

University of Colorado - Anschutz Medical Campus  
Department of Psychiatry Monthly Newsletter



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## A NOTE FROM THE GOOD NEWS TEAM

We are very excited to present the members of The Good News Team: Claudia Iannelli (co-chair), Cecilia Aguirre Villagomez (co-chair), Shannon McWilliams (member), Kristen Raymond (copy editor/staff spotlight), Aileen Norton (copy editor), Shaleeta Pearson (member), Kimberly Slavsky (Good News author/lab of the month) and Melissa Sinclair (member).

Please visit our submission page where you can share questions, comments, shout outs or ideas for a future article.

**Click on this box to be directed to our submission page!**

This March the DOPsych is excited to be joining in the campus-wide Food Fight Food Drive! As a department, we will compete against other groups to collect the most non-perishable items for a local food bank. There will be boxes for donations available around the DOPsych all month. The winner (most cans per FTE) will receive a trophy and bragging rights for the whole year! Look out for an email with additional information to be sent out soon! Please contact Mandy Doria at AMANDA.DORIA@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU with questions!

*Join the food fight!*



**SUPPORTING SUCCESS** for us, for life.

# the Good News

## 2019 AT A GLANCE

2019 was a year of incredible growth, progression and advancement in the DOPsych! Here are some of the most exciting stats for the year!



54 - 126 - 180

MORE  
OVER THERE!

In 2019, the DOPsych added 54 new faculty members and 126 staff members for a total of 180 new hires! This incredible increase in hiring led to the creation of the Recruitment Team in order to streamline the recruitment and hiring process.

\$13.3 Million 

We received \$13.3 million in awarded grants, a 100% increase from the 2018. Some notable investigators who played a role in this dramatic increase are Joe Schacht, Mark Laudenslager, Christina Leggett, Joel Stoddard and Jarrod Ellingson.



99 Publications

DOPsych faculty published 99 new peer-reviewed articles in journals such as the *Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*, *Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*, *Developmental Psychobiology*, *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* and *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*.

9 Expanded Programs 

2019 saw the creation or expansion of nine clinical programs including specialty areas in OCD, women's behavioral health, trauma, addiction, integrated care and psychiatric emergency medicine.

## INTRODUCING THE DOPSYCH RECRUITMENT TEAM!

As we are experiencing significant growth, we now have a recruitment team in the department. Our recruitment specialists - Lydia Lyon and Amanda Showalter - are assisting the department in recruiting world-class faculty and staff.

Lydia Lyon started in the DOPsych in September of 2019. She is new to the University but has taken very well to the environment. Lydia loves decorating her office for the holidays and her favorite candy is Twizzlers Pull 'n' Peel Cherry Licorice.

Amanda Showalter joined the team in October of 2019 but has been at the University for 12 years, most recently working in research recruitment. Amanda also loves decorating her office for the holidays, writing funny comments on their white board to welcome visitors, and pistachios are a favorite snack.

Please remember that there are many different moving parts to recruitment. There are regulations and processes that must be followed. How can you help? Just follow these simple steps:

1. Please submit all documentation as requested. If there is missing information, the process will be delayed.
2. Please respond to emails and calendar requests.
3. Please do not remove holds from your calendar unless you have confirmation from the assigned recruitment specialist.
4. Please ask questions if you are unsure about a process, procedure or applicant. They're here to help!

The recruitment team is working on new processes to manage recruitment and are always open to feedback on the process. We look forward to many successful recruitments in the years to come!



# In the Spotlight!

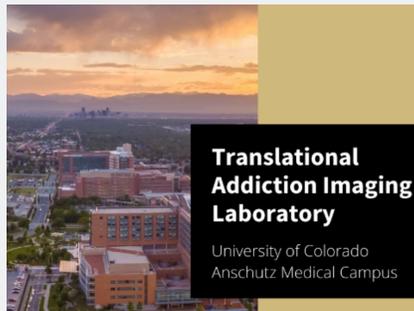
## LAB OF THE MONTH

### Translational Addiction Imaging Laboratory (TrAIL)

Please enjoy a new monthly feature from the Good News Team! Every edition will highlight a different research lab in the DOPsych. Nominations can be made through the Good Newsletter Submission page!

