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Psychology Department

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STUDENT HIGHLIGHT: ANDRE HERRERA

Andre is a Psychology major with a dual minor in Biology and Applied Mathematics. His main research interest is neurogenesis. Currently, Andre is working with Dr. Shannon Saszik in her lab studying the regeneration of retinal ganglion cells after optic nerve damage in zebrafish.

Andre did a Summer Research Opportunity Experience at Michigan State University examining the role of Hippocampal pERK on Reconsolidation of Cocaine Associated Memories.

Andre plans to continue his research on neuropsychology at MSU and was recently accepted into their Ph.D. program.



STUDENT AWARD

Uriel Saldivar, who is a Psychology major and McNair Scholar, won a Psi Chi Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA)



Convention Research Award for his research project, "Politics and Employee Selection: Exposure to Political Affiliation Cues and its Effect on Hiring Outcomes". Around 800 abstracts were submitted and only a few students were selected for the award. Uriel plans to attend graduate school next year in the area of Industrial/ Organizational Psychology.

GET TO KNOW YOUR PROFESSOR:

DR. DYKEMA- ENGBLADE (DEPARTMENT CHAIR)

1. What are some of your hobbies?

I love to work out, right now I am training for the Boston Marathon but when I am not training I enjoy a combination of running and boot camp-type classes. When I have time, I like to try new recipes and enjoy eating delicious food at various Chicago restaurants. I love to read and I love to read with my children. And, of course, I enjoy spending time with my family.



2. If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Okinawa Island in Japan. :) :) If this sounds like fun, please come talk to Dr. Takahashi or me. I'd also love to visit Greece.

3. What is your favorite movie?

I can't think of a single movie, per se, but I really like musicals and I hate horror films.

4. If you were not a professor, what job do you think you would have?

A) I tend to gravitate toward food/nutrition, exercise/ health-related items, so perhaps something in one of those fields.

B) I have a few friends who do community organizing work and I'm amazed by their hard-work and what they can accomplish to make Chicago- land a better place in which to live. I think I'd enjoy this type of advocacy work.

C) Something that allows me to be out in nature most days.

5. What's the best piece of advice you've received?

One piece of advice that I regularly fall back on is how a shift in thinking can change an entire situation. In other words, the framing of an event is so important and can often turn an "awful" situation into something pleasant or, at least, bearable.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Publication

Congratulations to instructor and alumnus, Resney Gugwor, on his recent publication



titled, "Engaged Against the Machine: Institutional and Cultural Racial Discrimination and Racial Identity as Predictors of Activism Orientation among Black Youth" in the American Journal of Community Psychology. Resney is currently finishing his Ph.D at the University of Chicago in Comparative Human Development.

Presentation

Gerontology graduate student, Ms. Elizabeth Salazar, RN



presented a paper on Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) at The World Federation Right To Die Conference (2018) in Cape Town, South Africa.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: ERYNN BESSER

1. **What year did you graduate?** 2015

2. **What graduate program did you attend?** I graduated with a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology with a focus in Marital & Family Therapy. I currently work with individuals and couples, primarily with adults. My clinical interests include traditional and nontraditional relationships, LGBTQ+ issues, gender, sexuality, self-esteem, women's issues, cultural differences, trauma, depression and anxiety.



3. **How did NEIU prepare you for graduate school and/or work?** NEIU helped prepare me for graduate school by providing a curriculum that was diverse in psychological theory. Once I was in my program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, I was surprised to see how many students did not come from a psychology background. While this is an aspect of my program that I really enjoyed, I felt ahead of the curve in having a knowledge base for statistics and research, lifespan development, and information on niche areas such as personality theory, and cognitive psychology. I was also grateful that I had the experience of completing a capstone at NEIU. My graduate program had an alternative to a thesis, which was called a Counselor Competency Exam (CCE), as well as an online graduation exam, similar to the licensing exam. During the CCE, you would present an audio recording of your work with a client and a full case conceptualization and treatment plan, in order to graduate from the program. The capstone at NEIU helped in preparing me for the work ethic that is needed in order to complete the requirements!

