



Counseling Psychology PsyD Program

Fall 2021 Newsletter

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SPRINGFIELD
COLLEGE



Editors: Dr. Scarlett Choi, Jennifer Tarm, Sean Bourgeoise, Julia Jermyn, Alex Lerner



Director's Message

I'm writing this message on my flight back home after a Thanksgiving holiday trip. I had a great time with people I love whom I couldn't meet in person for a while due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This holiday was a time to reunite, reconnect, and recover from the challenging times. While the challenges are ongoing (especially with the recent surge of a new variant!), the reconnection with people who care and support will empower us to manage any new challenges to come next year.

Reflecting on the blessing of Thanksgiving, I am grateful for our successful completion of the first in-person semester after 18 months of online learning. This semester reminded me of the reasons why I chose this career: The classroom filled with students' enthusiasm, inspiring and intellectual conversations, laughter and fun small talks before and after class and in the hallway. What made it possible is everyone's cooperation with the College policies and CDC guidelines. Although there were several moments that some people were not feeling well, everyone effortfully engaged in self-care and care for others. We truly appreciated the in-person contact and learning, and we made a great collective effort to make it a successful semester.

This semester also reminded us of our resilience, our ability to recover and restore. The completely refreshed bulletin boards in Locklin hallway, the updated brochures for the program's promotion, and the updated website represent our refreshed mind and new hopes for positive changes. I want to express my deepest gratitude to my amazing fellows, Sean Bourgeois, Julia Jermyn, Alex Lerner,

and Jennifer Tarm, and everyone who joined the collective efforts to revitalize the program. We also welcome ten new students who joined our 2021 cohort and brought new energy to the program.

Our program is also looking forward to some new changes in the spring of 2022. Dr. Elizabeth Morgan, the Chair of the Psychology Department, is going to serve as an interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for a year and half, during which Dr. Maysa DeSousa is going to serve as an interim Chair of the Psychology Department. We appreciate Dr. Morgan's leadership in the department and support for our PsyD program, and we welcome and look forward to working with Dr. DeSousa for our PsyD program.

On Thursday, December 9th, we will have a virtual Town Hall meeting. Our student's health and safety are of top priority. We look forward to hosting an in-person Town Hall next spring in the warm weather. Until then, (virtually) come meet friendly faces and celebrate our accomplishment of another semester. I look forward to seeing you all at the Town Hall, and wish you a happy, safe, and recharging holiday break.

Virtual Town Hall Zoom Link:

<https://springfield.zoom.us/j/4825161583>

Best,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scarett Choi".

Scarett Choi, Ph.D.
PsyD Program Director

COMING BACK TO CAMPUS

Top Highlights

This semester marked a great transition for every aspect of the program. Let us take a moment to highlight some of the successes and new opportunities that have blossomed through the challenges that the pandemic had put in our way.



1

We welcomed 10 new students in our 2021 starting cohort. You can see many of the students working across campus from being fellows for the program to working at the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

2

Our licensure rates surpassed 70% as we watched another group of Springfield alumni reach the next level in their careers. We also saw a 100% match rate for students entering practicum, another impressive showing from our strong students!

3

Application rates to our program soared throughout the pandemic year and we expect to see this increased interest in our program continue to grow in the upcoming year.

4

We have added a new practicum organization site for managing the application cycle! Also, keep an eye out on new programming surrounding supporting our students in the practicum application process.

COMING BACK TO CAMPUS

5

Speaking of impressive statistics, our program received an important facelift across our web page and in our recruitment materials. If you have not had the chance already, take a peek at our new brochure showcasing the successes of our current students and former alumni.

