

COUPLES RESEARCH AND THERAPY

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A Newsletter brought to you by the ABCT Couples SIG, Fall 2021

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Letter from the Editors

Without being able to gather in person again, we are truly grateful to have the opportunity to connect with one another via the ABCT Couples SIG Newsletter!

In the coming weeks, we will be transitioning over newsletter responsibilities to the new student officers elected to this position (to be determined shortly!). We would like to take a moment to thank all of you for submitting your updates and kudos. Throughout the past two years, we have very much enjoyed hearing about all of the wonderful accomplishments and achievements of the SIG members, and we will miss checking in with you all. We encourage each of you to attend the upcoming SIG business meeting (Wednesday, November 10th at 7PM EST, virtually) to hear more about other SIG changes.

In addition to lab updates, kudos, and “hot off the press” publications, we are pleased to highlight and provide additional information on the **Couples SIG Underrepresented Scholars Fund (pg. 4)**

Additionally, the newsletter features comments from our faculty co-leaders, **Drs. Hannah Williamson and Emily Georgia Salivar (pg. 2)** who discuss important information about their new positions, and provide several relevant updates about the SIG. Also included are an update from our treasurer, **Dr. Michelle Ramos (pgs. 2-3)** who discusses current business and membership information; as well as updates from our outgoing SIG student co-leaders, **Karena Leo and Jessica Kansky (pg. 3-4)**, who discuss the upcoming virtual convention. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming virtual conference!

Thank you for making the Couples SIG Newsletter possible!

*Colin Adamo, M.S. (colin.adamo@utah.edu)
Maggie M. Parker, M.S. (mparke11@binghamton.edu)*

Letter from the SIG Co-Leaders

Drs. Hannah Williamson and Emily Georgia Salivar

Some exciting changes and new initiatives are underway in the SIG. First, we have established two new committees: the Junior Awards Committee and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. We thank Dr. Alex Crenshaw and Dr. McKenzie Roddy for agreeing to serve on the Junior Awards Committee. This committee will coordinate the review of submissions for the Weiss Student Poster award. We also thank Dr. Kayla Knopp, Dr. Jasara Hogan, Dr. Nick Perry, and Colin Adamo for agreeing to be the inaugural members of the DEI committee. This committee will take over administration of the Under-Represented Scholars Fund and will also develop their own initiatives for improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in the SIG and in our field more broadly.

We have also made a change to the student officer roles. In the past, two new people were elected to each position every two years. We will now be staggering these elections, so that one new person is elected every year to serve a two-term. The overlap between new and returning officers in each position will allow for more continuity in these roles. In order to start this staggered election process, new student officers elected this year will serve 1 or 2 year terms, and new student officers elected starting next year will serve 2 year terms.

You will also notice a change in our membership renewal procedures this year. As we noted in our previous President’s Column, some of our primary goals for our term as SIG leaders revolve around increasing inclusion, equity, and diversity within our SIG. As we all know, we can’t assess change without having a good baseline measure. To that end, we will be collecting (optional) demographic information about our membership during this Fall’s membership renewal period. This data will allow us, in collaboration with the DEI committee, to assess the current state of the SIG membership and our current practices within the SIG, such as determining whether service work within the SIG is being shared equitably.

Virtual Conference 2021

Once again we are faced with connecting virtually, rather than in person, at the annual ABCT convention this year. We are certainly disappointed not to see all of you, but we do hope to provide meaningful online opportunities for us to get together. In that line, we will host the Couples SIG Business meeting in advance of the larger virtual conference on November 10th, 2021 at 7pm EST. Please use this link to join:

<https://utexas.zoom.us/j/92343094578>

Important to know: conference registration is not required to attend the Business Meeting. At this meeting we will conduct our usual SIG business, including election of new student officers, presentation of the Weiss student poster award, an update from our new DEI committee, and membership dues renewal. As we are conducting our SIG meeting prior to the conference, we will not be scheduling an additional pre-conference event.

Hannah (hwilliamson@utexas.edu) & Emily (esalivar@nova.edu)

Letter from the SIG Treasurer

Dr. Michelle Ramos

Hello SIG Members!

I hope that you are all doing well. Despite not being together for an in-person convention, I am looking forward to an exciting virtual conference! Here is an update of our membership status and dues:

Our current dues-paying membership, including those who have paid dues within the last 5 years, is 201 members (90 professionals, 111 students).

This includes 10 new members (2 professionals and 8 students) since our Spring Newsletter update in March. Please continue to reach out and encourage others to join as we always love to welcome new members, particularly during our upcoming conference.

The balance last reported in March was \$2748.83. Since then, we have taken in \$515 in dues and Underrepresented Scholars Fund donations and \$735 balance transfer of the Inaugural Underrepresented Scholars Fund collected by Brian Baucom. Thus, we have a current balance of \$3998.83. We expect to pay out \$300 for poster awards. Thank you for your continued support!

