wellbeing and Emotion Lab. She is interested in the neurobiological and psychological factors of pain and investigating how these factors influence the pain experience. Outside of school, Genevieve likes to journal, spend time with friends, and relax along the Riverwalk or Lake Michigan.
Dr. Amy Bohnert

Our vision for promoting youth’s health and wellness and addressing disparities through contextual influences continues to guide our collective efforts. This year has shown us how to adapt and embrace opportunities for growth. We have re-envisioned our work by more intentionally cultivating diverse perspectives in personnel, readings, mentoring, and collaborations. Our COVID-19 data collection allowed us to re-unite with a former AML lab member, Dr. Carolyn Bates, to address how youth have been affected by the pandemic. One paper (under final review) examines how routines and structure can promote family resiliency in the face of COVID-19 stressors, and several other papers are underway. We are also preparing for a one-year follow-up data collection with our initial cohort. We continue to work closely with GIG leadership to evaluate programming and needs during this time, and are grateful to have the opportunity to work together to find creative ways to evaluate their efforts. Our collaboration with the GyRL lab at Northshore and Dr. Stephanie Crowley at Rush will allow us to be the first team to examine sleep fluctuations across menarche. Our team has continued to prioritize mentoring a diverse group of future scholars and professionals. Hannah, Liz, and Laura’s oversight of four undergraduate research projects has resulted in an exceptional group of posters to be presented at upcoming conferences. Their efforts to support our students while cultivating and developing their own areas of expertise is truly inspiring! We are thrilled that Laura won’t be too far away next year as she starts her internship at Rush where former AML members have thrived (Lea & Edin). On a personal note, although this year (again) was marked by racism and lives that are still interrupted, I have cherished the opportunity for weekday lunches with my teenagers and the introduction of new family rituals including morning runs, long weekend bike rides, and cross-country skiing in the colder months. Sending my very best to our larger Loyola family over the miles!

Dr. Colleen Conley

Wow, what a year! Amid devastating violent attacks, social injustice and medical pandemics, and major disruptions in learning ~ working ~ social contexts, I have felt demoralized but also uplifted by the humanity and resilience I see all around, and humbled by opportunities for growth. I’ve enjoyed class meetings that start with silver linings, well-being check-ins, and meme therapy, sharing struggles and support (and tears and laughter) with my students and colleagues. My graduate students have had a remarkably productive year! Across Brynn, Carol, Amanda, Maya, and Sarah, in the past year we have worked on about a dozen publications, several more conference presentations, two grant applications, and all have made great strides in their thesis and dissertation work! They have remarkably navigated through adjusting our existing projects to the remote environment, and developing new projects aimed to help at-risk youth and young adults thrive through challenges. We recently hosted an interactive workshop, “The IMPACT Lab Guide to College Student Mental Health: Research-Backed Tools and Strategies to Improve Your Well-Being,” and aim to continue this in future years. At home, my crew has been enjoying game and movie nights, culinary adventures, summer dips in the lake, walking and wheeling around in nature, belting out showtunes, and playing with our recently-adopted dog. I look forward to seeing folks around Loyola soon!
Dr. Catherine DeCarlo Santiago

This year has brought a lot of challenges, but I remain very grateful to the entire CASA team for their creativity and flexibility as we continue to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for the joy and inspiration. Luckily, COVID couldn’t stop Roxanna Flores Toussaint and Susana Sosa from beginning graduate school despite the challenging circumstances! We are so glad to have them on the team! We have continued to work remotely and have been coding and analyzing data, culminating in submitting a qualitative paper on the effects of COVID-19 on refugee and immigrant families in Chicago. We have also continued to evaluate the implementation of Teacher-Child Interaction Training in public schools in Illinois. It has been exciting to focus on preparing manuscripts, including several team submissions. We also got to see several papers come out, including first-authored papers by Yvita Bustos and Sarah Jolie! We have missed Laura Distel tremendously this year, but she has been shining in her internship at CHOP. I can’t wait to celebrate her graduation and her amazing postdoctoral position at Boston Children’s Hospital. It has also been lovely to stay connected with CASA alumni and am especially grateful for the virtual chats with Stephanie Torres and Anna Maria Ros this past year. My little ones, Roma (7) and Tasi (4), have become mask-wearing champs and are very happy to have a few days of in-person school each week. Since life during the pandemic wasn’t already complicated, we decided to adopt a puppy! Roma thanks me every day for making her the “happiest girl in the world,” while Tasi remains skeptical about the pros of this not yet housebroken furry beast now living with us. I wish everyone, and their loved ones, health and safety. 💜

Dr. Grayson Holmbeck

Hi Alumni! I’m delighted to add some comments about our lab. Last Fall we welcomed a new graduate student: Allison del Castillo (from Children’s National in DC). And, for the first time, we have had 2 post-docs working in our lab: Dr. Tessa Kritikos and Dr. Zoe Smith. Also, graduate students Olivia Clark, Adrien Winning, Elicia Wartman, and Diana Ohanian are still working in the lab, as well as several undergraduates and post-bacs.

We are in Year 5 of our NIH grant (for which we are collecting Time 6 data) and in Year 5 of our Kiwanis grant (which funds a camp-based intervention for youth with spina bifida). Of course, given the COVID-19 crisis, all data collection temporarily stopped last March, but everyone has been working on data analyses, papers, theses, and dissertations from home! We started data collections again (on-line) earlier this year. So far, this type of data collection has been going well!

We also have a lot of posters in the virtual Society of Pediatric Psychology Annual Conference (SPPAC) this week, which has been an interesting experience (even though we all miss being in person).

Lots of transitions! Diana Ohanian will be going on internship this summer at University of Minnesota Medical School (Pediatric Psychology)! Dr. Tessa Kritikos, one of our current post-docs, has accepted a Psychology faculty position at University of Houston—Clear Lake! Our other post-doc, Dr. Zoe Smith, has accepted a position in our own Clinical Psychology PhD program at Loyola! Colleen Bechtel Driscoll has just accepted a job as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Integrated Behavioral Health program in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at NYU Langone Health (she’s moving to NYC!). Alexa Stern just accepted a post-doc position in Pediatric/Clinical Child Psychology at Baylor College of Medicine / Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston, TX. Congratulations to all of you!!

My daughter Kaitlin is currently working at a homeless shelter as a counselor; because of this, she was the first in our family to get vaccinated. My son Joe is a Junior at Loyola, majoring in business. He and his girlfriend are expecting a child in July! So, I will be a grandfather soon! Yikes! I hope all of you are well!
The PACE lab marched ahead this year with a lot of productivity using our main dataset from a family intervention study conducted several years ago and we have begun to use existing national datasets. Lauren Hindt, the enduring embodiment of “Minnesota Nice”, defended her dissertation in March. In one paper, she examined the widest range of ecological losses ever explored in a study of children in foster care (e.g., loss of school, siblings, friends). After her defense, I told my family about how it went and my son said, “You’re really going to miss her, aren’t you?”. Answer: Most definitely!

