

Psych Matters

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Editor, Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor of Psychological Science

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The Newsletter of the University of Mary Washington Department of Psychological Science

Drs. Marcus Leppanen and Erin Palmwood Join the Psychological Science Department Faculty

by Katherine Ellson ('21) and Amelia Jones ('21), Psychology Student Representatives

This academic year, the Psychological Science Department is excited to welcome two new faculty members! Dr. Marcus Leppanen, Assistant Professor, is a cognitive psychologist who received his doctoral and master's degrees in experimental psychology from the University of Louisville. His bachelor's degree in psychology was earned at the University of Milwaukee – Wisconsin. Dr. Erin Palmwood (formerly Burdwood), Assistant Professor, is a clinical psychologist who received her doctoral and master's degrees from the University of Delaware. Her bachelor's degrees in psychology and mathematics were earned at the University of Mary Washington.



Dr. Marcus Leppanen

Generally, Dr. Leppanen's research interests are in the area of memory. Specifically, he has studied remembering things that you have remembered in the past or memory for prior remembering, extensively; however, he has done research on other cognitive phenomena, too, such as how handedness and mindfulness influence attention and memory. Most recently, Dr. Leppanen was a postdoctoral research associate at

Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. In this position, he studied how different factors, such as how mentally absorbed one becomes in a task and how mindful one is during a task, influence attentional processes. Also, he is interested in the relationship between self-referential processing, that is, relating something to yourself, and memory.

Additionally, Dr. Leppanen taught a course on the psychology of human memory at Wesleyan University and he taught a research methods in psychology course at the University of Louisville. Notably, the University of Louisville awarded Dr. Leppanen the Excellence in Teaching Award for a Graduate Student! At UMW, he is teaching a section of Cognitive Psychology and two sections of Cognitive Neuroscience this fall. In the spring, he will teach a section of General Psychology and two sections of Cognitive Neuroscience.

In the future, Dr. Leppanen is looking forward to teaching more research-based courses to capitalize on his extensive training in experimental design and data analysis. In addition, he enjoys the discussion-based format of research seminars, which allow for the frequent opportunity to consider students' thoughts on course topics and to experience their various presentation styles. Although he foresees that his research seminars will focus on memory, he would like to teach a special topics course on embodied cognition, which is based on the theory that mental processes are influenced by more than just an organism's brain activity. In other words, the way that we think is not only a product of our brain activity, but also an organism's peripheral sensory and motor systems, as well as the environmental context within which the organism operates.

Dr. Leppanen's primary goal during his first year as a full-time professor is to grow as a teacher. Specifically, he wants to update the format of his courses, make improvements to his lectures and course activities, and learn how to better assess student learning. According to Dr. Leppanen, he became a professor because he enjoys psychology and passing on his enjoyment of the discipline to his students. Dr. Leppanen's secondary goal is to analyze previously collected data and prepare reports of that data for publication, as much so as a busy teaching schedule allows.

On a personal note, Dr. Leppanen is a bowler, bobblehead collector, and a hard rock/heavy metal fan. When Dr. Leppanen was in college, a fun Friday night typically consisted of bowling with his friends. Back then, his average score was around 180 points! Also, if you have a chance to visit his office, you may notice a Louisville Cardinals bobblehead, but you would not know that he has a collection of over 30 bobbleheads at home! Many of Dr. Leppanen's bobbleheads were obtained at baseball games he attended when he was younger. Last, Dr. Leppanen is such a big hard rock/heavy metal fan that he once drove all the way from Louisville, Kentucky to Milwaukee, Wisconsin listening to only his favorite band, Trivium. Currently, he enjoys listening to symphonic metal music.

So far, Dr. Leppanen's favorite experiences at UMW have centered around the people he has met. From his interview to the present day, he has enjoyed getting to know the welcoming faculty, staff, and students. He looks forward to getting to know



Dr. Erin Palmwood

everyone better and to becoming more involved around campus with organizations such as the Center for Teaching.

Dr. Palmwood, who graduated from UMW in 2012, and who received the Outstanding Senior Psychology Major Award that year, is a familiar face to some of the current faculty, who were her professors years ago. Nevertheless, she is enjoying meeting the faculty

and staff members who have joined the department since she graduated, and she is enjoying sharing remembrances of her UMW days with her current students as well.