We anticipate collecting most of our annual membership dues for the upcoming 2021-22 academic year around the conference. As Hannah and Emily noted in their President's Column, we have updated our membership renewal process. In addition to sending your dues electronically, please complete the membership renewal form:

<https://forms.gle/3xustNBLzbfApjgT8>

Dues are \$30 for professional members and \$5 for students, first-year post-docs, and retired members. Remember that with every professional membership, \$5 of dues automatically goes toward the Couples SIG Underrepresented Scholars Fund.

Dues can be sent via Venmo (send to @Michelle-Ramos-PhD) or via PayPal (send to mcramos@fullerton.edu). It is important to designate the payment as "Send to friends and family" to avoid processing fees. For all dues, indicate "ABCT Couples SIG" in the note.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about dues or membership.

I look forward to seeing you at our virtual SIG Business Meeting and virtual Cocktail Party and Graduation/Hooding Ceremony!

Michelle
(mcramos@fullerton.edu)

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Letter from the SIG Student Co-Presidents

Jessica Kansky & Karena Leo

Hello from your Student Leaders!

Couples SIG Cocktail Party

We were hoping that we would be able to offer an in-person gathering this year. However, given that this was not possible, and we want to continue to have a time for all of us to gather and socialize, we are working on organizing a virtual happy hour during the ABCT conference. The virtual happy hour will be tentatively held on Saturday evening; however, we are currently finalizing the schedule to make sure that we are not conflicting with any symposiums or other events that are of interest to members of the Couples SIG. Please be on the lookout for e-mails regarding happy hour updates and link to the virtual event!

Couples SIG Student Symposium

We selected three students for the final symposium proposal that is focused on understanding relational trauma using multi-method assessment. It was a fantastic submission, though unfortunately it was not accepted this year. We are disappointed with the outcome, but we wanted to thank the students for their wonderful work and time put into the symposium abstract.

Couples SIG Mentoring Opportunities

We have sent an e-mail regarding signing up as a mentor, and we are receiving many wonderful e-mails. If you would like to be a mentor, please e-mail Karena and Jessica. We will be following up with an e-mail shortly regarding how to sign up as a mentee to get matched with a mentor in the Couples SIG, so be on the lookout for this email. Please let us know if you have any questions about this

opportunity. We encourage all the students to sign up and thank you to all the mentors that have volunteered!

Get Involved!

We are open to suggestions, concerns, questions, and feedback, especially during this lack of in-person opportunities to brainstorm together! Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time. Remember to join the Couples SIG and the SIG listserv if you have not done so already. We are looking forward to meeting you or seeing you again virtually.

Jessica & Karena
(jk3gm@virginia.edu) & (karena.leo@utah.edu)

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FEATURED FUNDING

The ABCT Couples' SIG Underrepresented Scholars Fund

We are pleased to announce that the Underrepresented Scholars Fund will be accepting applications between December 1st and January 15th! The Couples SIG recognizes that our field is stronger when all voices are represented, and we are committed to increasing diversity within our field.

We know that the cost of applying to programs, networking at conferences, and interviewing for graduate school or internship is a significant barrier to entry within our field and we created the Underrepresented Scholars Fund to help close the gap. This fund is open to all students and potential students from underrepresented groups (broadly defined) to cover any costs associated with getting into graduate school, getting through graduate school, and internship.

Starting this year, we will be accepting applications in two cycles, one in winter and one in late summer. Please consider applying or spreading the word to students in your orbit. Email us at underrepresentedstudentscholarsfund@gmail.com with any questions and be on the lookout for the application link and a guide to communicating about these funds by the first of December!

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KUDOS!

We'd like to celebrate these special events in the lives of the following SIG members.

Congratulations to you!

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Dr. Christina Balderrama-Durbin's Couple Adjustment to Stress and Trauma (CAST) Laboratory

☺ Congratulations, **Eileen Barden**, on being selected for the Enhancing Diversity in Alcohol Research fellowship funded by NIAAA!

☺ Kudos to **Eileen Barden** for receiving Psi Chi's Research Grant Award to fund her dissertation research!

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Dr. Brian Baucom's Couples Lab for Observational Studies

☺ Congratulations to **Jasara Hogan** who transitioned to a role as a Research Assistant Professor in the Addiction Sciences Division at MUSC in August after receiving a Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH) K12 award. Her project will

examine the impact of relationship conflict on alcohol demand and craving among emerging adults. She was also awarded a Loan Repayment Program (LRP) award from NIAAA in July.

☺ Congratulations to **Nick Perry** for beginning his position as a Research Assistant Professor at the University of Denver and for being awarded a Wayne F. Placek grant from the American Psychological Foundation.