The good news is that I still have time left with the other wonderful members of the lab! Nathan has become quite the stats guru and has made a hobby of running analyses on anything he can find that has numbers associated with it. He has been extremely generous with his time helping students with their analyses. And, he’s developing a really exciting bundled dissertation that will push us forward in our understanding of how social support, parenting, and the child’s ecology all work together.

Jenny defended her thesis in record time. She produced a great study on the various types of families that offer support to children, mostly in terms of generational variability. Her study highlights that family comes in many forms. She is also the first author on a paper examining placement disruptions among children in foster care and did a masterful job leading the project.

Nicole defended her thesis proposal in the fall and is writing up her results and discussion now. She examined changes in the development of strengths in children in foster care. She found that there exists significant variability in strengths development, with some children showing significant development and others struggling in this area. Most interestingly, in terms of the focus of our lab, she found that the child’s social network of family and fictive kin is significantly associated with growth in the development of strengths.

We also welcomed a new member this year from Noni’s lab: Liz Sargent! Liz is a perfect fit with our group and it has been such a pleasure to get to know her more. Liz is working on her dissertation, which is examining the effect of adverse detention experiences (e.g., strict restrictions) on youths’ long-term outcomes. It has been really fun getting to know this literature.

During this last year my colleague, Yael Granot, and I were awarded an NSF grant to study different approaches to discipline in high school and how these relate to school connection and safety, as well as student outcomes. My research team continues to submit papers for publication and presentation from the many datasets. Both Cynthia Onyeka and Cara DiClemente are focusing their impressive dissertations on ways to reduce the school-to-prison pipeline, for which both Cara and Cynthia received funding. Catherine Dusing finished and successfully defended her dissertation this last year! Both Cara and Catherine are entering the final leg of their internships and excited about their post-docs. In the fall, Kaleigh Wilkins was a wonderful teaching assistant again and is busy finishing manuscripts with the team. Work with my graduate students has continued to be one of the most fulfilling and wonderful aspects of my time at Loyola. Retirement in December has allowed a bit more downtime. I will be forever grateful to Grayson and Katherine (colleague from SSW) for hosting a fabulous retirement celebration in January! I miss you all!
Dr. Rebecca Silton

As a small research lab, our scientific team cultivates opportunities to incubate novel research ideas and related outreach/consultation that promote wellbeing. I am grateful on a daily basis to work with the talented and dedicated graduate and undergraduate students who work hard to advance the lab’s research. This year, we welcomed a new graduate student (Genevieve Roth) to our research team. Genevieve is a fabulous addition to our lab and we appreciate her thoughtfulness and steadfast empathy for others. We have published a number of papers over the past year that contribute to our lab’s primary agenda of studying psychological mechanisms that promote wellbeing and positive health outcomes. If you are interested in following our research on the neuroscience of positive emotions and wellbeing, you can read more here. If you are interested in collaborating with us, please do not hesitate to reach out! My term as secretary for the Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR) begins October 2021, and I am excited to contribute in impactful ways to SPR, which is a society that has provided an interdisciplinary academic home for me over the past two decades.

I was also recently was invited to serve on the new Task Force for Gender Equity for the College of Arts and Sciences. I remain optimistic that the Task Force will be able to serve as a catalyst for important changes, especially considering the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, and particularly those with family caregiving responsibilities. On the home front, DJ and I have been enjoying spending time with Eli (age 10), Abbie (age 6) and have found many fun ways to stay busy, including hiking in the local forest preserves, spending time at the lake, biking, ice-skating, cross-country skiing, playing board games, reading books (youth literature is amazing these days!), creating art, exploring recipes from new cookbooks, playing Nintendo games, and watching movies and TV series together (WandaVision, the reboot of She-Ra, and Avatar were some of our favorite series). During these uncertain and challenging times, I would like to wish everyone good health and resilience. Please take good care of yourselves and those around you. ~Becky

Postdoctoral Fellow Dr. Tessa Kritikos

I’m delighted to be wrapping up my second year of postdoc at LUC with Dr. Holmbeck’s team. Thanks to funding from Division 54’s Drotar-Crawford Postdoctoral Pediatric Psychology Fellowship, I have been focused on a 3-part project aimed to develop, validate, and pilot a measure of benefit-finding and growth (BFG) for adolescents and young adults with spina bifida. Additional funding from a research support grant from Loyola is supporting a parallel project with parents of youth with spina bifida. In preparation for these projects, I was fortunate to have several students from the CHATS lab contribute to our manuscript, “A systematic review of benefit-finding and growth in pediatric medical populations,” that reviews 110 studies on youth and parental BFG in the context of a wide range of pediatric health conditions and disabilities and will be published in the Journal of Pediatric Psychology (JPP). I also feel fortunate to have contributed to other manuscripts from the CHATS Lab that have been published this year in the Journal of Healthy Psychology, Journal of Pediatric Psychology (JPP), Journal of Developmental and Behavior Pediatrics (JDBP), Journal of Nursing Scholarship (JNS), and Journal of Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine (JPRM). I’ve also really enjoyed teaching Child Assessment to clinical graduate students this spring. In other news, we are expecting our second child this Spring and soon after her arrival, will move to Houston, Texas, as I transition to the faculty at University of Houston Clear Lake’s combined Clinical and School Psychology Program. I look forward to staying connected with LUC, the CHATS lab, and the wonderful colleagues and students I have met here!

Postdoctoral Fellow Dr. Zoe Smith

I was thrilled to join the clinical psychology program and the CHATS Lab this year! I’ve enjoyed it so much, I am excited to more permanently join the program as a faculty member in the Clinical Psychology program starting in August!! With the CHATS lab, I have used my longitudinal structural equation modeling skills to better understand youth and young adults with spina bifida. I was able to use my interest in measurement and confirmatory factor analyses to publish a paper on two medical autonomy scales for youth with spina bifida. I have also worked with multiple students on a variety of publications and conference presentations. With my fellow postdoc Tessa Kritikos, we provided “postdoc office hours” to graduate students this year. I have also joined the 2nd year clinical students at the LUC Wellness Center and in the Psych 464 class and have enjoyed getting to know the students and discussing clinical cases. I have been active on multiple committees, including Diversifying Clinical Psychology, CODA, and the Racial Justice Examen and am working with graduate students who are creating a Quant Club.

