

PSYCHOLOGY CLINICAL RESEARCH POSTDOCTORAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM

VA San Diego Healthcare System

2024-2025

Brochure

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VA San Diego Healthcare System

UC San Diego Health

**VA San Diego Healthcare system
3350 La Jolla Village Drive
San Diego, California 9216**

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INTRODUCTION

The VASDHS (VA San Diego Healthcare System) Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Residency Training Program is a two-year postdoctoral training program based on the clinician-scientist model. The primary goal is to train psychologists to become leading clinical researchers in high priority areas of mental health relevant to Veterans. Over the course of the two-year program, fellows are trained in clinical research and advanced clinical service delivery with state-of-the-art program administration and evaluation experiences in an interdisciplinary setting. At the end of the program, Residents are prepared for VA or university medical center careers that integrate research, clinical, training, and leadership activities.

The training program consists of four contents:

- 1) MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment (focused on schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders)
- 2) CESAMH Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment (focused on the integration of neurobiological and psychosocial science to develop, evaluate, and disseminate treatment for trauma-related disorders such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI))
- 3) Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health
- 4) Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment.

All four special emphasis areas are two-year programs funded through the VA Office of Academic Affiliates (OAA). Most years there is one new psychology position in each of the content area; on occasion a second position may be available.

For more information, visit our website at:

[Psychology Internship And Fellowship Programs | VA San Diego Health Care | Veterans Affairs](#)

Our APA-accredited program emphasizes training in the professional practice of general clinical psychology and clinical research, and it does not offer training in any APA recognized substantive specialty practice areas.

Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
American Psychological Association
750 1st Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
Phone: (202) 336-5979
Email: apaaccred@apa.org
Web: [APA Accreditation - Home](#)

CLINICAL SERVICES AT VASDHS

Postdoctoral Residents are located within the VASDHS which is a teaching hospital adjacent to the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) medical school campus.



VASDHS provides a full range of patient care services, with state-of-the-art technology and high quality educational and research experience.

The VASDHS Mental Health Care Line serves Veterans who reside in San Diego and Imperial counties and provides general and specialized inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services. There are 28 acute care psychiatry beds and 10 beds assigned to the Neurobehavioral Assessment Unit. In addition, there is a Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SARRTP) for Veterans with co-occurring substance use disorders and PTSD.

An active outpatient Geriatric Psychiatry service also exists at the Medical Center, as well as a 20-bed Spinal Cord Injury Unit, offering inpatient and outpatient services.

There is also a 40-bed, Veteran Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (RRTP), the Aspire Center that promotes recovery in Veterans and provides temporary housing for Veterans who do not need inpatient care but would benefit from rehabilitation services for an average of 60-120 days.

Recently, VASDHS opened a Therapeutic Neuromodulation Program Suite to conduct a range of neurostimulation and neuromodulation, as well as ketamine-based interventions. VASDHS has a robust telehealth program that has greatly improved access to mental health care.

TO LEARN MORE

VISIT VA San Diego Healthcare System at:

<https://www.sandiego.va.gov/>

ABOUT THE SAN DIEGO VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

For 70 years, VA has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to training and to the development of academic affiliations for the purpose of:

- 1) Training and retaining high quality VA health care providers
- 2) Improving Veteran health care
- 3) Promoting an environment of scientific inquiry.

The VA is legislatively mandated to support the training of healthcare professionals, such as psychologists, for its system and the nation.

RESEARCH AT THE VA

VASDHS has one of the most active research programs in the nation. The VASDHS's Research & Development Service is one of the largest research programs in the Department of Veterans Affairs with over \$44 million in research funding, over 250 principal investigators, and nearly 700 research projects. It is home to nine special research programs, which include:

- Center of Excellence for Stress & Mental Health (CESAMH)
- Mental Illness Rehabilitation, Education, and Clinical Centers (MIRECC)
- VA Women's Health Practice-Based Research Network (PBRN)
- Million Veterans Program (MVP)

VASDHS's Research & Development Service is also affiliated with the Veterans Medical Research Foundation (VMRF) founded as a non-profit corporation in 1989 to administer additional funds for research studies. VMRF partially funds nearly 100 VA researchers and is one of the largest of 84 active VA Foundations in the nation.

The Psychology staff at the VASDHS represents one of the most academically oriented in the Department of Veterans Affairs Healthcare Systems. Currently, fully accessible by the postdoctoral residents are over 100 staff psychologists. Most of the VASDHS Ph.D. clinical psychologists hold joint academic appointments in the UCSD Department of Psychiatry, and all Clinical Research faculty have a joint appointment. Many of the major sub-specialties of clinical psychology are represented by the staff, including Neuropsychology, Geropsychology, marital and family therapy, substance use disorder treatment, day treatment for chronic patients, behavioral medicine, PTSD, and related psychology research. There are complete facilities at the VA for computer-assisted psychological testing and videotaping of therapy sessions.

Postdoctoral training in Psychology is a valued and integral part of the mission of both VASDHS and the UCSD Department of Psychiatry. The mission of UCSD is to provide high quality and effective clinical care, professional training, and research.

