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

SAVE THE DATES

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS
Upcoming faculty development seminars, which will be held from 9:00-10:30a, Zoom link:
- Wednesday November 8, 2023 - Finances: Loan Repayment to Retirement
- Wednesday February 21, 2024 – Trainee Feedback: Faculty Perspective
- Wednesday May 22, 2024 – Promotion: DEI Section of CV, Service Portfolio

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: Benson Ku, MD
Benson Ku is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. He works at the Achieving Recovery through Resilience, Optimism and Wellness (ARROW) clinic at Grady and cares for patients experiencing early psychosis. He also conducts research investigating risk and protective factors for the development of psychotic disorders, as well as suicide.

Benson is on the Executive Committee of the Social Determinants of Health Network, which was recently launched, and provides a platform for students, faculty, clinicians and researchers to learn about the social determinants of mental health from a biopsychosocial lens with a critical emphasis on disseminating academic research findings to the community.

Benson is thankful for the support and mentorship from his colleagues at Emory and is proud to be a faculty member here. He enjoys working in interdisciplinary teams with experts from health policy, biostatistics, epidemiology, neuroscience and psychology, as well as undergraduate, graduate and medical students. He also enjoys his different roles working as a clinician and researcher in early psychosis. As a clinician, Benson learns about his patients’ biopsychosocial circumstances and experiences and how their social environments impact their mental health and well-being. From these experiences, he investigates research questions relevant to patients’ lives at the biological, family and community levels, which have the potential to inform targeted early intervention strategies.
Key highlights of Benson’s career include receiving an NIMH K23 Award titled, “The Impact of Neighborhood Characteristics on Conversion to Psychosis among Youth at High Risk” and becoming an Assistant Professor with the department.

Looking to the future, Benson plans to continue his clinical work and research. He hopes to build a research team and global network of investigators, clinicians, community members and students interested in the social determinants of health to effectively address the structural issues impacting mental health.

Outside of work, Benson enjoys spending time with his friends and family. He also likes playing piano, learning new dances, swimming, planning road trips and watching silly movies.

**ADJUNCT FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Cheryl Eschbach, MD**

Cheryl Eschbach grew up in the Pacific Northwest. Her parents’ idea of a family vacation was to take her siblings and herself backpacking in the Cascade and Olympic mountains. She never imagined that she would end up settling on the opposite side of the country in Atlanta. But the fact that this city is, as its moniker suggests, a city in a forest made Atlanta feel like home from the beginning. Urban hiking has replaced mountain hiking as a frequent and favorite pastime of hers.

Cheryl didn’t take the direct route to a career in medicine and psychoanalysis, as it wasn’t until after she had earned her PhD in political science that she decided to become a clinician. She moved here after medical school nearly 25 years ago to do her residency training in psychiatry at Emory. She was strongly attracted to Emory’s mix of biological psychiatry and psychoanalysis. This orientation resonated with her own intuitive appreciation of the core mission of medical training: to understand the person who has the illness as the key to treating the patient with the disease.

In her fourth year of the residency program, while serving as senior resident in the Outpatient Psychotherapy Training Program (OPTP), Cheryl started her analytic training at the Emory University Psychoanalytic Institute (EUPI). The overlap of her psychiatry and psychoanalysis training programs made it easier to build her private practice around the distinctive career needs of a psychoanalytic clinician. Cheryl accepted primarily psychotherapy referrals and worked to deepen the treatments where needed, seeing many of her patients two, three, four, and five times per week (those coming four and five times weekly were usually in analysis on the couch). Along the way, she graduated from the psychoanalytic institute. Later she chaired the EUPI Curriculum Committee and, most recently, she completed a six-year term as chair of both the Adult Psychoanalytic Training Program and the Analytic Progression Committee.

Community service has always been important to Cheryl. Her first foray into the community involved frequent collaboration with internists to treat mutual patients, sometimes including patients who had been quite ill medically or psychiatrically or both. Through this work Cheryl has learned that community-based primary care physicians’ hunger to understand more about the mind: how it shapes the patient’s experience of
their illness and how developing such an understanding can, in the clinic, powerfully impact the clinician’s ability to treat.

Cheryl became involved in the community more directly as a psychoanalyst by means of the Atlanta Psychoanalytic Society, in which she served as Program Chair and then President. She also continued to supervise psychiatric residents in their psychotherapy training through the OPTP until she was appointed a Training and Supervising Analyst, when she began to supervise EUPI candidates in their analytic training.