#### How many lab members are in your group?

The director of TrAIL is Joseph Schacht, Ph.D., who recently moved to CU from the Medical University of South Carolina. Joseph Sakai, M.D. is the study physician, Kristen Raymond is the lab manager, and the TrAIL PRAs are Rachel Hoffman and Kate Mitchell.



#### What is your research focus?

Our work is currently funded by two R01 awards from the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), and focuses on treatment development for alcohol and substance use disorders. There are currently very few medications that are FDA-approved to treat these disorders, and they are modestly effective at best. We use behavioral genetics, functional neuroimaging, and experimental pharmacology to test new treatments in a research laboratory setting, with a particular focus on novel medications. Our goal is to create a future in which safe and effective medications for alcohol and substance use disorders are easily available and widely used.

#### What do you hope to accomplish in the coming year?

We are excited to begin enrollment on our two NIAAA-funded studies, which recruit non-treatment-seeking adults with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD).

#### How do we learn more about your research?

Reach out to our study email, [alcoholstudy@ucdenver.edu](mailto:alcoholstudy@ucdenver.edu), or click here to be taken to our website. Dr. Schacht is interested in developing new research collaborations at CU, contact him at [joseph.schacht@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:joseph.schacht@cuanschutz.edu).

## NEW PUBLICATION BY DR. DAVIES AND HIS DAUGHTER MADELINE E. DAVIES!

The father-daughter pair recently wrote a paper entitled, "The (Slow) Depathologizing of Gender Incongruence," published this month in *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*.

[Click here to read the full text article.](#)



## TEAM SPOTLIGHT

### ERIK PENN



Erik's nominator said, "Erik is a wonderful colleague willing to help out when needed. He has a bright and friendly personality and he has been incredibly helpful to brainstorm and collaborate with!"

- ? **When did you start working for the DOPsych at Anschutz?**  
✓ I came to CU and the DOPsych in September 2016.
- ? **Of what accomplishment are you most proud?**  
✓ I was quite excited when I was asked to join a community non-profit's board of directors and shortly thereafter was elected by the body into a leadership role.
- ? **What is your professional area of interest?**  
✓ My educational background is in Social Work and Fashion Merchandising. I have always felt drawn to business management and leadership which I have had great access to through my quality improvement and project management work.
- ? **What's your biggest professional goal?**  
✓ To launch a consulting firm.
- ? **What was your very first job?**  
✓ Cook at Sonic Drive-In and Photographer's Assistant.
- ? **What is your favorite season of the year?**  
✓ Fall: I've come to accept my basicness and enjoy sweater weather, hot cider, pumpkin pie, and all that fall brings.
- ? **What is your favorite Colorado activity?**  
✓ My family has an annual tradition of heading up to Frisco in the summer for the Colorado BBQ Challenge.
- ? **What's your dream vacation spot or trip?**  
✓ Touring Greece and Mesopotamia and learning more about their history and visiting the beautiful ancient ruins.
- ? **Got any hidden talents?**  
✓ I play the flute.

# Shout Outs and In the News!

## **CHRIS SCHNECK, MD WAS INTERVIEWED BY US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF FAMILY THERAPY FOR YOUTH AT RISK FOR BIPOLAR DISORDER.**

"This study is an important first step in trying to decrease the severity of bipolar disorder early on for children," said study co-author Dr. Christopher Schneck, an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Colorado. "Efforts at home and in health care settings, like providing skill training for families, can make a big difference in a child's suffering."



[Click here to read the full article.](#)

## **ROBIN GABRIELS, PSYD WAS AWARDED A \$2.5 MILLION GRANT TO STUDY WHY THERAPEUTIC HORSEBACK RIDING BENEFITS AUTISTIC CHILDREN**

The grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute Of Child Health & Human Development of the National Institutes of Health, will fund a randomized 5-year-study to look into the physiology of why this therapy produces such positive results compared to a no-horse barn activity control.

