

EMORY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES KUDOS
JULY 2023

REMEMBER

Please send me your accomplishments, program/team activities, and personal updates for the August 2023 Kudos

SAVE THE DATES

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS

Upcoming faculty development seminars, which will be held from 9:00-10:30a, [Zoom](#) link:

- Wednesday September 20, 2023 – TBD

WRITING GROUPS: UPCOMING

The Writing Group is the 1st Wednesday of every month from 8:00-9:00am. These meetings are on [Zoom](#).

SPOTLIGHTS

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Rachel Holt, PhD

Rachel Holt is currently the General Mental Health Program Development Coordinator for the Atlanta VAHCS. In this role she broadly assists GMH with several initiatives including coordination of hiring and onboarding new staff, assisting the Director with creation of SOPs, as well as serving as the facility coordinator for the national FLOW program. FLOW is a VA initiative that focuses on matching patients to the intensity and duration of care they require by shifting to a model based on episodes of care, that allows us to identify people who could benefit from transition to primary care. Her clinical duties are in support of the Continuity of Care team, which follows veterans after a psychiatric hospitalization until they are able to connect with their assigned GMH outpatient team.

Rachel recently completed a 90-day detail as the Acting Psychology Executive. In this role she oversaw professional practice and hiring for Psychologists and LPMHCs. She coordinated the bi-annual Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation (OPPE) process for every psychologist at the Atlanta VAHCS, as well as working with Mental Health Service Line leadership in the effort to secure a Special Salary Rate for psychologists, which went into effect just after my detail ended. Prior to that role she had been the General Mental Health North Region's Clinical Director for a number of years. At various times she oversaw GMH operations at 5-8 Community Based Outpatient clinics, providing supervision and support to the providers on those teams.

It is hard for Rachel to pinpoint what she most enjoys about work because there is so much she enjoys. She enjoys being involved in hiring because it's important to her to bring quality providers into the VA system and nurture future leaders. She enjoys program development because it directly impacts the veterans served and supports the

providers in the delivery of care. And she enjoys her clinical work because there are those days you leave a session and think “something really important just happened there.” And you realize fostering change on the individual level is just as important as working to make change on the programmatic level.

Rachel was recently selected by the Georgia Psychological Association to receive the Exemplary Service Award in May 2023. She has also received I-CARE awards from the Atlanta VAHCS facility Director, as well as from the Mental Health Service Line Chief. Regarding her career trajectory, she is proud to have done her training and then worked in the VA system. Rachel interned at the Atlanta VAHCS, completed her postdoctoral fellowship at the New Orleans VAHCS and returned to Atlanta where she has worked in clinical and leadership roles in the Substance Abuse Treatment Program and GMH.

Rachel plans to be a career VA psychologist. She is passionate about helping veterans, and made a promise to her WWII Veteran grandfather she would always work at the VA because he told her “they need people like you at the VA.” She is excited in September to begin direct clinical supervision with an unlicensed psychologist who is coming to the team after just completing an internship. She hopes to continue to be involved in this type of supervision in an ongoing capacity. She wants to continue to focus on program development and hiring because these two endeavors directly impact the quality of care veterans receive. And finally, one day, she hopes to retire to the mountains.

Rachel has three young children (ages 6, 7 and 9) who happily take up a good deal of her non-work time. She is involved in their school including serving on two committees, and is the volunteer coordinator for their swim team. She also assists her husband with various aspects of running his small business. When she gets a moment to herself you’ll usually find her with her Kindle in hand, reading anything by Stephen King.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Sarah Schwartz

Sarah Schwartz is the Program Director for the Emory Healthcare Veterans Program (EHVP). In this role, she works closely with the many sections of the program team, as well as with the major funder, the Wounded Warrior Project. She has been in this role for almost six-and-a-half years, so she has had the pleasure of being part of EHVP’s growth and success. It’s been a privilege to work on behalf of the country’s heroes in helping to provide them access to the international center of excellence’s mental health services that heal invisible wounds. EHVP has a two-week intensive outpatient program that has proven to be the gold standard in PTSD treatment. It’s incredibly fulfilling to know the work she and the rest of our amazing team do every day is helping our veterans and service members transform their lives.

Outside of her work at Emory, Sarah stays busy as a single mom to two boys – 12-year-old Heath and 9-year-old Asa. They are the lights of her life! In addition, she is a good example of the “sandwich generation” because she is also responsible for her elderly mother’s care. It’s a lot, but she is honored to do it as long as possible.

