

# IN THE LOOP

## ISPP NEWSLETTER



Fall 2024



### TAKE A MOMENT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FALL 2024 HIGHLIGHTS AND WHAT'S TO COME!

The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in Clinical Psychology program at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology (ISPP) is designed to educate and train students to become effective health service psychologists. ISPP aspires to develop psychologists who have the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for successful clinical practice.

Since its founding in 1976, ISPP has continuously strived to provide excellent doctoral training in an APA-accredited, academically rigorous, and nurturing environment. We are proud of our 48 year legacy.

*18 S Michigan Ave, Chicago*

#### In this newsletter you can expect:

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2024 Distinguished Illinois Psychologist Award

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# Welcome Message from the Program Director

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**Leah Horvath, PhD**

Program Director, Associate Professor

## *Greetings, ISPP Community and Friends!*

We have just wrapped up our fall semester here and our students, faculty, and staff are enjoying some much needed rest and time with loved ones. I hope wherever you are right now – you can also enjoy the comforts of the winter. I know that many people (myself included) grumble about the cold this time of year and wonder why we continue to live in Chicago with these icy temperatures! But I appreciate the winter for its call to rest, hibernate, and restore. The short days and cold temperatures remind me that this is a time for comfort and care and slowing down. So for that – I appreciate the winters in Chicago.

I hope reading the ISPP Newsletter brings some joy. I offer a huge thank you to our fabulous doctoral student Ana Perez for creating this newsletter. Not only is Ana a stellar student, leader, and psychologist-in-training, but she also possesses the patience and talent to create this beautiful newsletter (a talent I do not possess). I am very grateful to and for her.

Learn about more of our wonderful doctoral students in the section on ISPP Assembly (page 3), student presentations at the Illinois Psychological Association (pages 5-6), and in our student spotlight, which highlights third year student Henry Chen (page 7).

Scroll to page 9 to read about alumni spotlight this season, Dr. Aaron Keating (2020), consultant in the Department of Family Medicine at Madigan Army Medical Center. On page 11, we also honor ISPP alum and Past-President of IPA, Dr. Colin Ennis. Last month, Dr. Ennis was awarded the 2024 Distinguished Illinois Psychologist award for service excellence.

My wish is for our ISPP greeting to bring a little cheer and that the stories in this newsletter remind us of all the good that we do. There are many challenges, worries, and uncertainties that we face. I cope with that by turning towards hope. I look for signs of hope to remind me that good work is being done, kindness does triumph, and community connection and belonging are essential for well being. Thank you for all that you do to bring me hope.

Sending my best to our ISPP community,

*Leah*

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# ISPP Student Assembly

It is the mission of this organization to provide both personal and professional support and development opportunities to the students of ISPP at NLU. We aim to promote a strong community environment that facilitates student well-being, engagement, relationship building, and personal growth, with a focus on respect and dignity for all.

## *Please meet the 2024-2025 ISPP Assembly Board!*

**Faculty Support/Sponsor** Misty Mann

**President** Clare McIntosh (4th year)

**Past President** Sarah Brill (4th year)

**Vice President** Tina Giordano (2nd year)

**Secretary** Marina Boctor (1st year)

**Co-Treasurers** Kahkasha Khan (3rd year) & Isabel Vayser (3rd year)

**Co-Coordination** Erin Bishop (3rd year), Maggie Sackinsky (3rd year), & Marie Eddy (2nd year)

**Co-Mentorship Chairs** Ana Perez (3rd year) & Cassandra Coplea-Sanchez (2nd year)

**Student Representatives** Aaleiyah Spaulding (4th year), Carolina Schlawiedt (3rd year), Heather Toma (2nd year), Damian Ishak (1st year), LaWanda Thomas (1st year), Jamie Swiderski (1st year), Jolea Crearer (1st year)

*Congratulations!*

## EVENTS

### Fall

The ISPP Assembly virtually hosted Part 1 of their Practicum Guide Series: CVs & Cover Letters. This event provided an opportunity for 1st year students to receive feedback and ask questions about the preparation process of applying to diagnostic practicum. Thank you to all who attended!