While she was at UMW, Dr. Palmwood's favorite academic experience was learning about and participating in the research process. In fact, she has continued to work with her research team advisor, Dr. Chris McBride, Department Chair and Professor. Recently, Drs. Palmwood and McBride published an article titled, "Challenge vs. threat: The effect of appraisal type on resource depletion," in *Current Psychology*. In this paper, Drs. Palmwood and McBride report that individuals feel more mentally spent after a stressful task if they view the task in a more positive light, that is, as a challenge, but they feel both mentally spent and emotionally drained after a stressful task if they view the task in a less positive light, that is, as a threat.

Today, Dr. Palmwood's major area of research is cognitive and emotional processing in the context of relationships, which she examines with electrophysiological (EEG) recordings of brain activity. For example, she has studied differences in the allocation of attention to a romantic partner as a function of one's gender, and how witnessing intimate partner violence in early childhood can predict heightened attention to errors later in life. In addition, Dr. Palmwood has studied anxiety and depression using the EEG techniques with which she is familiar.

Dr. Palmwood's interest in mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression, reflects her extensive training as a clinician. Recently, she became a licensed clinical psychologist in the state of Virginia; she hopes to practice

part-time in the future. Prior to beginning her position at UMW, Dr. Palmwood completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Counseling and Psychological Services Center at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She completed her predoctoral clinical training at the Counseling and Psychological Services Center at Washington State University.

Additionally, Dr. Palmwood taught a few courses before coming to UMW, including courses in abnormal psychology and statistics as well as graduate-level clinical training seminars. At UMW, she is teaching one section of Foundations of Clinical Psychology and two sections of Abnormal Psychology this fall. In the spring, she will teach two sections of Introductory Statistics for Psychology and two sections of Abnormal Psychology. In the future, Dr. Palmwood is looking forward to guiding a team of students through the research process, offering them the same kind of enriched experience that she had while she was a member of Dr. McBride's research team.

Dr. Palmwood is happy to return to UMW to teach some of the courses she took as an undergraduate. In fact, as soon as Dr. Palmwood suspected that she wanted to be a psychology professor, she imagined herself back at UMW; however, she imagined herself in the department's old home, Chandler Hall, which used to be where the University Center now stands. So, the biggest change for her has been returning to a department that was relocated to Mercer Hall. Otherwise, the atmosphere of the campus feels much the same, despite some changes to a few of the buildings; it is still a warm and welcoming place with a genuine sense of community.

Dr. Palmwood spends much of her free time with her orange cat, Bentley, who is a Fredericksburg native. This includes going on walks or hikes together (featuring a special cat backpack!) and snuggling up to watch Hulu or read. One of the few things that Dr. Palmwood has appreciated about the pandemic is that it has given her more time to read, helping her meet her goal of reading 52 books by the end of this year! She also enjoys spending time with her husband, whom she met as an undergraduate student at UMW. Their favorite things to do together are to play board games, go on bike rides, and eat food – especially fried pickles.

The Department of Psychological Science hereby extends an enthusiastic welcome to Dr. Palmwood and Dr. Leppanen. We are thrilled to have you as members of our department!

Drs. Miriam Liss and Mindy Erchull Win the Distinguished Publication Award from the Association for Women in Psychology

The 2020 Distinguished Publication Award from the Association for Women in Psychology was given to Dr. Liss, Full Professor, Dr. Erchull, Full Professor, and their co-author, Kate Richmond, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Women and Gender Studies Program at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in recognition for their recently-published work, a textbook

titled, *Psychology of Women and Gender*. The textbook was published by W. W. Norton & Company in 2019.

According to the Association for Women in Psychology website (www.awppsy.org), "awards are given to published work that makes significant and substantial contributions to research and theory that advance our understanding of the psychology of women and/or gender, and promotes the goals



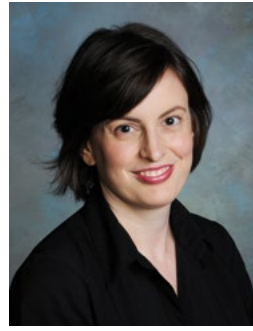
Dr. Miriam Liss

of the Association for Women in Psychology.”

