



# COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

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# GREETINGS FROM THE DCT



Dear Alumni, Colleagues, and Friends of the  
UNT Counseling Psychology Program,

Hello! I hope you are enjoying the warm spring  
weather we have had lately.

I would like to share with everyone some exciting news. The pre-doctoral internship match results were revealed at the end of February. All 6 of our students who were applying for their pre-doctoral internship training for the 2025-2026 academic year were matched with excellent sites. Our 100% match rate is substantially above the national average of 81% in Phase I, which is indicative of the high quality of our clinical training. We are very proud of these 6 advanced students (i.e., Macey Arnold, Kasey Chambers, Carmyn Hayes, Lauren Kemble, Shiho Toyama, and Sabrina Zuniga). Please join me in congratulating them and see page 18 of the program newsletter for information regarding where they are going to complete their pre-doctoral internship training in 2025-2026 AY.

This year's admissions cycle was a success! We conducted our virtual interview day activities on January 31 with 32 applicants. Then, we invited the candidates who received initial offers to visit our campus on February 21. I want to give a big, heartfelt "Thank You" to our program GSAs and student representatives (i.e., Issy Franks, Ayurda Pathak, Anna Straughan, and Javon Williams) for their hard work in coordinating with many current students to pull off these two important events. There are a lot of moving parts to both of these events, and I know the applicants appreciated the work that was done behind the scenes to make both days run smoothly. We have concluded our admissions process with 9 candidates accepting offers. We are excited about the incoming cohort and will provide more information about each of the new students in the Fall issue of our newsletter.

UNT has over 46,000 students on campus now, and our university continues to grow in its size and reputation. If any program alumni would like to visit Denton, please let me know and I would be more than happy to connect over lunch or coffee.

**Joshua Hook, PhD**

**Director, Counseling Psychology PhD Program**

## FACULTY UPDATES

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# DR. KAYLA BALCOM

After almost a year back in Denton, Dr. Balcom and her family are settling in well. Her son is adjusting to new classes at school and is learning to read, and her daughter started crawling and is super fast! Her family has started their reunion tour of all their favorite food spots in Denton and are adding parks and playgrounds to the list of most frequently visited places. They are thoroughly loving being back and finding lots of ways to enjoy Denton again.





# DR. MARTINQUE JONES

Members of the BWell Lab have been very productive over the past few months and are excited about the Spring semester. Lab members have continued to develop their thesis and dissertation projects.

Additionally, multiple lab members have manuscripts that have been published, received a positive review, or are currently under review. Notably, lab member, Cassandre Jean-Ceide, published in the Journal of Black Psychology. She and other members of the lab (Dionne Regis, Melissa Briones-Zamora, Natalia Barrera, Madison Fox, and Gabrielle Wallace) also published in Social & Personality Psychology Compass.



Also, Amber Williams finished in 2nd place in this past year's 3-minute thesis competition (pictured). Students have also engaged in meaningful service both within and beyond the university community through various organizations. For example, Raven Gipson-Washington was selected as Student Affiliates of Seventeen (SAS). State Representative for Texas, Quanisha Whittfield was elected as Student National Convention Chair of the Association of Black Psychologists, and Dionne Regis serves as Student Representative for the Texas Psychological Association. Raven (president), Quanisha (past president), Dionne (community service/social media chair), and Amber (treasurer) serve as elected leaders within the UNT Association of Black Psychologists Student Circle (pictured).



# DR. CHIACHIH DC WANG

We have had a productive time in the past few months since last issue of the program's newsletter. Shiho, our 5th year lab member, was matched with her top choice of pre-doctoral internship program of the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center. She will be relocating to Utah this summer for her internship.

Congratulations to Shiho and we hope she will have a smooth transition to the next stage of her professional development.

Cachet and Ashley are both working diligently to pass their IRC and complete their dissertation proposals this semester. Tiffany has accepted an offer from Great Life Counseling Center and is excited about completing her 1st externship there next year. Additionally, Ayurda is in her last step of completing her 5910 project. Christie has finalized a research model for her thesis and has been working on writing up her thesis proposal. Lynn has begun the process of conceptualizing a research model for her thesis and plan to schedule her proposal meeting in the beginning of Fall 2025.

