

# PSYC Info

THOMAS HARRIOT COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

## Letter from the Chair



Dear Alumni and Friends,  
Arrrgh! As I'm writing this letter, it is Talk Like a Pirate Day. As ECU continues to grow, now nearly 29,000 Pirates, the Department of Psychology continues to grow as well. This fall, we have 839 declared and intended undergraduate majors; as of last spring, we had 39 master's students, and the largest doctoral program in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, with 42 health psychology doctoral students.

Raising the GPA requirement to declare psychology as a major (from 2.0 to 2.3) has not slowed down our growth. We continue to conform to the APA guidelines for the undergraduate major, which require a challenging mix of core courses

tapping biological bases of psychology, learning and cognition, statistics and research methods, as well options from other content areas such as social, developmental, abnormal, and ethnocultural influences.

We've increased our service learning courses, with students now earning credit for field experience by tutoring middle school students in Greene and Nash counties, a literacy program at Building Hope afterschool program, staffing crisis lines at REAL Crisis Center, and a new placement with the Mediation Center of Eastern Carolina. In addition, many faculty include undergraduate students in their research labs, so students learn research skills and get experiences that help them be competitive in applications for graduate programs. Faculty research programs continue to offer findings to help improve the health and well being of residents of our region, including studies discerning the link between depression and cardiovascular disease, awareness of pain and sleep issues for youth with sickle cell disease, improved care

for people with implanted cardiac devices and offer novel treatment for sexual assault survivors.

In this issue of PSYC Info, you can see our scholarship and award winners. This fall, the initial meeting of Psi Chi/Psychology Club was standing room only, with over 80 attendees. We are especially proud of how this organization has grown under Dr. Michael Baker's advisement, and now Dr. Ted Whitley is renewing his Psi Chi leadership! The new Scholarship established by Psi Chi is announced in this issue. A study of barriers to students completing college has identified that even small amounts of funding can mean the difference to keep a student in school, so we celebrate this initiative, and hope you will consider supporting it.

It's a great day to be a Psychology Pirate!

**Susan McCammon**  
*Chair and Professor*

### Did You Know?

For the 2015 year, the Health Psychology PhD program had 170 complete applications, and admitted a total of 16 students to get our cohorts (9% acceptance rate).

## Departments of Psychology and Family Medicine Receive Federal Grant

The Departments of Psychology and Family Medicine at ECU were recently awarded a highly competitive \$730,000 Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to train doctoral-level psychologists.

The purpose of the grant is to prepare doctoral-level psychologists to provide mental and behavioral health care in medical settings with an emphasis on underserved and/or rural populations. This program strives to provide cutting-edge training in primary integrated care to students who possess a passion for working with poor, rural, and underserved patients. Faculty members Dr. Rob Carels, Dr. Marissa Carraway, Dr. Dennis Russo, and Dr. Susan McCammon were instrumental in this success.

Six health psychology doctoral students (from the clinical health/pediatric school Psychology concentrations) will be selected each year. The program aims to train 18 doctoral students over the three-

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## ...Federal Grant

year grant period (2016–2019).

As an integrated healthcare trainee, each intern will:

- gain specialized knowledge and skills related to integrated behavioral health;
- participate in a didactic curriculum intentionally designed to prepare students for practice in a integrated settings;
- learn to function as behavioral health consultants, fully integrated and collaborating with medical and other multidisciplinary health providers (residents, physician extenders, nutritionists, pharmacists, nurses, and social workers) to provide brief assessment and intervention at the point-of-care; and
- receive a \$25,000 stipend (for tuition, fees, health insurance, and living expenses).

“The HRSA grant represents the exact mission of East Carolina University which involves student success and service to the public,” said Dr. Rob Carels from ECU Psychology.

“This is the type of training that future psychologists really need,” added Ashley Rhodes, doctoral student in clinical health psychology. “The integration of psychologists into medical settings better meets the comprehensive needs of patients and more effectively prepares us for future practice.”