### Winter

Please keep an eye out for upcoming events! ISPP is to host part 2 of the Practicum Guide Series: Interview Workshop & Professional Comportment.

Student Concerns Survey

# ISPP Community Gathering

On October 29, 2024, ISPP students organized a self-care choose your own adventure event! Tania Abukoush, Ana Perez, Carolina Schlawiedt, and Maninder Singh organized a very fun event that included dancing (with a performance from first years Carstly and Dershanel!), rock painting, board games, and a Halloween-themed Escape Room! In the busyness of our daily lives – it's important to find time for fun, connection, and letting go of stress. And this was a great way to do that!

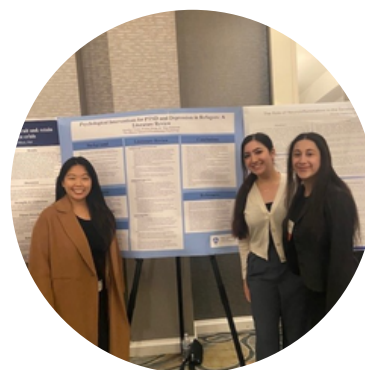


# Illinois Psychological Association Convention

Congratulations to all of our ISPP Students who presented at the Illinois Psychological Association Convention earlier this month. We had an impressive group! Sixteen students presented posters – and two of the ISPP Posters won awards. And IPAGS Executive Committee member Clare McIntosh spoke at the convention. Great work students!



**Clare McIntosh** – panelist for the IPA Convention:  
2024 IPAGS Program Presentation: Early Career  
Psychology



**Evelyn Hong, Heather Toma, and Nina Khawan** –  
“Psychological Interventions for PTSD and  
Depression in Refugees: A Literature Review”  
\*3rd place in the Student Poster Presentation  
Competition\*



**Shaima Aljawfi and Nashali Miranda Cardona** –  
“A Literature Review: Socioeconomic  
Determinants of Homelessness Among Latinos  
in the U.S.”  
\*7th place in the Student Poster Presentation  
Competition\*



**Connor Pond, Alex Lauro, and Alona Halkina** –  
“Literature Review: Changes in Religiosity after  
Trauma”

# Illinois Psychological Association Convention



**Irene Angelos, Tuomas Pirttimaki, and Connor Pond -**  
 “Protective Factors in the Development of a Perpetrator of Abuse”



**Shraya Pandey and Clare McIntosh -**  
 “Neuropsychological Effects of PANDAS in Pediatric OCD: Assessment Strategies and Treatment Implications” and “The Neuropsychological Impact of Pharmacological Treatments on Pediatric OCD.”



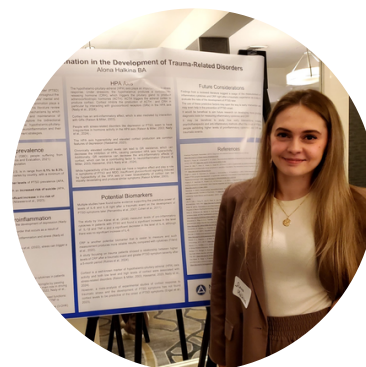
**Erin Bishop and Isabel Vayser -**  
 “Evidence-Based Treatment Approaches for Individuals Experiencing Anticipatory Grief Related to a Cancer Diagnosis”



**Tuomas Pirttimaki, Tina Giordano, and Kasey Browne -**  
 “Transgenerational Trauma in Subsequent Generations in Refugee Families with Histories of Trauma Exposure”



**Alex Lauro and colleagues -**  
 “Increasing the Ability of Community Service Employers to Recruit and Retain Behavioral Health Professionals during the Workforce Crisis”



**Alona Halkina -**  
 “The Role of Neuroinflammation in the Development of Trauma-Related Disorders”

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## ISPP Current Student Spotlight: Henry Chen

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**Henry Chen, MA, MEd (He/Him)**  
**3rd Year Clinical Psychology**  
**Doctoral Student**

*\*Henry is pictured wearing a white shirt on the front left*

Could you tell us about your transition from a previous career to psychology?