## FACULTY UPDATES →

# DR. CHIACHIH DC WANG

Our lab had a multicultural potluck gathering in mid-March of 2025 at Dr. Wang's house. Each attending lab member and their significant other brought a home-made dish or dessert to the lab social. Following the tradition, everyone shared a story regarding how the dish/dessert is associated with or reflecting their cultural backgrounds and/or family upbringing. The group photo was taken in the Spring 2025 lab social gathering.





# DR. CLIFTON EDWARD WATKINS

*Many of you, students and faculty, will know me, but some of you won't. So, let me share a little personal and professional information to catch you all up on a few things with me.*



First the **personal**: After being a part of our most wonderful counseling psychology program for about 40 years, I retired on 8/31/2023 and began my three-year term of modified service to the department on the very next day. So, I am still around, though you may not see me much. I have two children, Amelia and Grant, and four grandchildren, ages two, five, seven, and 12. In the pictures, you see them all, along with my daughter, Amelia. Since my children and their families all live right around me, I have loved so very much being with my grandchildren, keeping them and having sleepovers, going to their activities and ballgames and school lunches, and enjoyed beyond words my oh so precious time with them all. It has surely been a

sweet, sweet time in my life, and I have deeply appreciated and valued every second of it. I hope all of that continues on and on and on without end! Certainly, a time of great joy for me.

And speaking of joy, let me mention a bit about the professional side, too. I still work (virtually every day) and am thrilled to do so. Since beginning my modified service, where Teaching, Research, and Service are all still in play, I have been dividing my time up this way.

**Teaching:** I have taught a seminar each semester in the counseling psychology program for the first two years of my modified service. For my last year of departmental service,

which will begin in August, I will have the pleasure and privilege of leading a practicum team once more. It is so very hard to believe that my very last year with the program is approaching --- way too, too fast!

**Research:** I continue to much enjoy my writing/publication activities. My biggest project (all 42 chapters of it), in which I have been and continue to be deeply involved, is editing the second edition of my *Handbook of Clinical Supervision*, which I hope will be published in 2026 or, at the latest, early 2027. The book's first edition appeared in 1997 (then titled the *Handbook of Psychotherapy Supervision*), so a second edition 30 years later(!) surely seemed needed. It has been a whole lot of fun working on this project! And I look forward to keeping at this for some time yet to come.

**Service:** I chose to make international work the focus of my (modified service) service efforts, and I have been very fortunate in that regard. Some of my activities over the past several months, or in the months to come, are these: (i) being certified (1/2025) as an Integrative Psychotherapist, Supervisor, and Trainer by the European Association for Integrative Psychotherapy; (ii) serving as external examiner for a supervision dissertation at the University College Dublin (so cold there in December!);



(iii) serving on a supervision dissertation committee at the University of Malta (a seven year commitment with monthly meetings!), and being invited to visit there next year; (iv) while in Slovenia to give a conference presentation this May, being invited by a friend/colleague/professor at the University of Primorska to provide a lecture on psychotherapy to her clinical psychology students; (v) continuing to regularly work with my teammates at the Tibiscus University in Timisoara, Romania, participating in and playing a leadership role in their annual international supervision conference, serving as Associate Editor of their journal, the International Journal of Supervision in Psychotherapy, and continuing to be a trainer/supervisor in their Institute of Psychotherapy, Counselling and Clinical Supervision; (vi) beginning this June, providing supervision training and supervision of supervision for the





China Psychological Competence and Academic Training Center, a psychotherapist training platform that has over 100,000 Chinese members; (vii) in November and next January, providing supervision training --- leading to the Diploma in Supervision -- for the Institute for Integrative Psychotherapy and Counselling in Ljubljana, Slovenia; (viii) being invited to serve on the International Advisory Board of the Diplomatura en Supervisión Clínica, a supervisor training program --- which has the endorsements of Fundación Aiglé and Universidad del Salvador --- that provides supervisor education for mental health professionals throughout the countries of Latin America; and (ix) on June 6th, receiving an honorary doctorate, the Doctor Honoris Causa, from Tibiscus University in Timisoara, Romania, for my supervision work there over the past approximate decade. I am so deeply grateful and thankful for all of these wonderful professional opportunities that have come my way.