ALUMNUS PROFILE

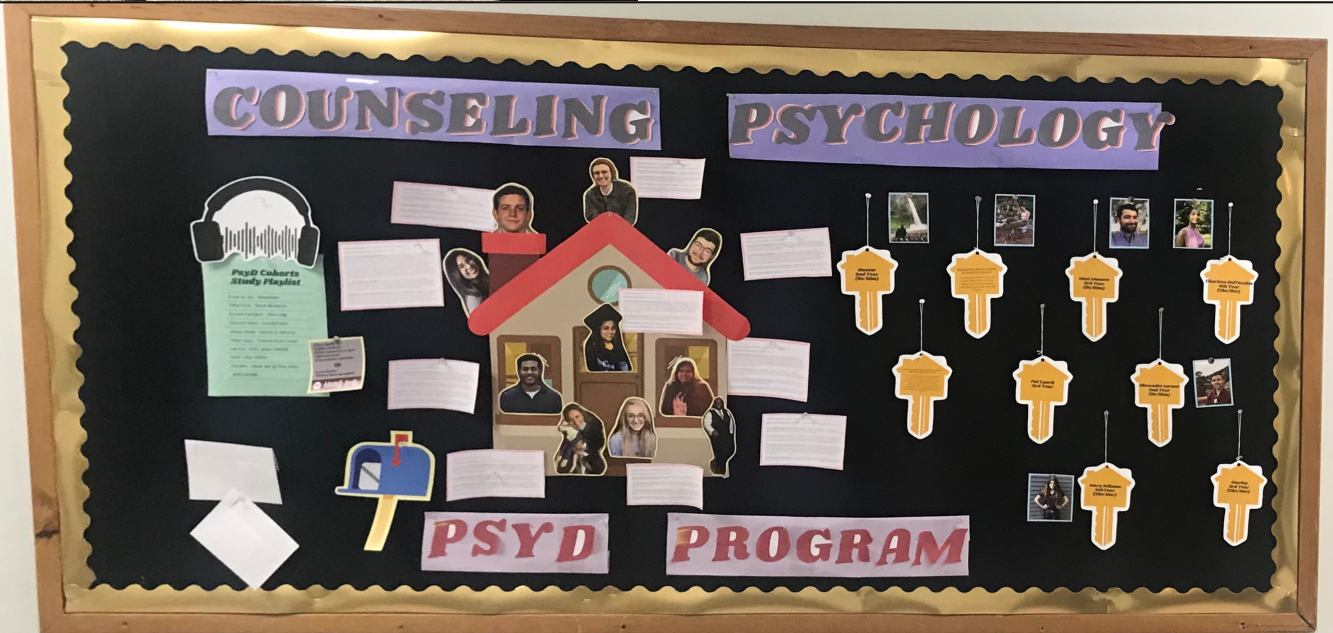
Ronald Ma, PsyD'16

Licensed Psychologist
Private Practice



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Post-quarantine flexibility across practicum sites and class format has allowed students new opportunities for enacting programming and conducting research in exciting new ways.



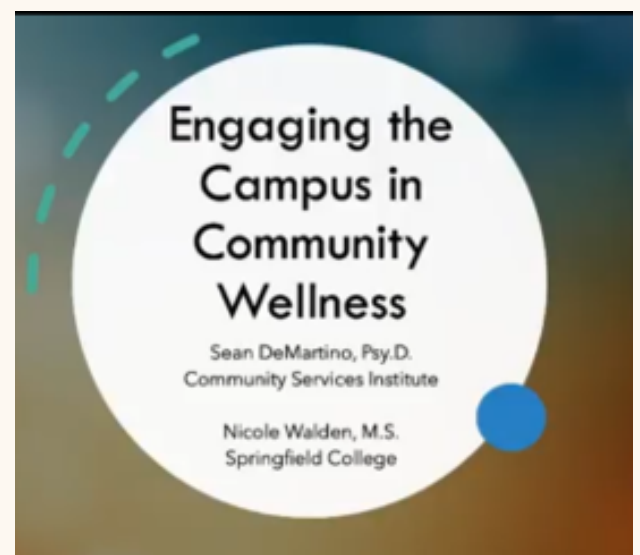
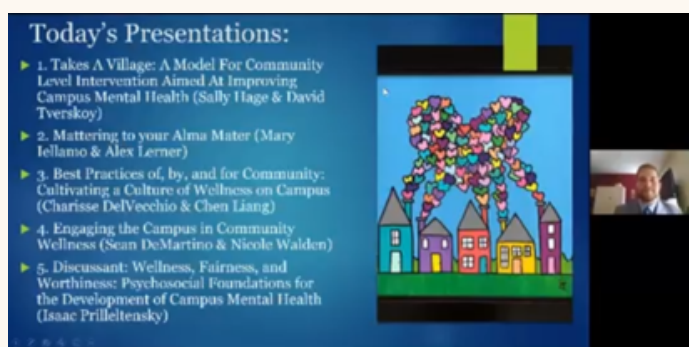
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You can also see some new photos in our promotional materials and around the halls of Locklin providing a window into how far the program continues to grow.