I am so thankful for all these experiences and am looking forward to my transition to becoming a faculty member!
Lab Updates

Activity Matters Lab by Liz Rea, Hannah Hagy, and Laura Nicholson

The Activity Matters Lab continues to stay active with many exciting projects! With the advent of COVID-19, AML collected self-report data regarding family routines, sleep, and other behavioral and psychological changes resulting from the on-going pandemic and resulting shifts in structure in the lives of families across the nation. Second-year student, Hannah Hagy, continues to oversee our collaboration with NorthShore on the E-sleep project which examines sleep and obesity among females across the pubertal transition. Hannah also successfully proposed her Master’s Thesis, Menstrual pain trajectories and their psychological and behavioral predictors, in December. Third-year student, Liz Rea, continues to oversee our collaboration with Girls in the Game (GIG), including implementing an interactive interview workshop and qualitative data collection with Teen Squad in January. Liz also successfully defended her Master’s Thesis, Emotion reactivity and its relation to daily affect and sleep experiences among first year college students, in September. Fifth-year student, Laura Nicholson, kept very busy proposing her dissertation and assisting to develop the Life Interrupted Project. Furthermore, Laura matched at Rush University Hospital for her predoctoral internship! We are proud of all of these accomplishments and will celebrate our graduating seniors at a socially-distanced picnic in May. Check us out on Instagram (@activitymatterslab)

CASA Lab by Susana Sosa & Roxanna Flores Toussaint

The Children Adapting to Stress and Adversity (CASA) Lab has had a very exciting year as we welcomed not one, but TWO new graduate students! Our team was joined by Roxanna Flores Toussaint and Susana Sosa, who have been great additions to our team. The CASA Lab has been very productive this year, despite the year we’ve all had. In partnership with the Center for Childhood Resilience at Lurie Children’s Hospital and Chicago Public Schools (CPS), we piloted a strengths-based, trauma informed intervention for immigrant and refugee youth, the Supporting Transition Resilience Of Newcomer Groups (STRONG) intervention. Unfortunately, the intervention was cut short last spring due to the pandemic. However, we were able to reach out to families remotely to get their feedback about their experience with the program and about their experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic. This valuable data helped us write a paper about the unique experiences of refugee and immigrant families with COVID-19. This paper is currently under revision and we hope it’ll be out soon! After completion of data collection evaluating the implementation of the Teacher-Child Interaction Training-Universal (TCIT-U) across public school districts in Illinois, we’ve been able to analyze qualitative data and are currently in the process of getting a paper about this project out soon. This year, the research team assisted with submitting a R15 NIH research grant to examine the impact of STRONG on refugee and immigrant student mental health using a group randomized waitlist control design. In addition, our lab also began a new collaboration evaluating the Resiliency Education to Advance Community Healing (REACH) initiative, a school-based intervention that prepares school staff to support student mental health and resilience. While the pandemic tried to stop us and some of our data collection, our graduate students Yvita Bustos, Sarah Jolie, Susana Sosa, and Roxanna Flores Toussaint have been busy analyzing data, preparing manuscripts, and submitting papers for publication, in addition to working on their dissertations and theses! Yvita passed her quals and is currently rocking teaching her course this semester. Sarah defended her thesis titled: Ethnic Racial Socialization, Ethnic Identity, and Internalizing Outcomes in the Context of Stress Among Mexican-Origin Families. Laura Distel also defended her dissertation in January titled: Examining the Interplay of Mental Health, Family Conflict, and Body Mass Index Among Mexican-origin families: A cross-lagged Model. Roxanna and Susana have succeeded in their first year of the program, taking on the challenges of the first year of graduate school during the COVID-19 pandemic. What an exciting year for the CASA Lab with many more to come!
The CHATS lab has had a busy, exciting year! We have missed connecting in person, but enjoyed a socially distanced walk around campus in the fall! After transitioning to a virtual format in spring 2020, we transferred our primary study protocol to be administered online. We have thus been gathering data virtually through Zoom and online surveys for the sixth time point in our CHATS study! In addition to collecting data, we have had a particularly productive writing year, with about 23 papers published/in press and many more under review and preparation for submission. At the start of the school year, we were very excited to have Allison del Castillo join the CHATS Lab as our newest graduate student. Olivia Clark proposed her Master’s Thesis, “Growth of Condition-Related Knowledge Among Youth with Spina Bifida: Associations with Neurocognitive Functioning and Self-Management Skills.” Adrien Winning and Elicia Wartman both passed their qualifying exams and are excited to become fifth-year students in the lab! Elicia has also been hard at work preparing for our virtual psychosocial camp intervention this summer, and Adrien has published several first author papers this year. Diana proposed her dissertation, “A Longitudinal Study of Pain in Youth and Young Adults with Spina Bifida: Three Studies Based on the Bio-Neuropsychological Model,” and matched at University of Minnesota Medical School in the Neuropsychology-Pediatric Psychology track for internship. Alexia Stern has been completing her internship at Rush University Medical Center and will be moving to Houston for a postdoctoral fellowship. Diana was selected as the winner of the Drotar-Crawford Postdoctoral Fellowships Research Grant for her work on benefit-finding and growth in spina bifida, and she has accepted a tenure-track academic position at University of Houston Clear Lake. Congratulations to all for these incredible achievements! We cannot wait to see what next year has in store for the CHATS Lab!

The IMPACT (Improving Mental health and Promoting Adjustment through Critical Transitions) Lab has had a busy year with various exciting projects! We were thrilled to welcome our newest graduate student, Sarah, who is overseeing one of our two new pilot studies launched this year! Supportive Accountability in Mental-health Mentoring of Young Adults (SAMMY-A) is a study in collaboration with researchers at UMass Boston and Fordham University that aims to improve college student well-being through wellness apps (e.g., Headspace, IntelliCare) by integrating supportive accountability and supervised skills practice into college academic advising relationships. We have a similar project (SAMMY) testing this intervention in the context of youth mentoring organizations. We have continued several ongoing intervention studies for college students, including Students Taking on Effective Post-graduation Skills (STEPS), which assesses the effectiveness of social-emotional skills training in promoting post-graduate career success and life satisfaction. We are wrapping up our 8th and final semester of data collection for the Supported Mindful Learning (SMiLe) study, an 8-week intervention wherein students with depression engage in Headspace, an app delivering brief, guided mindfulness exercises, along with an online support group. We have enjoyed collaborating with the research team at Headspace, as well as Dr. Becky Siltin and the WELL lab to make this study possible! We completed data collection for our Wellness Advising study, which examines the effectiveness of an early identification and prevention program incorporated into academic advising and success coaching, in increasing student utilization of mental health services. We plan to focus on publishing results from this and other projects over the summer and upcoming academic year. The lab has numerous papers, including multiple meta-analyses, in the works and has presented at several conferences this past year, including ABCT, DOCC, MPA, and CAURS. Finally, Carol successfully proposed her dissertation and will be heading to Children’s Mercy Kansas City for internship this fall, and Brynn successfully defended her dissertation and will be continuing on at Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital for her postdoctoral fellowship within the Center for OCD and Related Disorders.
The PACCT lab went through a major change this year as Dr. Noni Gaylord-Harden accepted a new position at Texas A&M University in the Fall of 2020. Although it was sad to see her leave Loyola, she has continued her work on community violence, mental health, and coping in African American families. Prior to Dr. Gaylord-Harden’s move, the lab began collecting data from focus groups assessing how African American parents navigate conversations about community violence with middle-school aged children. Graduate students Jenny Phan, Liz Sargent, and Kaleigh Wilkins continue to collaborate with Dr. Gaylord-Harden on presentations and publications related to youth future orientation, chronic violence exposure, and intergenerational trauma. Dr. Amanda Burnside graduated this year, and she is now a postdoc at Lurie Children’s Hospital.