And speaking of honors, the greatest honor of my life --- serving in our counseling psychology program! I am thrilled to still get to be part of the program for another year once this semester is done. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of our counseling psychology faculty, thoroughly enjoyed the supportive collegueship down through the decades. And I have been forever lifted up by and will forever be in awe of our wonderful students. You are surely the greatest!

I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for all that you have given me across these 40 years. It has been my pleasure, my privilege, my honor to serve you and to work with you. I wish you all the very, very best!

*Dr. Ed Watkins*

Hello everyone!

Some of you reading this may remember me as Stephanie Barrett, and there are many I'm sure I have yet to meet, so allow me to (re)introduce myself...I'm Stephanie Gdovin (the G is silent) and I graduated from the sport psychology elective cluster in the Counseling Psych program in 2021. I left Denton for my internship at James Madison University's counseling center during the peak of the COVID pandemic in June 2020 and since then, life really feels like it hit the accelerator. It was a...unique experience doing internship entirely via Zoom from a windowless office while also finishing my dissertation (0/10 would not recommend; if I have one piece of advice for current students, it's finish your dissertation before internship!). Overall, I'm deeply grateful for what I learned and the relationships I made at JMU – many of whom I still stay in touch with.

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT DR. STEPHANIE GDOVIN

After graduating, I was hired as the inaugural postdoctoral fellow in the Athletic Department at Duke University in Durham, NC. This position offered me the opportunity to join an amazing team and reconnect with another UNT sport psych alum and dear friend, Dr. Alex Thompson, who provided the supervision I needed for licensure, as well as tremendous mentorship about being an embedded provider within a collegiate athletic department. My position was able to become permanent after my postdoc year, and I have spent the last 3.5 years as a staff psychologist (2022-23) and Assistant Director of Mental Health and Performance (2023-present).



# DR. STEPHANIE GDOVIN CONT.



My role consists of providing individual mental health and sport psychology services to Duke's varsity student athletes, as well as team-based interventions for various sports. I have been fortunate to work with an awesome team of dually trained mental health and sport psych professionals, as well as our broader interdisciplinary sports medicine and sports performance team. Even more rewarding has been the opportunity to work with some truly outstanding and elite student athletes. Additionally, I serve on the Eating Disorder Integrated Care Team alongside one of our physicians and dietitians managing care for athletes presenting with disordered eating concerns, as well as the department's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) advisory group. I get to wear a lot of different hats in my day to day, which is one of my favorite things about my job.

Within the last couple of years, my department in Athletics has partnered with the Duke counseling center to create first one, and then two, predoctoral internship positions. So, I've gotten to add another hat to the rotation: clinical supervisor. I have enjoyed the opportunity to (hopefully) create a positive learning environment for those wanting to work in similar settings. Coincidentally, in our first year of the internship, Match Day brought us a member of the UNT sport psych family, Derek Sokoloff, and in the second year, another UNT student matched with us: Julian Yoon. I've had the privilege of supervising both, and what a cool full-circle moment to see how they have grown since I had last seen them as first-year doctoral students.

I set out on the path to become a sport psychologist when I was a 16-year-old struggling student athlete and saw the benefit mental skills had on my own performance. I didn't know how long the journey would be (and it was LONG) or how the dream would evolve as I gathered new experiences along the way, but I'm here doing the thing I always wanted to do, and that feels really cool. In some ways, it looks just like I imagined it would and in other ways, it looks entirely different. The world of college athletics is changing pretty rapidly, so who knows what the future holds for positions like mine. I'm excited about what I've been able to do so far that has created new possibilities for me in the future. Nothing concrete or official to report yet, though!