[Click here to read more!](#)



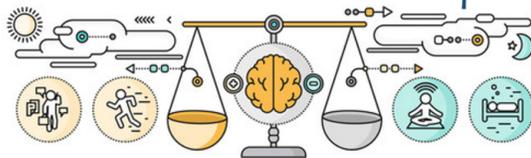
## **RACHEL DAVIS, MD WAS INTERVIEWED BY NEWSEY ON THE USE OF IMPLANTING ELECTRODES IN THE BRAIN AS A TREATMENT FOR A PSYCHIATRIC CONDITION**

"For someone to be a candidate for deep brain stimulation, we want them to have tried all the standard therapies and to have had those not work," explains Dr. Rachel Davis, a psychiatrist at UHealth and director of the OCD Clinic at CU Anschutz.

"They need to have tried the medications that are standard for OCD. They need to have tried an antipsychotic, a benzodiazepine, and they need to have done at least 20 sessions of exposure and response prevention with a therapist who's familiar with treating OCD."

[Click for the full article.](#)

## Developmental Psychobiology Research Group



## **DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOBIOLOGY ENDOWMENT FUND (DPEF) WAS FUNDED FOR ANOTHER DECADE!**

The DPEF was established in 1977 with \$500,000 from the W. T. Grant Foundation, with the intent to support the Developmental Psychobiology Research Group. Under the direction of Mark Laudenslager, the group recently recieved an additional 10 years of funding!

## **RACHEL DAVIS, MD ALSO WROTE AN ARTICLE FOR OC87 ON WHAT IT'S LIKE TO WORK AS A DOCTOR WITH OCD**

OC87 Recovery Diaries focused on busting the stigma of mental health through first-person storytelling. Dr. Davis kindly and openly shared the struggles she faced dealing with anxiety and OCD while growing up and studying to become a doctor.

[Click here to read her story.](#)



# Published!

The following list represents some of our faculty with recent publications!



Davies, R. D., & Davies, M. E. (2020). The (Slow) Depathologizing of Gender Incongruence. *The Journal of nervous and mental disease*, 208(2), 152. DOI: 10.1097/NMD.0000000000001123

Pugliese, C. E., Ratto, A. B., Granader, Y., Dudley, K. M., Bowen, A., Baker, C., & Anthony, L. G. (2020). Feasibility and preliminary efficacy of a parent-mediated sexual education curriculum for youth with autism spectrum disorders. *Autism*, 24(1), 64-79. DOI: 10.1177/1362361319842978.



Anthony, B. J., Robertson, H. A., Verbalis, A., Myrick, Y., Troxel, M., Seese, S., & Anthony, L. G. (2019). Increasing autism acceptance: The impact of the Sesame Street “See Amazing in All Children” initiative. *Autism*, 24(1):95-108. DOI: 10.1177/1362361319847927.



Bertollo, J. R., Strang, J. F., Anthony, L. G., Kenworthy, L., Wallace, G. L., & Yerys, B. E. (2020). Adaptive Behavior in Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder: The Role of Flexibility. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 50(1), 42-50. DOI: 10.1007/s10803-019-04220-9



Strang, J.F., Klomp, S.E., Caplan, R., Griffin, A.D., Anthony, L.G., Harris, M.C., Graham, E.K., Knauss, M., & van der Miesen, A.I.R. (2019). Community-based participatory design for research that impacts the lives of transgender and/or gender-diverse autistic and/or neurodiverse people. *Clinical Practice in Pediatric Psychology*, 7(4), 396-404. DOI: 10.1037/cpp0000310



Kennedy, S.M., Halliday, E. & Ehrenreich-May, J. (2020) Trajectories of Change and Intermediate Indicators of Non-Response to Transdiagnostic Treatment for Children and Adolescents, *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, DOI: 10.1080/15374416.2020.1716363



**WOW!**  
Sarah Kennedy worked on this paper while participating in the Psychiatry Research Innovations 2019 Scholar cohort!

Burns, M., Griese, B., King, S., & Talmi, A. (2020). Childhood bereavement: Understanding prevalence and related adversity in the U.S. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. Publish Ahead of Print, DOI: 10.1037/ort0000442.