The PACE lab continues to engage in research about the child welfare system! We have spent a productive year analyzing data from the Recruitment and Kin Connection Project, a child welfare intervention to promote well-being by increasing family-finding and engagement. From these ongoing analyses, we published manuscripts about placement disruption and child maltreatment outcomes. We also presented on our cumulative research program at the Transformational Collaborative Outcomes Management Conference. Individual lab members are also doing great work! Lauren Hindt is on internship at the University of Minnesota Medical School (Neuropsychology-Pediatric Psychology) and successfully defended her bundled dissertation entitled “Ecological Systems in the Contexts of Foster Care and Parental Incarceration.” Brynn Huguenel is also on internship at Harvard Medical School (Massachusetts General Hospital) and has also successfully defended her dissertation, “Adherence to a mindfulness app for college students with depression: Patterns, predictors, and outcomes”. Both are staying at their respective institutions for post-doc—congratulations Lauren and Brynn! Nathan Lutz is working on preparing for his dissertation proposal that will explore how children’s relationships with both caregivers and extended family impact the development of internalizing symptoms and externalizing behaviors. He is also heading up the new Quant Club to offer his statistical wizardry to more students in the department. We were overjoyed to welcome Liz Sargent to our lab this year! She is a great fit given her interest in how stress and trauma affect youth in child welfare and the justice system. Jenny Osborne successfully defended her thesis on typologies of kinship social support and is already getting started on her dissertation examining the validity of multiple reporters on child welfare related measures. Finally, Nicole Hodgkinson successfully proposed her thesis on kinship and strength development and is working on writing up her defense in the coming months.

The Risk & Resilience Lab has had another busy and productive year! Our lab director, Maryse Richards, Ph.D., formally retired from the university in December 2020, however is still actively consulting and advising ongoing projects and finishing up manuscripts. The lab wrapped up two large studies in the past year (our DOJ-funded cross-age peer mentoring program and Illinois DHS-funded TF-CBT evaluation study in DuPage County), completing technical reports for both. Sixth-years Cara DiClemente and Catherine Dusing are currently thriving on internship (at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford and Texas Child Study Center at Dell Medical School, respectively), while fifth-year Cynthia Onyeka recently matched to the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. Presently, the lab is collaborating with Dr. Yael Granot on a NSF-funded study examining student and staff perspectives on justice in schools. Data collection is underway on this exciting new project and it has been great utilizing mixed methods with a multidisciplinary team. Cynthia proposed her dissertation last September and is working on her defense using data from the NSF project. Catherine defended her dissertation last August and Cara is currently preparing to defend. The team is excited to continue this important work and is looking forward to an exciting year!
The WELL Lab by Andrew, Gen, Ian, & Becky

This year, as the WELL lab members worked and lived through a heart-wrenching global pandemic, our lab double-downed on focusing on cura personalis, and centering our own wellbeing, including attending a weekly virtual yoga class together funded by the lab. It is not normal to expect previous rates of academic productivity during a global pandemic, especially when community-level losses and trauma are being experienced on a regular basis and perpetual racial injustices are causing immense harm. We hope that everyone who is reading the Psyren has found space to care for themselves and the others whom they hold tight around them and have engaged in advocacy work for areas that are important to you and your communities. Despite the backdrop of the pandemic, our lab still had deadlines to meet, and perhaps because it felt harder than ever to get this work done, we feel an immense sense of pride in our accomplishments from this past year. A huge congratulations goes out to Dr. Kelly Polnaszek who successfully defended her dissertation last Spring during the onset of the pandemic, titled, “Neuropsychological correlates of chronic pain: the influence of anxious arousal on cognitive control.” Ian Kahrilas (5th year student) has been working on several manuscripts, as well as his dissertation, that explore the neural correlates of positive emotion reactivity and regulation. He has also been providing neuropsychological assessment at Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital where he will be completing his internship next year. Andrew Rauch (2nd year student) has been working diligently on his Master’s Thesis titled, “Impact of App-Based Mindfulness Intervention on Depression and Emodiversity.” He was accepted into UIC’s Advanced Practicum in Adult Clinical Neuropsychology and is eager to begin developing his neuropsych skills over the next year. We are thrilled to have welcomed our newest lab member, Genevieve Roth. Genevieve spent the past three years working in the GYRL lab (NorthShore University HealthSystem) studying the development of pelvic pain conditions in girls and women, and she plans to submit an NIH NRSA proposal this summer to expand upon this area of research expertise. We are continuing to advance the lab’s primary agenda of studying psychological mechanisms that promote wellbeing and positive health outcomes. Additionally, our lab is continuing to work on a number of collaborative projects to advance EEG methods used for modeling brain networks and to improve dimensional approaches to assessing psychopathology and pain conditions. Dr. Silton is also contributing to initiatives that involve scientific advocacy and promoting gender and racial equity in academia. All lab members have been supporting and contributing to initiatives that are working toward racial justice within the psychology department, and within our broader communities as well. The following publications are indicative our recent research efforts from lab members on the science of positive emotions and wellbeing: Regulating positive emotions: Implications for promoting wellbeing in individuals with depression; The neuroscience of positive emotions and affect: Implications for cultivating happiness and wellbeing; Change is on the horizon: Call to action for the study of positive emotion and reward in psychopathology; Savoring the moment: A link between affectivity and depression; Predicting relapse after alcohol use disorder treatment in a high-risk cohort: the roles of anhedonia and smoking. We are excited for our future research endeavors as we continue to thrive as a small lab that produces big science, while first and foremost centering our own wellbeing and finding joy wherever we can.

Alumni News

Shona Vas (Class of 1997)
Shona Vas (Class of 1997) cannot believe 2021 marks 20 years since she graduated from Loyola! Shona is currently the Director of Clinical Training and an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Chicago and oversees the psychology externship, internship, and fellowship programs. Shona is very involved in the national training landscape (hello, virtual interviews!) and will chair the APPIC Board of Directors next year. Nihal (10) and Riya (8), and puppy, Jazmin (8 months) keep Shona and her husband, Stan Gonsalves, very busy; it’s a good thing her commute is 12 minutes from her garage to her desk. Shona has a special place in her heart for Loyola students and is always excited to have Loyola trainees on board. In terms of a double connection, two of UChicago’s psychology interns from the 2019-20 cohort have just accepted faculty positions at Loyola! Byron Brooks and Zoe Smith are thrilled to be joining the Department in August and we look forward to many more years of collaboration between our programs.