## 50th Anniversary of ECU's Psi Chi Chapter

This year, we are proudly celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of East Carolina University's chapter of Psi Chi: The International Honor Society in Psychology. Our chapter's charter was originally issued on December 8th, 1966 under the leadership of the group's first faculty advisor, Dr. William Grossnickle. A lot has changed since that time. In 1966, ECU was still named “East Carolina College.” The name change to “East Carolina University” went into effect the following year. Furthermore, at that time Psi Chi was a “National” Honor Society whereas it has since expanded internationally in 2009. A total of 1,855 outstanding students have been inducted into our chapter in the years since its founding. Although the vast majority of these individuals are now among the ranks of our alumni, the chapter has a very active group of 59 current student members.

The duty of advising this student organization has been passed on from founding

advisor Dr. William Grossnickle to several Psychology Department faculty members over the years. Dr. Michael Brown, Dr. Jeannie Golden, Dr. Derrick Wirtz, and Dr. Michael Baker have all provided guidance over the decades. This year, Dr. Ted Whitley, who served as student president of ECU's Psi Chi Chapter in 1967, has assumed the role of faculty advisor.

Psi Chi officers and members carry out responsibilities of departmental and community service. The group's primary mission is to provide current students with early career guidance. Guest speakers at the bi-weekly meetings educate students about current developments within various subfields of psychology, provide information about volunteer opportunities and graduate school options, and share helpful tips for preparing for the GRE standardized test and materials for graduate school applications.

For the past five years, Psi Chi has invited faculty to a

## Psi Chi Engagement Scholarship

This new scholarship goes to an active Psi Chi member that shows maturity, academic integrity, and willingness to give their all to the community and local chapter. The scholarship is \$500 yearly, \$250/semester. We are funding this scholarship with residual funds from member dues and fundraisers and by the kind donations from current and past members. Recipients will be determined by the Psychology Department Scholarship Committee.

meeting every semester at which faculty members inform members about opportunities to serve as a research assistant in their laboratories in order to gain valuable hands-on research experience. Psi Chi officers and members also serve a critical role in organizing and conducting our departmental Graduate Recognition Ceremony every May and December. Additionally, the officers lead the group on a community service or charitable fundraising mission each year. In recent years, these have included fundraising for the Brain and Behavior Foundation, Relay for Life, and even a completion of the “ice bucket challenge” for the ALS Foundation.

ECU's chapter of Psi Chi continues to serve as a valuable resource for students, enabling them to connect with faculty members, gain leadership experience, contribute to the community, and prepare for the future.

## Sears Collaborates with Vidant Hospital System to Help Heart Patients Live with Heart

Professor Dr. Sam Sears engaged nearly 2,000 patients throughout Eastern North Carolina during the February Heart Month. Dr. Sears is considered the world authority on the psychological care and quality of life outcomes of patients with implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) patients. He has published over 150 articles in the medicine and psychology research literatures and provides lectures all over the world on a regular basis. This time, Dr. Sears was able to present his work in Edenton, Colerain, Murfreesboro, Nags Head, Washington, Greenville, Wallace, and Tarboro, North Carolina.

Dr. Sears presented research and everyday strategies as part of the hospital system wide series on heart health, describing the heart and mind connection in preventing and managing cardiac disease. Attendees were given a *Living with Heart* handbook written by Dr. Sears that detailed specific strategies for achieving optimal health across mind, body, and relationships.

Dr. Sears is a professor in the Departments of Psychology and Cardiovascular Sciences at East Carolina University. He also serves as the Director of Doctoral Studies in the Department of Psychology.