☺ Congratulations to **Karena Leo** for finishing internship and beginning her position as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Duke University with Laura Porter

☺ Congratulations to **Colin Adamo** for beginning his internship at the University of Pennsylvania

☺ Félicitations pour la naissance de votre petite fille to **Alex Crenshaw** for the birth of his baby girl, Mia, this past March

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Dr. Don Baucom's UNC Couples Lab

☺ **Kimberly Pentel**, PhD, finished her post-doc at the Seattle VA and passed the EPPP. Congrats, Kim!

☺ **Emily Carrino**, B.A., completed an esteemed summer fellowship conducting research in partnership with UNC's Center for Excellence in Eating Disorders. Her research is in preparation for publication. Congrats, Emily!

☺ **Danielle Weber**, M.A., started her internship at the Durham VA. Congrats, Danielle!

☺ **Emily Carrino**, B.A., received a departmental award for her innovation and implementation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives from 2020-2021. Congrats, Emily!

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Dr. Katie Baucom's HEART Lab

☺ **Monique Aguirre** (HEART Lab Manager) was selected for the Yale Psychology Department Committee for Diversity & Inclusiveness' "Sneak Peak" Program in Fall 2021, which provides mentorship in the PhD application process for underrepresented undergraduates & post-baccs!

☺ Several alumni started graduate school in Fall 2021! **Briana Schubert** started a Clinical Psychology PhD (University of Denver) & **Elsie Antuna-Valencia** started an MD (Medical College of Wisconsin).

☺ Several RAs were selected to participate in research programs in Summer 2021 (**Tali Bauman**, Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program & **Bennie Martinez**, Summer Program for Undergraduate Research)!

☺ **Yanina Nemirovsky**, LMSW completed her master's degree, passed her licensing exam, and started a job as a Clinical Social Worker at University Settlement Consultation Center in New York in summer 2021!

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Dr. Rebecca Cobb's SFU Close Relationships Lab

☺ Congratulations to **Michelle Korlacka, Shulamit Sternin, Lauren McRae, and Jessica Ferreria** who all received funding for their research!

☺ **Michelle** received a Vice Presidents Undergraduate Research award for her work on support in newlyweds.

☺ **Shuli** received a SSHRC Masters fellowship for her work on sexuality in long distance relationships.

☺ **Lauren** received a SSHRC Doctoral fellowship for her study on motives for relationship boundary discussions and their role in relationship quality over time.

☺ **Jessica** received a SSHRC Doctoral fellowship to investigate how emotional expression and behaviour in sexual discussions relates to changes in couples' sexual satisfaction.

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Dr. Kristina Coop Gordon's Couple Research Lab

☺ **Dr. Kristi Gordon** started a new position as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Community Engagement in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at UTK.

☺ **Dr. Erica Mitchell** began an appointment as a Research Assistant Professor in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in August 2021.

☺ **Dr. Kristi Gordon** won the Lamar Alexander Award for Exceptional Undergraduate Teaching and Distinguished Scholarship for UTK for 2021.

☺ **Zahra Amer** successfully defended her Master's Thesis (see above).

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Dr. Dr. James V. Córdoba's Center for Couples and Families at Clark University

☺ **Emily Maher** successfully defended her dissertation and completed her internship. She has started her postdoctoral fellowship at Brown University. Congrats, Dr. Maher!

☺ **Taylor Dovala** completed her internship and started her postdoctoral fellowship at Framework Psych in Los Angeles. Congratulations, Dr. Dovala!

☺ **Nick Canby** started his internship at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System. The lab doesn't feel the same since he departed!

☺ **Lizzy Engelkamp** got married over the summer!

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Dr. Brian Doss' Couples Lab

☺ **Karen Rothman** began her post-doc at Together CBT in New York City where she is providing CBT and mobile mental health app consulting

☺ In collaboration with colleagues at USF and UCF, we received a 3-year grant from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to adapt the OurRelationship program for Latina breast cancer survivors and their partners.

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Dr. Steffany Fredman's Penn State Couple and Family Adaptation to Stress Lab

☺ In Spring, 2022, **August Jenkins** will begin as a Visiting Postdoctoral Research Associate in Family Diversity at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, with the possibility of converting to a tenure track assistant professor position within the Human Development and Family Studies Department after completion of the postdoc. Congratulations, August!

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Dr. Amy D. Marshall's Penn State Relationships and Stress Lab

☺ **Emily Taverna** is finishing her NSF GRFP projects and will be applying to internships this fall.

☺ **Alex Mattern** began postdoctoral training at the National Center

for PTSD, VA Boston.

☺ **Jen Wong** began postdoctoral training at VA New Mexico.

☺ **Kelly Daly** began postdoctoral training with the Family Translational Research Group at New York University.