ABOUT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

As an academic department, the UCSD Department of Psychiatry has a strong commitment to offering superb training to the next generation of clinical research scientists. Thus, since its inception, the Department has continually expanded its existing programs and created new training programs for clinical care and clinical research. Furthermore, psychologists have a strong presence in the Department of Psychiatry, and are fully integrated into all administrative, educational, and clinical endeavors.



UCSD is one of ten campuses of the University of California (<http://ucsd.edu/>). UCSD curricula and programs have been singled out for top rankings in national surveys at both undergraduate and graduate levels. In terms of Federal research and developmental funding, it is currently in the top five. The UCSD Department of Psychiatry is strongly integrated within the VASDHS, and together they offer a rich clinical and research environment. The mission of both the UCSD School of Medicine and the VASDHS include a strong emphasis on clinical care, professional training, and research; and both are nationally renowned for strong clinical, teaching, and research programs.

Many successful joint programs are currently in operation under the umbrella of an inter-agency sharing agreement. Including:

- Four-year Residency in General Psychiatry
- Two-year Fellowship in Child Psychiatry; psychiatric fellowships in Geriatric Psychiatry, an APA-approved Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology; and an APA-approved Pre-doctoral Internship in Clinical Psychology.

As a companion program to the VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program described in this brochure, another key resource within the VASDHS Mental Health Care Line is the Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Residency Program, which offered 13 postdoctoral positions for the 2023-2024 training year. The latter program consists of one-year clinical positions in two APA accredited tracks-- Evidence-Based Psychotherapies (EBP) and Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR), with rotations in Mood Disorders; Geropsychology and Home-based Care; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Mental Health; PTSD Clinical Teams (PCTs); PTSD/Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI); and Family Mental Health.

QUALIFICATIONS, FUNDING & BENEFITS

Requirements:

For consideration of admittance to the VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program include:

- 1) Completion of an APA-accredited doctorate in clinical or counseling psychology and an APA-accredited internship in clinical psychology
- 2) US citizenship (as required by VA)
- 3) Males born after December 31, 1959, must have registered for the draft by age 26 years (as required by VA)

Desirable qualifications include:

- 1) Experience using evidence-based interventions
- 2) Clinical Research experience
- 3) Career goals involving clinical-research, clinical care, and leadership
- 4) Recruitment of residents from diverse demographic groups (e.g., social, economic, and cultural) is a high priority

Funding:

All Residents are funded through postdoctoral stipends from the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) Department of Veterans Affairs. Stipends are currently \$58,571 (for first year fellows) with health, dental, and vision benefits. Funds from VASDHS Mental Health Care Line and Education Service budgets are often used to cover program needs (e.g., office and testing supplies, on-site computers).

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

Each applicant is asked to submit the following materials via the APPA CAS portal:

1. A brief statement of interest (maximum 3 pages), with the following: i) the special emphasis program you are applying to and why; ii) a summary of educational, clinical and research experiences relevant to the specific area of interest; iii) a summary of your training needs and goals for the residency; and iv) a statement of your career goals. We are especially interested in learning about ways in which your personal history, prior training, and career goals align with the program's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion. **If you are applying to more than one emphasis area, please submit a separate letter of interest for each area.**
2. A current curriculum vitae or resume.
3. Three letters of reference, including one from a clinical supervisor and one from a research supervisor.

Materials should be submitted via the APPA CAS by **11:59 PM EST (8:59 PST) pm November 17, 2023.**

We will conduct a virtual informational meeting on November 3, 2023, at 4:00 PST. An invitation will be sent to all emails entered into APPA CAS at that time. For more information, please contact Dr. Lindamer (Laurie.Lindamer@va.gov). Applicants should be available for a virtual interview on December 13, 2023. Other interview dates may be possible. Late applications will be considered only for positions are not filled by applicants who applied by the deadline.

SELECTION PROCESS:

Selection of residents is done by our Postdoctoral Selection Committee (consisting of the training director, programs directors, and supervisors for each emphasis area) with input from other psychologists in each emphasis area. Consistent with a holistic review process we consider the following criteria (not in order of priority):

- 1) Breadth and quality of previous general clinical training experience
- 2) Breadth, depth, and quality of training experience in the specific content area (e.g., psychosis, trauma, women's health, or addictions treatment)
- 3) Quality and scope of scholarship, as indicated partially by research, conference presentations, and publications
- 4) Relationship between clinical and research interests/experience of the applicant
- 5) Evidence of accomplishments
- 6) Evidence of commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in clinical, teaching and/or research capacity
- 7) Goodness of fit between the applicant's stated objectives and the training program and medical center's resources
- 8) Thoughtfulness of information provided in the cover letter
- 9) Strength of letters of recommendation from professionals who know the applicant well

The top applicants in each content area are invited to interview with the training directors, primary supervisor, and other faculty. The applicants are reassessed following the interviews with the above criteria with the opportunity to obtain further and clarifying information to assess interpersonal skills. Final admission and hiring of residents are dependent on VASDHS Human Resources Service approval, which includes a federal background check, physical examination, and education/credential verification.

