

VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018

What's New?

By Robin Lewis, Ph.D., DCT

Spring has officially sprung, bringing with it the famous Virginia humidity. The Consortium celebrated another successful year at the End of Year Picnic in historic First Landing State Park. There we honored our upcoming August 2018 graduates, **Laurin Roberts**, **Cristina Bain**, and **Denise Calhoun**, and our current students leaving for internship, **Eva Panigrahi**, **Stefan LaTulip**, and **Tiren Parker** (see page 11). **Cristina Bain** and **Denise Calhoun** participated in the commencement ceremony hosted by NSU on May 5th, 2018. We also announced **Lydia Qualls** as the winner of our annual Eileen O'Neil Student Service Award. Congratulations to all!

The Consortium held our first ever Diversity Outreach Workshop for local undergraduates from multiple universities interested in seeking a graduate degree in Clinical Psychology (see page 10). Both student and faculty panels shared their experiences and advice to guests regarding their graduate training, careers, and personal journeys. With overwhelmingly positive feedback from guests, the event was a great success.

As always, we want to keep in touch with our alumni – Please send a note to let us know how you are doing and how we can stay in touch via email. Feel free to email our graduate assistants who route incoming program email at vcpcpga@gmail.com or me at rlewis@odu.edu.

With Best wishes,
Robin



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Retiring Faculty: Dr. Michael Lindsay Stutts

Dr. Michael Lindsay ("Mike") Stutts joined Eastern Virginia Medical School in 1985, with joint faculty appointments to the Departments of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R). His undergraduate B.S. degree was from the University of Maryland, he completed his M.S. and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Louisville, he took his clinical psychology internship at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, and he completed a post-doctoral fellowship in clinical neuropsychology at MCV/VCU in Richmond.

Dr. Stutts was recruited here by the late Tom Peake, Ph.D., ABPP, co-founder of the Neuropsychology Program at EVMS with J.D. Ball, Ph.D., ABPP, and by the late Charlie Peterson, M.D., founding Chair of PM&R at EVMS. For 33 years, Dr. Stutts has been heavily involved in patient care at EVMS from within both his inpatient services on the Rehabilitation Unit of Sentara Norfolk General Hospital and his outpatient services through the Department's Neuropsychology Program. From 1995 to the present, as Co-directors of The Neuropsychology Program, Drs. Stutts and Ball developed a strong regional reputation for high quality health care. The Neuropsychology Program attracted a steady backlog of new patients of all ages and varied conditions, enticed a great many students to follow into neuropsychology, and was a Department center of excellence for decades.



Thank you
for your 33
years of
service at
EVMS, Dr.
Stutts!



Through it, Dr. Stutts cared for over 10,000 patients. Amidst this clinical care, he provided continuous clinical training to students in five different educational programs: (a) practicum supervision for doctoral students within the Virginia Consortium Program in Clinical Psychology (VCPCP), (b) major rotation internship supervision in our Department's Clinical Psychology Internship, (c) fourth year medical student clerkship supervision in neuropsychology, (d) residency supervision with the EVMS Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, and (e) supervision of neuropsychology post-doctoral fellows through our prior Post-doctoral Fellowship in Clinical Neuropsychology, sponsored by both the EVMS Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Eastern State Hospital.

Dr. Stutts' teaching activities extend far beyond this remarkable tenure of clinical teaching. He has also been active in the classroom through his yearly instruction of several three-credit doctoral graduate classes in Biological and Cognitive Aspects of Behavior, Advanced Clinical Neuropsychology, and Geriatric Neuropsychology, his research mentorship of ten VCPCP student dissertations over his term here, his weekly seminar instruction within the Clinical Psychology Internship, his regular lectures within the Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Residency and Art Therapy Graduate Program, and his facilitation of a School of Health Professions Interprofessional Collaboration Education Course. Dr. Stutts has also held an adjunct faculty appointment within the Department of Psychology at Old Dominion University from 1989. Dr. Stutts' excellent teaching quality has been verified by his having been twice honored (in 2009; 2013) as Instructor of the Year within the EVMS Clinical Psychology Internship and his having received the 1995 Graduates' Award for Outstanding Contributions to the VCPCP. Additionally, various Department Chairs in Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences have recognized Dr. Stutts' academic leadership by awarding him administrative responsibilities as (a) the EVMS Director of Training/Council of Directors for the VCPCP, (b) the Clinical Training Director of the VCPCP, and, most recently, (c) Vice-Chair of the EVMS Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences.



