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From the Program Director
Virginia Gil-Rivas, Ph. D.

I am pleased to share with you some of the most recent program activities and the achievement of students and faculty in the Health Psychology Program. Over the past year, we welcomed new faculty and students into our program, launched new initiatives, and expanded our collaboration with several community organizations. Wishing a smooth end of the semester and a happy holiday season!

Welcome to new program faculty!

Dr. Erin Basinger, Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies, has joined the Health Psychology faculty.

Program of research: Dr. Basinger’s research focuses on interpersonal processes, including stress and coping and social support, as they occur in the health contexts (e.g., chronic illness, bereavement, mental illness). Specifically, she investigates how family members cope together or separately with stressors and how their coping patterns influence individual and relational outcomes. Her recent work focuses on type 2 diabetes and military deployment and how the individual stress of a diagnosis or a deployment affect and are affected by family members.

Dr. Alexia Galetti, Assistant Professor, has joined the Department of Psychological Science.

Program of research: Perspective-taking is ubiquitous in everyday life: in many situations people must consider perspectives distinct from our own, including others’ emotions, perceptions, knowledge, and beliefs. Yet this fundamental cognitive skill is subject to many underexplored constraints. Dr. Galetti’s research program examines how people keep track of each other’s perspective in conversation, how they adapt their language and behavior to coordinate when working together, and how successful that coordination ultimately is. In a health care context, she is interested in the relationship between treatment outcomes and the interactions between patients and professionals in the health care system. For example, identifying linguistic signatures of miscommunication in these interactions could be valuable for predicting divergence from treatment protocols and could help mitigate its potentially detrimental effects. In another line of research, she is interested in leveraging virtual reality (VR) technology to examine how health-related practices are related to behavior in (real and virtual) space. Finally, she is broadly interested in perspective-taking skills across the lifespan, and how decrements in these skills may impact the well-being of older adults, in particular.
**Update from the clinical concentration!**

We continue to have a vibrant group of students and a growing cadre of graduates from the clinical concentration!

In 2017, Bradley Aleshire, Austin Coates, Lena Etzel, Maggie Giggler, Taryn Greene, and Leslie Snapper joined the concentration. In 2018, we welcomed Iris Fraude, Jodie Lisenbee, Alexis Mitchell, Jan Mooney, and Rachel Uri. They are already making such a positive contribution to our program, even as they bear up under the heavy course load of the first semester. Welcome!

Next, please congratulate three students who are currently completing their clinical internship during the 2018-2019 year. Cara Blevins is enjoying her training at the Asheville VA; Leila Forbes is rounding out her clinical training at the Counseling and Psychological Services Center at UNCC; and Brooke Palmer is engaged in the adult track of the internship at the University of Kansas Medical Sciences Center. Each of these excellent students was matched to her first choice!

Congratulations are also due to a number of clinical program graduates whose degrees were or will be conferred during 2018. This includes:

- Dr. Allison (Knotts) Bickett who continues her excellent work as the Director of Behavioral Medicine Education in the Atrium Health Department of Family Medicine;
- Dr. Chuck Burgess, who is enhancing his clinical and outreach skills through a post-doc at the University of Missouri Student Counseling Center;
- Dr. Christine (Smith) Mason, who is specializing in Obesity and Weight Management on her post-doc at Rush Medical Center;
- Dr. Sandy Milling, who has a full-time position as a Behavioral Health Consultant at the Cabarrus Rowan Community Health Center, and;
- Dr. Alyssa Vela, who is obtaining advanced clinical health psychology training through a post-doc in the Michigan Center for Advanced Psychology Training.

We are very excited that our graduates continue to contribute so much to the field of clinical health psychology!

Finally, the Clinical concentration continues to be APA accredited* while we await final word from the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) about our accreditation renewal. The renewal process began with the submission of a very lengthy program self-study on May 1, 2017, followed by a productive and positive site visit on November 16 and 17, 2017. In May, 2018, we were asked to provide additional information that was reviewed in the CoA meeting at the end of October. Stay tuned for an update in the next edition of this newsletter!
Update from the community concentration!