Becoming a TA/SA is typically regarded as a pinnacle career achievement. For Cheryl this professional role has also involved the humbling but immensely rewarding recognition that psychoanalytic growth requires an unstinting commitment to lifelong learning. Beyond EUPI, she participates in clinical case supervision groups as well as in post-graduate courses for training analysts. Here at Emory, her supervision of psychiatric residents and psychoanalytic candidates has been recognized by awards from both the Department of Psychiatry and EUPI. But she also continues to obtain consultation and supervision on her own cases from psychoanalysts outside of the institute.

Cheryl says, “Unquestionably, I learn the most from my own analytic patients and analysands. An analysis can take a long time, usually years, but in a productive analytic process, I am continually learning about my patient’s mind and, more generally, about psychoanalysis, along with my patient. It is truly a unique journey, unrivaled by the clinical encounters that I have had in other types of treatments. One analytic session is never the same as the next.”

**STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Catey Funaiock, MS**

Catey Funaiock works within the Emory Autism Center (EAC) and is the director of education and oversees enrollment, adhering to all state licensing rules and regulations (and all the fun paperwork that comes with it!), hiring and training of teachers, curriculum development and providing in-class support when staffing is low (which currently has been often so she is doing most of her job at night). The EAC is currently going through the Quality Rated process and hopes to gain its three stars in early spring and next up would be to earn back the NAEYC accreditation that was lost during COVID. Both programs require a lot of dedication so it’s a tricky job of balancing it all out, but having a great support system at work truly helps.

After receiving her bachelor’s in psychology from Georgia State University, Catey began training as a clinical specialist at the Marcus Autism Center and continued there for eight years. She then pursued her master’s in special education (ASD) and became a severe autism teacher for Gwinnett County Public Schools at Chesney Elementary from 2014-22 and she is now at Early Emory.

When Catey decided to leave teaching after eight years in the classroom, she still was very much wanting to be involved in education and autism advocacy but wasn’t sure how to do that outside of the classroom. When she came across the EAC job opening,
she knew it would be perfect. Catey would still very much get to be involved with education and autism! She also really enjoyed her time as a mentor teacher and knew she loved leading and mentoring. Her favorite part of the job is being able to support teachers in ways she didn’t feel supported when she was a teacher, which in turn helps them to be a better teacher to children. She also gets about 60 kids that give her hugs and are excited to see her when she does visit the classrooms. Recently, Catey was playing with one of the children with autism that uses a couple of signs to communicate. They were working on him requesting hugs with the sign. A few days later when she was in that classroom, he arrived late and came into the classroom. He immediately saw her playing on the rug with another child and walked up and signed hug and she was able to give him the biggest hug she could give. It’s little moments like this that make childcare worth it!

When at the Marcus Autism Center, Catey was able to work in every department over her eight years there and found working in the Pediatric Feeding Disorders Clinic as a Clinical Specialist the most rewarding. Helping children ween off feeding tubes or avoid getting feeding tubes was surreal at times but this is when she felt the most growth of herself while at Marcus. After obtaining her masters in special education, she then accepted a position as a severe autism teacher for Gwinnett County Public Schools and taught K-5th. She was a district mentor teacher in GCPS for many years and supported special education teachers through the district. In her seventh year of teaching, she was nominated by her principal for Teachers as Leaders, a program in Gwinnett that accepts 60 teachers each school year. Catey got to spend a full school year (her eighth year) focusing on and developing her leadership skills through advanced trainings and opportunities ending with a capstone presentation. She has been able to take many of the leadership tools she learned in that program and implement them within Early Emory. Recently, a she and coworker were asked to present to about 200 YMCA Head Start educators about navigating challenging behaviors in the classroom. That was her largest group to present to and the feedback was fantastic!

When Catey interviewed for her current position and Dr. South talked about his plans for the future and where he wanted to take the program it sounded exactly like what she wanted her future to head towards. Her goal is to continue working with Early Emory in building this inclusive teaching model she and the leadership team can take nationwide and present about at educational/autism conferences. She wants to help support other childcare facilities in giving them the tools they need to help build an inclusive model that can have neurotypical and neurodivergent children learning together. Catey always says “had we all been raised in a true inclusive teaching model, we all (society) would be a lot kinder to each other.” She is also hoping to continue her education by becoming a Board-Certified Advocate in Special Education (BCASE) and helping to support the pre-kindergarten children with autism as the parents navigate the IEP system and the public schools.