The program is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Our commitment to diversity includes attempting to ensure an appropriate representation of individuals along many dimensions, including (but not limited to) gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, ethnic or racial minorities, SES, religion, and disabilities. We attempt to provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment for all residents, regardless of ethnic background or physical needs, and applicants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

TRAINING PROGRAM & ENVIRONMENT STRUCTURE

We provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment for all persons. Our commitment to diversity includes attempting to ensure an appropriate representation of individuals along many dimensions, including gender, sexual orientation, age, religious, ethnic/racial minorities, and (dis)abilities in our trainees and faculty. Our program contains Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's three elements of cultural humility:

- 1) We model the "ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the person (Hook, et al, 2013)¹;
- 2) We invite the trainees to join any of the several VASDHS and UCSD committees which are actively addressing aspects of structural racism and other inequities; and
- 3) We provide opportunities for trainees to engage stakeholders and to participate in partnerships to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Training focuses on clinical research in high priority mental health issues relevant to Veteran populations. Residents in the VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program have a shared responsibility in designing and planning their residency experience in collaboration with their supervisors, and they will receive training in clinical research and provision of evidence-based clinical services and can develop teaching, supervision, administration, and leadership skills in interdisciplinary settings. The emphasis in this Residency program is training in academic, clinical, and health systems research and program development that build on the interests of the Resident and the strengths of our faculty and department.

Our program is unique in that residents devote effort both to direct clinical research and direct provision of clinical services. Residents devote up to 75% effort to clinical research, the majority of which is clinically relevant activities. The expectation for the program is that Residents will spend at least 25% in direct clinical service, such as providing assessments or conducting therapy in VA clinics or research programs. One strength of the clinical research approach is that there is time allotted for the following clinical research-specific activities:

- Developing awareness of pressing clinical /research priorities within the VA.
- Developing skills in grant writing.
- Learning to navigate the landscape of career development awards.
- Developing advanced skills in mental health research methodology and statistical analyses, scientific writing and presentation, and research ethics in mental health research to understand the best evidence-based approach to clinical research and treatment.
- Participating didactics that address an array of topics ranging from advanced research methodologies, professional writing, and research ethics.
- Giving formal presentations of their clinical research findings.

The VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program requires a two-year commitment from about September 1 of the first year to about August 31 of the second year. Residents work a 40-hour week thereby completing 2,080 hours of supervised training per year, which is well above the minimum of 1,500 postdoctoral Supervised Professional Experience (SPE) hours required for Psychology licensure in California. The VASDHS is a Business and Professions Code (BPC) Section 2910 exempt setting whereby all hours related to clinical care including clinical research can be counted as SPE for licensure in California.

General office hours are 8:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; any deviation from this schedule must be approved by the primary supervisor and Director of Training. **There are 11 federal holidays, 13 sick leave days, and 13 annual leave days per year. There are no part-time Residents.**

¹ Hook, J.N. (2013). *Cultural Humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. Journal of Counseling Psychology.*

Each Resident is assigned to work with a primary clinical research supervisor who will work with the Resident, the Training Director, and delegated clinical supervisor(s) in developing, implementing, and overseeing of the Resident's training plan.

Orientation:

The training program begins with an orientation week in which Residents are oriented to the VASDHS and receive an introduction to their clinical practice and clinical research placements. Orientation includes:

- Overview of policy and procedures (including Due Process and Grievances), competency objectives, and evaluation procedures. Trainees must also complete a 90-minute online training that is intended to take the place of all the hospital annual mandatory training modules.
- During the orientation period, the supervisors and mentors and Residents evaluate the trainee's strengths and weaknesses and develop an individualized training plan for the residency year. This plan outlines the Resident's responsibilities, including the proportion of time devoted to each training activity. Every Resident must have a training plan approved by the Training Director(s) by the end of the first month of training.

The VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program also allows an opportunity for "supervised supervision" of psychology interns, practicum students and graduate and undergraduate students; formal presentations and lectures to academic, medical, and community audiences; and program administration and leadership training.

Residents who successfully complete our program meet the following requirements:

- Minimum of 2 publications submitted for publication by completion of program
- Successful completion (via formal evaluation with supervisor) of clinical service placements
- Scores of "C" (Competency Achieved) on all skills in each competency domain and at least a rating of "A" (Advanced Competency) in two or three specific skills related to career goals by completion of year 2.
- Successful completion (via formal evaluation with research mentor) of clinical research
- Successful completion of required didactics (via formal evaluation of preceptor / supervisor)
- Maintenance of consistently professional and ethical conduct in professional setting throughout duration of training (via formal evaluation with research mentors and clinical supervisors)

Petition to graduate in less than 24 months:

Under certain circumstances, a fellow may petition to graduate from the program in less than 24 months. If a fellow receives a grant or job offer, a successful outcome that is consistent with the program goals, and if he or she must initiate the grant or begin the job within months of his/her end date, the fellow may petition to graduate early.

- Fellow will provide a written request to graduate early that includes the notice of grant award or job offer and the start date.
- Fellow will provide documentation that MLA's have been achieved, including an evaluation by the supervisor.
- The fellow's request will be reviewed by the Training Directors, who will determine if the fellow has successfully completed the MLA's and if he/she will be allowed to leave the program prior to 24 months.

SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

The overall structure of each of the four emphasis areas of the **VASDHS Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program** is the same, but each has a different content focus, which are described below.