The community concentration has several news to share. First, we welcomed new students Vickie Galica (2017), Khalil Salim (2017), and Rachel Siegal (2018). Second, over the past year students have received awards and contributed to our community. This fall, Drew Gadaire, a 4th year student in our Community concentration, received the 2017 Vera S. Paster Award from the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice (formerly the American Orthopsychiatric Association). The honor targets graduate students or others in training whose work has “significantly contributed to the social, educational, physical and/or psychological well-being of persons of color, thereby promoting their empowerment and ameliorating their disadvantages from oppression and its effects.” He was presented the award by Ryan Kilmer, President of the Global Alliance. Drew’s work has focused on addressing the needs of unaccompanied minors from Central America, has recently worked to help empower and increase the economic and social status of women in Guatemala, has been a project coordinator working to evaluate and improve a large pre-k program serving disadvantaged youth, and is now the evaluation director for an innovative project in a bilingual preschool. Drew has demonstrated consistently excellent work which is recognized in this award.

Drew spent the summer in Guatemala working with Wakami, an organization that empowers women in rural communities by developing technical skills, helping them establish their own businesses, and connecting those businesses with international markets. Drew conducted interviews and focus groups with Wakami business women and Wakami staff to identify the strengths of the Wakami model and the factors that impede or facilitate the success of Wakami businesses. He also helped identify possible explanations for why the Wakami business incubation model, which works very well in most communities, has not functioned as well in a certain region of Guatemala.

This year, Drew is working with the Charlotte Bilingual Preschool to evaluate their innovation classroom and help implement their parent education program. For his Community Interventions class project, Drew is working with Dr. Kate Hogan at Teen Health to develop a system for monitoring and improving service delivery for youth in foster care.

Khalil Salim is working with Life Connections of the Carolinas' DASH Mentoring Program. The program provides mentoring services to youth ages 7-17 referred from juvenile courts, Department of Social Services, mental health centers, and schools. For his Community Interventions course project, Khalil is focusing on building the program’s evaluation capacity, specifically their ability to collect data and make data informed decisions to better serve children and youth.
In the Know: Meet the Biobehavioral Core (BBC) Lab

The lab was created with financial subsidy from the Department of Psychological Science and runs with continued support from the department as well as the Health Psychology PhD Program. Designed to be shared BSL-2 lab space, resources from the Stress WAVES BRL and WISH Lab were combined to create the BioBehavioral Core (BBC) Lab, opening its doors in August 2017. Today, the BBC Lab runs under the direction of Dr. Jeanette Bennett.

The BBC lab physically resides in four different spaces: two data collection rooms (4104 & 4117), one research space (4080), and one wetlab (4105). Both the data collection rooms were designed for biological specimen collection including blood and saliva as well as basic vital assessments such as blood pressure and heart rate. Uniquely, 4104 data collection room is outfitted with a BIOPAC that includes electrocardiography (ECG), electrodermal activity (EDA), and respiration rate assessment. In addition, it has a television/monitor and intercom system linked to 4080 to allow for stimuli manipulation with participants having complete privacy. The wetlab is BSL-2 compliant and provides resources for cell culture techniques as well as single plex and multi-plex enzyme linked immunosorbertent assay data collection. The lab is outfitted with the following equipment:

- MSD QuickPlex SQ 120 electrochemiluminescence plate reader*
- BioTek H1 chemiluminescence plate reader
- BioTek plate washer
- Beckman Coulter Z1 cell counter
- Beckman Coulter Allegra 12 benchtop centrifuge
- Microcentrifuge
- Two plate shakers (one heated)
- Small instrument autoclave
- CO₂ Incubator
- Aqua solutions DI water filtration system
- Two biosafety cabinets
- Two -80 ultra deep freezers
- Two -20 freezer
- One refrigerator
- Multiple micropipettes (electronic and manual)

* The purchase of the MSD was funded via the departments of Psychological Science and Kinesiology as well as the Health Psychology PhD Program.