I have worked in different fields prior to beginning this PsyD. Most prominent would be in real estate, where I took care of properties and tenants, and later invested in my own properties. One thing that led me to transition from real estate was that much of the conflict we experienced with different parties, be they tenants or contractors, felt like a frustrated communication of psychological needs. While I found it meaningful to de-escalate and mediate conflict, it was not my explicit role, and I wanted a profession where I could work more closely with the roots of discontent. In my other work in marketing and management for a nonprofit, I also felt a need to be closer to change.

Please tell us about a recent accomplishment that's meaningful to you.

I feel that I have better communication with my father these days. I have had a contentious relationship with him for many years, and often felt conflicted between being angry at him, and understanding some of the factors that have influenced him. I credit some of this improvement in his growth, and some of it in mine, which has been very much informed by my practice of relational modes of Focusing partnership, a kind of peer counseling where my partners and I share from our implicit bodily sense of life situations. These long-term partnerships, a couple of them spanning a decade now, have also been a source of pride, as I have learned to have heartfelt conversations through our inevitable ruptures.

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## ISPP Current Student Spotlight: Henry Chen

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If you'd like to share, please tell us about one of your most important experiences at ISPP.

A few ideas have impacted the way that I practice therapy and understand the person. The idea we learned in HHDI that the brain evolved in an improvisational manner to shifting environments has relaxed my compulsion to have a unitary theory of the person. It has allowed me to not expect coherence, to embrace contradiction, and find value in competing theoretical orientations. A second idea from HHDI (also with Dr. Warner) that has influenced me has been her aligning of multiple psychopathological theories to understand schizophrenic, borderline, and narcissistic disorders. This has helped me to make sense of these presentations and, perhaps more importantly, to see the humanity and suffering in those afflicted. Finally, I have been quite affected by the Person-Centered Therapy course, which I took with Dr. Wu. I have found this approach to be especially useful with some of my clients, who may otherwise feel like a task on my list when I try to help.

What has been the most rewarding part of your training thus far? What are your professional goals?

I have perhaps been fortunate in my training at Regional Health Systems and A Safe Haven. Both are community mental health organizations and the supervision has been supportive and spacious. I find it meaningful to work with this population, so much so that I sometimes feel lost coming home. It seems difficult to hold the tension between being part of a cause, and approaching the world from an individual perspective, where different groups are subsumed under my self. As I am attracted to therapy, research, as well as leadership in a community organization, I am not yet sure where I am headed professionally. Maybe you can help me?

**Henry has completed training on his orientation in English, Mandarin, and French. He also holds diverse professional experiences in the arts and property management.**

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## ISPP Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Aaron M. Keating, Psy.D., ABPP

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**Dr. Aaron M. Keating, Psy.D., ABPP (He/Him)**

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Board Certified in Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology

### How did you get interested in psychology?

I enlisted in the Army when I was 18 and served 11 years, deploying for over 3 of those years. This experience exposed me to a number of things that helped shaped my interest in psychology. First were the very different ways people react to adversity and stressors, including traumatic stressors. This has always been a fascination to me that two individuals can be exposed to the same stressor and react very differently during and after. Secondly was being able to witness individuals being able to push through their personal limits and grow. I have been given the opportunity in my time since becoming a psychologist to help with special operations assessment and selection processes and was just as intrigued to see how far an individual is able to push themselves. I would say that the overarching theme that drew me to psychology about both of these are the complexities of the human mind were very fascinating to me and I wanted to learn more. What drew me to Clinical Psychology was also seeing how much of an impact a Clinical Psychologist can have on the lives of people and very profound ways.

### Could you tell us about your transition from the Military to Psychology?

I separated from the US Army and moved to Chicago to start graduate school within two weeks of our first day of the program. This gave very little time to transition to a completely new living and learning environment with a very different culture. The first year was rather smooth but the biggest challenge in the transition was going into practicum where my time was divided. I would say the biggest challenge in that time was having to shift focus between practicum and academics and making sure that tasks do not get neglected in either environment. What was helpful was having a very thorough planner and improving my personal task management skills. The biggest thing I learned in that time was how to better manage my time and how to better plan and structure my days. This has been of benefit to me all the way up to present.