What Sarah most enjoys about work is knowing that what she does each day helps transform, and even save, veterans' and service members' lives. The EHVP has data that shows the work they do decreases suicidal ideation/tendencies. They are truly saving lives!

Key highlights of Sarah's career trajectory to date include graduating from Emory with a degree in Psychology and then got an MSW from the University of Georgia. She came back to Emory to start her professional career in 1997 as a research coordinator, working with new atypical antipsychotic medications that were being tested for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. At that time, the atypical antipsychotics were new options for patients that offered fewer side effects than the typical antipsychotics of the time. She loved this work, and it set the stage for her continued work in mental health. While working with research patients, Sarah would routinely find day programs and other supplemental programs for them. However, she noticed many great programs were going out of business due to a lack of business savvy. This motivated her to go back to school to get a business degree, with the intention of going back into the mental health field to utilize her business skills. When she applied to Georgia State University's business school, she was made aware of a dual degree program – a Masters of Business Administration & Masters of Healthcare Administration. She completed these dual degrees while working part-time at Emory. Upon graduation, Sarah knew she wanted to stay in the mental health field, but in a business capacity. Her first position after graduating was as a consultant. Although she learned a lot in this role, she wasn't getting the mental health exposure she hoped for. So, Sarah went on to become the Executive Director of the Georgia chapter of Mental Health America (MHA). In this position, she successfully married both her clinical knowledge and business expertise. She stayed in this position for 10 years, enjoying the rich experience she got in the advocacy world and mental health outreach and education. Sarah is most proud of a program she started from scratch while in her role with MHA. It was called Project Healthy Moms, and had multiple components to support, educate, screen and advocate for women who suffered from perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The project won a national award, but most importantly, it helped raise awareness about these often-overlooked mental illnesses that wreak havoc on mothers and families. In 2017, she came back to Emory into the role I'm now in.

Sarah's most important goals for the future are getting her boys through school, ensuring they become good men with integrity and can support themselves and their families – all while remaining happy and fulfilled. She also looks forward to one day finishing decorating her home – seems like an endless task sometimes, but she truly loves it. She also plans to travel out of the country with her kids as soon as she can so they can take advantage of all that travel teaches. Finally, she plans to lose 30 pounds ASAP! 😊

Outside of the workplace, Sarah enjoys spending time with her boys and supporting them in all they do, including learning and competing in Taekwondo. She also enjoys spending as much time with family and friends as possible, as well as reading, watching movies, exercising and enjoying interior design whenever she has the chance.

TRAINEE SPOTLIGHT: Brandon Sims, MD

Brandon Sims is currently a PGY-4 resident in psychiatry and behavioral sciences, as well as co-chief resident at Grady Memorial Hospital (with Chaewon Im), resident recruitment co-chair (with Eric Galante) and active on the resident DEI committee and GME pride resident group

Brandon's favorite part of being Grady Chief is working with his co-chief and interns. It is a privilege witnessing their professional development over time. He also enjoys working with the other residency classes. He learns every day from the interns, other residents and faculty and fortunate to have this opportunity. He enjoys teaching, creating spaces for residents to feel safe, keeping positive energy going and finding humor in situations.

Key highlights of Brandon's career trajectory to this point include being chief-resident and working with Chaewon to foster a warm, safe, fun, learning environment for residents. He also highlights working with Eric to improve resident involvement in recruitment. He considers improved recruitment efforts to be the greatest highlight of his career so far.

Brandon's plans for the future include pursuing a forensics fellowship. Beyond that, likely a mix of inpatient/outpatient (prefer higher acuity), and currently he prefers the inpatient setting. Brandon is also interested in continued work with marginalized communities (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, immigrant populations).

Outside of workplace, Brandon enjoys hiking state parks, watching anime, going to the movies, reading nonfiction, trying new restaurants on Buford highway (Mamak is his personal favorite) and 90s/00s pop/R&B (recent personal triumph was seeing Janet Jackson live).

NEW FACULTY

Zach Johnson, PhD – Zack studied Integrative Biology and Neuroscience as an undergrad at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), completed his PhD at Emory University in the Neuroscience Program and then did postdoc work in neurogenomics at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He is now back at Emory building a research program that will integrate neuroendocrinology, neurogenomics and genetically-targeted circuit manipulations to discover the neurobiological mechanisms of social behavior.

Hema Kher, MD, MPH – Hema Kher joined Emory in September 2022 as the director of the consultation-liaison psychiatry service at Emory St. Joseph's Hospital. In this role, she's helped establish an on-site psychiatry presence in the hospital. Her clinical and academic interests include psychosocial oncology, geriatric psychiatry, critical care psychiatry and trainee education. She's looking forward to working more closely with the residents and CL fellow this coming year.