Outstanding Contributions to the VCPCP. Additionally, various Department Chairs in Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences have recognized Dr. Stutts' academic leadership by awarding him administrative responsibilities as (a) the EVMS Director of Training/Council of Directors for the VCPCP, (b) the Clinical Training Director of the VCPCP, and, most recently, (c) Vice-Chair of the EVMS Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences.

Dr. Stutts' service to EVMS and to the region has included a long tenure on the EVMS Institutional Review Board (IRB) and his service on and chairmanship of the EVMS Appointments and Promotions Committee for many years. Perhaps his most remarkable public service has been his two four-year terms (1991-99) on the Virginia Board of Medicine, during which he was Vice-President for several years, followed by two four-year terms on the Virginia Board of Psychology (2000-08), during which he was Vice-Chair and Chair. He also served on the Virginia Board of Health Professions. Dr. Stutts also chaired the Virginia Brain Injury Council for several years, was President of the Virginia Academy of Clinical Psychologists for two years, and was a member of its Executive Committee six years. Nationally, Dr. Stutts served on the Planning Committee of the National Academy of Neuropsychology, in which he is also a fellow.

In terms of personal scholarship, Dr. Stutts' has had direct involvement in a number of research grants, including a multi-year tri-state project with Dr. Ball to investigate potential neurocognitive effects of neurotoxins from *pfisteria* outbreaks on the Chesapeake Bay, funded by the National Centers for Disease Control through the Virginia State Health Department. His editorial board membership on *Rehabilitation Psychology*, his reviewer status with five other journals, some fifteen different refereed publications, an authored book chapter, and many more invited addresses and presentations help round out his academic profile. With this record of vast accomplishment in clinical services, teaching, administrative leadership, service to the school and the state, and scholarship, Dr. Stutts was quickly promoted. He has held the rank of Professor in both Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation for over 20 years.

- Dr. J. D. Ball

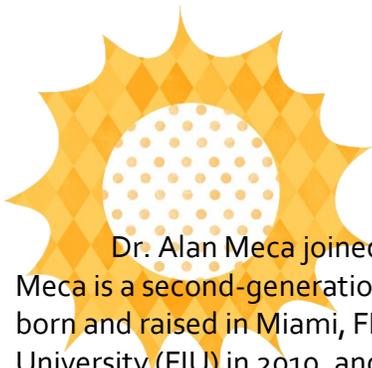
Consortium Students Say Farewell to Dr. Stutts!

Over the past three years, Dr. Stutts has been my director, course instructor, and, most recently, practicum supervisor. Dr. Stutts has made invaluable contributions to this program, and faculty and students alike will miss him. He has mentored countless students as a research mentor for VCPCP and as a director for The Neuropsychology Program at EVMS. In my experience, Dr. Stutts has always been fair and even-tempered, which makes him easy to be around and work for. He is also a wealth of knowledge as it relates to neuropsychology, and I have learned a lot from him during my time in the program. While I know his absence will be felt, I wish him well in retirement!

-Lindsay Howard, Class of 2020

I can say with confidence that Dr. Stutts is not only an extremely knowledgeable and helpful resource within the Consortium, but from my interactions with other local professionals, he is held with high esteem in his field. Working with him as an advisor, mentor, and supervisor has given me invaluable experience and helped prepare me for what lies in my future career. His presence and willingness to discuss Washington sports will be sorely missed, but I wish him the best of luck in his hard-earned retirement.

-Sean Flannery, Class of 2019



New Faculty Highlight: Dr. Alan Meca

Dr. Alan Meca joined the ODU Psychology Department during the fall of 2017. Dr. Alan Meca is a second-generation Hispanic immigrant and a first-generation college student. He was born and raised in Miami, FL where he completed his Bachelors in Psychology at Florida International University (FIU) in 2010, and stayed at FIU to complete his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology after his father passed away to lung cancer. His doctoral training was focused on identity and positive youth development (2010-2012 under Dr. Kurtines) and cultural identity development and acculturation (2012-2014 under Dr. Stephens). Dr. Meca is also a Ronald E. McNair Fellow and received the McKnight Dissertation Fellowship and Provost's recognition for Outstanding Teaching.