APA '21 Virtual Conference

The APA 2021 Virtual conference went on without a hitch for our Springfield students! The conference entitled "It Takes a Village: A Whole Campus Model for Positively Transforming College Mental Health," explored concepts of community involvement and mental health across various levels from the campus to the city level. Headed by Dr. Sally Hage

and Dr. DeMartino, our students aspired to putting together a 2 hour conference with the guest speaker Isaac Prilleltensky as the keynote speaker of the piece. Our contributing students: Mary Iellamo, Chen Liang, Charisse DelVecchio, Alexander Lerner, David Tverskoy, and Nicole Walden. The APA 2021 team was made up of Springfield's own TAP research lab which is preparing to tackle the APA 2022 upcoming conference. If you have any interest in exploring the TAP team, being part of the next conference or wish to learn more about the work that our faculty and students have completed, please contact Dr. Sally Hage or Dr. Sean DeMartino of the TAP research lab.



SEAT at the Table

Join the Springfield College community for our 2nd annual Springfield College SEAT (Social justice, Equity, Accountability, Transformation) at the Table Week took place from Oct. 17 through Oct. 24. This year's format allowed for a combination of in person and virtual formatting. SEAT at the Table Week was organized by Psy.D. student Charisse DelVecchio as a conference that offered educational experiences dedicated to deconstructing oppressive systems, liberating educational spaces, and transforming our community towards equity for all.

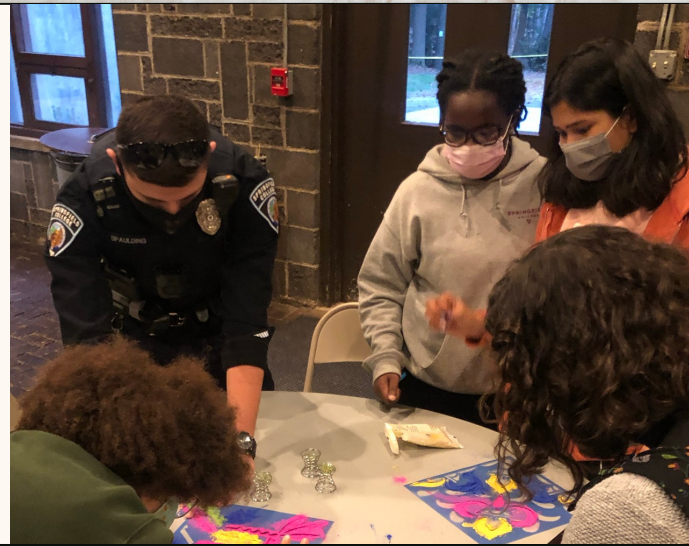
First year Psy.D. students Grayson Stevens and Zev Levi Spiegel led the facilitation, "Building Trans and Queer Community: A group dialogue on safe and brave intersectional spaces." The event—which had a turnout of nearly fifty participants—aimed to foster trans and queer community on campus. "As a facilitator I took so much meaning and nuance away from these discussions and I hope that



participants left feeling invigorated to continue thinking deeply and critically about gender, as well as ways to actively participate in trans and queer liberation work," Zev said of the event. When asked about his vision for the future at Springfield College, Grayson Stevens explained, "My hope is that both the Psy.D. program and the Springfield College community more broadly can continue to commit our time, energy, and resources to addressing issues of injustice—particularly those that disproportionately affect transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive people."