Women's Mental Health Fellowship (Julie Kangas, PhD, Director Psychology Training): The overall goal of the Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health is to provide interdisciplinary training to Clinical Psychology Residents to prepare them for careers as independent women's healthcare specialists. Through a combination of clinical, research, and teaching experiences, cross-disciplinary training opportunities, and supervision from women's health specialists, Residents will be prepared for a career in the VASDHS that integrates clinical, research, and leadership activities related to women's health. Specifically, the fellowship provides clinical and clinical research training:

- 1) To provide coordinated, comprehensive, and evidence-based clinical care for women Veterans;
- 2) To translate the scientific literature into sound, evidenced-based practice for women Veterans,
- 3) Instructs Residents in the evaluation and dissemination of evidence-based practices; and
- 4) Provides mentored teaching and leadership experiences to impart skills and knowledge that will allow the Residents to ultimately serve as advanced clinicians and clinical researchers, advocates, educators, and mentors in the field of women's mental health within the VA system.

MIRECC (Barton W. Palmer, PhD, Director Psychology Training): The VASDHS MIRECC Psychology Residency is part of the mission of the MIRECC at VASDHS (in partnership with the Greater Los Angeles VA and the Long Beach VA) is to improve the long-term functional outcome of patients with chronic psychotic mental disorders, including schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and psychotic mood disorders. We approach this mission through an integrated program of research, education, and clinical programs aimed at translating findings from the research laboratory into improved clinical care. A primary goal of the MIRECC-sponsored Psychology Residency position is to train psychologists to become leading clinical researchers in psychosis and other major mental illnesses. The fellowship combines individual mentored research and clinical training with state-of-the-art



educational experiences.

CESAMH (Laurie Lindamer, PhD, Director Psychology Training): The goal of the CESAMH Advanced



Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment is to launch the careers of Residents to be independent clinical researchers and leaders who conduct research in integrated neurobiological and psychosocial science to develop, evaluate and disseminate treatment for trauma-related conditions to optimize the well-being and functioning of Veterans. CESAMH's scope of research ranges from basic science, psychophysiology, and genetics through pharmacological and psychosocial interventions and their implementation. With this strength in multidisciplinary, translational research, CESAMH provides an ideal setting in which to train psychologists to become highly productive clinical researchers and leaders.



Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment (Neal Doran, Ph.D. Director Psychology Training):

The over goal of the Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment is to develop leaders with vision, knowledge, and commitment to develop, implement, teach, and evaluate addiction treatments to improve healthcare for Veterans and the nation. VASDHS, with UCSD as our affiliate, is one of seven VA facilities/systems that was selected by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) based on having excellent clinical programs and a commitment to interprofessional training in substance abuse and addiction treatment. The Addiction Treatment Coordinating Center (ATCC) for the VA's Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment is located at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare

System. The ATCC is the education, coordination, and dissemination resource for all seven fellowship sites. Residents participate in local addiction-related curriculum as well a unique two-year seminar curriculum in interdisciplinary addictions research developed by the ATCC.

SUPERVISION

Residents receive at least four hours of supervision per week, and at least two of these hours are individual supervision with a qualified psychologist.

At least one hour of weekly individual supervision comes from the primary clinical supervisor, and one from the primary clinical research mentor (if the research mentor is a California-licensed psychologist). Additional individual supervision comes from secondary supervisors, who may be selected for individual cases or projects or to provide regular supervision throughout the year and may include group supervision. Individual supervision involves direct observation of clinical care or use of video/audio recording. Supervision assignments are documented in each resident's individualized training plan.

Residents also have an opportunity for training in providing supervision by spending one hour per week supervising the clinical work of a psychiatry resident, clinical psychology intern, clinical psychology practicum student, or other trainee, to gain experience supervising others. The clinical psychology resident's primary supervisor will supervise this supervision experience.

SEMINARS

Postdoctoral Residency Professional Development Seminar

When: first Tuesday of the month from 3-4pm (in person)

All residents are required to attend the Postdoctoral Residency Professional Development Seminar in their 1st year. This is a combined seminar that includes the one-year clinical postdoctoral Residents. It meets monthly for 60 minutes for the entire training year and focuses on professional development issues. It is led Drs. Castriotta and Wilhite.

Clinical Mental Health Research Seminar

When: third Wednesday of the month from 8:30-9:30 (virtual)

All residents are required to attend the Clinical Mental Health Research Seminar. It covers topics important to the conduct of clinical research and serves as a mechanism for fellows to provide feedback to the program. It is organized by Drs. Lindamer and Correa.

Laws and Ethics Seminar

When: Usually during Orientation (in person)

All residents are also required to attend a Laws and Ethics Seminar. The ethics portion of the seminar covers: 1) code of conduct, 2) avoiding ethical complaints, 3) patient-therapist relationship issues, 4) record keeping guidelines, 5) forensic issues, and 6) research ethics. The legal portion of the seminar covers: 1) informed consent, 2) HIPPA, 3) confidentiality, 4) reporting laws, and 5) an individual's access to their own medical record. It is organized by the VA psychology training directors.

Cultural Diversity Seminar

When: 2nd Tuesday of each month (virtual)

All residents are required to attend a Cultural Diversity Seminar. This seminar meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 3-4 pm). It incorporates didactic presentations with case presentations by Residents. Potential topics are decided by the seminar leader with input from the Residents and include cultural competence in psychotherapy, assessment and treatment of lesbian, bisexual, gay, transsexual (LBGT) clients, assessment

and treatment of persons with disabilities, acculturation models for various ethnic minority groups, and diversity issues in the supervisory relationship. The Cultural Diversity Seminar is led by Dr. Wang.