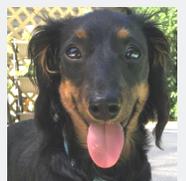


Koljack, C.E., Garcia, M.L.W. & Davis, R.A. (2020) Anti-Stigma Mental Health Panel: an Initiative to Reduce Mental Health Stigma Experienced by Health Professional Students. *Academic Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40596-020-01187-z>



## CALLING ALL PET OWNERS!

For the March edition of the Good Newsletter, the Good News team is asking pet owners within the DOPsych to participate in a pet/owner picture matching game! Want to be included? Just go to our **submission page** and upload TWO separate files: a picture of you AND a picture of your pet! These pictures will appear as our Good News Initiative for March where everyone can guess which pet belongs to which DOPsych team member! We're looking for ALL types of animals! Any furry (or feathered or scaly) friend will do!



*Would you have guessed this was my dog?*

# The Good News Initiative



READ ALL ABOUT WHAT WE *love* ABOUT WORKING FOR THE DOPSYCH !



I love my co-workers and peers. Not only do we get to support and help others while at work, many of us fight for justice, equality, and several different causes outside the scope of our jobs.  
-Emily Hemendinger

I truly love the positive impact on human life that my contribution carries in working in behavioral health as I believe that it has a positive impact on the world; I also enjoy the opportunity for professional development and the exposure to new knowledge via different avenues.

-Iman Nouis

*Since I joined the department at the start of December, I've been filled with gratitude on a daily basis. It's wonderful to work amongst a team of supportive, passionate and like-minded individuals...both in the office and outside in nature!*  
-Danielle Sukenik

There are so many reasons that I love my job, but mainly I get to serve faculty, staff and trainees who are exceptionally passionate about helping to improve the lives of individuals suffering with mental illness. We all want to improve the mental health landscape of the great State of Colorado!

-Neill Epperson

*I love that I can delve deeply into my interests and am supported in doing so.*

I LOVE working with such dynamic, interesting, and engaged colleagues. As I tell every candidate, everyone in our department is lovely and you can't say that about every place you might work. I LOVE that we are working together to serve a larger mission and it feels good to be part of something bigger, with people who I truly enjoy and respect.

-Melissa Sinclair

*Three reasons: 1) I have some of the best colleagues 2) my work is always evolving and never the same, and 3) we are all committed, no matter our roles, to improving mental health for all.*  
-Emmaly Perkes

I LOVE the professional development and the support for all staff and faculty that the department gives us. The desire to have better connections between not only divisions but other departments and institutions makes this role even better!  
-Kimberly Slavsky

Knowing I have the flexibility to care for loved ones, and knowing that I'm making a small difference in the lives of the people I work with and for.  
-Shaleeta Pearson

I love that I am given the freedom to be creative and create fun and meaningful content for our Departmental initiatives!  
-Claudia Iannelli

I love the people above all! There is never a dull moment and it's the passion, collaboration, and team spirit that make coming to work fun!  
-Stacey L'Hommedieu

"I started in August in the new role of the Triage Counselor for Student/Resident Mental Health, and since then I have felt supported in forging new relationships between our clinic and the campus community, along with providing more access to care for our students and residents. I love the work and collaboration with my peers and colleagues, and I especially love working in the Outreach role with student affairs to improve the mental health and well-being programs and interventions on our campus!"

-Mandy Doria

*I love that I work with a team that shares the same vision and drive. Each day offers new challenges as well as opportunities and I take satisfaction in solving these problems knowing that the job I do makes a difference in people's lives.*  
-Tamara Saunders

## QUIET CORNER: PRESENCE

WITH STACEY L'HOMMEDIU



What does it mean to be present? Not dwelling in the past since it has already transpired, and not living in the future since it hasn't yet come to pass. It means living in this moment since it truly is the only moment we have. How do we cultivate presence? Through breath. Try closing your eyes and sitting up tall with your palms face down on your thighs. Notice your natural inhales and exhales. Start to match the length of your inhale and exhale on a count of 4. Inhale 1-2-3-4, Exhale 1-2-3-4. Try this for 5 rounds of breath, then incorporate a mantra. Inhale 'I am', Exhale 'Present'. Try this for another 5 rounds of breath. Slowly open your eyes and notice any differences.

Namaste-



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