Carolyn Bates (Class of 2019)
Carolyn has accepted a Tenure-Track Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

Jackie Lennon Papadakis (Class of 2018)
Professionally, I'm in my second year as faculty at Lurie Children's Hospital/Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine, where I work with three groups: the Spina Bifida Center, the Sex Development (Differences of Sex Development) Program, and the hospital's inpatient Psychiatry & Behavioral Health Consultation Liaison Service. One of the best parts of working at Lurie is work alongside so many Loyola alum! Personally, my husband George and I welcomed our first child in October 2020, our baby boy Lazarus. He is almost 6 months old! He is an absolute joy. Included are pictures of him at 5 months and of us taking him to his first Cubs game which was on Easter. Cubs won!
Jenna Shapiro (Class of 2019)
I started a faculty position as a pediatric psychologist at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and an assistant professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Specifically, I am an attending psychologist embedded in the hematology/oncology department where I work with another fantastic Loyola alumna, Edna Romero, Ph.D.

Jessica Patel (Class of 2008)
Last year, Jessica Snowden Patel (2008) and her family left Illinois and moved to the Bay Area in California. She joined the clinical faculty at Stanford University and works in their Developmental-Behavioral Pediatric Department conducting evaluations of children from birth-12. Jessica and her husband, Alok, welcomed their 4th child, Arya, in November. She was happily greeted by her 3 big brothers (Kieran, age 8, Asher, age 6, and Dorian, age 2)

Brittany Lakin-Starr (Class of 2009)
In 2017, I left my job as a supervising psychologist at Illinois Masonic Medical Center to open a boutique group therapy practice with a dear colleague. The Chicago Center for Growth and Change recently celebrated its 4 year anniversary. We have a wonderful team of 6 psychologists and two post-doctoral fellows and specialize in several trauma treatments for children and adults, as well as Gottman couples therapy, and eating disorder treatment (www.chicagocenterforgrowth.com). I also co-lead a very popular evening psychodrama group, which is a creative arts therapy that uses guided dramatic action to facilitate change. Additionally, I am certified as a practitioner and trainer in psychodrama after many years of study and am the founder of the Chicago Center for Psychodrama, a training center where I teach psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, graduate students, and other mental health professionals about psychodrama (www.chicagopsychedrama.com). Yet, my favorite new role is that of mom. After a 9 year struggle with infertility, with the help of a friend who donated an egg and another wonderful woman who was our surrogate, Dave and I welcomed our daughter, Eliana Lakin Starr, on March 19, 2020. Eliana means "God answered us" in Hebrew. Our little pandemic baby just turned one and has blessed us in so many ways.

Caitlin Murray (Class of 2017)
Just a few updates for me! My son, Leo Mahavir Taing was born on May 22nd 2020 (so is now 10 months old). He is the happiest little baby, and we are so in love. I also eloped in November with my now husband, Rahul (see photo).

Margit Cox Henderson (Class of 1997)
Margit Cox Henderson, Ph.D. (Class of 1997) spent the lockdown finishing her second book, From Hope to Habit: Science-Based Solutions to Live Your Best Intentions. Like most clinicians, Margit transitioned her private practice to video therapy and enjoyed this much more than she expected. She also rediscovered her love of teaching and now uses Zoom to teach the Habits Deep-Dive Course, based on her book, and the Resiliency Restoration Course, helping soul-tired helping professionals across the country break out of the burnout cycle. She will celebrate her 30th wedding anniversary this summer. Margit now has an empty nest, and enjoys watching her two children live their adult lives. https://www.margithenderson.com/psychologist-resilience-trainer/

Katie Beckwith (Dorociak) (Class of 2019)
My husband and I gave birth to a baby girl, Ava Beckwith on 9/18/20! We are loving our little Cali babe (see photo).

Alisha Miller (Class of 2018)
I transitioned to a new position as a psychologist within the Division of Neurology at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. In addition, I continue to consult with Services for Teens at Risk (STAR) at Western Psychiatric Hospital on the assessment of suicide risk among adolescents and I recently partnered with a pediatric practice in West Virginia to increase access to behavioral health services for children and adolescents in rural communities.

Jessica Patel (Class of 2008) and family
Brittany Lakin-Starr (Class of 2009) and family
Caitlin Murray and family
Margit Cox Henderson and her book
Katie Beckwith and her family
Jessica Patel's children
Alex Psihogios (Class of 2016)
It has been a busy year, mostly at home! Professionally, I was appointed to Assistant Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania. My lab has been collecting data for the first aim of my K award from the National Cancer Institute—an app-based ecological momentary assessment study investigating day-to-day predictors of oral chemotherapy adherence among adolescents and young adults with cancer. Now more than ever, the pandemic has demonstrated the need for digital health. As Co-Chair/Co-Founder of the Society of Pediatric Psychology Digital Health SIG, we published a commentary that outlined considerations for identifying effective and engaging behavioral health apps for children (this can be very difficult to do since there are so many apps!). I also continue to provide clinical care to children and adolescents with cancer at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. Yet, my greatest accomplishment this year was giving birth to my daughter, Cora, who is the love of our lives!

Ashley Rolnik (Class of 2014)
I continue to work at NorthShore University Health System as the Behavioral Medicine Director of Gastroenterology and Weight Management. My most exciting news is that Jason and I welcomed our daughter into the world on August 25, 2020. Juliana Marie Filip is 7 months old now and a ray of sunshine in our lives! Hope all is well at Loyola!

Michelle (Christensen) Sarche (Class of 1998)
Michelle (Christensen) Sarche (Clinical Psychology, 1998) received two grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to support the mentorship and career development of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian scholars pursuing child development research careers and an biennial research conference. The Native Children’s Research Exchange Scholars program has supported 9 cohorts of Scholars since 2012. Read more about the Scholars and the program here! www.ncrescholars.org. You can also read more about the Native Children’s Research Exchange network and conference, also supported by a grant from NIDA, here www.ncrenetwork.org.

Suzanna So (Class of 2019)
Despite the pandemic, Alan and I got married virtually on June 20, 2020 and we also added a new dog to our family on the same day. (Still hoping that we can eventually have a party in person!) I am finishing up my postdoctoral fellowship at Children's Hospital Los Angeles at the end of August 2021, and I accepted a tenure-track assistant professor position in the Department of Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling at California State University Long Beach.

Stephanie Torres (Class of 2019)
I am currently a Bridge to Faculty Research Associate in the Department of Educational Psychology at UIC, where I am building a program of research focused on Latinx immigrant families and mental health. On a personal note, I was surprised with a pandemic engagement at the Chicago Botanic Gardens last summer! Eric (a New York native) and I met at a clinical externship during graduate school and we will be getting married in Chicago in 2022, once and for all proving Chicago is better than New York City.