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Dr. Matthew D. Johnson’s Marriage and Family Studies Lab:

☺ **Tarah Midy**, Ph.D. is now a psychologist at the Cleveland VA.

☺ **Haley Fivecoat**, Ph.D. is now on the faculty at the Family Institute at Northwestern.

☺ **Erin Alexander** has advanced to candidacy.

☺ **Erin Alexander** received a grant for her work on assessing intimate partner violence.

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Dr. Richard Mattson’s Center for Transdisciplinary Research on Intimate Relationships (CTROIR) Lab:

☺ **Allison McKinnon** and **Maggie Parker** successfully proposed their dissertations, advanced to doctoral candidacy, and have applied to internship.

☺ **Michael Shaw** passed his comprehensive exams!

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Dr. McKenzie Roddy’s Lab

☺ **Dr. Roddy** was funded as a Consultant on “Engaging out-of-care distressed rural Veterans and their partners in outreach and an ACT-based intervention”, Dindo, PI, from the Office of Rural Health, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

☺ **Dr. Roddy** was funded as a Co-Investigator on “Enhancing access to emergency mental health care for rural Veterans: Sustainability and safety of urgent tele-mental health via videoconference (TMH-V)”, Ward, PI, from the Office of Rural Health, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

☺ McKenzie Roddy and Chase Hall married 12/31/20.

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Dr. Shelby Scott’s Promoting Resilience In DiversE (PRIDE) Family Studies Lab

☺ **Quyen Do** is the recipient of this year’s ABCT Student Research Grant award! This grant will fund her dissertation on intimate partner violence in consensual non-monogamous relationships. Quyen’s research was also recently featured in the September issue of the Behavioral Therapist.

☺ **Dr. Scott** is a recipient of this year’s Visionary Grant from the American Psychological Foundation for a project on transgender couples and intimate partner violence.

☺ **Dr. Scott** received the honor of “Best Paper of the Year” from APA’s Div. 43 in their journal Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice.

☺ **Dr. Scott** also received a university-level award of “Outstanding Professor” for her contribution to student life.

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Dr. Sarah Whitton’s The Today’s Couples and Families Research Program

☺ **Emily Devlin** received a University Research Council Graduate Student Research Fellowship!

☺ **Lisa Godfrey** matched to an internship at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center!

☺ **Neslihan James-Kangal graduated** with her Ph.D. in August, 2020 and is completing a postdoctoral fellowship in the San Francisco VA Healthcare System

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Dr. Erica Wooden’s UVic Healthy Relationships Lab

☺ Congratulations to **Kari Duerksen**, who received a BC Support Unit Graduate Fellowship to conduct patient-oriented research on mental health supports in higher education.

☺ In collaboration with **Dr. Catherine Costigan, Dr. Woodin** was also awarded a grant from the British Columbia Ministry of Health to explore experiences of secondary traumatic stress in mental health outreach teams during COVID.

☺ Finally, congratulations to **Fanie Collardeau** for receiving the Psi Chi Mamie Phipps Clark Diversity Research Grant, as well as for successfully matching to the Edmonton Internship Consortium.

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Lab Updates
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Lab Name: Baucom Lab/UNC Couples Lab

Head of Lab: Donald Baucom, Ph.D.

Lab Update: Our lab continues both its treatment outcome research and basic research on various couple processes. We believe that both of these approaches are valuable in themselves and interact in a synergistic manner to contribute to our knowledge in the field of intimate relationship functioning.

Treatment research

Eating disorders: Dr. Baucom and the lab continue their collaborative efforts with Dr. Bulik at UNC evaluating the effectiveness of a couple-based intervention for binge eating disorder in our community clinic. To further disseminate therapist training of our empirically-supported interventions in eating disorders, we are partnering with 3-C Family Services and the UNC Center for Excellence in Eating Disorders to take therapist training online for our couple-based treatments for anorexia nervosa and binge eating disorder.

Insomnia: Our lab is collaborating with Dr. Sean Drummond in Australia and Dr. Melissa Jenkins, a former UNC doctoral student, on a randomized controlled trial to treat insomnia with a couple-based intervention, expanding our couples and psychopathology work to a new disorder. The RCT is ongoing.

Depression: Our lab continues a long-standing collaboration with the National Health Service in England to offer training and supervision to therapists in our couple-based interventions for couples in which one partner is depressed. This is part of England’s nationwide IAPT program to provide empirically-supported interventions to the public.

Basic research

In response to the rapid onset of COVID-19, our lab collaboratively designed and completed an online survey study to examine changes to individual and couple functioning as a result of “stay-at-home” orders across the US in May 2020. A follow-up study was also completed in February 2021. Our main outcome manuscript is now published, and follow-up analyses are in preparation.

