



## *Psychology Department Newsletter Fall 2022*

### *In this Issue*

<b>Congratulations Dr. Benjamin Rusiloski! .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Dr. Tamara Monroe .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Building Bridges.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Psychology Club: Raising Funds for Mental Health .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Guest Speakers with DelVal Roots .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Student Writing Celebration.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Celebrating 10 Years .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Disability Equity .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Interviews, Presentations, and Publications .....</b>	<b>6</b>

### **Congratulations Dr. Benjamin Rusiloski!**



*The Inauguration of*  
**BENJAMIN E. RUSILOSKI, PH.D.**  
 14<sup>th</sup> President of Delaware Valley University

As the 14th President of Delaware Valley University, Dr. Benjamin Rusiloski has been a member of the DelVal community for over 25 years and brings a wealth of higher education leadership experience to his role. He joined DelVal as an assistant professor of chemistry in 1994 and has made an impact on the university's legacy of experiential learning. In 2012, Rusiloski led a task force of faculty, staff and administrators who designed and implemented the award winning Experience360 program. The E360 program has greatly influenced our Counseling Psychology program, with many students gaining valuable experience in the field.

The Counseling Psychology department joined the University in celebrating Dr. Benjamin Rusiloski during his inauguration on Friday, October 21, 2022. Dr. Allison Buskirk-Cohen served on the planning committee for the successful event. Lisa Schell, who is both an undergraduate alumnus (Class of 2019) and a graduate alumnus (Cohort 7, Class of 2021) was a featured speaker. Dr. Matt Mutchler shared his musical talent and performed with his band Jess and the Mansplainers. Congratulations, Dr. Benjamin Rusiloski!

## Dr. Tamara Monroe



Dr. Tamara Monroe, an adjunct professor in the undergraduate and graduate counseling psychology programs felt that it was important to make her Internship I class experiential. Monroe took her graduate students to the Bucks County Youth Detention Center to learn from people like Mr. Brian Boger who works directly in the field. Monroe emphasized that as counseling professionals, students will have to adapt and work with a diverse group of clients. Taylor Price (Cohort 8, Class of 2022) stated, “I feel that the

experience translates to my work in the field because I can understand my youth clients better that may interact with this system. I also feel like I will be able to have a frame of reference now for a detention center.” Monroe remarked, “Far too often we get so wrapped up in doing things that make us feel comfortable. When we are thrown in a situation where we have to think on our feet, things tend to go awry. As an instructor, I feel it is important to prepare my students for the good and bad things that can occur, so they have the ability and experience to deal with them and not feel overwhelmed.”

## Building Bridges

“I came to this panel with a strong desire to learn new things, and I left feeling incredible satisfied knowing that I had heard so many insightful ideas spoken. One of Mr. Boger’s remarks has stayed with me... that when working with children, you can’t expect to ‘fix’ them entirely in a single day, or even ever, but sometimes, it’s simply about making that day better for them or even the time you spend with them better.”

-Jordan Gombs  
Class of 2024

The Psychology and Criminal Justice departments came together on September 22, 2022 for “Building Bridges: A Panel Discussion on Prison Reforms.” The event was part of the Business and Humanities Question It! Change It! colloquium series. Department chairs, Drs. Allison Buskirk-Cohen and Megan Terry Demarest, facilitated a discussion with three panelists. The panelists included Simon Schackner, a first-year student at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Daniel J. O’Connell, a senior scientist at the University of Delaware Center for Drug and Health Studies and an assistant professor of sociology and criminal justice, and Mr. Brian Boger, the director of program development at the Bucks County Youth Center. They talked about the penal system’s improvements and ongoing activities, such as program development,

educational alliances, and fresh approaches to jail research. Additionally, audience members had a chance to ask questions.

## Psychology Club: Raising Funds for Mental Health



The Psychology Club is a community of students who share a passion for mental health and psychology in a fun and engaging environment. This semester, the club has been dedicating their time to raise funds for local mental health organizations in Bucks County. The club hosted a spooky bake sale in October supporting NAMI Bucks County and a bead bracelet sale in November supporting the Bucks County Suicide Prevention Task Force. In total, they raised over \$550 for local foundations! Club president, Alexandra

Hendricks (Class of 2024), believes that fundraising for Bucks County mental health services is crucial because it provides resources to those who may not have access, which can make a lasting impact in the community. Additionally, Hendricks emphasizes that, "Everything in the sales were handmade so it was a great way for students to take a mental health break and make these products." The club also regularly hosts mental health activities for students, such as paint night, chalk drawing on campus, and guest speakers. Follow the Psych Club on Instagram ([@psychclub at dvu](https://www.instagram.com/psychclub_at_dvu)) to stay up to date on upcoming events! Please contact Dr. Brianna Morgis, faculty advisor, at [Brianna.Morgis@delval.edu](mailto:Brianna.Morgis@delval.edu), to support the club or to become a member.