Festival of Lights

Diwali is a Festival of Lights celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains. A group of Springfield College students who celebrate the festival got together this semester to discuss how much they miss being home for this festival.



Hence, Rhea Bhatia, a PsyD student, along with the Office of Spiritual Life, put together an event to celebrate the spirit of Diwali. Deepashree Karwe, Chhandak Roy, and Prajwal Sapkota contributed to the planning of this event.



The event took place on East Campus on November 5th, 2021. The space was filled with music, lights, food, and fun activities that included rangoli making. The student formed connections by sharing how the festival is celebrated amongst their families.

Welcome First Year Cohort!



Zev Levi Spiegel
(He/Him, They/Them)

"My cat, Pippin, is named after both the musical and LOTR and I'd love to talk to anyone about any of those topics anytime (Pippin the Cat being a topic of her own)."



Joseph Kennedy
(He/Him/His)

"A hobby beyond sports/fitness that I've been trying to develop is DIY/Home improvement stuff."



Deepashree "Dee"
Mohan Karve
(She/Her/Hers)

"I was a professional Judo player for more than 15 years and I have represented India at Junior Asian Championships at Hong Kong in 2015."



David Middlebrooks
(He/His/Him)

"I lean pretty strongly on the introversion continuum. And I embrace that. So if you see one of my faces, I'm not judging you (maybe I am :)) I'm just processing."



Grayson Stevens
(He/Him, They/Them)

"A fun fact about me is that I hope to visit all of the Major League Baseball stadiums at least once."

Welcome First Year Cohort!



Rhea Bhatia
(She/Her/Hers)

"I'm passionate about plant-based living."



Olivia Vasiloff
(She/Her/Hers)

"I am a former collegiate athlete in cross country and track & field. I still run competitively in half and full marathons!"



Julia Jermyn
(She/Her/Hers)

"I have been to 26 countries!"



Sean Bourgeoise
(He/Him/His)

"I picked up golf at age 20 and ended up competing in Division II."



Jennifer Tarm
(She/Her, They/Them)

"I am a tea enthusiast! Can't live without my matchas. Oh, and coconut water too!"

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO "YOUNGER" COHORTS?

Hunter Soens 2nd Year

"Make time for yourself! Don't forget to take self-care as seriously as you take school work and clinical work. Reach out to anybody in the program if you are ever struggling or have questions. We are all here for you."



MJ Snider 2nd Year

"Doing your best may not seem like a lot on some days, but it's all anyone, including yourself, can ask of you."

Matt Monaco 3rd Year

"Explore, self-introspect, and try out different approaches, styles, and clientele to find your clinical style as well as the population you find passion in working with."

"To those in their first year, use this time to get to know each other and also work on self-care and time management. When practicums start in the second year, there are many more demands placed on you and these early steps at looking after yourselves and managing your time will serve you well. "

Pat Lynch 3rd Year

**WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU WISH YOU KNEW
WHEN YOU WERE A FIRST YEAR?**

**Charisse DelVecchio
4th Year**

**"There is no need to say yes to everything,
the opportunities will keep coming."**



**Mary Iellamo
4th Year**

**"Even when you doubt yourself or feel
overwhelmed, you are still doing
meaningful work and taking steps toward
where you want to be."**



**Marley Balasco
3rd Year**

**"Start thinking about your dissertation and
consider starting your literature review as early
as you can. "**

**"To think about practicum letters several months in
advance to practicum site applications. The due dates
for applications vary for practicum sites with some sites
having due dates as early as end of November.
Something to think about now."**

**Nicole Walden
2nd Year**

Springfield College Counseling Center

Typical Day

Connor's weekly schedule consists of two full days and one-half day for a total of 20 hours. We decided to examine what a full-day at the counseling center typically looks like. Connor meets with his first client at 9:00AM, then usually sees three clients back to back. "Each session lasts 50 minutes and you have ten minutes to write your progress note at the end of it. You get pretty good at writing quick notes, but also sufficient notes as well." This year, the Springfield College Counseling Center newly implemented an open paperwork block from 12PM-1PM. "You can use it to catch up on notes, but also eat with other staff members and connect during that time." Following the break, Connor will finish his day either by meeting with four clients, or three clients and two thirty-minute intakes—ending at 5PM.