The full lecture can be viewed on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmDP1Z78RDI>

## Pediatric School and Clinical Health Psychology Doctoral Student Internships

### 2014-2015

**Kristen Alston**—Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, MI

**Laura Daniels**—Cherokee Health Systems, Knoxville, TN

**Lawrence Woodrow**—Sheridan VA Medical Center, Sheridan, WY

**Holly Manley**—Cherry Hospital, Goldsboro, NC

### 2015-2016

**Katherine Cutitta**—Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's Hospital Department of Psychiatry

**Julia Dodd**—Charles George Veteran's Affairs Medical Center, Asheville, NC

**Rebecca Ladd**—Kansas University Medical Center, Kansas City, KS

**Lindsey Rosman**—Alpert Medical School at Brown University

**Eric Watson**—Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Department of Rehabilitation Science, New York, NY and continuing as post-doc

**Kayzandra Exum**—Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology, Munroe-Meyer Institute

### 2016-2017

**Jessica Buzenski**—University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center/St. Jude Pediatric, Memphis, TN

**Ryan Ford**—Nebraska Internship Consortium/Munroe-Meyer Institute Behavioral pediatrics, Lincoln, NE

**James Loveless**—Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University/Charlie Norwood Veteran Affairs Medical Center, Augusta, GA

**Emmi Scott**—Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Department of Rehabilitation Science

## Awards/Scholarships

The Department of Psychology 2015-2016 Scholarship and Award winners included the following students and faculty:

### Students

Department of Psychology Outstanding Senior Award—**Astrid LaCruz Montilla**

Outstanding Senior Thesis Award—**Brianna Knox**

Miller Moore Undergraduate Scholarship—**Danielle Goltermann**

Miller-Moore Graduate Scholarship/Krystal Trout University Book Exchange Scholarship in Psychology—**Aenia Amin**

Carol Smith Ripley Scholarship—**Brianna Roberts**

Earl and Norma Childers Scholarship—**Marci Toppin**

Patricia Jane Clarke Endrikat Memorial Scholarship—**Brittany Smith**

Walker-May Scholarship—**Kyla Francis**

### Faculty

Hazel F. Stapleton Memorial Teaching Excellence Award—**Lisa Maag**

Psi Chi Teaching Award—**Kendall Thornton**

Dr. William Hendrix Psychology Faculty Excellence Award—**Lisa Campbell**

ECU Scholar Teacher Award—**Tuan Tran**

ECU Interdisciplinary Research Award (\$14,180)—**Tuan Tran**

ECU Interdisciplinary Research Award (\$13,050)—**Cecelia Valrie**

## Graduate Conducts Research on Leadership

In December 2015, Justin Raines was the first graduate of the occupational health psychology concentration of the health psychology doctoral program. Dr. Raines is now a research scientist at CEB's Talent Management Labs where he conducts research on leadership. His specific emphasis is on the identification of leadership behaviors associated with both performance and derailment. In addition to his PhD, he also earned an MA in industrial/organizational psychology from ECU.

## Doctoral Student Leigh Patterson Wins Student Scholarship Award



Doctoral Student Leigh Patterson was awarded the 2016 North Carolina Association of Behavior Analysis (NC ABA) Student Scholarship Award at the association's annual conference in February 2016. Each year the award is granted to a student who has "outstanding achievement in advanced courses and practical experiences in behavior analysis,

thereby demonstrating excellent potential for behavior analysis application in the future". Ms. Patterson was awarded a plaque and a \$100.00 stipend.

Dr. Jeanne Golden, ECU faculty member and Jason Cone of Behavior Consultation and Psychological Services, PLLC, nominated Ms. Patterson. Dr. Golden presented Leigh with the award at the conference opening and gave a speech about their collaborative work at the conference.

### Did You Know?

Clinical health psychology is accredited by the American Psychological Association and is one of seven programs in the United States focused primarily on health psychology.

For the 2016 year, the Industrial/Organizational Psychology MA program had 159 applications and enrolled 13 students (8% acceptance rate).

The MA/CAS School Psychology training program has held NASP-program approval (national recognition) for more than 20 years.

The Pass Clinic in the Department of Psychology serves both the campus community and the public by providing low cost assessment and treatment services to the greater Greenville area. In fact, in 2015-2016, 24 graduate student clinicians under close faculty supervision provided -17,000 hours of services with close to 1,000 hours of psychological treatment.

## Donors 2015 - 2016

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## Please Consider making a contribution to the Psychology Department!

You can donate on-line by following this link: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/give/how-to-give.cfm> or you can also donate by sending a check to ECU Foundation, with *Department of Psychology* on the *memo line*, should be sent to:

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