## Guest Speakers with DeVal Roots



Dr. Allison Buskirk-Cohen's Senior Seminar undergraduate class had many visitors this year, many of whom connect our undergraduate and graduate programs. To learn more about graduate school, the class spoke with Jocelyn Balan Lopez (Cohort 8, Class of '23), Jennifer Wielgus (Cohort 9, Class of 2024), and Gia Lebo (Cohort 10, Class of 2025). They also had a chance to meet with Mr. Chris Walter, Clinical Coordinator of Graduate Counseling Psychology, and Ms. Jessica Schmitt, Assistant Director of Graduate Advising & Student Experience. To gain information about post-graduate life, students in the class met virtually with several alumni, including Kyla Dannelke (Class of 2011), Stephen Sheriff (Class of 2014), and Ashleen Caba (Class of 2020). In reflecting upon the experience, Madison Bernacki (Class of 2023) said, "My senior seminar

course was extremely rewarding. I feel as though I was provided with wonderful tools and networking recourses to start the next chapter of my journey. Dr. Buskirk-Cohen instilled a sense of confidence in embracing the unknown and that our path may not always be clear but it's uniquely our own."

## Student Writing Celebration



Graduate counseling psychology students in Cohort 9, Class of 2024, were a powerful force at the Student Writing Celebration organized by the DeVal English department. For the Tiny Memoir category, graduate counseling psychology students shared their stories including Obed Noguera “ERASMO”, Ezri Lutz “Loss”, Jennifer Wielgus “Step One”, Megan Gambino “Tom Who Kept Giving Back”, and Timmy Turner “Catching Up”. In the poetry category, Alexandria Kazandjian shared their poem titled “Untitled Poem”. Jennifer Wielgus received an award in the blog/journalism category for her entry titled “Mortality”, a memoir to her mom. Wielgus transitioned from a journalism career to the counseling psychology program. She explained, “There was a painful rough patch between leaving

journalism and deciding to go to grad school for sure! But now, I’m feeling this wonderful synergy between a career where I told people’s stories — always looking to shed light on their strengths and times they triumphed over adversity — and a career where I can help others harness the great power, we all have inside to “write” the future they want to live.” Wielgus has a recovery blog, where she shares her experience, and the most recent post is about the Writers Conference <https://jenwielgusjournalism.blog/2022/11/17/passion/>

## Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference



This past October, Counseling Psychology graduate students Jocelyn Balan Lopez (Cohort 8, Class of 2023) and Emily Easter (Cohort 8, Class of 2023) travelled to the Pennsylvania Counseling Association (PCA) conference in Pittsburgh, PA. Balan Lopez consistently advocates for effective counseling services in Spanish and the well-being of bilingual counselors and students. Mentored by Dr. Matt Mutchler, Balan Lopez presented a session entitled, *Lost in Translating: The Hidden Work of Bilingual Counseling*. It reviewed the challenges and barriers that Spanish-speaking students and counselors face that hinder their professional development and

ability to provide competent bilingual counseling. Balan Lopez explains, “Doing the research validated the emotions that I have felt throughout my practicum and internship experience. On one hand, I am extremely proud of my Hispanic roots, and I am grateful to have the skills to serve the Spanish speaking population. On the other hand, I feel burnt out in doing all the work to make the field better equipped to serve a more diverse population.” She hopes to continue advocating for others and herself in future presentations.