Our lab continues its broad-based exploration of interpersonal emotion regulation by examining couple conversations using dynamic systems modeling and other intensive time series methods. We have been interested in vocal features of emotional arousal within multiple populations of couples and are currently working on multiple projects at various stages. Manuscripts on interpersonal emotion regulation

in couples with a focus on (a) physical and/or psychological violence, led by Alexandra Wojda (5th year student) and (b) longitudinal symptoms of psychopathology, led by Danielle Weber (pre-doctoral intern) are now published. Another paper on interpersonal emotion regulation in therapy-seeking couples with experiences of mild psychological violence is in preparation, whereas another on emotional communication in same-sex female couples pre- and post-couple therapy is under review.

Dr. Baucom and Dr. Melanie Fischer are co-Principal Investigators on a funded effort to explore how symptoms of anxiety and depression relate to various interpersonal emotion dynamics in couples. This effort uses data across multiple samples of couples using integrative data analysis, in collaboration with Dr. Dan Bauer and Dr. Brian Baucom, along with several other couple researchers who have provided invaluable data sets. The paper based on the primary set of findings is in preparation.

In line with the lab's continued interest in psychopathology and relationship behavior, Emily Carrino (3rd year student) and Alexandra Wojda are co-leading an investigation on differences in relationship schematic processing between couples experiencing Anorexia Nervosa (AN) and Binge Eating Disorder (BED). Data analysis is currently ongoing.

Our lab is collaborating with Dr. Shelby Langer and Dr. Laura Porter in a large investigation of communication among couples experiencing different forms of cancer. Dr. Baucom is involved in procedures for observational coding of couple interactions and emotional arousal. Dr. Melanie Fischer and Danielle Weber have provided consultation regarding procedures for processing and analyzing vocal features of emotional arousal within couple interactions, and Dr. Brian Baucom is overseeing comprehensive behavioral coding efforts. Analysis and manuscript preparation is ongoing.

Led by Danielle Weber in collaboration with Dr. Steve Du Bois and Dr. Tamara Goldman Sher, our study of community long-distance couples in comparison to geographically-close couples is complete. Danielle Weber used components of these data as her dissertation and successfully defended her dissertation in April 2021. A manuscript based on her main findings is now under review. Emily Carrino has also led a mixed -methods (qualitative and quantitative) investigation to explore differences in remote and in-person communication in long-distance and geographically-close couples. Findings from these studies will be presented at this year's convention.

Our lab continues to be committed to conducting research on diverse populations of couples. For her Master's thesis, Emily Carrino compared differential patterns of relationship functioning between subgroups of sexual and gender minority couples, with a focus on couples in which one or both partners are bisexual+. She will present main findings at this year's convention and will defend in Spring 2022. Alexandra Wojda's dissertation focuses on better understanding the cognitive processes associated with individual and relationship functioning in low-income couples; she is on-track to propose her project this Fall. She is also currently preparing a manuscript that introduces a novel framework for understanding relationship resilience within low-income populations. Anais D'Oelsnitz is completing an honors thesis in collaboration with Emily Carrino and Alexandra Wojda about the use of humor in couple communication across cultures.



(Dr. Donald Baucom's Lab Pictured above)

Lab Name: Behavioral Health Innovation and Dissemination Center (formerly CLOSE lab)

Head of Lab: Brian Baucom and Feea Leifker

Lab Update: We've been making some exciting changes in the CLOSE lab this past year. We had the good fortune to have the opportunity to launch a center within the university, which now serves as a research and training clinic for the seven graduate degree granting programs at the U of U that require training in psychotherapy. While we'll continue to do basic research on relationship processes, our focus has shifted to graduate training, treatment development, and randomized clinical trials with an emphasis on interventions for couples and families. We are exciting to be involved in a number of funded clinical trials that use family-based approaches to address concerns across the lifespan such as preventing HIV in adolescent MSM, treating PTSD in law enforcement couples, and helping older adult couples incorporate a CPAP into their sleep routines. None of this would be possible without our wonderful team of staff, graduate students, undergraduate interns, and research assistants. We want to welcome Robyn Kilshaw to the lab; Robyn's interests are at the intersection of advanced methods/statistics and clinical phenomenology with a particular emphasis on clinical digital phenotyping. We are also so fortunate that Abigail (Abby) Boggins, BS, joined us as our clinic manager this past Summer. Abby is a recent graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill where she worked as a research assistant for Don Baucom and for Laura Porter at Duke.

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Lab Name: Center for Transdisciplinary Research on Intimate Relationships, Binghamton University (SUNY)

Head of Lab: Richard Mattson, Ph.D.

Lab Update: We continue to analyze data on projects related to sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and sexual wellbeing. In addition, a new graduate student has joined the lab! Alyssa Miville is a first-year clinical psychology student who is interested in the intersection of religiosity, spirituality, couples functioning, and relationship satisfaction.