Outside of work, I married my partner, Jacob, in June 2023, and we welcomed our son, Peter, one year later. Don't get me wrong, parenthood is humbling on a daily basis, and sometimes balancing the personal and professional feels like trying to juggle spinning plates of fire. Overall, though, as someone who was so singularly focused on pursuing the dream career for such a long time, reaching this current place of integration among the different parts of my life—of myself, really—feels extremely fulfilling.

As I reflect on my experiences, the throughline of all of it for me is relationships. This makes sense—I see a lot of things through a relational lens. It started with a relationship to a sport, and then a career dream. It was fueled along the way by the relationships with my family, friends, supervisors, and mentors, and was sustained in some of the most challenging times by the bonds in my cohort (special shout out to Kendra, Carlie, and Karol). As a result, I've been able to cultivate a relationship with myself—as a psychologist, supervisor, colleague, friend, partner, and parent—that I feel really proud of.

Wishing everyone in the UNT community well, and thank you for taking the time to read a little about my updates! If I can be of any help to you, please don't hesitate to reach out.

~Steph



# JULIAN YOON

Hey everyone, I'm Julian, a 6th year in the sport psychology cluster. I am just over halfway through my internship at Duke University Counseling and Duke Athletics and it's been great to get a view of what life after graduate school will be like. Although it's not quite as easy as a paid vacation (shout out Foundations with Dr. Wang), life on internship is certainly a lot smoother with dissertation in the rear-view mirror. Speaking of research, I remember being a kid and visiting my mom's research lab and thinking it was soooooooo boring. If you had told me back then (or even 7 years ago) that I would be doing a Ph.D. and actually enjoying doing research, I would have called you crazy. But now here I am, almost at the finish line, looking for jobs in the sport psychology world (ask me how this is going in a few months!).

Being on internship has also demonstrated how well prepared we are in all facets from our program. I have been able to hit the ground running and, although I am learning a ton from my supervisor, I had confidence from the start in my competence. Sport psych folks, you are also in great hands. Being able to learn from some of the best in the business here at Duke has confirmed what I already knew, that Drs. Petrie, Balcom, Tackett, and Force really know what they're doing and are preparing us to be strong clinicians in the field from the jump.





Ask anyone who has been to Durham and they'll probably say what I've experienced here so far, which is that life in Durham is pretty sweet. North Carolina has a culture almost as unique as Texas, and I've enjoyed getting to learn about, and be a part of that culture. Living in the heart of the city allows Gill and I to walk around with our pups, Mocha and Jia, and check out cafes and restaurants, our favorite pastime.

The summer before coming to Durham, Gill and I took a visit to Korea with my mother. It was a special moment for us, to go back to our home country and experience it with a new lens (neither Gill nor I had been to Korea in 10+ years). We had numerous conversations around culture, food, fashion, self-image, and identity.



This trip held extra meaning to me, as we visited my father's family burial ground after he passed earlier last year. This site is where we hope to one day bring his ashes to rest with his family. I've included a picture of the site so you can see how amazing his view will be and pass along good energy to him and his family. I love you 아빠 and hope you are finally resting well!

# RAVEN GIPSON-WASHINGTON

Hello everyone!

I'm Raven, the newest member of the BWell lab, and I'm writing to you as a first-year (soon-to-be second year)! I am in the culture, identity, and wellbeing cluster and this nicely encapsulates my research interests, in service of Black women. This first year in the program has been an absolute whirlwind. I continue to be in awe of just how much we can learn and grow and blossom in such a short amount of time. Thus far, I have worked on some pretty cool research projects, including a project funded by the National Science Foundation and adopted a new theoretical orientation, acceptance and commitment therapy, which I adore. I currently serve as the President of the UNT Student Circle Chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists, and I am the new APA, Division 17 SAS State Representative for Texas. I have a heart for compassionate leadership, advocacy, and representation, and I look forward to continuing to serve in these roles and beyond.



It has certainly been an exciting year, but it has not been without its challenges.

As we know, one of the most difficult things about being a grad student is finding a sustainable work-life balance, and Lord knows I really struggle in this area.