## Celebrating 10 Years



This year marks 10 years of the Graduate Counseling Psychology (GCP) program. The accredited MPCAC program was developed by Drs. Audrey Ervin and Allison Buskirk-Cohen in 2012 and leads students to apply for licensure as a professional counselor. GCP

students select a track either in social justice community counseling or child and adolescent counseling. To date, over 80 students have graduated from the GCP program and are currently working as therapists, counselors, client advocates and community change agents. Alumni of the program are employed throughout a myriad of clinical sites including A Woman's Place, Aldie Counseling, Pendell Mental Health, Lenape Valley Foundation, Eagleville Hospital, Jewish Family Services and Armid Wellness, among many others. Many students have opened private practices in the area. "It is always inspiring to see our graduates return to mentor our incoming students," stated Ervin. "There is a strong network of mentorship for our incoming students due to the cohort model. We are proud that the program typically has 100% job placement upon graduation. Our students are sought after by local and regional employers." DeVal's graduate program in Counseling Psychology is now accepting applications for Fall 2023! Contact Danielle Pedrotty, Director of Graduate Student Operations, with questions or to begin your application at [danielle.pedrotty@delval.edu](mailto:danielle.pedrotty@delval.edu)

## Disability Equity



In September, over 60 undergraduate and graduate counseling psychology students came out to hear Imani Barbarin, disability rights advocate, speak to a full house about the intersections of race and disability. Born with cerebral palsy, Barbarin spoke about her experiences from the perspective of a disabled black woman. Topics addressed included intersecting identities, systemic ableism, racism, and strategies to be an able-bodied ally. Undergraduate and graduate students reported it was a powerful learning experience that addressed areas of power and privilege that are often rendered invisible. Students described leaving the event with feelings of inspiration and motivation to engage in community advocacy work.

*Photo credit Maude Bolinger*

## Interviews, Presentations, and Publications

In addition to their teaching and service responsibilities, full-time faculty also engage regularly in different forms of scholarship. Here are some examples from 2022:

Dr. Allison Buskirk-Cohen

- Snyder, K. (2022, November). Recess On The Rebound. Bucks Family Magazine. <https://edition.pagesuite.com/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&edid=d5831ecc-ca24-4182-af01-fa83ecf38beb>
- Duncan, T.A., & **Buskirk-Cohen, A.A.** (2022). *Cultivating Student Success: A Multi-faceted Approach to Working with Emerging Adults in Higher Education*. Oxford University Press: New York.

Dr. Audrey Ervin

- Werner, J. (2022, June). Central Bucks Residents Speak Out on Pride Flag, Library Books Policy. The Patch. <https://patch.com/pennsylvania/doylestown/central-bucks-residents-speak-out-pride-flag-library-book-policy>
- **Ervin, A.** (2022). *The Ethics of Working with Gender Expansive and Gender Non-Binary Folx*. 3-hour workshop presented at the Pennsylvania Psychological Association, Mt. Pocono, PA.
- Landry, M. J., Bailey, D. A., Lee, M., Van Gundy, S., & **Ervin, A.** (2022). The Impostor Phenomenon in the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession: An Online Cross-Sectional Survey. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(9), 5558.

Dr. Brianna Morgis

- LaBianca, J. (2022, November). 8 "Small But Toxic" Things to Stop Saying to Your Partner, According to Therapists. Yahoo BestLife. <https://www.yahoo.com/now/8-small-toxic-things-stop-210222554.html>
- **Morgis, B.**, & Mutchler, M.S. (Oct 2022). *Fostering Cultural Competence in the Counselor Training Program*. Poster Presentation at the 2022 Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference. Pittsburgh, PA.

Dr. Matt Mutchler

- Morgis, B., & **Mutchler, M.S.** (Oct 2022). *Fostering Cultural Competence in the Counselor Training Program*. Poster Presentation at the 2022 Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference. Pittsburgh, PA.
- Balan Lopez, J. & **Mutchler, M.S.** (Oct 2022). *Lost in Translating: The Hidden Work of Bilingual Counseling*. Presentation at the 2022 Pennsylvania Counseling Association Conference. Pittsburgh, PA.
- Weinstock, C.P. (2022, August). All about boundary setting: Why do it and how to get better at it. *Everyday Health*. [https://www.everydayhealth.com/emotional-health/all-about-boundary-setting-why-do-it-and-how-to-get-better-at-it/?fbclid=IwAR1u6m9l12IY5NIsIDY6tkikl\\_YbVYEn1q41L722fPC1M5ZR0RnbWrxo0](https://www.everydayhealth.com/emotional-health/all-about-boundary-setting-why-do-it-and-how-to-get-better-at-it/?fbclid=IwAR1u6m9l12IY5NIsIDY6tkikl_YbVYEn1q41L722fPC1M5ZR0RnbWrxo0)