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Lab Name: Center for Couples and Families at Clark University

Head of Lab: James V. Córdova, PhD



(Dr. James Córdova's Lab Pictured above)

Lab Update: Dr. Cordova is currently working on a book about intimate relationship as a mindfulness practice for Guilford Press. He has also been busy disseminating the Relationship Checkup through the Department of Defense's Military Family Life Counselor program. Dr. Cordova and Dr. Cigrang are waiting on the outcome of a grant submission to take the Checkup into primary care in the U.S. Army. Dr. Cordova also continues to collaborate with his brilliant grad students on their many innovative and fascinating projects. Nick Canby is on internship at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System, where he is getting a lot of training in working with couples

and trauma. He is also completing his dissertation research, which examines the characteristics and consequences of experiences that involve perceptions of oneness with someone or something outside the self and/or a loss of their sense of self. Setareh Rossman is working on her dissertation proposal exploring how meaning-making processes and values relate to intimate partner acceptance. She is also enjoying treating patients through the Eating Disorders Clinical Research Program at Mass General Hospital. David Yoo is engaged in dissertation preparation, analyzing quantitative and qualitative about the impact of emotionally vulnerable conversations between emerging adults and their parents on emerging adults' intimate safety with their parents. He is also excited about his clinical externship at the Bedford VA. Jenna Rice is currently completing her master's thesis examining the influence of discussing common relationship patterns on relationship health. She has recently begun a clinical practicum at UMass Medical School's Student Counseling Services. Lizzy Engelkamp is working on her Master's thesis, examining how couples communicate about pornography use within the context of their relationships.

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Lab Name: Couple Adjustment to Stress and Trauma (CAST) Laboratory; Binghamton University – SUNY

Head of Lab: Christina Balderrama-Durbin, Ph.D.



(Dr. Christina Balderrama-Durbin's Lab Pictured above)

Lab Update: Our research on the impact of acute stress and trauma on romantic relationships within high-risk populations continues has renewed relevance in today's dynamic challenges. Moreover, we are struck by the adaptation to adversity and adjustments made by all in the transition back to in-person activities.

Second-year graduate student, Melissa Gates, is making great strides on her thesis project examining reactivity and recovery to acute stress in the context of a romantic relationships and is especially interested in examining stress transmission as measured by cardiac pre-ejection period – a measure of sympathetic activity. Fifth-year graduate student, Eileen Barden, has completed data collection for her dissertation examining the role of emotion regulation and dyadic coping in partnered individuals with co-occurring alcohol use and PTSD. Additionally, she has been selected for a 2-year NIAAA-funded fellowship aimed at Enhancing Diversity in Alcohol Research. Dana Ergas, fifth-year student, and Alex Wang, sixth-year student, are currently completing their pre-doctoral internship at the Syracuse VA and applying for post-doctoral positions for next year.

We are diligently working to analyze and disseminate findings from several projects that were recently completed including studies working with Veterans, military, and sexual minority couples. These findings will help inform a federally funded randomized clinical trial for a prevention program designed specifically for at-risk military couples entering technical training. We're thrilled to be taking the next steps toward advancing evidence-based care for marginalized and high-risk couples. Thank you tremendously to our impressive and dedicated team of research assistants!

Lab Name: Couple Lab at Nova Southeastern University

Head of Lab: Emily Georgia Salivar, PhD

Lab Update: The Couple Lab at NSU has taken off in the past year. We have welcomed our first graduate student, Madeline Jubran, joining us from Dr. Andrea Meltzer’s lab at FSU. We also received two separate President Faculty Research and Development Grants through NSU. The first, in collaboration with social psychologist Dr. Paula Brochu examines the actor-partner impacts of weight bias internalization within romantic dyads. In collaboration with geropsychologist Dr. Ashley Stripling and OurRelationship (OR) developer Dr. Brian Doss test the feasibility and acceptability of OR among older adults.

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Lab Name: Doss Couples Lab

Head of Lab: Dr. Brian Doss

Lab Update: We welcomed Shayna Guttman as a first-year graduate student in the lab. Shayna comes to us from Barnard College (Columbia University).

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Lab Name: Gordon Couple Research Lab

Head of Lab: Dr. Kristina Coop Gordon

Lab Update: Desirée Woodle, Maya Barrett, and LaTrice Wright are graduate students who have joined us in the lab this semester.

We completed the third and final training for our John Templeton Foundation funded project led by Dr. Kristina Gordon and Dr. Erica Mitchell to use implementation science principles to develop effective partnerships between university staff and a network of local churches and clergy. We have completed data collection for our qualitative study to better understand the lived experiences of church representatives in partnering with a university-based initiative and are writing up our findings. We are nearing the end of data collection for our community mapping project to identify zip codes across Knox County in need of relationship health services. We are in the final planning stages of our final study on this grant which will begin later this year.