Outside of the program, I'm a mommy to two babies (Samaria - 8 y/o and Sanai - 5 y/o), a wife to my husband of 12 years (together for almost 14 years), and a regular person with hobbies and interests and a desire for sleep! (lol). My biggest piece of advice for you, no matter what busy looks like for you, is to (a) remember your why, (b) set clear boundaries for yourself and others, (c) take a holistic, whole-person approach to caring for yourself, including body, mind, and spirit, (d) lean into community, and (e) be kind to yourself. You cannot pour from an empty cup, and this combo will keep you feeling whole.



Speaking of community, this has been such an important component of my own wellness this first year, that it warrants further highlighting. I cannot stress to you enough the importance of finding your people and nurturing those relationships. I have met some of my lifelong best friends in this program, and they have served as my resting place at the end of long days, my cheer squad when exciting opportunities arise, and most importantly my sistah circle. Whether it's your labmates, cohort, or student organizations,

invest in  
those  
relationships.



When it's all said and done, and I am Dr. Raven, I plan to own and operate an interdisciplinary wellness center and group practice, specializing in the holistic care of Black women. My research endeavors will continue as well as some teaching. I have a heart for public scholarship as well, bridging academia with the real-world, so I will continue to interact, teach, advocate, and serve the public via social media, workshops, initiatives, and various forms of media. I dream of slow mornings on my land, somewhere here in the beautiful Texas countryside. I dream of a joy-filled life, where I am proud of the work that I have done and the woman I have become. I dream of legacy and equity, community and adventure, and a general sense of peace and satisfaction. I am excited for the journey ahead. Second year, here I come!

# CHRISTIE TSAO



Hello lovely humans, I hope you are having a great day wherever you are.

Christie here! I cannot believe I am about to wrap up my second year in the program. I am currently working hard toward proposing my thesis by the end of the semester, and of course, finishing everything required for second-years (assessment report, courses, assistantship, etc.). Toward the end of each semester, I find myself wondering, “Can I really do this?” This is not only because of the imposter phenomenon that makes me feel incapable at times,

but also the sacrifices I feel like I have to make to trek this less-traveled path. The late nights, the early mornings, the busy weekends, the missed family events, the rescheduled hangouts, the long-distance social and romantic relationships – all because I decided to move to Denton, TX to pursue a PhD in Counseling Psychology.

Do you ever wonder how your life would be if you had chosen something else in an alternate universe? I do. I wonder if my life would have turned out like some of my friends – a stable career, a loving family, a color-coordinated apartment, cozy weeknights, and adventurous weekends. Social media, am I right? As my mind began to drift off to a different version of my life, one of my favorite songs, House on a Hill by Eric Nam, came on:

*“What if I get everything I want?  
What if nothing ever fills me up?  
What if being happy isn’t what I thought?  
What if more is never enough?”*



Hearing this chorus always makes me smile. Because when I look at the life I have created for myself, this is more than I have ever imagined. Who would have thought little Christie would travel over 8,000 miles from Hong Kong to the US to pursue a college degree, let alone a doctoral degree? And own the cutest dog in the world? Not under my parents' watch! And here I am, 9 years later, living independently in the US with my dog, Spirit, and building a life I am grateful for.



All the sacrifices I felt necessary to make always turned into a gain – a supportive cohort, a loving partner, deepened friendships, unlocked new skills and confidence, and a choice to be a more authentic self. Yes, I am (we are) defying social expectations to live life a certain way, possibly not checking some of the typical boxes of adulthood until later in life (or maybe never). And I am learning that it's OK. Just like the song, maybe happiness is not what I have been taught. Maybe being happy can look different for me.

Someone told me that the semesters don't always get easier, they just become more manageable as we learn to handle the stress and responsibilities. While I sometimes still fantasize about how life would have been if I had walked a different path, I notice myself continuing this journey because of the craving for knowledge, the fulfillment of serving others, and the people who believe in me. And when things get tough, I take a break and then whisper to myself, "Let's do this =)."

With love,

*Christie*



# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 - 2026 INTERNSHIP COHORT!