After graduating, Dr. Meca began a postdoctoral position as part of an NIH Minority Supplement at the University of Miami Medical School under Drs. Seth J. Schwartz and Jonathan Tubman. There, his research specifically focused on the role that developmental and cultural processes have on alcohol use and engagement in other risky behavior. Extending this research agenda, Dr. Meca's Team on Acculturation, Risk, and Development of Identity and Self (TARDIS) Lab investigates identity development and acculturation in ethnic/racial minority youth, as well as the respective impacts of these processes on health risk behaviors (e.g., alcohol use, risky sexual behavior, etc.).

Dr. Meca's studies have not only shown the importance of identity development among adolescents and emerging adults (Meca et al., 2016; Ritchie, Meca, et al., 2013), but shown that identity is amendable to intervention (Meca et al., 2014). Most recently, Dr. Meca's found a bidirectional relationship between personal and cultural identity among recently immigrated Hispanic youth (Meca et al., 2017) and Hispanic emerging adults (Meca et al., under review), however, the protective effects of identity development were largely confined to personal identity.

Building on this research, Dr. Meca will be focusing on understanding the complex relationship between personal and cultural identity, the role of bicultural identity integration in promoting positive psychosocial functioning, the impact of cultural stressors on youth adaptation, and mechanisms that may serve to promote adaptive identity development. The goal of such research is to inform prevention/intervention programs capable of reducing risk behaviors and promoting positive development.

In addition to his research, Dr. Meca is also married, has three furbabies, and is expecting a new addition to the family in September – a baby girl. He is also an avid consumer of all things geeky and a huge fan of Star Wars and the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Hobbies include binge watching TV shows, trying out new restaurants, playing video games, and reading a good book.



Check out what goes on in Dr. Meca's ODU lab at <https://sites.wp.odu.edu/tardis/>

New Faculty Highlight: Dr. Abby Braitman



Dr. Abby L. Braitman received her Ph.D. in 2012 from Old Dominion University's then Applied Experimental Psychology program (now Applied Psychological Science). Her program of research focuses on college student health, particularly heavy episodic drinking. Her main NIH-funded line of research focuses on enhancing online interventions (widely adopted throughout the United States) via booster sessions sent via mobile technology (e.g., emails, text messages, app messages). She is currently examining content components and message framing to optimize the efficacy of these messages. She is also interested in exploring the daily etiology of college drinking, and why students choose to engage in heavy drinking episodes on some occasions as compared to lighter drinking on other occasions. Along these lines, she is exploring social and environmental contextual factors of each occasion as predictors of heavy drinking and related undesirable outcomes.

Dr. Braitman also has a strong interest in quantitative methods, particularly longitudinal data analysis. She has given multiple workshops on best practices for data cleaning, addressing missing data, data record keeping, using advanced software, or specific analysis types, both locally and at national conferences. Helping researchers engage in the highest quality research possible is a strong passion of hers.

This strong interest in quantitative methods has led to many opportunities for collaborations across health and clinical programs of research. She has contributed to many projects focused on alcohol use, such as the etiology of high risk populations like associations with moral injury among veterans and interventions with high-risk populations like nonstudent emerging adults and disordered family units. She has also contributed to broader health collaborations, such as binge eating, sexual minority stress, HIV-related stigma, diabetes self-care, distracted driving, and psychometric validations of relevant scales. Many of these collaborations were with members of the Consortium or affiliates (e.g., Drs. Kristin Heron, Michelle Kelley, Cathy Lau-Barraco, Robin Lewis).

A Maryland native, Dr. Braitman received her bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Maryland before starting the master's program at New York University. Prior to completing that program, she was admitted to ODU's PhD program in psychology. After receiving her Ph.D. in 2012, Dr. Braitman secured a training grant from NIH (the F32 Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award) to fund a postdoctoral fellowship at ODU. This fellowship continued her program of research on improving online interventions for college drinking through mobile booster sessions. She then transitioned to a research faculty position and secured a career development grant from NIH (the K01 Mentored Research Scientist Development Award). This 5-year grant funds a series of studies to extend this line of research, as well as additional training and career development experiences.

As a graduate student, Dr. Braitman taught Introduction to Psychology, Quantitative Methods, and Research Methods in Psychology to undergrads, as well as serving as the lab instructor for the graduate ANOVA and Regression courses. As faculty, she continued to teach Quantitative Methods and Research Methods in Psychology, including both in-person and online, as well as a graduate course in Program Evaluation. She plans to teach a course in Longitudinal Data Analysis next year. Her teaching responsibilities are currently reduced because of her career development grant, but she has plans to continue teaching Program Evaluation and Longitudinal Data Analysis, as well as potentially teaching Health Psychology and Community Psychology in the future.