Fellows are expected to achieve competence in multiple domains of clinical and research training. The following seminars are offered to assist in building competence in several of these domains and can be incorporated as needed into each fellow's individual training plan. Note that some seminars also fulfill California Board of Psychology licensing requirements.

Substance Use Disorders Seminar

When: Wednesdays @ 1pm (virtual)

All residents are required to attend the Substance Use Disorders Seminar (unless they already have fulfilled this California licensure requirement). This seminar meets weekly for 60 minutes for a total of 15 meetings. The content of the seminar covers the areas to meet the California Board of Psychology licensure requirement on the evaluation and treatment of alcohol and substance use disorders. It is organized by John Correa Ph.D.

V-Tel Core Didactic Series Seminar

When: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays from 10am-12pm (virtual)

This seminar serves as the primary seminar for the MIRECC and CESAMH fellows. Fellows are linked to other sites participating in the VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment virtual seminar hosted by the Fellowship Hub Site (Palo Alto VA). This seminar provides an in-depth overview of key topics in mental health research and clinical practice by experts in the field. Each site contributes to one or more of the seminars, and the associated modules, in which they have significant expertise. ***This seminar is mandatory for MIRECC and CESAMH***, and it is optional for all other Residents. Additional supplemental seminars are also offered by the Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment in biostatistics, grant preparation, and manuscript writing, which are optional for all Residents.

Addiction Treatment Coordinating Center Fellows' Curriculum Call

When: 1st Wednesday @ 11am-12:30pm (virtual)

This is a monthly teleconference call that includes presentations on state-of-the-art research and practice in addictions for all interprofessional fellows from the seven Addictions Fellowship sites. This seminar provides an in-depth overview of key topics in addictions research and clinical practice by experts in the field. This seminar is ***mandatory for Residents in the Advanced Fellowship in Addictions*** and is open to all other Residents. It is organized by the Addiction Treatment Coordinating Center (ATCC) located at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System.

Women's Mental Health Teleconference Training Series

When: 2nd Thursday @ 3pm (virtual)

This is a monthly teleconference call that includes presentations on state-of-the-art research and practice in women's health by each of the Women's Health fellowship sites. Topics include but are not limited to interpersonal trauma sequelae and treatment issues; sexual dysfunction; lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues in mental and medical care; behavioral medicine for eating disorders; obesity; chronic pain; homelessness in women Veterans; and postpartum depression and chronobiological basis of mood disorders specific to women. This seminar is ***required for residents in the Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health*** and is open to all other residents.

VASDHS PTSD Seminar

When: Fridays @ noon (virtual)

This seminar is jointly run by the VAHSDC PTSD clinics (MST&IPT, PCTs) and includes training in evidenced based assessment and treatment of posttraumatic distress; research presentations on trauma risk, outcomes and treatment issues; and case discussions and consultations.

In addition, the following seminars are optionally available to all fellows:

1. **UCSD/VASDHS Biobehavioral Addictions Research Seminar**

When: 2nd & 4th Wednesday @ 4pm (virtual)

Professional development and research presentations facilitated by addictions research faculty.

2. **UCSD Psychiatry Department Grand Rounds**

When: 4th Tuesday @ 8am (hybrid)

Range of topics from molecular biological approaches for psychiatric disorders to public policy implications of psychiatry.

3. **UCSD Biological Psychiatry and Neuroscience Fellowship Seminar**

When: Thursdays @ 1pm (virtual)

Recent advances in biological psychiatry and neurosciences and professional development topics.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core competencies are those skill sets that are essential to all practicing academic psychologists and that address the professional psychological competencies, skills, abilities, proficiencies and knowledge in the content areas outlined in the APA *Standards of Accreditation (SoA)*. Residents are expected to develop expertise in the core competencies by the end of the program and are the same in all four programs, and are listed below:

Goal 1: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Intervention:

Residents will develop advanced competencies in the use of empirically derived treatments and systemic means of psycho-diagnostic and neuropsychological evaluation of patients.

Goal 2: Consultation, Supervision, and Teaching:

Residents will gain advanced skills in delivering consultation to inter-professional teams, develop advanced skills in the supervision of psychology trainees including interns and practicum students; gain experience providing psychoeducation to patients, family members and providers; and gain experience presenting clinical research findings.

Goal 3: Scholarly Inquiry:

Residents will acquire competencies in clinical research and scholarship.

- a) ***Integration of Science and Practice:*** Residents will learn to utilize the scientific literature to guide their clinical practice and will use “lessons learned” from clinical practice to foster and shape their scientific hypotheses. Residents will learn to use their emerging competencies in clinical science to identify solutions to emerging clinical problems they encounter in practice and will systematically evaluate the effectiveness of their clinical work (e.g., monitoring patient outcomes).

- b) **Conducting Clinically Informed Research:** Residents will gain advanced skills in conducting clinical-research pertinent to the mental health needs of today's veterans.