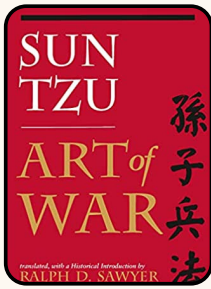
Flexibility and Support of Site

Connor explained that there is not a set number of clients that you are expected to work with. "If you need that extra time or that break in the day, it's not like they are going to look down on you. The staff is willing to work with you and check in with you, especially in the beginning of the semester." Connor also discussed the gradual buildup of clients and frequent check-ins with staff. "As I increased my number of clients, the staff was great about checking in to make sure I didn't feel like I was being flooded."

Advice

Connor encourages counselors to ask themselves the question, "When I am just being me, what theoretical orientation am I?" He explained that by doing this he was able to build off of his natural personality traits, rather than work to apply a theory which may not mesh well. "I have been trained in CBT [Cognitive Behavioral Therapy] and it seemed safe to me, but when I tested my natural theoretical orientation, CBT ended up being one of the lowest, next to Freudian." Connor found that his natural theoretical orientation is geared towards a more existential and humanist approach. Connor's last piece of advice is that although meeting with clients may feel uncomfortable at first, it is important for new counselors to trust in their training and abilities. "You are probably more prepared than you think you are."

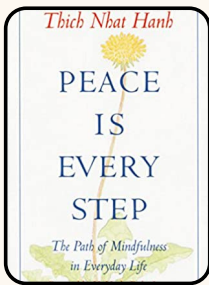
WHAT IS A BOOK THAT HAS HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE WAY YOU THINK?



The Art of War (Published 5th century BC) by Sun Tzu

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles." This book is not only about military nor about techniques; it is about the principles of and the attitudes toward life. What in life is not a battle?"

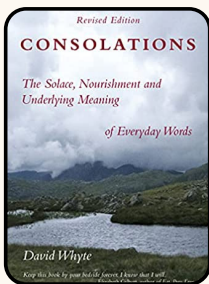
- Dr. Scarlett Choi



Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life by Thich Nhat Hanh

"This book has helped me be aware of others, the world, nature, and injustice, and to live mindfully, aware that each moment is an opportunity to cultivate peace within and in the world."

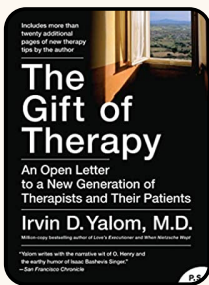
- Dr. Sally Hage



Consolations: The Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning of Everyday Words by David Whyte

Language matters, and I find the essays in this book so helpful in thinking through all the psychological layers embedded in the words we use day to day."

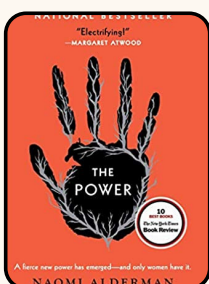
- Dr. Holly Schaff



The Gift of Therapy by Irvin Yalom

"Dr. Yalom's book helped to settle a lot of my fears or concerns when I was first starting to work with clients. I find myself taking away something new and different each time I read through the book."

- Dr. Sean DeMartino



The Power by Naomi Alderman

"The Power viscerally challenged my previously unexamined beliefs about gender and power, specifically that women would not necessarily wield power in self-serving and tragically harmful ways if they had access to opportunity. This book shines light on how power drains our empathy and magnifies our certainty, arguing that how we use our power, whoever we are, may be the real culprit for so much of the harm done in the world."

- Dr. Tatiana Gray



Counseling Psychology PsyD Program

Stay Safe and Healthy!

Remember, the semi-annual PsyD Program Town Hall is on December 9th at 6:30 PM and will be held virtually over Zoom. We look forward to seeing everyone!

Zoom Link: <https://springfield.zoom.us/j/4825161583>

Happy Holidays and Have a Restorative
Winter Break!



Follow us on [Facebook!](#)