Dr. Matt Judah's Emotion Research and Psychophysiology (ERP) Lab

Dr. Judah's lab at ODU is the Emotion Research and Psychophysiology (ERP) Laboratory. In his lab psychophysiological tools are used to investigate cognitive processes in anxiety disorders and depression. Specifically, the lab focuses on utilizing event-related potentials (ERPs) to research both elaborative and basic cognitive processes, such as worry, working memory, and cognitive biases.

A recently completed study examined how social anxiety is related to an ERP indicator of attention to heart rate. The results suggested that socially anxious individuals pay more attention to their heart rate. The relationship was mediated by concerns about the social consequences of anxiety. These findings align with cognitive theories, which propose that social anxiety involves increased attention to anxiety symptoms because they may be noticeable by others.

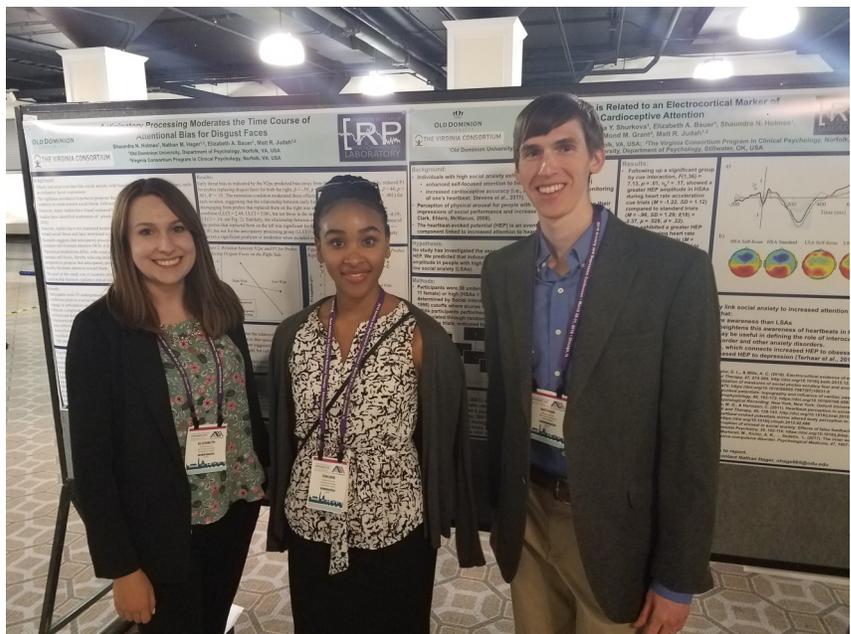
Currently, the ERP Lab is examining the relationship between direct gaze at emotional faces and perceptual biases related to social anxiety. Past research has suggested that socially anxious individuals make less eye contact and spend less time looking at others' faces. Lack of direct gaze may reduce sensory processing of faces, leading to distorted perceptions.

A second study is exploring a variety of psychological and behavioral health problems and how they relate to cognition. The study uses electroencephalography to measure brain activity across a battery of five tasks which assess attention, cognitive control, and resting state function.

An upcoming study in collaboration with Dr. Michelle Kelley will examine the relationship between moral injury and ERP indicators of cognition in a sample of recent-era military veterans. One arm of the study will examine whether MI is associated with enhanced physiological reactivity to combat-related images. **Check out Dr. Judah's ERP lab at <https://fs.wp.odu.edu/mjudah/>.**

"The ERP Lab has been an ideal place to apply my interests in mood disorders, cognition, and emotion. Dr. Judah's expertise in ERP methodology provides me with great training as I seek to bridge my clinical and research passions by examining dysfunction in neurocircuitry. I am excited to begin collecting data on my thesis project and hopefully contribute to our understanding of how reward information is processed and how it relates to memory and symptoms of depression."

- Nathan Hager, ERP Lab graduate student



Pictured above: Texas A&M doctoral student, Elizabeth Bauer, ODU undergraduate RA, Shaundra Holmes, and first-year Consortium student, Nathan Hager

Research Awards

Congratulations to the Consortium students who earned research awards during the spring 2018 semester!