Outside of work, Catey leads a simple life, it’s just her and her pets. She just bought her first house in August after owning a condo for 12 years. Her dog and cat are the happiest they could be with a nice backyard. Now that she has a yard, she is hoping to
Catey is very close with her sisters who live here in Atlanta. Each of them has children so she loves being an aunt and they love spending time with their “Tay-Tay.” She has been enjoying gardening in her new house and getting all settled in. She loves to travel and has a couple upcoming trips (New York in November to see her favorite band, Bears Den; Nashville in November for the NAEYC conference and a cruise to Turks and Caicos in February).

**TRAINEE SPOTLIGHT: Darron Lewis, MD**

Darron Lewis is currently an Addiction Psychiatry Fellow (PGY6), working in the the Addiction fellowship and the Substance Abuse Treatment Program (SATP) in both the Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) and Outpatient settings. He also works alongside attendings to provide addiction care for veterans for all addictive substances.

Outside of Emory, Darron is also an American Psychiatric Association Foundation/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (APAF/SAMHSA) Minority Fellow. This is a fellowship program provided by the APA and SAMHSA to advocate and advance the care of minorities and marginalized populations in the community. This fellowship involves a service project in which he is creating an education curriculum for Marijuana Use in Adolescence.

Darron’s favorite part of being a psychiatrist in general is getting to work with a diverse patient population. Each patient he encounters has a unique story, and he enjoys the opportunity to bring positivity to their story. In particular, he enjoys working with transitional age youth and guiding them to their bright futures.

Darron is so thankful for the various opportunities he has had to work with his community. Of note, he is thankful to work in clinics providing care to those who normally do not have access to mental healthcare, such as a school-based clinic. He additionally enjoys working with veterans at the VA and getting the opportunity to give back to those who have served our country.

Darron’s ultimate career goal is to provide more access to mental healthcare for marginalized populations. To do this, he hopes to help create an addiction/rehabilitation center for Child and Adolescent minority populations. The goal of this clinic will be to accept patients with Medicaid and provide addiction care to the community.

Outside of work, Darron enjoys spending time with his dog and various outdoor spaces found in Atlanta. Additionally, he enjoys immersing himself in new cultures and is an advocate for traveling outside of the USA. In his free time at home, he enjoy playing video games with family and friends in other parts of the country.

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: myLIFE Program**

myLIFE is a social engagement program for autistic adults (we also have one new group for high school students) that is comprised of clinical groups, support groups, and recreational groups. Members are assigned to a clinical group based on their age, level of support needs, and goals. They can then choose support and rec groups as if they
were building a college schedule. Our program focuses on building adulting/life skills through the lens of social skills. Some of our major values are autonomy and self-determination and in addition to increasing skills we aim to build inclusive neurodiverse communities. We serve about 60 members a session and their families.

The program was developed by our program manager, Mrs. Toni Thomas in order to meet the needs of autistic adults as they aged out of the school system and encountered a supports cliff, many of whom had been students in the Early Emory Preschool at the EAC, where Mrs. Thomas used to teach.

Our program operates out of an apartment in student housing on Emory’s campus which allows us to really lean into the naturalistic developmental behavioral model upon which we were founded. Essentially, we teach, learn, and practice skills in the environment in which they will be used. We also have between 85-100 Emory student volunteers each semester who provide support in our groups and serve as peers and peer mentors to our members.

We are a small but mighty (and growing) team! We have 3 clinicians, a program manager, billing and rec support from our awesome admin team, and 6 practicum students. We also rely heavily on our Emory student volunteers and we have trainees from psychiatry, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, dietetic, and art therapy programs.

We have longstanding relationships with the nursing school, the business school, and several student-oriented offices through Emory University. For example, we have writing tutors from Emory’s writing tutor program, and we have business school students who run the SPARK mentorship program with our members. We also work closely with several Emory student-run clubs. We love and value these relationships and would love to work with other folks around campus!

We take the phrase, "Nothing about us without us" seriously and try to have our members involved in creating our programming each session. We are also developing a leadership course to support members who want to eventually run their own rec groups through the myLIFE program.