Given that coverage of an unusually wide variety of topics are included in the textbook, the award is fitting. Specifically, the textbook covers traditional topics, such as feminism, gender socialization, sexualization, objectification, and gender-based violence, as well as topics of concern to today’s

psychology of women and gender students, such as a more inclusive consideration of gender and sexual orientation, the experiences of transgender women, and the intersection of gender and other aspects of individuals’ identities, such as race.

Furthermore, one of the authors’ goals, which was achieved, was to provide coverage of the field that is modern in terms of its accessibility to the target audience, which is a college student audience diverse with respect to, for example, its gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability status. To



Dr. Mindy Erchull

appeal to this audience, the authors complemented critical analyses of extant research with carefully-designed, hands-on exercises and the inclusion of thought-provoking topics for consideration or debate drawn from traditional and social media.

These departures from pre-existing textbooks in the area of women and gender studies clearly distinguished the work of Drs.

Liss, Erchull, and Richmond and, in turn, led to recognition of the work by the Association for Women in Psychology. In celebration of their achievement, the authors have been invited to address the attendees of the 2021 Association of Women in Psychology annual conference, which will be held virtually this year.

Congratulations on your achievement, Drs. Liss, Erchull, and Richmond!

Dr. Miriam Liss Receives the Waple Faculty Achievement Award

Congratulations to Dr. Miriam Liss, Full Professor, who was given the Waple Faculty Achievement Award! The award was established in honor of Shirley Van Epps Waple. Waple, an ardent and long-time supporter of Mary Washington, graduated from Mary Washington College in 1952 and was

a psychology major. Dr. Liss was nominated by her fellow faculty for the award, which is given based on the recipient having produced scholarly, creative, and/or professional achievements that have had a significant impact in their field.

New Psychology Student Representatives, Aides, and Tutors for '20-'21

Last spring, **Waverly Atkinson**, **Amelia Jones**, and **Elizabeth Jones** were elected by their peers to serve as Psychological Science Department Student Representatives. **Nichole Boigegrain** and **Katherine Ellson**, who served as student representatives last year, return to serve again this year. The representatives have been busy organizing events like the Majors Meeting and Movie Night. The student representatives work with Dr. Chris McBride, Department Chair and Professor, to bring these events about. Also, the student representatives contribute to this newsletter!

Two students, **Morgen Liebert** and **Hannah McCarthy**, were selected to serve as lab aides. This year, the lab aides will focus on editing and updating the department website. The lab aides are advised by Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor. In addition, **Kathleen Daly** and **Elizabeth (Ellie)**

Bryn are serving as statistics tutors. The tutors provide virtual tutoring, especially for the introductory and advanced statistics courses.

Elsa Baumgartner is serving as the subject pool student coordinator. She is advised by Dr. Hilary Stebbins, Associate Professor. **Emily Beitzell** is serving as the community service learning student coordinator. She is advised by Dr. Miriam Liss, Professor. Last but not least, **Annalee Kopp** is serving as a clerical aide, specializing in developing the department’s presence on social media; she is serving under the direction of our office manager, Rosemarie Staggs.

On behalf of the psychology department, thank you to the student representatives, aides, and tutors (and to their advisors) for the services you provide.

Psi Chi Inducts New Members and Elects New Officers for '20-'21

Last spring, a number of psychology majors were welcomed into the UMW chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. The spring 2019 inductees were: **Mollie Beidleman**, **Colleen Burger**, **Hannah Checkeye**, **Matthew Crawford**, **Kathleen Daley**, **Vivian Hyatt**, **Haley McKeen**, **Malhar Meeren**, **Brian Merski**, **Erin Pierce**, **Purnaja Podduturi**, **Eva Waszak**, **Christine**

Wehner, and **Jessica Whitney**.

Also, the Psi Chi chapter elected new officers last spring. **Hannah Checkeye** and **Vivian Hyatt** were elected Co-presidents, **Paige Arnau** was elected Secretary, and **Emily Beitzell** was elected Treasurer. Also, **Shanthi Gnanasekaran** was elected Fundraising Chair and **Anna Balgoyen** was elected Social Media Chair.