In addition, the Health Psychology PhD Program has purchased mobile and point of care equipment that is currently being overseen and maintained by the BBC Lab, including:

- 6 mobile health units**
- 8 Polar watches and wearlinks with bands
- 8 scales (including 4 with bioimpedance assessment)
- 6 stadiometers
- 6 eSence skin conductance
- 6 pulse oximeter
- 4 Cardiocheck PA analyzer
• 3 DCA Vantage analyzer

** These mobile health units are available to any Health Psychology graduate student following the completion of the newly offered Applied Physiological Psychology for Health Scientists course.

Being shared lab space, these resources are available to all faculty in the department of Psychological Science and their students. Below outlined are two successes, each graduate student and their advisor(s) collaborated with the BBC Lab to reach the completion of a programmatic milestone.

Health, Emotions, and Reactivity to Stress (HEARTS) Study - Sara Sagui-Henson, PhD

This study is a collaborative, interdisciplinary research project testing the impact of stress reactivity and emotion regulation ability on cardiometabolic health. We use behavioral, psychophysiological, and survey methodologies to examine how the adaptive coupling of stress profiles and emotion-focused coping strategies can mitigate biobehavioral risk for obesity-related health conditions. The Biobehavioral Core (BBC) Lab has been an invaluable collaborator and resource for implementing the HEARTS experimental procedure, which includes anthropometric assessments, a social-evaluative laboratory stressor with continuous ECG measurement, and finger stick blood draws to assess lipid profiles. In addition to providing the equipment needed to conduct this research, the BBC lab has provided in-depth training in biodata collection; including biosafety training and management of protocol and waste, research design considerations, and data management techniques. The BBC Lab offers support and infrastructure to ongoing projects and is a valuable UNCC resource that facilitates high-quality biobehavioral health research.

Collaborative faculty: Sara Levens, Jeanette Bennett

Emotional Stress & Health: The Impact of Emotion Regulation (ESTHER) Study - Lydia Roos, MA

My master’s thesis project examined relationship stressors and how the use of ruminative and avoidant emotion regulation strategies affect psychological distress, basal cardiovascular functioning, and systemic inflammation. The BBC Lab was critical in allowing me to obtain the biomarkers necessary for my project. In addition to supplying the necessary facilities and equipment, the BBC also provided me with ample training and guidance in appropriately collecting, analyzing, and interpreting indicators of physiological health.

Collaborative faculty: Amy Canevello, Jeanette Bennett
HPGSA

HPGSA 2018/2019
President: Courtney Rogers
Vice President: Sydney Park
Secretary: Catie Simmons
Treasurer: Bradley Aleshire
Philanthropy Chair: Cecily Basquin
Social Chair: Megan McComas
Senators: Meredith Griffin and Lena Etzel
Clinical Concentration Representative: Alyssa Minnick
Community Concentration Representative: Vickie Galica
General Concentration Representative: Lydia Roos

Program events (2018)
Coffee Hour
This semester, we have been hosting the coffee hours prior to the program meeting. This is an excellent opportunity to connect with fellow students and HO faculty. Coffee and snacks were provided.

HPGSA 2017/2018
President: Marie Hayes
Vice President: Jessica Taylor
Secretary: Magin Day
Treasurer: Courtney Rogers
Social Chair: Sydney Park
Philanthropy Chair: Meredith Griffin
Senators: Victoria Willetts and Maggie Gigler
Clinical Representative: Brooke Palmer
Community Representative: Catie Simmons
General Representative: Lydia Roos

Events 2017/2018
Fundraisers
- Last year, our primary fundraiser was the Health Psychology program t-shirt sale. Funds raised by HPGSA during fundraisers are used for things such as social events, student gifts, operational costs, etc.
- We also collected donations from program members to fund the social event following interview day.