Check out the myLIFE website. If you are interested in collaborating or learning more, email Amanda Platner and Toni Thomas.

**NEW FACULTY**

**Martha Calamaras, PhD** – Martha Calamaras earned her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Georgia State University in 2014. She completed her internship at the Charlie Norwood VA/Medical College of Georgia Consortium and her postdoctoral fellowship at Emory University School of Medicine-Grady Health System. She has been at the Atlanta VA, where she specializes in the treatment of borderline personality disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder and eating disorders since 2015. Martha has additional interests in perinatal/reproductive mental health and treatment process and
outcome research. At Emory, Dr. Calamaras hopes to supervise trainees in the provision of DBT and other evidence-based psychotherapies and serve on committees.

**Raegan Hanlon, PsyD** – Raegan Hanlon completed her doctorate in clinical psychology at Xavier University in 2006 with a specialty in gero-psychology. Upon completing her VA internship and residency, she accepted a position at the Miami VA Health Care System where she served 13 years as a staff psychologist working as part of a multidisciplinary team on the Hospice and Palliative Unit. Her primary role was devoted to assisting Veterans and helping them live fully until they reached the end of their life, while simultaneously offering emotional support to their family. She had an active role in developing and enhancing the Bereavement Initiative at the Miami VA and was active at the VISN level as well. She also helped to establish and build the psycho-oncology program at the Miami VA. Raegan transferred to the Atlanta VA in August 2020; joining the health psychology team. Presently, her primary responsibilities include developing/enhancing the psycho-oncology program and offering emotional support and behavioral interventions to Veterans participating in home-based cardiac rehab. She facilitates four cancer support groups and offers individual, health-focused psychotherapy. She is also involved in supervision and training. Raegan’s primary area of interest is helping Veterans cope and maintain a good quality of life despite the challenges of living with serious illness. Personally, she is a wife and mother to two, amazing young children who keep her on her toes. She enjoys spending time with her family, playing games, swimming, traveling and cooking, as well as exercising and reading.

**Meeka Maier, PhD** – Meeka Maier is a clinical psychologist returning to Emory after having completed her PhD in the Department of Psychology and internship at the Child and Adolescent Mood Program in 2020. Following graduation, she completed her post-doctoral fellowship at the 3East Intensive Adolescent Dialectical Behavior Therapy Residential Unit at McLean Hospital, then worked as a Staff Psychologist at the 3East Partial Hospitalization Program. She is excited to rejoin the Child and Adolescent Mood Program as an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Meeka will provide care to children, adolescents and young adults who have difficulty managing their emotions and who struggle with depression, anxiety and/or interpersonal difficulties. She will also assist with the program’s research and supervise trainees. Outside of work, Meeka enjoys yoga and exploring Atlanta with her husband and toddler.

**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

WOMEN’S FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

None reported.

FACULTY KUDOS

Major Leadership Appointments, Activities and Achievements

None reported.

Research


**Honors, Awards, Rankings**

The Healthy Baby Child Development project at Emory just received a $1.5 million supplement to the main grant for the purposes of collection biospecimens at the time of delivery. In addition to the existing Emory investigators (Julie Kable, Claire Coles, Alex Perez, Daniel Dilks, Jennifer Stevens, Justine Welsh and Victoria Green), they will be including Alicia Smith, Dani Fallin, Suchitra Chandrasekaran and Sejal Tamakuwala on the project.

The following individuals received an Emory University School of Medicine Psychology Travel Award for Outstanding Trainee Professional Contributions:

- Demy Alfonso
- Frannie Calkins
- Mayank Gandhi
- Chloe Holbrook

The following faculty served as Discovery Mentors for Emory Medical Students this year:

- Rob Cotes
- David Goldsmith
- Nadine Kaslow
• Sanne van Rooij

Geoff Goodman received the following awards from the Emory University Psychoanalytic Institute: Beverly J. Stoute, MD, Diversity and Inclusion Award and the Hugo Zee, MD, Psychoanalytic Research Award.

Elizabeth McCord received Faculty Development Funds to present at the Association of Medicine and Psychiatry Conference.