Psychology Students Named Scholarship and Award Winners

First, the '20-'21 *Outstanding Senior Award* was given to **Brighton Payne**. Congratulations, Brighton! In addition, a number of students were awarded scholarships for the '20-'21 academic year. The *Topher Bill Scholarship* was awarded to **Kathleen Daley** for her outstanding academic performance, particularly in statistics and research methods. Two *Minnie Rob Phaup Scholarships*, named in honor of a former faculty member, were awarded to **Irene Andrade** and **Sydney Dahl**.

Two *Burney Lynch Parkinson Scholarships*, for students who intend to make education a career, were awarded to **Paige Arnau** and **Madison Shifflett**. **Nichole Boigegrain** and **Christine Wehner** were awarded *Emily Cella Scholarships*, for their outstanding academic achievement in social science.

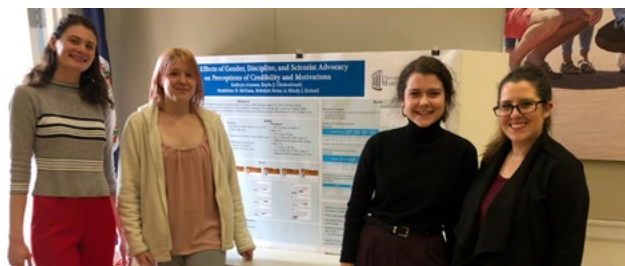
Emma Snyder was awarded the *C. Jarrett and Hazel Small Wilkins Scholarship* in Social Sciences for outstanding academic achievement.

Last, **Elsa Baumgartner** was awarded the *James C. ('87) and Deborah S. Llewellyn Scholarship* in Psychology for her excellent academic performance. James C. Llewellyn endowed this scholarship because he appreciated the critical thinking, research, and communication skills he garnered at UMW, which prepared him well for an advanced degree and a career in Human Resources. Deborah S. Llewellyn is employed in the Human Resources field as well. Congratulations to all our scholarship recipients!

Psychology Students Recognized at the Research Forum on Women's and Gender Studies

Psychology students won two awards at the Spring 2020 Research Forum on Women's and Gender Studies. **Kathryn Arntsen**, **Kayln Clinkenbeard**, **Madeleine McGann**, and **Rebekah Stone** won the award for best poster presentation. The title of their poster was, "The effects of gender, discipline, and scientist advocacy on perceptions of credibility and motivations." The research they reported and discussed was completed during their independent study experience which was supervised by Dr. Mindy Erchull, Professor, during the '19-'20 academic year.

In addition, **Kathryn Arntsen** won one of two first place awards for her presentation titled, "Women's body hair removal practices in various body regions." Kathryn completed the research she presented in partial fulfillment of her final project for the Women's and Gender Studies major, for which Dr.



Best Poster Presentation Winners:
Presenters **Katherine Arntsen**, **Rebekah Stone**,
Madeleine McGann, and **Kayln Clinkenbeard**

Mindy Erchull was her supervisor. Congratulations, Kathryn, Kayln, Madeleine, and Rebekah!

Nichole Boigegrain Awarded Honors in Psychology

Honors are awarded to academically outstanding psychology majors who complete an empirical investigation or a theoretical paper either independently or as part of the work of a research team. In addition, these students present their work to an honor's project committee for evaluation. **Nichole Boigegrain** was awarded honors for the '19-'20 academic

year. Nichole's honors thesis was titled, "*The Effect of Maternal and Paternal Caregivers' Failure Mindsets and Helicopter Parenting on Emerging Adults' Intelligence Mindsets*," and it was completed under the supervision of Dr. Holly Schiffrin, Professor. Congratulations, Nichole!

Psychology Majors Invited to Join Phi Beta Kappa

Last spring, the following psychology majors were invited to join the UMW Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa: **Nichole Boigegrain**, **Meryl Menezes**, and **Samara Wong**.

Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776, is well-known for being the oldest undergraduate honors association in the United States. Its mission is to foster and recognize excellence in the liberal arts and sciences.

What Are They Doing Now?

Susan Anderson ('90) is currently working for ACT Holdings, Inc. She serves as a liaison between hospitals and insurance companies to ensure that the parties involved in claims follow state laws that apply to reimbursement for care.