Social Events
- Coffee hour was held on a regular basis.
- We also organized social events at the beginning and end of the academic year, as well as a social during interview day.

Volunteering
- Last year, we volunteered with a number of organizations (over 16 hours). For example, we volunteered at the Veteran's Health Conference (we also received an event grant to fund breakfast for conference participants).
• Several HPGSA officers spoke with potential program applicants on Interest Day.

Advocacy
• Concentration representatives attended advisory committee meetings and served as liaisons between HPGSA and the advisory committee, as well as between their respective concentrations and HPGSA.

Other
• HP students were able to obtain a significant amount of travel funding from the Graduate and Professional Student Government as members of HPGSA.
• Related to this travel funding, we received the Educators Award from GPSG. Here is some more information about the award:
  o "One of the more unique GPSG Awards, our selection committee looked at organizations whose members presented at the most conferences. By presenting at conferences around the world, HPGSA students helped to strengthen UNC Charlotte’s identity as a premier research institution. 29 HPGSA members presented their research at 10+ conferences and events this year. Even after adjusting for organization size, this number was far ahead of most organizations. This level of travel also indicates strong communication channels regarding GPSG affairs and funding opportunities between HPGSA and students."
• HPGSA played a significant role in the coordination of interview day. For example, we received an event grant which funded lunch (we also set up lunch and clean up afterwards). We also helped to monitor the obtainment of housing and travel as needed for applicants.
• We secured funding to purchase promotional items for the program (i.e., lunchboxes).
Student and Faculty Accomplishments

Awards and Honors:

Student Accomplishments and Awards – Congratulations!

Magin Day received the 2018 US Air Force Health Professions Fellowship

Drew Gadaire received the 2017 Vera S. Paster Award from the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice.

Galica, V., Recipient of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte’s Kennedy Fellowship (2017-2018)

Nicole Hilaire received the 2016-2017 CLAS Summer Research Fellowship

Jafari, N., received the Health Resources & Services Administration Grant: Integrated Behavioral Health Scholarship, through the School of Social Work ($28,000).

Lydia Roos received the Health and Behavior International Collaborative Award, Society for Health Psychology (2017)

Lydia Roos and Kim Papay received the 2016-2017 Health Psychology Program Summer Research Fellowships

Rogers, C. B., received the Women’s Health Interest Group Poster Day UNCC, 1st Place, Spring 2017

Roos, L. G., received the Thomas L. Reynolds Graduate Student Research Award (2018)

Faculty and Student Scholarly Achievements

Publications - *health psychology student


Crane, J. L., & Davis, C. S. (2018). Child’s play: The role of play in mitigating the fear of death among Pediatric Palliative Care Team patients, families, and caregivers. *Journal of Loss and Trauma.*


Peach, H. D., Gaulney, J. F. & "Ruggiero, A. R. (In press). Direct and indirect associations of sleep knowledge and attitudes with objective and subjective sleep duration and quality via sleep hygiene. Under review at the *Journal of Primary Prevention.*


**Translation of Research & Research Publications**


Presentations:


Basinger, E. D. (2017, November). Developing and validating a measure of communal coping and testing the communal coping typology in the context of type 2 diabetes. Paper presented at the 103rd annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Interpersonal Communication Division, Dallas, TX.

Basinger, E. D. (2017, November). Explicating the appraisal dimension of the communal coping model. Paper presented at the 103rd annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Health Communication Division, Dallas, TX.


Davis, C. S., Lachlan, K, Breede, D., Brais, S. & Stamper, B. (November 2018). Straight Talk about Teaching Communication Research Methods. Accepted for presentation at Short Course Division, National Communication Association annual convention, Salt Lake City, UT.