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# ISPP Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Aaron M. Keating, Psy.D., ABPP

## Tell us about your training experience.

When I started graduate school, I was initially interested in Neuropsychology and started my training with emphasis in this area. I went through my first practicum (assessment) in a private practice that did a great deal of disability assessments as well as general psychological assessments and neuropsychological assessment for their clients. My interests shifted and in my second and third practicum (treatment and advance) when I was at Illinois Masonic Medical Center where I was able to work in a specialty rotation in the OB/GYN clinic as an integrated behavioral health consultant. This experience shifted my interest to health psychology and integrated behavioral health and generally changes my perspective on working with various patients. I completed my internship with the US Air Force at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center where about 50% of my training time was Clinical Health Psychology and Primary Care Behavioral Health. Halfway through my internship was when the COVID lockdowns occurred, impacting a great deal of trainees with regards to clinical hours. I was fortunate enough in that time to be able to support efforts with responses to COVID-19 and spent the rest of my internship working with those impacted by COVID-infection, helping to make sure that vital missions continued, and helping individuals impacted by the lockdown. The most interesting thing I was involved in at that time was helping with assessments for those attending Air Force Basic Training. I was tasked with determining fitness for duty while also helping trainees manage stress during the training process. COVID made this process far more complex with regards to stress management during training since most of the trainees were away from home for the first time in their lives and isolated for 14 days away from everyone then tasked with completing 3 months of vigorous training under COVID restrictions. After graduation, I was transferred to Wyoming where I completed my military contract and continued my work with health psychology. I now work as a civilian at Madigan Army Medical Center Family Medicine Department where I now have the opportunity to supervise interns during their health psychology rotation.

## What has been the most challenging aspect of your career?

COVID obviously had a major impact on my career in many ways. First, the field rapidly evolved with its approach to individuals seeking psychological support, ultimately increasing demand and opportunity for psychologists as well as how we can reach these individuals as psychologists. This, however, did come with growing pains with navigating appropriate technology as well as convincing some to accept these changes in how care is delivered. A major challenge with constant connectivity with patients and coworkers came an expectation of always being reachable. Finding a balance in a constantly connected time became a huge challenge and many leaders started to expect the ability to be instantly connected with their provider. Since I have been working in a Military Health System since internship, the demand was even higher from leadership to always be able to have contact with mental health services. A struggle over the past 5 years has been setting my own boundaries with connectivity and ensuring that I am balancing my work with my family and personal time. This was a learning process, but I believe that I have been rather successful in the past 2 years finding this balance.

**Dr. Keating is currently a consultant in the Department of Family Medicine at Madigan Army Medical Center. He provides evidence-based interventions to the Active-Duty service members and returned service members and their families.**

# 2024 Distinguished Illinois Psychologist Award: Dr. Colin Ennis , Psy.D.



**Dr. Colin Ennis, Psy.D., ABPP (He/Him)**

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

IPA Past-President

From the beginning of his career, Dr. Ennis has exemplified dedication and active leadership. He's a firm believer in service to the field, a commitment that started in graduate school when he chaired the Graduate Student Section of the Illinois Psychological Association. Since then, he's continued to hold influential leadership roles nationally through his work in divisions of the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Ennis is also deeply committed to LGBTQ+ health care, demonstrating his passion for creating inclusive, supportive spaces for all. His career has been equally focused on training and mentorship, having served as the Training Director at Illinois Institute of Technology's Student Health Center, as well as Associate Director of Training and Assistant Professor at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Through these roles, he has empowered future psychologists, guiding them to lead with empathy, integrity, and resilience.

*Congratulations!*

**The 2024 Distinguished  
Illinois Psychologist is  
awarded for service  
excellence.**

**Dr. Ennis is an ISPP alum!**

# Get Involved! Membership & Workgroup

## APAGS Committee for the Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Diversity



### American Association of Graduate Students (APAGS)

APAGS is a division within the American Psychological Association (APA) dedicated to representing and addressing the needs of graduate students in psychology. APAGS provides resources, support, and advocacy for psychology graduate students to help them succeed in their academic and professional pursuits.