Arie Zakaryan (Class of 2016)
Over at Phoenix Children's Hospital, this past year our Pain Clinic has started a Weekly Rehabilitation and Pain Program (WRAPP) at 2 locations, where we combine 3 specialties: physician (who also does acupuncture and kinesiotaping), psychologist, and physical therapist, for 3 hour-long, rotating appointments for 8 weeks. We are also incorporating more services, like osteopathic manipulation treatment (OMT) and ACEs screening to help patients dealing with multiple life stressors. I also joined our EDS/Hypermobility Clinic to help conduct intakes for patients identified as dealing with hypermobility and chronic pain. Plus, we also recently had our first official Division Chief join us in January! It's been exciting to see the growth! I also was elected to be the Membership Representative for the Arizona Psychological Association, so it has been interesting getting more involved with work at our state level. And though it was fun to briefly "crash" the Lurie’s virtual booth for a brief visit with fellow alums Devin McNulty and Jackie Papadakis at the vSPPAC Internship/Fellowship Programs on Parade, I'm hoping next year I can show folks around in Phoenix for an in-person SPPAC!
The Clinical Student Association (CSA) continues to meet monthly to allow clinical students to voice their concerns and needs regarding graduate student experiences. We have created an anonymous google form to allow students another avenue to voice concerns about assistantships, coursework, finances, and COVID-related changes in graduate student life! We hope that the CSA will continue to enrich and improve the program and serve as a resource for students to enact change and have a voice within the Clinical Program.

The Information Committee hopes that you are enjoying this year's edition of the Psyren! In addition to this newsletter, we created a virtual version of the Clinical bulletin board with information about the first-year students. Thank you for letting us share the many accomplishments, both professional and personal, of the Clinical Program!

Committee Updates

Clinical Students Association by Hannah Hagy

The Colloquium Committee has had a busy 2020-2021 year with the help of several LUC alums and other members of the psychology community! This Fall, we hosted a Working with LGBTQIA+ Populations panel in collaboration with the Diversifying Clinical Psychology Committee, with Dr. Byron Brooks, Dr. Eric Clausell, and Dr. Claire Coyne offering their insights. Lea Ventura once again graciously volunteered to lead our mandatory supervision event, and Nathan Lutz and Elicia Wartman led our clinical hours tracking colloquium. Dr. Lucy Leibowitz, Dr. Zoe Smith, Nathan Lutz, and Andrew Rauch served as fantastic resources on our Social Media and Online Presence panel this Spring. We also had a fantastic group of panelists for our Clinical Careers and Work/Life Balance Panel, including Dr. Colleen Conley, Dr. Daniel Dickson, Dr. Emily Edlynn, Dr. Tessa Kritikos, Dr. Cynthia Pierre, and Dr. Lea Ventura. We are looking forward to a virtual case conference and internship meeting this Spring!

The Employee Committee sent out our annual survey on outside employment opportunities our students engage in. We collected additional information this year on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected employment and gathered information for our students' motivations to work as psychometrists part-time. Currently, the Employment Committee, in collaboration with faculty and the Diversity Committee, is working on ways to collect information about financial resources and stressors for graduate students. We hope this information will bolster support for new financial initiatives within the graduate school.

The Social Committee had so much fun planning our Fall semester event this year! We hosted virtual catch phrase, which included some healthy smack talk and a lot of laughter. We are looking forward to our Spring social event on May 1st where we will meet in a park for some socially distanced fun and games. We can't wait to see you there! In addition to social events, the committee stepped into the student wellness arena. We coordinated with students to provide group meditations on Insight Timer and look toward moving towards wellness as individuals and as a program.

The technology committee has been hard at work this year updating the clinical psychology graduate program's website and liaising with other committees within the program. In the fall, the technology committee met to review the clinical psychology website to ensure the information was up to date and that diversity, equity, and inclusion were prioritized throughout the site. The committee worked with the diversifying clinical psychology committee on this front. In addition, the technology committee worked with the colloquium committee to put together a panel about social media and online presence as psychologists.

Colloquium Committee by Oliva Clark

Practicum Committee by Nicole Hodgkinson, Maya Hareli, and Laura Nicholson

Employment Committee by Liz Sargent and Adrien Winning

Information Committee by Jenny Osborne

Practicum Committee by Nicole Hodgkinson, Maya Hareli, and Laura Nicholson

Social Committee by Jenny Osborne

Technology Committee by Nathan Lutz
Anti-Racism at LUC

Where we’ve been....

For several years, individual students and faculty members have been leaders in making their research, classes, and our program more inclusive and equitable. These individuals spearheaded initiatives like the Diversifying Clinical Psychology Committee and the Inclusivity Gathering and Q&A during admissions interviews, as well as the Departmental Committee on Diversity Affairs (CODA), which co-hosted a monthly lecture series on racial injustice, developed an anti-racism statement for the psychology department, and supported faculty in created anti-racist, anti-colonialist syllabi. Over this past year, members of the Clinical Psychology program have worked to build upon these efforts in order to identify additional anti-racist actions that our program will implement moving forward. This movement towards racial justice in our program has included several distinct changes. First, faculty and students met individually with an anti-racism consultant in order to identify pain-points in the program. Faculty and students then met together to identify concrete steps forward. Subsequently, faculty have continued to meet and read articles related to anti-racism. Grayson also met individually with each cohort to discuss the consultant meeting and to listen to challenges that may be specific to each cohort or were not shared in the larger group. Furthermore, the faculty conducted a job search. Included in the application material was a section about each job candidate’s diversity and equity efforts. The faculty prioritized candidates whose body of work spoke to their commitment to anti-racism. They also incorporated current student feedback into the decision-making process and subsequently hired two incredible new faculty members! Additionally, a number of students spearheaded the development of a process group designed to create a place for students to discuss challenges in the program and Chicago more broadly as related to social and emotional health. This group will also include a concrete process for addressing conflict and promoting reconciliation. Finally, the faculty updated the Annual Review forms to include a section about student contributions to diversity and equity efforts. The change in this form will better represent the painstaking and essential work that several students have been doing for years.

Where we’re going....

Becoming a program that provides equitable opportunities and actively invests in and promotes equity and racial justice is an ongoing process. As such, there are several ongoing conversations about how to best structure our program and initiatives therein. First, Grayson is continuing to work with the graduate school and university to discuss the stipend and make movement towards decreasing financial barriers to becoming a clinical psychologist. Additionally, the student process group has identified mediators and will begin meeting regularly. Importantly, these efforts will continue alongside the work of CODA and the Diversifying Clinical Psychology Committee. If you are interested in supporting current graduate students and anti-racism initiatives, you can donate money to LUC that is specifically earmarked for the Clinical Psychology program.

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Diversifying Clinical Psychology Committee

by Cynthia Onyeka and Jenny Phan

The Diversifying Clinical Psychology Committee has had another busy year! Last year, our committee was awarded the Loyola Samuel A. Attoh Diversity and Inclusion Award. This year, we continued to move full steam ahead! In October, we attended the city-wide Diversifying Clinical Psychology Event. In November, we were invited to be a part of a panel at the ABCT Annual Conference in Atlanta that focused on addressing barriers for under-represented students and sharing resources across programs. In the new year, we hosted two Inclusivity Gatherings during the LUC Clinical Psychology Interview Days. We also reviewed and offered suggestions to faculty about their various syllabi in order to ensure inclusion of issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, disability status, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation in coursework. We are also currently in the process of revising the cultural diversity questions of the program’s Clinical Survey to ensure diversity inclusiveness in training and teaching. Our committee has also joined the Chicagoland Diversity Committee Network, a community of regional clinical psychology program diversity committees with the goal of networking and sharing resources. Finally, we are celebrating some success as we have been able to advocate and secure some resources through the Graduate School to offset some costs for prospective students associated with interviewing with our program!