Galati, A. (October 3, 2018). Constraints on perspective-taking and interpersonal coordination. Talk to be given at the Cognitive Psychology and Cognitive Neuroscience seminar series. Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC.


*Galica, V. (April, 2018). Evaluation design for A Child’s Place Community Response Team school services.
Oral Presentation to A Child’s Place Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee, Charlotte, NC.


*Griffin, M., Canevello, A., McAnulty, R. D., & *Willetts, V. (2018, July). The influence of individual characteristics on mobile dating application motives and meeting matches in person. Presentation at the International Association for Relationship Research, Fort Collins, CO.


actual practice. Opening plenary at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte’s Engaged Scholarship and Community Partnership Symposium, Charlotte, NC.

Kilmer, R.P. (February, 2017). Invited panelist as part of session at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte’s Engaged Scholarship and Community Partnership Symposium, Charlotte, NC.


Janson, J., Sturmheuer, S., Roos, L. G., & Rohleder, N. (2018, March). Cortisol habituation mediates the relationship between positive trait coping and plasma interleukin-6 habituation. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society, Louisville, KY.

Johnson, B., & Quinlan, M. M. (2017). 5,6 or 7DP5DT: (In)fertility, lay medical advice and the language of Instagram. Paper presented on panel: All the shade: Gendered identities in diverse health contexts at Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, & Gender, 40th Annual Conference, Omaha, NE.


Johnson, B., & Quinlan, M. M. (2017). This is your job, to me it means the world: Female patients’ perceptions of nurses’ communication during Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility (REI) treatment. Paper on competitively selected panel to the Applied Communication Division at the 102nd annual meeting of the National Communication Association in Philadelphia, PA. Awards Panel presentation at Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, & Gender, 40th Annual Conference, Omaha, NE.


Knobloch, L. K., Basinger, E. D., & Theiss, J. A. (2017, November). Relational turbulence and perceptions of partner support during reintegration after military deployment. Paper presented at the 103rd annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Interpersonal Communication Division, Dallas, TX.


Qualitative Methods Conference, Banff, Canada.


*Salim, K. (October, 2017). Building evaluation capacity: Partnering with a college and career readiness program. In E. Godly-Reynolds (chair), Responding to community needs through organizational capacity building. Symposium conducted at Southeastern Ecological-Community Psychology Conference, Miami, FL.


**Other (Awards, Grants, and Recognitions)**

Blood markers related to isometric exercise training induced reductions in resting blood pressure. Role on project: Co-PI (Bennett, J. M.). UNC Charlotte Faculty Research Grant ($17,678)

Continuation, Graduate Assistantship with Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, 1/1/19 – 5/15/19
  Funding Source: American Orthopsychiatric Association (dba Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice), $8519
  Investigators: Ryan P. Kilmer and Virginia Gil-Rivas

Creative Expression Award, Organization for the Study of Communication, Language & Gender (2018).
  Johnson, B., Quinlan, M. M., Reyes, R. Greetings in the gap: Participant-generated support messages and emotional support for fertility patients. Awarded at OSCLG’s 41st Annual Conference, South Lake Tahoe, NV.


Davis, C. S., Invited Speaker, NCA (National Communication Association) Institute for Professional Development, 2018

Evaluation Assistantship, 6/16 – 6/17
  Funding Source: Thompson Child and Family Focus, $22,489
  Investigators: James R. Cook and Ryan P. Kilmer

Graduate Assistantship with Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, 1/1/18 – 12/31/18
  Funding Source: American Orthopsychiatric Association (dba Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice), $22,167
  Investigators: Ryan P. Kilmer and Virginia Gil-Rivas

Graduate Assistantships with Teen Health Connection
  Funding Source: Teen Health Connection, $34,078, 8/15/18-5/15/19.
  Investigators: Amy Peterman and Ryan P. Kilmer

Graduate Assistantship at United Way of Central Carolinas, 8/16/17 – 5/15/18
  Funding Source: United Way of Central Carolinas, $17,719
  Investigators: Ryan P. Kilmer and James R. Cook