Goal 4: Organization, Management, Administration, and Program Evaluation:

Residents will gain experience pertinent to organizational management and administration pertinent to the career development of clinical psychologists and scientists. Residents may choose additional training experiences that facilitate the development of advanced competencies in program evaluation.

Goal 5: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues:

Residents will become competent (as appropriate for an entry level professional) in professional and collegial conduct, knowledge of the ethical guidelines of clinical psychology, and those ethical guidelines that govern the appropriate conduct of human subject's research. They will also become appropriately familiar with the wide array of legal issues pertinent to the proper conduct of clinical psychology and human subjects related research.

Goal 6: Cultural and Individual Diversity Issues:

Residents will further develop their awareness and appreciation of cultural and individual differences and will attain cultural competence regarding the delivery of mental health services to a diverse cadre of veterans.

Goal 7: Confidence and Professional Identity:

Residents will develop a strong professional identity and confidence and professional demeanor commensurate with their entry-level status in the profession.

DIVERSE PATIENT POPULATIONS

The program is organized and administered in such a way that respect for and understanding of cultural and individual diversity of faculty, staff, residents, and consumers is fundamental and a core part of training at the VASDHS.

Recent census data for San Diego County can be found [here](#). VASDHS serves all adult age groups, Veteran cohorts, and ethnic/racial/cultural backgrounds, as well as all gender identities and expression. The Veteran population, itself, also represents a unique cultural group within our community. Thus, Residents receive training and experience working with this culture, as well as how the Veterans culture interacts with other aspects of diversity.

There are 261,009 Veterans in San Diego and Imperial County, and in fiscal Year 2021, VASDHS served 84,572 Veterans. More than 25,000 of those Veterans were seen in mental health clinics for a total of about 200,000 mental health visits. Veterans served within VASDHS mental health clinics were 81% male. With respect to age, 2% were under age 25, and 21% were age 65 or older. 45% were White non-Hispanic, 19% Hispanic, 17% African American, 9% Asian, 2% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian. With respect to Veteran culture, the Navy represents the most frequent branch of service, and Persian Gulf Era Veterans (which includes Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans) is the largest cohort at 74%.

Each resident will receive training regarding sensitivity to issues of cultural and individual diversity, through the 10-12-week seminar dedicated to such topics, as they are discussed when appropriate in other seminars, and through ongoing consultation with research mentors and clinical supervisors.

Prior to graduation, each resident is required to write about an important cultural diversity experience during the year including what they learned and how they benefited from supervision. Each resident also completes the California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale at the beginning and the end of the training period to assess the change in their level of cultural competence.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Using Tervalon and Murry-Garcia's cultural humility framework, we offer a multitude of opportunities to engage in life-long learning, system level committees, and advocacy to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

DEI Training Program Activities: Self-Evaluation, Openness, and Life-long learning

Each Resident receives training regarding sensitivity to issues of cultural and individual diversity both through formal didactic in a monthly seminar (Dr. Clarice Wang, PhD, Co-Director of the VASDHS Mental Health Diversity Action Committee), as well as through discussions as appropriate in other seminars and with supervisors and mentors. At the beginning of each year, the training cohort is surveyed to gather information about the cultural and identity diversity areas of particular interest to them to design the topics of the Diversity Seminar. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss DEI issues as an integral part of case conceptualization and treatment planning.

In response to concerns, our faculty (Dr. Lacefield) and trainees conducted a needs assessment regarding occurrence of and ability to respond to microaggressions that trainees received during the provision of clinical care. Consequently, a seminar on responding to microaggressions was developed and is held yearly, and trainees are invited to attend a quarterly consultation group to build skills. This is led by Dr. Kangas.

We also evaluated our efforts to create a practice of cultural humility. Trainees evaluate their supervisors on a yearly basis on training in diversity and cultural humility. Each Resident also completes the California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale at the beginning and the end of the training year to assess the change in their level of cultural competence.

DEI Training Program Activities: System Level Approaches

The VASDHS Mental Health Care Line recently reconstituted the Diversity Action Committee, a group that meets twice monthly to report on the progress of subcommittees and to present CME seminars. Currently active subcommittees consist of EConsults (CPRS request for consultation on diversity-related clinical issues), LC3 (LGBTQ+ Clinical Care Committee), Outreach, Quality Improvement, and Training and Didactics. Trainees are welcome to participate. Examples of the CME seminars include Dr. Faith Prelli presenting on "Antiracism in Clinical relationships Accountability Model" and Dr. Nia Billings discussing "Implicit attitudes toward people with disabilities".

The UCSD Psychiatry Department Chair's Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues welcomes trainee members to join in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Department. The committee meets monthly on the first Monday and subcommittees meet in the interim. If you would like more information, please contact the Committee Chair, Dr. Lisa Eyler (lteyler@ucsd.edu). This long-standing Chair's Advisory Board on Diversity and includes about 20 subcommittees, which include workgroups for each Gender, LGBTQ, and Disability focus; a separate subcommittee each on Attracting, Retaining, and Elevating BIPOC staff, trainees, and faculty; a group focused on Mechanisms to facilitate community engagement and advocacy; a workgroup on educational programs/workshops on structural inequality, systemic racism, and police brutality; a subcommittee on Clinical Service Diversity & Serving minority and low-income clients; and other DEI topics. The Diversity Committee also sponsors seminars on implicit Bias and allyship, hosts a yearly Cultural Celebration, awards a Diversity Champion faculty and trainee.