Hema's a native Floridian and received her MD/MPH at the University of Miami. She moved up north for psychiatry residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston, where she also served as chief resident. She completed CL psychiatry fellowship with a focus on psychosocial oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana Farber Cancer Institute. While living in Boston, Hema visited her now husband in Atlanta where he was a resident, and they both fell in love with this city!

Outside of work, Hema enjoys making pizzas, exploring restaurants in Atlanta, biking on the Beltline and watching good TV.

Nathan Scheiner, MD – Nathan Scheiner hails from Minneapolis, MN, where he completed his Medical Doctorate, and a concurrent Master of Arts in bioethics, at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine and the Center for Bioethics, respectively. He moved to Atlanta in 2018 and completed combined Internal Medicine/Psychiatry residency training at Emory University in July 2023, serving as chief resident in the 2022-23 academic year.

Nathan's academic interests have included medical ethics, clinical ethics and the intersection of phenomenology with neuropsychiatric problems. He has published on the ethics of patient refusal of treatment and considers himself a feminist ethicist with interests in everyday ethical decision making, moral distress and moral community. He views ethical clinical decision making as an essentially collaborative process in which all members of the medical team should be encouraged to participate. As part of his MA training, he assisted the clinical ethics consultation team at the University of Minnesota and served as an institutional review board member at a private hospital in Minneapolis. Since residency, Nathan's research interests have focused on clinical case reporting at the conference and journal level. In 2021 he co-authored what has now become the most cited review of catatonia due to COVID-19 infection.

Clinically, Nathan joins the faculty as Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine and Psychiatry with duties at Grady Memorial Hospital. He will split his time between Psychiatric Emergency Services as a supervising attending and the new (and imminently open) Med/Psych Unit as a hospitalist. He looks forward to working with residents in a teaching capacity, and he recalls with gratitude excellent attendings in the departments of psychiatry and internal medicine whose teaching helped him the most to feel prepared for independent practice. He is also excited to develop the med/psych unit with an exceptional team. Finally, he takes a particular interest in LGBTQ+ care and plans to find ways to integrate this into his teaching and clinical practice, as well as become more involved in advocacy.

Now that he has completed residency, Nathan hopes to return to ethics publication and serve at the institutional level at Grady Hospital. He also looks forward to spending more time with his partner, Joe, and their 5-year-old tabby cat named Betty White. He anticipates hiking more often and continuing to explore the Georgia state parks he was introduced to during the height of the pandemic. He is an avid amateur cook, video gamer and will return to playing the violin in the near future.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Wellness Resources:

Healthy Emory is bringing back the [Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less](#) program in September.

Challenges with Healthy Emory are ongoing - the Sharecare app is the platform and incentive dollars are available!

[Operation Eat Right](#) encourages you to improve your nutrition and boost your well-being using Healthy Emory Connect!

Resources from Healthy Emory and a link below to the ACPH.

- [Benefits](#)
- [Rewards](#)
- [Career](#)
- [Learning](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Work Life](#)
- [Employee Assistance](#)
- [Employee Assistance – Physician Wellbeing Conference](#)

Healthy Emory resources including the Sharecare platform for Move More, Refresh from Stress and more! Open to University and Healthcare Employees

[Healthy Emory Connect | Emory University | Atlanta GA](#)

Wellbeing and mental health support for Emory University Employees [Faculty Staff Assistance Program](#) and for [Emory Healthcare Employees](#) username EHC (800 327 2251)

Graduate Medical Education Well-being [Resident Well Being | Emory School of Medicine](#)

International Conference on Physician Health (alternates years with American Conference) [International Conference on Physician Health™ | American Medical Association \(ama-assn.org\)](#)

[Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes Foundation | Dedicated to Protecting the Well-Being of Physicians and Health Care Professionals \(drlornabreen.org\)](#)

Office of Well-Being established for Woodruff Health Sciences
[Emory's Woodruff Health Sciences Center establishes Office of Well-Being | Emory University | Atlanta GA](#)

FACULTY KUDOS

Major Leadership Appointments, Activities and Achievements

Sheila Rauch and Barbara Rothbaum published a new book entitled *Making meaning of difficult experiences: A self-guided program*. It is published by [Oxford University Press](#) and also available via [Amazon](#).

Research

Dunlop BW, Cha J, Choi KS, Nemeroff CB, Craighead WE, and Mayberg HS. [Functional connectivity of salience and affective networks among remitted depressed patients predicts episode recurrence](#). *Neuropsychopharmacol.* (2023).