Graduate Assistantship with Communities in Schools, 8/16/17 – 5/15/18
Funding Source: Communities in Schools, $8,344
Investigators: James R. Cook and Ryan P. Kilmer

Graduate Assistantship - Evaluation Coordinator: UNCC-ChBP Dual Language Innovation Classroom
Evaluation, 8/15/18 - 5/15/19
Funding Source: Charlotte Bilingual Preschool, $17,039
Investigators: Ryan P. Kilmer, James R. Cook, and Laura M. Armstrong

Increasing the Capacity of Early Childhood Education Programs to Use Data to Improve Implementation and Evaluation, R305H160052, 9/1/16 - 8/31/18
Funding Source: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, $398,000
Investigators: PI: James R. Cook; Co-PIs: Lindsay Messinger and Ryan P. Kilmer


Quinlan, M. M., & Johnson, B. (Co-PIs), 2017-2018: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Speaker Funding ($1,350). Fertility for colored girls: Debunking racial myths by narrating stories of (in)fertility. The goal of this grant project is to bring in Rev. Dr. Stacey Edwards Dunn for a public presentation, panel discussion, filming session and interview. Event is an outcome of book research and advocacy work on practitioner-patient communication.

Quinlan, M. M., 2018-2019: UNC Faculty Research Grant ($5,970): You’re Doing it Wrong! Mothering Discourses, Social Media, and the History of Medical Expertise (Principle Investigator), Co-PI: Bethany Johnson. The goal of this grant project is to gather funding and complete research to support some of the drafted chapters, as well as the web-hosting for book companion website.

Quinlan, M. M., Faculty Recognition at UNC Charlotte’s 49er Football Game (Fall 2017).

Social and environmental influences on geographical knowledge; Agency: Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation; Role: Galati, A., Co-PI (PI: Marios Avraamides, Co-PI: Alinda Friedman; Amount: €150,000; Period: 2018–2019

Technical Assistance to Teen Health Connection Pregnancy Prevention Project, 9/1/16 - 6/30/17; no-cost extension to 10/1/17
Funding Source: Teen Health Connection, $15,000
Investigators: Erika Montanaro and Ryan P. Kilmer

Top Four Paper Award (Knobloch, Basinger, Abendschein, Wehrman, Monk, & McAninch), National Communication Association, Interpersonal Communication Division, 2017

Webb, J. B., 2018-2019: UNC Charlotte Department of Psychological Science SEED Grant ($1000): *Developing the Be Body Kind for New Moms Guided Self-help Program* (Principal Investigator)


Webb, J. B., UNC Charlotte Bonnie E. Cone Early-Career Professorship in Teaching Award (2017-2020)
New Health Psychology Doctoral Students

Rachel Uri
Previous School: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, B.A. Psychology
Concentration: Clinical
Advisors: Dr. Gil-Rivas and Dr. Webb
Research Interests: Co-occurrence of eating disorders and chronic health conditions, body image and acceptance, social determinants of health and health equity (especially surrounding issues of food justice and insecurity)
About me: I am a Charlotte native who enjoys spending time with family, taking walks on the greenway, and regularly attending food truck Friday. When I'm not studying, I like to play with my cat, try out new recipes, and go hiking on the weekends.