DEI Training Program Activities: Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy

The VASDHS Mental Health Care Line host and annual Mental Health Summit on issues related to Veterans and caregivers that is open to the public and brings together multiple stakeholder groups. Trainee are encouraged to attend, and CME are available for faculty.

Professional advocacy is a topic in the Diversity Seminar and this year UCSD will present a panel discussion on Incorporating Advocacy into Professional Life that will be part of orientation.

MIRECC/ CoE Interest Groups

The VA Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Centers (MIRECC) and the Centers of Excellence (CESAMH) have formed a national interest group to review and enhance DEI issues at multiple levels in the Centers. CESAMH also has created a DEI position to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in research, clinical care, and training.

Diversity-Related Clinical Experiences

VASDHS offers specialty clinics in LGBTQ, transgender, and women's care. We also have a strong Geriatric Psychiatry Program.

Other DEI Resources

The "Recruiting, Retaining, and Elevating Diverse Trainees" Subcommittee developed a trainee resource pages: <https://medschool.ucsd.edu/som/psychiatry/education/trainee-resources/Pages/Underrepresented-Trainees.aspx>

The VA Psychology Training Council's Multicultural and Diversity Committee has multiple resources that may be of interest. One is a "diversity discussions" listserv. Once per month an article is sent out and discussion about the topic is invited. Every month or so there is also a consultation call advertised on the listserv. To request to join the diversity discussions listserv please email Dr. Jamylah Jackson. (JamylahK.Jackson@va.gov).

Equal Opportunity Employer

The program has nondiscriminatory policies and operating conditions and avoids any actions that would restrict program access and participation. In recent years, California state law and University of California policy have prohibited the specific inclusion of race/ethnicity factors in the recruitment of staff and faculty. More recently, however, the University has initiated an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Program to increase faculty and staff diversity with some success. There is no discrimination in faculty hiring and retention practices, Resident recruitment and selection processes, or patient eligibility criteria concerning access to the various evaluation and treatment programs.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Supervisors and Residents are expected to exchange feedback routinely as a part of the supervisory process; the evaluation procedures are meant to formalize this continuous information flow. It is the responsibility of the Training Directors and supervisors to ensure that evaluation occurs in a timely and constructive fashion, but Residents are encouraged and expected to take an active role.

To that end, it is essential that Residents understand the philosophy and logistics of evaluation as they begin training. The Training Directors review the overall evaluation process with each Resident, and each individual supervisor reviews competencies for the specific emphasis at the beginning of the training period.

- Residents complete a self-assessment of their own skills and knowledge for each core competency at the beginning of the training year. Strengths and weaknesses that emerge from this self-assessment, as well as the Resident's application materials, are discussed with supervisors and are considered in the development of the Resident's individualized training plan.
- Residents complete additional self-assessments and supervisors complete competency-based evaluations of Residents at mid-year and end-of-year for each of the two years. The mid-point evaluations are intended to serve as a progress report for Residents to increase self-awareness and awareness of supervisor's perceptions, discrepancies between self-ratings and supervisor ratings, and to help Residents focus on specific goals and areas of needed improvement as training progresses. We use a developmental rating scale to evaluate resident competencies.
- The minimum threshold expected of residents to graduate from the program is a rating of "competent" in all skills with at least a rating of "advanced competency" in three skills of their choice by the end of the training program. If a supervisor suspects that a Resident is not meeting critical competencies, Due Process procedures are in place to work towards resolution of the problem. The Due Process procedure is reviewed in detail with Residents at the beginning of the Fellowship.
- Residents provide a written evaluation of each supervisor (including primary clinical supervisor, research mentor, and other supervisors when applicable) at the end of the program.

As part of a continual quality improvement plan, the Training Directors conduct a self-study with Residents at mid-year and at the conclusion of each training year. The areas reviewed are balance of activities (clinical, teaching, research), amount, and quality of supervision, adequacy of facility resources, and professional relationships between the Residents and other healthcare professionals. The findings and minutes are distributed to the entire faculty for review and action when appropriate.

CONTACTING MENTAL HEALTH CARE LINE

The VASDHS Mental Health Care Line Administration is open for business Monday through Friday, 8AM-4:30PM Pacific Standard Time, except on Federal holidays. The Psychology Training Program can be reached at the following address and contact information:

VASDHS Mental Health Care Line Training Programs (116B)
 VA San Diego Healthcare System
 3350 La Jolla Village Dr
 San Diego, CA 92161
 Telephone: (858) 552-8585 2649
 Email: Laurie.Lindamer@va.gov

Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
 American Psychological Association
 750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002
 Phone: (202) 336-5979 / Email: apaaccred@apa.org
 Web: www.apa.org/ed/accreditation

Postdoctoral Residency Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data

Date Program Tables are updated: 9/7/2023

Program Disclosures

<p>Does the program or institution require students, trainees, and/or staff (faculty) to comply with specific policies or practices related to the institution’s affiliation or purpose? Such policies or practices may include, but are not limited to, admissions, hiring, retention policies, and/or requirements for completion that express mission and values?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>If yes, provide website link (or content from brochure) where this specific information is presented:</p>	
<p>As per VA policy postdoctoral fellows must be US citizens and if male gender born after 12/31/59, must have registered for the draft by age 26 years.</p> <p>Please see the brochure for more details:</p> <p>Psychology Internship And Fellowship Programs VA San Diego Health Care Veterans Affairs</p>	