4. **What advice would you give undergraduate students?** Just work hard and follow your passion, even if that means changing majors. There are so many people I know, friends included, that wish they had changed their major and went into a different field. I personally took a year off before attending NEIU to figure out what I really wanted to concentrate in. I know for most people this doesn't feel ideal due to timing and finances, but in the long run it will be worth it to know you are doing what you love. Also, take the time to make connections with your professors. More often than not, they end up becoming mentors and colleagues. Overall, make the most of your undergraduate experience and fully embrace any opportunity!

MEET THE PEER LEADER (PL) COORDINATOR: TIFFANY NOVAK

The Peer Leader program is a program in which upper- class students serve as mentors for students enrolled in certain psychology courses such as General Psychology, Stats & Research Methods, and Stats & Research Methods II. The purpose of the program is to enhance student learning and success by providing students with access to more senior students who have successfully completed the course. The faculty members who are part of the program are Drs. Erber, Silverthorn, Rueckert, Callahan, and Professors Cuevas and Polyashuk.



1. What are your responsibilities?

As the PL Coordinator, I put together the schedule that fits best with both the students and the peer leaders to try to ensure all students have an available session to go to. I also act as a support system for the peer leaders. I want the peer leaders to know that if there is ever a situation, or anything that they may need help with, I am here for them. As the professors are also there for them, they have a lot going on in general with their own classes, so I am one more resource for the peer leaders to go to before going to the professors.

2. What made you want to become the PL coordinator?

Prior to being the PL coordinator, I was a peer leader for a few semesters. Nothing gave me greater satisfaction as when I saw students I had worked with complete problems on their own and help their fellow students. It is one thing when you have someone who just gives you the answers, but when you have someone guide you through the process of finding the ways to solve a problem to get the answers on your own, you feel a sense of accomplishment once you've completed the problem. Being a peer leader gave me that feeling. Acting as a guide has always gave me great pleasure, I enjoy helping people. Plus, I have tremendous organizational skills, and putting those two factors together, I thought it would be a great idea and an experience to be the peer leader coordinator.

3. What are the benefits of courses having PLs?

There are many benefits to having PL's for the courses. I would have to say that not only does it benefit the students taking the course, but it also benefits the peer leaders themselves. This program builds self-discipline, it builds confidence, it improves problem solving techniques and it helps build a team work atmosphere. Another thing I believe is a benefit of having peer leading sessions and peer leaders, it shows you that you are not the only one who may be struggling with a concept or a problem and it gives you that team to figure it out together.

FIELD EXPERIENCE: SHARON WENTZ

Sharon Wentz, Senior Psychology major, is completing her credits for the capstone requirement at The Hatchery.



1. What is the agency's mission statement?

Located in Chicago's East Garfield Park, The Hatchery's mission is to help food businesses develop and grow. Their grand opening was this January 2019, with the space undergoing it's final touches. Among their 67,000 square feet they have 56 private kitchens available for lease, a shared kitchen that may be rented by the day or hour, business planning support, and space for meetings and events.

2. What are your responsibilities?

My responsibility is to interview each of the individuals that have been involved during the start-up, development, and officially running The Hatchery, then write a qualitative account of the birth and growth of the project, which is the first of it's caliber. I'm enjoying the opportunity to interview such creative, warm, and inspiring individuals who want to create something unique, while helping those with a dream manifest their goals.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Event : The screening of "Eating Animals"

Date : Thursday, February 21st

Time: Doors open at 6:00 pm and film starts at 6:30 pm

Location: BBH 102

" Eating Animals is an urgent, eye-opening look at the environmental, economic, and public health consequences of factory farmers."

SUMMER REGISTRATION

Feb 19- March 15

- Advance registration begins/ ends for first half and full summer sessions

March 16- May 15

- Open registration begins/ ends for first half and full summer sessions

March 16- June 29

- Open registration begins/ ends for Summer II and second half sessions

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT FACULTY AND STAFF