Fani N. (2023). New horizons in the assessment and treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. *FOCUS: The Journal of Lifelong Learning in Psychiatry*, 21(3), 237-238. doi.org/10.1176/appi.focus.20230013.

Fulton TM, Lathan EC, Karkare MC, Guelfo A, Eghbalzad L, Ahluwalia V, Ely TD, Turner JA, Turner MD, Currier JM, Mekawi Y, Fani N. (accepted, *Biological Psychiatry: Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuroimaging*). Civilian moral injury and amygdala functional connectivity during attention to threat.

Ku BS, Addington J, Bearden CE, Cadenhead KS, Cannon TD, Compton MT, Cornblatt BA, Druss BG, Gülöksüz S, Mathalon DH, Perkins DO, Tsuang MT, Walker EF, Woods SW, Carrión RE. Associations Between Childhood Area-Level Social Fragmentation, Maladaptation to School, and Social Functioning Among Healthy Youth and Those at Clinical High Risk for Psychosis. *Schizophr Bull.* 2023 Jun 26:sbad093. doi: 10.1093/schbul/sbad093. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37358832.

Parker DA, Cubells JF, Imes SL, Ruban G, Henshey B, Massa NM, Walker E, Duncan E, Ousley OY (2023) Deep psychophysiological phenotyping of adolescents and adults with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome: A multilevel approach to defining core disease processes. *BMC Psychiatry*, 23:425.

Schneider RL, Faro AL, Mullin B, & Bonifay A. (2023, July). *From song lyrics to scavenger hunts: Group-based exposure therapy for children and adolescents*. Workshop presented at the Annual Convention of the International Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Foundation. San Francisco, CA

Twohig M, Storch E, Schneider RL, Farrell N, Faye M, & Wooley M. (2023, July). *Misophonia: A Panel Covering Scientific and Clinical Perspectives on Diagnosis and Treatment*. Panel presented at the Annual Convention of the International Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Foundation. San Francisco, CA

Honors, Awards, Rankings

The VA Prolonged Exposure for Primary Care Training Program was funded by the Office of Rural Health for three more years as a Rural Promising Practice.

Negar Fani (1) joined the editorial board of Neuropsychopharmacology - Digital Psychiatry and Neuroscience (2) and served as guest editor of the July 2023 special issue of *FOCUS: The Journal of Lifelong Learning in Psychiatry: Novel Mechanisms and Interventions for PTSD*.

Alyson Goodwin received the Senior Physician Clinical Distinction from Emory School of Medicine.

Justin Palanci (1) was invited to serve on The International Society for Psychological and Social Approaches to Psychosis United States Chapter (iSPS-US) Speakers Bureau and (2) was a panelist on a webinar put on by iSPS-US entitled Bringing Dialogic Approaches to the U.S. Healthcare System: From Theory to Accessibility.

Erica Marshall-Lee (1) received the Eminent Psychologist Clinical Distinction from Emory School of Medicine and (2) was appointed to the American Psychological Association's Task Force on Serious Mental Illness/Severe Emotional Disturbance.

Andrew Sherrill was elected to the Emory University Senate.

Presentations

Justin Palanci and Rob Cotes gave a presentation on "Open Dialogue Atlanta" at the Regional Gathering of Dialogic Practice, Virtual Meeting on July 20th, 2023.

Community

None reported.

Media

Wendy Baer (1) Atlanta Jewish Times – [Increasingly, People Live Well with Cancer.](#)

Nadine Kaslow (1) WSAV – [Gun Deaths on the Rise in Georgia, Nonprofit Says.](#) (2) Emory Magazine – [Mindful Moments.](#)

Elizabeth McCord (1) WSB-TV – [One High from Delta-8 Can Lead to Permanent Brain Damage, Warns Georgia Doctor.](#)

Andrew Miller (1) Emory Magazine – [Lost in a Brain Fog.](#)

Barbara Rothbaum (1) Prevention – [Sexual Violence Has Longer Lasting Health Effects Than You Think.](#) (2) Atlanta Jewish Times – [Psychedelics Get New Respect from Medical Researchers.](#)

ADJUNCT FACULTY KUDOS

Volpe, V., Ross, J., Collins, A., Spivey, B., **Watson-Singleton, N. N.**, Goode, R., Hoggard, L., & Woods-Giscombe, C. (2023). Gendered racial microaggressions and emotional eating for Black young adult women: The mediating roles of superwoman schema and self-compassion. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*

TRAINEE KUDOS

Sumeet Sharma was granted Honorable Mention recognition for the 2023 National Institute of Mental Health Outstanding Resident Award.