Postdoctoral Program Admissions

Briefly describe in narrative form important information to assist potential applicants in assessing their likely fit with your program. This description must be consistent with the program's policies on intern selection and practicum and academic preparation requirements:

Our 2-year postdoctoral training program is based on the clinician-scientist model. The primary goal is to train psychologists to become leading clinical researchers in high priority areas of mental health relevant to Veterans. Over the course of the 2-year program, fellows are trained in clinical research (~75%) and advanced clinical service delivery (~25%) with state-of-the-art program administration and evaluation experiences in an interdisciplinary setting. At the end of the program, Residents are prepared for VA- or university-medical center careers that integrate research, clinical, training, and leadership activities. The VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program consists of four emphasis areas: 1) MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment (Focused on schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders); 2) CESAMH Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment (focused on stress and trauma disorders such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)); 3) Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health; and 4) Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment. All four content areas are 2-year programs funded through the VA Office of Academic Affiliates. Most years there is one new psychology position in each of the emphasis areas; on occasion a second position may be available.

Selection of residents is done by our Postdoctoral Selection Committee (consisting of the training directors and supervisors for each emphasis area) with input from other psychologists. Consistent with a holistic review process we consider the following criteria (not in order of priority):

1) Breadth and quality of previous general clinical training experience; 2) Breadth, depth, and quality of training experience in the specific content area (e.g., psychosis, trauma, women's health, or addictions treatment); 3) Quality and scope of scholarship, as indicated partially by research, conference presentations, and publications; 4) Relationship between clinical and research interests/experience of the applicant; 5) Evidence of accomplishments; 6) Evidence of commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in clinical, teaching and/or research capacity, 7) Goodness of fit between the applicant's stated objectives and the training program and medical center's resources; 8) Thoughtfulness of information provided in the cover letter; 9) Strength of letters of recommendation from professionals who know the applicant well.

The top applicants in each content area are invited to interview with the training directors, primary supervisor, and other faculty. The applicants are reassessed following the interviews with the above criteria with the opportunity to obtain further and clarifying information to assess interpersonal skills. Final admission and hiring of residents are dependent on VASDHS Human Resources Service approval, which includes a federal background check, physical examination, and education/credential verification.

The program is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Our commitment to diversity includes attempting to ensure an appropriate representation of individuals along many dimensions, including (but not limited to) gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, ethnic or racial minorities, SES, religion, and disabilities. We attempt to provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment for all residents, regardless of ethnic background or physical needs, and applicants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:

Desirable qualifications include experience using evidence-based interventions and career goals involving clinical-research, clinical care, and leadership in university-affiliated, VA, or other medical center setting. Recruitment of men and women from diverse demographic groups (e.g., social, economic, and cultural) is a high priority. We strive to foster a climate of cultural humility and inclusivity; we are committed to a professional environment that is positive, respectful, and supportive of cultural and individual differences; and we value the wide range of diversity and intersectionality represented by our faculty and trainees.

1. Completion of doctoral degree, including defense of dissertation, from a clinical or counseling psychology doctoral programs accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) before the start date of the residency.
2. Completion of an APA-accredited psychology internship program
3. U.S. citizenship
4. Matched postdoctoral residents are subject to fingerprinting, background checks, and a urine drug screen.
5. Male applicants born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the draft by age 26

*** Failure to meet these qualifications could nullify an offer to an applicant.

Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year†

Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Residents	\$58571	
Annual Stipend/Salary for Half-time Residents	NA	
Program provides access to medical insurance for resident?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If access to medical insurance is provided:		
Trainee contribution to cost required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Coverage of family member(s) available?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Coverage of legally married partner available?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Coverage of domestic partner available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation)	104	
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave	104	
In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to interns/residents in excess of personal time off and sick leave?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other Benefits (please describe): Vision and dental		

†Note. Programs are not required by the Commission on Accreditation to provide all benefits listed in this table

Initial Post-Residency Positions

(Provide an Aggregated Tally for the Preceding 3 Cohorts)

	2019-2022	
Total # of residents who were in the 3 cohorts	20	
Total # of residents who remain in training in the residency program	5	
	PD	EP
Academic teaching	PD = 0	EP = 0
Community mental health center	PD = 0	EP = 0
Consortium	PD = 0	EP = 0
University Counseling Center	PD = 0	EP = 0
Hospital/Medical Center	PD = 0	EP = 0
Veterans Affairs Health Care System	PD = 2	EP = 10
Psychiatric facility	PD = 0	EP = 0
Correctional facility	PD = 0	EP = 0
Health maintenance organization	PD = 0	EP = 0
School district/system	PD = 0	EP = 0
Independent practice setting	PD = 0	EP = 1
Other	PD = 0	EP = 2

Note: "PD" = Post-doctoral residency position; "EP" = Employed Position. Each individual represented in this table should be counted only one time. For former trainees working in more than one setting, select the setting that represents their primary position.