Do you have thoughts? We would love to hear your opinions about how best to make the LUC Clinical Psychology program one that welcomes and amplifies diverse voices! Please email gholmbe@luc.edu with your thoughts.
Student Awards

Lauren Hindt: President's Medallion 2020-2021
Nicole Hodgkinson: Student Poster Award, APA Division 37
Nathan Lutz: Research Mentoring Program
Jenny Osborne: Research Mentoring Program
Jenny Phan: Research Mentoring Program

Thesis Defenses

Sarah Jolie: Ethnic racial socialization, ethnic identity, and internalizing outcomes in the context of stress among Mexican-origin families

Jenny Osborne: Beyond family: Patterns of kin and fictive kin caregivers among children in the child welfare system (see picture)

Liz Rea: Emotional reactivity and its relation to daily affect and sleep experiences among first year college students

Kaleigh Wilkins: A chronic route?: Examining the path between community violence exposure, posttraumatic stress and juvenile delinquency in low-income, urban, African-American youth

Dissertation Defenses

Catherine Dusing: Impact of exposure to violence on children’s mental health and family functioning: An ecological-transactional approach

Lauren Hindt: Ecological systems in the contexts of foster care and parental incarceration

Brynn Huguenel: Adherence to a mindfulness app for college students with depression: Patterns, predictors, and outcomes

Alexa Stern: Longitudinal associations among individual factors, parenting behaviors, and medical responsibility in youth with spina bifida: Mediation, moderation, and growth analyses (see picture)
More Good News!

**Postdoctoral Fellowships for 2021-2022**

**Cara DiClemente:** Adolescent DBT Postdoctoral Fellow, Stanford University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences (Palo Alto, CA)

**Laura Distel:** GI Psychology Service Postdoctoral Fellowship, Boston Children’s Hospital (Boston, MA)

**Catherine Dusing:** Postdoctoral Fellow, Division of Pediatric Psychology, Michigan Medicine / University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI)

**Lauren Hindt:** Postdoctoral Fellow, Pediatric Neuropsychology, University of Minnesota Medical School (Minneapolis, MN)

**Brynn Huguenel:** Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for OCD and Related Disorders, Massachusetts General Hospital / Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA)

**Alexa Stern:** Postdoctoral Fellowship in Pediatric/Clinical Child Psychology, Pediatric Psychology Track, Baylor College of Medicine / Texas Children’s Hospital (Houston, TX)

**Internship Placements for 2021-2022**

**Carol Hundert:** Children’s Mercy Kansas City, Clinical Child Psychology (Kansas City, MO)

**Ian Kahrilas:** Edward Hines, JR. VA Hospital (Hines, IL)

**Laura Nicholson:** Rush University Medical Center, Child, Adolescent, and Pediatric Psychology (Chicago, IL)

**Diana Ohanian:** University of Minnesota Medical School, Neuropsychology-Pediatric Psychology (Minneapolis, MN)

**Cynthia Onyeka:** University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston (Houston, TX)

**Externship Placements for 2021-2022**

**Yvita Bustos:** University of Chicago U-STAR Clinic

**Olivia Clark:** Rush NeuroBehavioral Center

**Hannah Hagy:** University of Chicago Adult Neuropsychology

**Maya Hareli:** Pediatric Developmental Center (PDC), Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center

**Nicole Hodgkinson:** Pediatric Developmental Center (PDC), Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center

**Sarah Jolie:** Rush University Medical Center: Building Early Connections Practicum

**Nathan Lutz:** DePaul University EARLY Externship

**Jenny Osborne:** Rush University Medical Center: Advanced Child and Adolescent Therapy and Assessment Practicum

**Jenny Phan:** Rush University Medical Center: Advanced Child and Adolescent Therapy and Assessment Practicum

**Andrew Rauch:** UIC Advanced Practicum in Adult Clinical Neuropsychology

**Liz Rea:** University of Chicago Adult CBT Clinic & Oak Park Behavioral Medicine

**Elizabeth Sargent:** Cook County Juvenile Court Clinic—Advanced Externship in Juvenile Forensic Psychology

**Elicia Wartman:** University of Chicago Child/Adolescent Advanced Psychotherapy and Pediatric Psychology

**Kaleigh Wilkins:** University of Chicago Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) Program

**Adrien Winning:** Shriners Hospitals for Children


A Pandemic Reflection by Scott Leon

It’s been just over a year since our lives changed in ways we will never forget. It has got me thinking a lot about loss and the profound effect it can have. Some in our world, nation and even Loyola community have experienced the worst loss possible, the death of a loved one. Your pain and loss remind all of us of how precious life is and how important it is to cherish the time we have with those we love. For those of us who did not experience this most painful loss, we nonetheless faced much smaller losses that impacted us in ways that challenged us to grapple with what matters most in our lives. My journey with these losses is ongoing and has changed me forever.

I remember the moment I turned off the lights in my office and headed home for what I thought would be a couple months at most. I didn’t even bother to clean my office, filled with open books, scattered manuscript pages and a couple half empty coffee mugs that I am sure by now have sprouted their own ecosystems. I thought the most I would have to figure out was zoom and keeping my undergraduates from cheating on tests. But the illusion began to fade with time. On my first day at home, I found myself being interrupted on a regular 10-minute schedule. At 10:30, I went to look for my daughter, who wasn’t at her workstation, only to find her hiding in her closet playing Among Us. I thought, “OK, I guess I will need to keep a closer eye on her” but was pleased to hear my son’s excitement in his room; his transition was surely going better. I opened the door to share in his excitement for school, but instead saw him doing an uncoordinated rendition of one of those goofy Fortnite dances in front of his computer. Apparently, his 9th place finish was a record for him. I assumed it was just the transition, but I could not have been more wrong.

What I see now is that I began to experience a series of losses. First was the loss of a freedom I had previously enjoyed. The freedom of my day to engage in professional life uninterrupted. This loss led to another loss, the loss of time that allowed me to be productive, which impacted my professional identity as fewer goals were accomplished. Then there was the loss of social outlets like time spent with friends on back porches, with my wife at restaurants, the loss of daily connection to colleagues at work and a cancelled trip to see my family.