Zahra Amer and Dr. Erica Mitchell are in the process of completing a manuscript for publication which explicates findings from Zahra’s Master’s Thesis project which qualitatively examines first-generation South Asian immigrants’ attitudes toward love and arranged marriage for their children in an effort to expand upon and update the extant literature examining the potential cross cultural and intergenerational divide between South Asian immigrants around the topic of marriage. Zahra will also be presenting these findings in a poster presentation at this year’s ABCT convention.

Matt McCall and Zahra Amer are currently conducting qualitative analysis on a focus group that invited church leaders to share their perspectives on the Relationship Checkup (RC) intervention manual. These results will inform future efforts to implement the RC throughout the Knoxville community via Healthy Connections’ network of university-church partnerships.

LaTrice Wright is in the process of completing her doctoral dissertation on the influence of family and intimate partner emotional climate on the association between gendered racism and anxiety symptomology among Black women. She is also exploring whether mindfulness moderates the association between gendered racism and anxiety through family and intimate partner emotional climate.

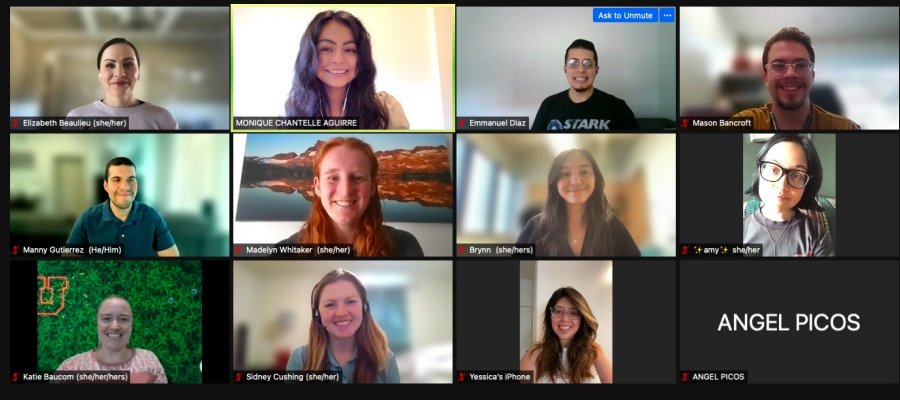
Desirée Woodle, Matthew McCall, and Maya Barrett all began and completed training to serve as ePREP coaches as part of Dr. Kristi Gordon’s Healthy Connections Knoxville initiative. The students look forward to stepping into the coaching role while working with couples recruited through Health Connections church partnerships. Desirée Woodle, Matthew McCall, and Maya Barrett all began and completed training to serve as ePREP coaches as part of Dr. Kristi Gordon’s Healthy Connections Knoxville initiative. The students were

able to complete this training due to a grant won by Dr. Erica Mitchell. The students look forward to stepping into the coaching role alongside Dr. Mitchell while working with couples recruited through Health Connections church partnerships.

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Lab Name: HEART Lab, University of Utah (<https://heartlab.psych.utah.edu>)

Head of Lab: Katie Baucom, PhD



(Dr. Katie Baucom’s Lab Pictured Above)

Lab Update: We continue to focus much of our work on diabetes prevention in a relationship context. Our planned pilot trial of *Prevent T2 Together*, a couple-based adaptation of the CDC’s Prevent T2 diabetes prevention curriculum, has been delayed due to COVID, but we hope to enroll participants in 2022!

In the meantime, we received several internal pilot grants to understand current implementation of the CDC’s National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP). We are carrying out this work with several ABCT members outside of our SIG (Drs. Anu Asnaani & Cassidy Gutner) and other colleagues. Over the summer we collected survey data from Lifestyle Coaches across the United States to understand their backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives on the NDPP. We are in the process of analyzing and writing up several papers from this dataset, including a qualitative analysis of Lifestyle Coach perspectives on the benefits and challenges of a dyadic approach (i.e., friends or family members participating in the NDPP together).

Our next step is to better understand implementation of the NDPP delivered to Hispanic/Latinx participants, who were substantially less likely to enroll and complete the NDPP compared with members of other racial/ethnic groups (Ely et al., 2017). Monique Aguirre will present some of the data we have collected thus far at the Latinx SIG during the Convention Cocktail Hour in her poster, *Emotional, Social, and Structural Barriers Among Latinx Participants in the NDPP*. In the next phase of this research, we will examine adaptations and modifications made to the NDPP when delivered to Hispanic/Latinx participants. We have just begun recruitment of a subsample of Lifestyle Coaches from our recent survey study to participate in a mixed-methods follow-up study. Manny Gutierrez Chavez, a second year PhD student in the lab, is taking the lead on this project.