Lindsay Howard was awarded the **P.E.O. Scholar Award**. P.E.O. Scholar Awards are one-time, competitive, merit-based awards for women who are pursuing a doctoral level degree at an accredited college or university in the United States or Canada. In addition to recognizing and encouraging excellence in higher education, these awards provide partial support for study and research for women who will make significant contributions in their varied fields of endeavor. Lindsay will use her award to support her dissertation research project entitled "Investigating Race Differences in Young Women's Reports of Denial and Disordered Eating: An Ecological Momentary assessment study". Her research aims to: (1) examine differences between Black and White women in denial of disordered eating behaviors and help-seeking attitudes, (2) determine the relationship between daily denial and engagement in disordered eating that night, and (3) explore the influence of interpersonal problems and negative affect on denial and disordered eating. Congratulations, Lindsay!



Kelsey Ellis's proposal was selected as one of the six that were selected for funding through the **ODU Graduate School Summer Research and Creativity Grant**, which will fund her summer research project entitled "Examining the Role of ADHD in Harsh Parenting Preferences: An Analog Study." As child abuse rates continue to rise, there is an urgent need to better our understanding on the psychological factors involved in harsh parenting behaviors. Infant crying has demonstrated disruptive effects on parental mood and cognition, but this has not been studied in the context of harsh parenting. Furthermore, limited research has explored the impact of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms (i.e., inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity) on harsh parenting preferences among typically-developing young people. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of ADHD symptoms on harsh parenting preferences under a condition of simulated parental stress (i.e., infant crying noises). Congratulations, Kelsey!

Research Awards

Alexander Shappie's proposal was also selected for funding through the **ODU Graduate School Summer Research and Creativity Grant**. Out of 43 submissions, Consortium students' proposals were two of the six selected for funding! The grant will fund Alex's summer project entitled "The Feasibility of Recruiting a Nationally Representative Sample of Sexual Minority Men via Facebook Advertising: A Study of Demographic Characteristics and Health Variables." Researchers oftentimes have difficulty recruiting diverse samples of individuals who identify as a sexual minority (i.e., lesbian, gay, bisexual, etc.). Social media advertising offers researchers the opportunity to recruit participants across a wide range of geographic and demographic characteristics, including individuals who identify as sexual and/or a racial minority, which may assist researchers recruit populations that have historically been difficult to access. Building upon previous research regarding the use of social media for social science research recruitment, Alex's work will examine the feasibility of recruiting a racially diverse, nationally representative sample of sexual minority men (SMM) via Facebook Advertisements. Alex was also recently awarded a \$300 **student travel award from the APA Science Directorate** to help defray the costs of attending the upcoming APA 2018 convention in San Francisco. Congratulations, Alex!

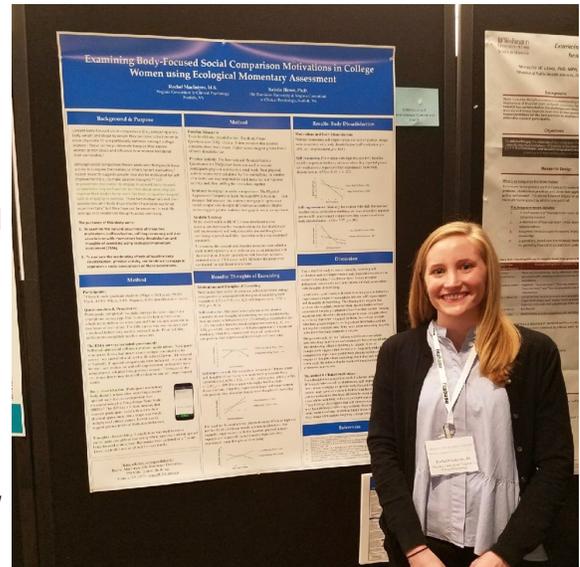


Dominique Blanchette won **2nd place at the Virginia State University Black Psychology Conference** for her poster presentation. She presented a protocol poster of her dissertation outlining her unique population, topic, methodology and potential contributions to the field of forensic psychology. Her dissertation is entitled "The 23: Racial and Other Demographic Differences in the Assignment of Risk Factors for Individuals Found Not Guilty By Reason of Insanity in Virginia" . Dr. Robin Lewis and Dr. Andrew Osborn served as co authors on the poster. Congratulations, Dom!