But it was the loss of my sense of self as a parent that proved to be the hardest. Gone were the days I could enjoy my work life, leave it behind and head home to enjoy a few hours with my kids. Gone were the trips to the zoo, the library and local pool. Instead, my days were filled with the thankless tasks of keeping my kids on schedule, refereeing fights, and failed attempts to teach them concepts that were not sinking in due to the nearly imperceptible words written by the teacher on the easel board through the grainy zoom medium. After one tutoring episode, my daughter took a test and performed poorly. She screamed from the other room, “Daddy you are terrible at teaching!” I glanced in her direction but as I turned my head back towards my screen, I could see my entire Psychology 101 class in uproarious laughter. Instead of quietly reading an article in my peaceful office, I was chasing a barking dog five minutes before class to the screams of my kids to shut her up. After an exhausting day with them, I no longer had the energy for bike rides to the ice cream shop and the iPads came out for hours at a time. I remember a beautiful spring day watching my kids mindlessly stare at a screen but felt no energy to stop it. I was working three times as hard to be a worse parent and I felt terrible about it. There was no letup in the fall and I reached a breaking point. I remembered a quote attributed to Erik Erikson stating that it is not loss in life that is the problem, but loss without meaning. It was the losses that seemed to bring no meaning that were ravaging my self-esteem and identity.

Time and the pandemic marched on and I had no idea when the ground hog’s day nightmare would end. And then something changed. It was early November, and I snuck up behind a door to overhear my 10-year-old Victoria’s interactions with classmates in a breakout room. She was new to the school this year and many kids already had strong friendships. This was a constant worry for her in the fall. The previous day I role-played with her how to talk to kids to learn about them and make connections. She didn’t think she could do it. With a minute left in the breakout room, in a nervously cracked voice she whispered a question to the girls: “Do you play any sports or do other activities?” My heart stopped and it felt like a minute before anyone spoke. But then, one after another, they all took turns chiming in about their interests and her confidence grew as she stood up straight and asked them what they liked about their activities, reflecting back their excitement (yes, I did go over reflection skills with her). By the end of the week, she said she thought she finally made a friend. Then it hit me: I had been witness to the beginning of my daughter’s friendship. I was witness to her courage and got to see how to she relates to the world around her in a way I would have never been able to do had she been in school and doing this on the playground. The pandemic was offering me a way to be a more intimate part of my children’s lives.
The next morning at 10:15, I heard the sounds of large objects slamming onto the floor of my son’s bedroom. I ran upstairs to find him picking up his math book and slamming it on the floor, then again, each time harder. He ran to his worksheets and ripped them up, scattering them as far as he could throw. He had studied hard all week for his math test and was disappointed with his score. He fell onto his bed and began to cry. I joined him on the bed, put my hand on his head and said, “I know how hard you tried and how important this was to you and I am sorry”. A few minutes later, he sat up, wiped his tears and said “There’s another one in two weeks. I will be ready”. When the next test day arrived, I paced the floor downstairs as he took the exam, bracing for the sound of slamming books. Then, the door opened, and he bounced downstairs. He looked emotionless at me, clearly exercising the art of suspense. “Well?” I said. A smile finally broke through, and he said “A”. I pumped my arms in the air and ran 15 feet to him with my high-five hand up the whole way over. I realized that the pain of his disappointment two weeks earlier and the thrill of his excitement on this day were more intense than anything I had ever experienced with him around school because I was experiencing them with him in real time. It was like I was in the classroom right there with him because I was!

And then there was my teenager, Ava. I didn’t expect that I would be witness to friendships developing or that she would in any way be interested in a high five for any reason whatsoever. But I began to pay attention to her schedule and noticed she came down for lunch every day at 12:20 and ate on the couch for exactly 15 minutes. With my new realization in tow, I leapt into action. I began to casually pretend I had a break in my schedule and could make her lunch since I was making mine anyway. I then took a leap of faith and sat next to her on the couch, hoping she might take the cue and put her phone down. She did, and by the end of the week we had a standing lunch date. Ava is going to college next year, so we spent our days talking about her applications, her rankings, and what she thought might happen to her high school friendships when she left. It was light and fun and I felt closer to her than I had in years.

It wasn’t long before we began to hear about plans for opening back up the schools in our district for full-time, in-person instruction and the date was set for March 29th. My first reaction was “Wow, so this is happening, schools are opening”, followed by “This will be good for them”. But I was avoiding something, and I knew it. I only had a few weeks left with them at home before our Covid-manufactured time together would be over. I thought of how much closer we had gotten and all that we had experienced together. I began to feel very sad but convinced myself that nothing really had to change. That prediction turned out to be wishful thinking, and I am getting reacquainted with a favorite word among children: Fine. “How was school?” “Fine”. “How’d the math test go?” “Fine”. If I were to raise my hand for a high-five after hearing about a test result now it would be as strange to them as me breaking out into a Fortnite dance.

The first day they went back to school full-time felt like any pre-pandemic morning, rushed and bustling with regular shouts of “You’ll be late!”. Then they left and I was alone in the house I had shared with them for over a year. I couldn’t bear to think back on all the memories. I took the long way to the kitchen from my office so I wouldn’t see what had become of my daughter’s workstation, once a mess of scattered art and empty applesauce containers, now just a clean dining room table with nothing on it. I had to face the sadness, so I went to my son’s room. I pulled his math book from the bookshelf and sat on the bed where he had sobbed next to me months earlier. I listlessly flipped through a few pages and began to cry. I finally regained the freedom and space I had so resented losing a year ago, and it meant nothing compared to what I had just lost. But it was the loss of the life I knew prior to the pandemic, and my painful reaction to it, that made way for all these wonderful experiences. In the end, Erikson was right, it wasn’t the loss I experienced in March of 2020 that was the problem, it was that I didn’t see any meaning in it. I had finally derived meaning from it, but the experience was fleeting, making way for a new wave of loss. How strange that my new loss made way for the regaining of the freedom that for so long represented the loss prism through which I experienced the pandemic. And what of this new loss, the loss of my intimate connection to the moment-by-moment daytime experiences of my kids? What meaning will come with this loss? I cannot say, but at least now I know to look for it.
Marriages and Engagements!

Laura Nicholson and Branon McParlin were married on July 11, 2021 (and masked appropriately!)

Brynn Huguenel and Joe DeLorenzo got engaged in the White Mountains (NH) on New Year’s Eve

Life Outside Loyola

Brynn, Cara, and Catherine see each other one last time before moving from Chicago!

Jenny P, Cynthia, and Carol (behind camera) enjoy a socially distanced picnic at Montrose Beach
Stephanie Torres and Suzanna So explored New York City while visiting for the Annual Convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies.

The second years winter-walk in Andersonville!

Jenny O’s coworker is not good at social distancing.

Second years having fun with zoom filters

Hannah, Nicole, Jenny P., Diana, Maya exchange Friends-giving treats!

The sixth years celebrate the holidays and Brynn’s fashion is inspirational, per usual.
First years are all together for the first (and only) time this semester

CASA Lab graduate students meet all together for the first time for a socially distanced bonfire by the lake

The sixth-year cohort catches up from six different states via Zoom!

The (fully vaccinated) fifth years reunite to celebrate a successful match day!

First years celebrating after completing their first day of class

Jenny O and Amanda are suited up for practicum