Andrew Sherrill was recently awarded a National Science Foundation grant (4 years, $2M) for a project he is leading with colleagues at Georgia Tech and Penn State and within our department (Courtland Hyatt, Jessica Maples-Keller, Sheila Rauch, Barbara Rothbaum, Laura Watkins and Carly Yasinski). The team will develop an interactive AI system that can evaluate a clinician’s performance with a patient, provide objective and actionable feedback to the clinician and receive input from the clinician so feedback is based on what that individual clinician needs to learn. A prototype will be deployed and evaluated in diverse settings and with diverse clinicians and diverse patient populations. This project aims to 1) develop computational and design guidelines to develop and integrate interactive AI into mental health work, 2) understand how the integration of interactive AI will impact the knowledge, skills and attitudes of mental health workers, and 3) identify ethical guidelines and risk-mitigation strategies for "AI teaming" in mental health work.

Carly Yasinski received Faculty Development Funds to present a poster at the Annual Convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies.

Presentations
At DBHDD’s Behavioral Health and the Law Conference at the Jekyll Island Convention Center, psychiatry faculty presented a CE workshop on: Challenging Competency to Stand Trial Evaluations. The workshop had the following five talks:

• Psychology, the Law, and Sign Language by Tomina Schwenke, PhD, ABPP, CI, CT, QMHI
• Evaluating Defendants with an Intellectual Disability (ID) or Autism by Mary Maddox, PsyD
• Signs of Organic Mental Disorders during Competency Evaluations by Glenn Egan, PhD
• Evaluating Defendants with Sovereign Citizen Beliefs by Mary Maddox, PsyD, and Glenn Egan, PhD
• Evaluation of a Defendant Who Wants to Represent Himself - The Pro Se Defendant by Peter Ash, MD

Claire Coles, Julie Kable and Mikle South presented a webinar regarding “Children’s Care During War” to the Omni-Net network in Ukraine, cosponsored by Volyn University and Khmelnytsky Children’s Hospital. Claire and Julie have worked with the Omni-Net group for many years regarding care for children with prenatal exposure to radiation, alcohol and other teratogens. Before the war this network was expanding services for all
children with special needs, but it has been a difficult time. 280 providers including pediatricians, psychologists and other clinicians from all around the country attended. The moderator said the talks were a great inspiration during a difficult time. He noted: “This is not a war to conquer square feet. This is not a war of greed. This is a war to destroy a nation. Thank you for your contributions to keep the spirit of our children and our nation alive.”

Geoff Goodman presented “Object Relations Theory and Attachment Theory” at the Morehouse University School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Psychiatry Residency Didactic Session.


Rebecca Schneider gave the grand rounds talk at Marcus Autism Center/CHOA BMH Grand Rounds titled “Innovations in the Treatment of OCD.”


**Community**

**Media**
Negar Fani (1) Impostrix Podcast – *Unmasking the Impact of Racial Trauma on Brain Health: A Candid Conversation with Dr. Negar Fani*

Geoff Goodman (1) Emory Report – *‘A Story Grows in Uganda’ combines storytelling traditions, shows that literacy research flourishes at Emory*

Grayson Norquist (1) Atlanta News First - *Grady Hospital Set to Open Georgia’s First ‘Med-Psych’ Facility*

Jeffrey Rakofsky (1) AARP Magazine – *When Lying Is a Sign of a Health Problem*
Barbara Rothbaum (1) New York Times – A Novel Therapy, Using Writing, Shows Promise for PTSD.

Personal
None reported.

ADJUNCT FACULTY KUDOS

Kisha Holden (1) received notification of being named a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (effective 1/24), (2) served as the moderator for a session at the 2023 convention of the American Psychological Association entitled “Charting A Path Forward for Leadership to Advance Health Equity” and (3) is the lead for a new blog for Psychology Today magazine entitled Resilient You: Journey of Self-Empowerment. (4) Blog post with Dr. Malika B. Gooden on Psychology Today website titled Resilient You: Journey of Self-Empowerment.

Kendle Jenkins is now an AAPE-approved and EUPI-appointed Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst.

Michelle Robbins is serving as Interim Chair, Department of Clinical Psychology, Mercer University College of Health Professions.

As Co-Chair of the Holmes Commission on Racial Equality in American Psychoanalysis, Beverly Stoute was an integral member of the leadership team of the Commission that conducted the study and released the report of its findings this summer.


TRAINEE KUDOS
Cecilia Hinojosa received a K99-R00 MOSAIC award from NIAAA, “Sex differences in reward neurocircuitry underlying alcohol craving and consumption in trauma-exposed individuals.”