Research Awards

Rachel MacIntyre received the **Outstanding M.S. Thesis Award at the 2018 College of Sciences Award Ceremony** for her thesis titled “Examining Body-Focused Self-Improvement and Self-Evaluation Social Comparisons on Exercise in Young Adult Women Using Ecological Momentary Assessment.” The project utilized a smartphone application and Fitbit Flexes to capture the natural occurrence of body comparisons college women make in their everyday lives and their associations with their thoughts about their bodies and exercise and exercise behaviors. Although social comparisons are considered to be motivated by self-evaluation (i.e., to evaluate oneself compared to others), Rachel’s project was the first to examine the natural occurrence of self-evaluation as well as an additional motivation that may be associated with these behaviors, self-improvement (i.e., to make positive changes). Rachel sends a special thanks to her research mentor and thesis chair, Dr. Kristin Heron, for all of her guidance and support on the project. Congrats, Rachel!



Virginia Consortium Diversity Committee Hosts Diversity Potluck Dinner

By Lydia Qualls

The Virginia Consortium Diversity Committee Hosted a potluck dinner on Friday, April 20th at the house of Drs. Barbara Winstead and Val Derlega. Each person attending shared a dish from their culture, as well as a story about why the dish was important to them and their culture. Dr. Lewis shared kugel, a traditional Jewish dish made of noodles and a variety of other ingredients. Bilg  Yilmaz and Peter Preonas shared similar dishes, Bilg  bringing b rek from the Turkish culinary tradition and Peter bringing the traditional Greek spanakopita. Both dishes consist of a base of filo dough and cheese, illustrating culinary and cultural similarities between two geographically neighboring countries. Alex Shappie shared some scrumptious corn on the cob, a major export of his native Ohio, and Dr. Winstead supplied delicious North Carolina barbeque. Dr. Hacker, Phoebe Hitson, Lydia Qualls, and Tiren Parker illustrated the ubiquity and variety of Southern cuisine by bringing cornbread stuffing and cranberry sauce, pimento cheese and crackers, cheese grits, and fried apples, respectively. It was a delicious and informative evening for everybody!

Virginia Consortium Hosts First Diversity Outreach Evening at ODU

By Lydia Qualls

The Virginia Consortium Program in Clinical Psychology hosted the inaugural Diversity Outreach Workshop at the ODU Webb Center on Wednesday, April 18th, 2018. The event was supported in part by Graduate Recruiting Funds from the ODU Graduate School and was targeted towards undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds (including but not limited to racial/ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, differently abled individuals, first generation college attendees) who were interested in learning more about for clinical psychology training programs. Current Consortium students and faculty spoke with the attendees about their individual pathways to graduate school, how best to prepare for graduate school, what graduate school is like from the point of view of current students, and what faculty members look for in a graduate student. Attendees also got the opportunity to network with Consortium faculty and students and to find out about opportunities to get involved in research with Consortium members. The event was well-attended with undergraduate students from Norfolk State University, Hampton University, Virginia Wesleyan University, Christopher Newport University, and Old Dominion University. Attendees were also provided with an informational workbook on getting into graduate school and a GRE study book to assist them in their graduate school preparation. Feedback from the undergraduate students attending the event was overwhelmingly positive, and the Consortium hopes to host a similar event next year!



Student panel pictured above: Bilgé Yilmaz, Rachel Amerson, and Peter Preonas

Faculty panel pictured below: Erica Russell, Andrew Franklin, and Cathy Lau-Barraco



Graduates!

This coming August, we have three Consortium graduates! **Lauren Roberts**, **Denise Calhoun**, and **Cristina Bain** will all be completed with their degrees at the end of the summer. Lauren Roberts worked with Dr. James Paulson during her training and is finishing her internship at the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System in Gainesville, Florida. Denise Calhoun worked with Dr. Robin Lewis and is currently completing her internship at the VA Illiana Healthcare System in Danville, Illinois. Cristina Bain worked with Dr. Jennifer Flaherty and is nearing the end of her internship at the Hampton VA Medical Center close by in Hampton, VA. Congratulations to Lauren, Denise, and Cristina, our three graduates. The Consortium is so proud and wishes you all great success in your careers!

APPIC Matches

Eva Panigrahi, **Stefan LaTulip**, and **Tiren Parker** all matched to APA approved sites for internship during the spring semester. Eva will be completing her internship at **West Virginia University School of Medicine in Morgantown**, West Virginia. Stefan will be doing his internship at the **Tennessee Valley Healthcare System** in Nashville, Tennessee. Tiren will completing her internship at **W.J.B. Dorn VA Medical Center** in Columbia, South Carolina. A huge congratulations to Eva, Stefan, and Tiren, and good luck with your internship year!