Jodie Lisenbee
Previous School: University of California at Davis
Concentration: Clinical
Advisors: Drs. Webb and Gil-Rivas
Research Interests: Psychological factors that impact outcomes during the perinatal period, particularly the experiences of women during childbirth.
About Me: I grew up in San Diego but have spent the past four years living in San Francisco working in health tech and volunteering as a birth and postpartum doula! I love music festivals, riding my bike to campus on the greenbelt, exploring new places, and drinking new beers. :)

Alexis Mitchell
Previous School: UNC Charlotte
Concentration: Clinical
Advisor: Dr. Sara Levens
Research Interests: How mindfulness, emotion regulation, and acceptance, in the context of health information, relate to preventative health behaviors and behavior change, as well as disease risk and disease management.
About me: I’ve lived in the Charlotte area for about 8 years now and I’m originally from a small town in Virginia. I love living in Charlotte, however, my heart belongs to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Western NC and Southwest VA- nothing is more beautiful to me than a cool breeze and a mountain sunset! During my free time you can find me at a
farmer’s market, running on the greenway, or travelling up to Asheville to visit my favorite tea shop or VA to see my family.

**Jan Mooney**
**Previous School:** UC Berkeley  
**Concentration:** Clinical  
**Advisors:** Dr. Webb and Dr. Armstrong  
**Research Interests:** eating behaviors; weight/shape concerns; components of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy; development of emotion regulation; interoceptive awareness  
**About Me:** I am originally from California and have been in North Carolina for six years now - I love it! I am a huge fan of my dog and we hang out all the time. I also really enjoy cooking, especially for friends and family.

**Philip Zendels**
**Previous School:** North Carolina State University  
**Concentration:** General  
**Advisor:** Dr. Gaultney  
**Research Interests:** Sleep and cognition  
**About Me:** I study sleep so that I can pretend I get enough of it! Some of my favorite hobbies include cooking and board games, and I have a huge nostalgia for anything Pokémon related! If you ever want to play a game ranging from Apples to Apples to Dungeons and Dragons, let me know.

**Rachel Siegal**
**Previous School:** University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
**Advisors:** Drs. Cook and Kilmer  
**Research interests:** Development, implementation and evaluation of school and community wide interventions; child and adolescent wellness; community-participatory based research; research dissemination and policy  
**About me:** Growing up in Massachusetts I drank Dunkin’ Donuts coffee instead of water and took the beautiful fall foliage for granted. After living in Baltimore for a few years, I still cheer for the Patriots but have grown to love Old Bay and the Maryland flag. If I haven’t answered your email yet, chances are I’m out on a run, practicing my downward dog or procrasti-baking.
**Iris Fraude**

**Previous School:** Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt  
**Concentration:** Clinical  
**Advisor:** Dr. Armstrong  
**Research Interests:** Adverse childhood experiences, early trauma, prevention of child maltreatment, early childhood interventions, interpersonal relationships  
**About Me:** I was born and raised in Germany and went to college in Austria for my undergrad and graduate degree. It’s my first time living in such a big city and I very happy to be here. When I am not studying I love being active. I enjoy running, tennis, and working out.

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**Maria Alessi**

**Previous School:** University of Pittsburgh  
**Concentration:** Clinical  
**Advisor:** Dr. Bennett  
**Research Interests:** My research interests focus on mind-body interventions for the treatment of depression. More specifically, I am interested in how emotion regulation interventions such as mindfulness meditation can affect the physiology of stress responses (i.e. HPA axis activation, inflammation) that are elevated in depression.  
**About Me:** I am passionate about mental health education and living a balanced life. In my free time, I love hiking, biking, camping, running, and hanging out with friends!
Announcements and Upcoming Events:

- **Dissertation Defense Announcement Template:** In an effort to standardize the way in which dissertation defenses are announced to the campus, the Graduate School introduces a new one-stop-template for announcements: [http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/dissertation-defense-announcements](http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/dissertation-defense-announcements). Now information can be entered one time, which will automatically post to the web and be shared with Academic Affairs. No need to send multiple emails in order to get announcements published.

Important Reminders:

- If you would like to update any information on the Health Psychology webpage or you would like to make an announcement in the weekly news blast, please email Lena Etzel (letzel@uncc.edu)

Thank you for your interest in our Health Psychology Program newsletter. If you have any information you would like to include in future newsletters, or if you would like to be added to our e-mail list, please contact Lena Etzel (letzel@uncc.edu)