*See below for news of our  
incoming interns, their sites, and  
some of their "senior quotes".*

## **MACEY ARNOLD**

"FIND YOUR COMMUNITY AND STAY  
CONNECTED"

UA COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES  
ALBANY, NEW YORK

## **CARMYN HAYES**

"CHERISH THESE 4-5 YEARS OF GRAD SCHOOL  
(AND ALL IT BRINGS) AS MUCH AS YOU CAN!  
ONCE THESE YEARS ARE DONE, CHANCES ARE  
THIS WILL BE THE LAST TIME YOU ARE 15-30  
MINUTES AWAY FROM SOME OF YOUR CLOSEST  
FRIENDS."

GSPP INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM, UD  
DENVER, COLORADO

## **SHIHO TOYAMA**

"YOU HAVE BRAINS IN YOUR HEAD. YOU HAVE  
FEET IN YOUR SHOES. YOU CAN STEER  
YOURSELF ANY DIRECTION YOU CHOOSE.  
YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN. AND YOU KNOW WHAT  
YOU KNOW. AND YOU ARE THE ONE WHO'LL  
DECIDE WHERE TO GO..." —DR. SEUSS "

SALT LAKE CITY VETERANS AFFAIRS  
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM  
SALT LAKE CITY, UT

## **KASEY CHAMBERS**

"ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES"

NC UNIVERISTY COUNSELING CENTER  
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

## **LAUREN KEMBLE**

"LEARN ALL THE THEORIES, MASTER THE  
TECHNIQUES, BUT WHEN YOU TOUCH A  
HUMAN SOUL, JUST BE ANOTHER HUMAN  
SOUL." - CARL JUNG

UNIVERSITY OF SD, COUNSELING CENTER  
SAN DIEGO, CA

## **SABRINA ZUNIGA**

"KEEP DREAMING & REMEMBER YOUR WHY"  
WELLSPAN PHILHAVEN HOSPITAL  
MT. GRETN, PENNSYLVANIA



# STUDENT REPS COLUMN

Hello & greetings from your 2024–2025 student reps, Issy & Javon! Only a few weeks left in the academic year—we’re almost there! Time has truly flown.

Huge thanks to everyone who helped before, during, and after Interview Day. It was a long but successful event, and several applicants were impressed. We’re so grateful to our amazing community — current GSAs, previous GSAs, and former student reps — who made planning smoother and showed why students want to be here.

We’re excited to welcome the new cohort soon! As we celebrate, we also prepare to say farewell to students heading off to internship. While we’ll miss you, we’re so proud and can’t wait to see what you do next. Be sure to take time to wish them well!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Spring 2024 Town Hall! Your voices matter, and we’re grateful for the honest feedback and collaboration. We’re committed to working with other programs and the Dean to make our program better and more inclusive.

To all students — please continue sharing your thoughts with us! We love hearing from you and are here to support your success.

Remember to take care of yourselves: practice self-care, set boundaries, and reach out when you need help. We’re in this together. Finally, from Issy: It’s been an honor serving this community over the last two years. Thank you for the memories. I know the next rep will continue to make us proud!

With appreciation,  
*Issy & Javon*

# EDITOR'S COLUMN

To the students, alumms, and faculty of UNT Counseling Psych, congrats on (almost) making it the Spring 2025 semester!

So many exciting things have happened in the past year: the Welcome Party, Mock Interview Day, Interview Day, and the Admitted Students celebration. The success of all these event couldn't have been possible without all the support, so many thanks to everybody who contributed to help us out!

We also want to thank everybody that have contributed to this newsletter. It was so wonderful hearing your professional and personal stories. We are so excited to continue growing our program and bettering the world as psychologists.

And finally, thanks to Anna - our senior GSA - for all her hard for these past two years. We'll miss you and can't wait to see what you're up to next!

*Ayurda & Anna*



**INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING  
TO FUTURE NEWSLETTERS?**

**EMAIL [AYURDAPATHAK@MY.UNT.EDU](mailto:AYURDAPATHAK@MY.UNT.EDU)  
OR [ANNASTRAUGHAN@MY.UNT.EDU](mailto:ANNASTRAUGHAN@MY.UNT.EDU)**