Get Involved:

<https://www.apa.org/apags/governance>

Resources:

<https://www.apa.org/apags/resources>

Resource Guide for Psychology Graduate Students of Color:

<https://www.apa.org/apags/resources/ethnic-minority-guide>



### Antiracism & Intersectionality and Workgroup

All are encouraged and welcome to join us as we host an open conversation on race, racism, and the intersectionality of gender and gender identity. We meet every Wednesday at 7pm CST.

LINK

<https://nl.zoom.us/j/92136874153>

# The Thrive Center



National Louis University believes ALL students can THRIVE through the advocacy of an inclusive campus and the support of a caring community, where students feel a sense of belonging and empowerment to not only be academically successful, but thrive personally and professionally.

<https://nl.edu/student-services/food-pantry-and-thrive-resources/campus-and-community-resources/>

## Single Stop

As we begin the academic year, the Thrive Center is encouraging for staff and faculty to promote this excellent service. **Single Stop** is a one-stop application that provides all resources available to individual needs from housing, healthcare, education, financing, and much more!

## Thanksgiving Dinner

For this Thanksgiving, the Thrive Center invited students to sign up to pick up a basket for their Thanksgiving dinner. Students were able to set an appointment for a personal shopping experience for a Thanksgiving meal that included meat and fresh vegetables.

## Volunteer Opportunities

With our partnership with the Chicago Food Depository and other incredible events, the Thrive Center invites everyone to sign up for volunteer opportunities across the year. **Pick a Date on Our Calendar**

# Additional Support and Resources



## Counseling & Wellness Center (122-Rm. 3013)

*In crisis? Text "START" to 741-741 or call 988*

NLU's Counseling & Wellness center offers in-person and virtual session with a counseling intern or licensed clinician! This is FREE for students!

They have also partnered with UWill for FREE immediate access to teletherapy, a 24/7 crisis support line, telemedicine support, and various wellness programs—all easily accessible through Uwill's user-friendly online platform. Students receive up to 10 sessions.

Activate your account today!  
[www.UWill.com](http://www.UWill.com)



## The Food & Hygiene Pantry (18-Rm. 526)

NLU's food and hygiene pantry provides resources to help students overcome the basic-needs barriers that impeded their academic success, physical health, and social emotional life.

[HTTPS://NL.EDU/STUDENT-SERVICES/FOOD-PANTRY-AND-THRIVE-RESOURCES/CAMPUS-AND-COMMUNITY-RESOURCES/](https://nl.edu/student-services/food-pantry-and-thrive-resources/campus-and-community-resources/)



## Learning Support

NLU's Learning Support provide personalized tutoring (both virtually and onsite) in writing, math, computer science, and English-language learning (ELL/ESL support); coordinate with faculty to support student learning; host workshops and events to prepare students for major assessments; create and curate help guides and tutorials; and advocate for equitable educational access.

<https://nl.edu/learning-support/>

# Additional Support and Resources



## Help Hotlines

- Help and Crisis Lifeline: 988 (Call or Text)
- The Trevor Project: Text 678-678 or call 866-488-7348
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233
- National Child Abuse Hotline: 800-422-4453
- Elder Abuse Hotline: 800-252-8966
- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa & Associated Disorders: 847-831-3438
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-HOPE
- National Runaway Safeline: 800-786-2929
- Crime Victims Hotline (Stalking): 866-689-HELP
- Alcohol Abuse and Crisis Intervention: 800-234-0246
- National Safe Haven Alliance Crisis Hotline: 888-510-BABY
- Veterans Crisis Line: 800-273-8255

## Looking for a therapist?

- <https://www.nami.org/>
- <https://locator.apa.org/>
- <https://openpathcollective.org/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>



*Thank you for reading!*

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| ISPP @ NLU                                                            | FALL 2024          |
| Questions? <a href="mailto:aperez81@my.nl.edu">aperez81@my.nl.edu</a> | 18 S Michigan Ave. |