Belinda Collins ('68), who has master's and doctoral degrees in Experimental Psychology from the University of Virginia, was employed as an applied research psychologist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Gaithersburg, MD, before going into management and retiring

as a member of the Senior Executive Service. She was at NIST for 39 years. Currently, she is a leadership and executive coach, having earned a Certificate in Leadership Coaching from Georgetown University. She feels that she split her psychology path into two parts: first as a researcher in human factors and applied psychology, and now as a leadership coach helping others grow their careers as leaders – and she has been able to be fulfilled in each of these rather different paths. She feels her early training in psychology at Mary Washington has served her well.

Peyton Crickman ('19) is currently a medical scribe in the Emergency Department at Winchester Medical Center, and he is working as a research assistant in the Well-being Laboratory at George Mason University. Currently, Peyton is applying to doctoral programs in Clinical Psychology. He plans to do research in the area of positive psychology. In particular, he is interested in how being mindful, spiritual, and having a sense of meaning or purpose in one's life can contribute to mental health.

Mackenzie Johnson ('20) has been accepted into the master's in social work program at Virginia Commonwealth University and will begin her studies this winter.

Allie (Krebs) Kochert ('03), a licensed clinical practitioner and spiritual director, recently opened a private practice titled, Rooted Growth, which provides mental health counseling for

and focuses on the psychospiritual wellness of individuals in caregiving professions including clergy and spiritual leaders. Allie is passionate about supporting helpers and healers in their roles by helping them to maintain resiliency and prevent burnout, so that they can continue to do the work they do. Allie lives in central Pennsylvania with her husband of over 15 years, Erik Kochert ('02), and their three children, ages 11, 9, and 6.

Bethany Pierce ('20) began the master's degree program in Neuroscience at Wake Forest University this fall. Bethany will be using electroencephalography to assess the effects of oxycodone withdrawal on sleep deprivation, especially rapid eye movement sleep deprivation, in rats.

Rachel Tafoya ('20) began the Sentara College of Health Sciences Master's Entry to Nursing Practice program this fall. After completing this two-year accelerated program, designed for individuals who have completed a bachelor's degree, she plans to join the U.S. Navy as a military nurse. Rachel plans to specialize in psychiatric care.

Jennaveve Yost ('18) began the master's degree program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology at George Mason University this fall.

Marissa Walia ('20) has been accepted into the master's in social work program at Virginia Commonwealth University and will begin her studies this spring.

Message from Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Outgoing PsychMatters Editor

After 13 years and 26 issues, my time as editor of *PsychMatters* has come to an end. I am passing on this important departmental service role to share the joy that comes from reflecting and reporting on our department, especially the students, staff, and faculty that make it so special.

I am pleased to announce that Dr. Virginia Mackintosh, Associate Professor, will become *PsychMatters* editor beginning

next semester, Spring 2021. I am excited to see her place her unique touch on this particular pathway of communication between our constituents! Thank you for your years of readership, contributions, and encouragement while I served as *PsychMatters* editor. I am sure you will continue to enjoy *PsychMatters* under the supervision of Dr. Mackintosh. Best wishes!

Announcements

Please consider recognizing the Psychological Science Department with a monetary contribution. Please make checks payable to the University of Mary Washington Foundation, and specify that the donation is for the Psychological Science Department. Please send checks to the following address: University of Mary Washington Foundation, Jepson Alumni Executive Center, 1119 Hanover Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401-5412. Your donation will be used to support student scholarships and student presentations at conferences. We would appreciate your support!

Find us on the web: cas.umw.edu/psychology Recent news and upcoming events are posted to the Psychological Science Department website. Our current students will find information on, for example, program requirements, experiential learning opportunities, and Psi Chi happenings. Furthermore, alumni can keep in touch by providing updates. Check it out!

Keep in touch with your psychology department and fellow graduates. Join the **UMW Psychology Majors** group or the **UMW Psychology Alumni** group on Facebook!

The *PsychMatters* newsletter is circulated digitally. It is sent out to alumni as an email attachment and it is posted to the department website at cas.umw.edu/psychology/home/newsletters/. In addition, it is posted on the Facebook UMW Psychological Science page, the Facebook UMW Psychology Majors group, and the Facebook UMW Psychology Alumni group. If you are a UMW Psychology graduate and you are not on our email distribution list, but would like to be, please contact Angela McCormick, Associate Director of Alumni Communications, at (540) 654-2062 or amicormi@umw.edu to provide a current email address.