Last but not least, this semester we welcomed two first year Clinical Psychology PhD students, Brynn Meulenberg (BA, Michigan State University) and Madelyn Whitaker (MA, Northwestern University), to our team!

the lab. Shuli’s work will focus on technology mediated sexual activity in long distance couples. Her goals are to learn more about who uses these technologies and how frequency and modality are related to sexual and relationship satisfaction.

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Clinic/Lab Name: Penn State Relationships and Stress Lab

Head of Clinic/Lab: Amy D. Marshall

Clinic/Lab Update: The Children, Intimate Relationships, and Conflictual Life Events (CIRCLES) Study is in its 3rd year of NIH funding.

240 parents have joined the study with over 80 having completed the full year of study procedures. We are pleased to welcome Annie Gallagher Sarama from Arizona State University as a postdoctoral fellow working on the project. Several graduate students, undergraduate students, and postbac trainees also continue to keep us running at full steam! At the same time, we are thrilled to begin collecting data as part of a four-site NIH-funded study of traumatic brain injury among IPV survivors.



(Dr. Amy Marshall's Lab Pictured Above)

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Lab Name: Penn State Couple and Family Adaptation to Stress Lab

Head of Lab: Steffany Fredman, Ph.D.

Lab Update: Our lab is continuing to work on a variety of basic and translational research projects focused on couples and stress. Annie Le is leading work on micro timescale emotion regulation in couples as well as couple and family adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic. August Jenkins is leading work on the daily and long-term associations between relationship functioning and individual mental health among African Americans within a sociocultural context as part of an NIMHD F31 predoctoral fellowship. We're wrapping up a project on micro timescale emotion regulatory processes among couples with PTSD conducted in collaboration with Melanie Fischer from the University of Heidelberg, Don Baucom from UNC-Chapel Hill, and Amy Marshall from Penn State and are eager to continue this work in the context of treatment outcome research. Building on the success of our pilot study of an abbreviated, intensive, multi-couple group version of cognitive-behavioral conjoint therapy for PTSD (AIM-CBCT for PTSD), we're currently preparing a pre-proposal to the DoD to conduct an RCT to test the efficacy of AIM-CBCT for PTSD relative to the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP) in active duty military and veteran couples. This work is being conducted in collaboration with Galena Rhoades, Scott Stanley, Candice Monson, and the Consortium to Alleviate PTSD.

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Lab Name: Promoting Resilience In DiversE (PRIDE) Family Studies Lab, University of Texas at San Antonio

Head of Lab: Shelby Scott, Ph.D.

Lab Update: The PRIDE Family Studies Lab has been busy. We completed a 7-year follow up with female same-gender couples and we have two manuscripts under review related to retrospective reasons for breakup and longitudinal predictors of breakup. We also completed a qualitative project on transgender individuals who went through part/all of their gender transitions while in romantic relationships and are writing up the results! We recently launched a quantitative study on transgender/non-binary couples in collaboration with Lex Pulice-Farrow and Dr. Kimberly Balsam. Results from these projects will help inform couple and family interventions for the transgender population. Dr. Scott continues to collaborate with Dr. Aleja Parsons on a project focused on defining race-based stress and the impact of these experiences on Black couples. We will start

collecting data at the end of Fall 2021.

Doctoral student, Quyen Do, published a first-author paper on intimate partner violence in female same-gender couples. She is also presenting a poster on Asian women’s health care experiences and will join a clinical panel on Asian health at ABCT this year. Bryanna Garibay joined the lab as a master’s student. She will also be presenting her first ABCT poster on breakup in female same-gender couples. Dr. Scott will also be on a panel on centering the experiences of underrepresented populations in clinical supervision.

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Lab Name: SFU Close Relationships Lab

Head of Lab: Dr. Rebecca Cobb

Lab Update: We are wrapping up an RCT evaluating a relationship education workshop for young adults that was developed by Dr. Joanne Davila. We had over 200 participants and our goal is to learn whether participating in the workshop is related to making better relationship decisions, regulating emotions more effectively in the context of romantic relationships, and whether participants enjoy more satisfying sexual and romantic relationships than non-participants. We are also just starting a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada funded study on consensually non-monogamous relationships (CNMR). In depth interviews with participants will begin next month to learn more about their relationship and sexual experiences.

We are excited to welcome Shulamit Sternin as a new MA student in survivors.

Michelle Korlacka has also just begun her honours project studying whether effective partner support buffers the negative effects of attachment insecurities in newlywed couples. Michelle will evaluate whether support that matches type of insecurity is most effective. Specifically, whether partner emotional support is most effective to buffer attachment anxiety and whether partner instrumental support is most effective to buffer attachment avoidance.



Photo is from our summer Kayaking trip to celebrate another successful year in the lab.

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Hot off the Press
In Press and Recently Published Literature

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