

**2025-  
2026**

**Salt Lake City Clinical Psychology  
Postdoctoral Fellowship:  
PTSD Track**

George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans  
Affairs Medical Center

# SALT LAKE CITY CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: PTSD TRACK



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## CONTENTS

Letter from Postdoctoral Fellowship Co-Director .....	5
Accreditation Status .....	6
George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Salt Lake City Health Care System .....	7
Mental Health Service .....	8
Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship .....	8
Training Philosophy .....	8
Commitment to Diversity .....	9
Fellowship Goal and Objectives .....	9
Fellowship Goal .....	10
Training Objectives .....	10
1. Assessment .....	10
2. Intervention .....	10
3. Supervision and Consultation .....	10
4. Scholarly Inquiry .....	10
5. Administrative Abilities .....	10
6. Individual and Cultural Diversity .....	11
7. Professionalism .....	11
Fellowship Training Experiences .....	11
PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) .....	11
Outpatient PCT .....	12
Military Sexual Trauma Recovery .....	12
PCT/MST Roles and responsibilities: .....	13
Polytrauma Team .....	13
Polytrauma Roles and responsibilities: .....	14
Postdoctoral Fellow Didactics .....	14
Polytrauma Team Didactic Series .....	14
Evidence-Based Treatment Didactic Series .....	14
Psychology Seminar Series .....	15
Professional Development .....	15
Postdoctoral Fellowship Project .....	15
Psychology Intern Presentation Series .....	16
Research .....	16
Postdoc Tea .....	16

Leadership .....	16
Outreach Opportunities .....	17
Competency Evaluation.....	17
Fellow Resources.....	18
Fellow Training Year .....	18
Stipend and Benefits .....	20
Eligibility Requirements .....	21
Dates to Remember .....	22
Application Checklist .....	22
Application Evaluation.....	23
Administrative Policies and Procedures.....	23
Medical/Family Leave: .....	24
Due Process: .....	24
Privacy policy: .....	24
Self-Disclosure: .....	24
Liability Protection for Trainees:.....	24
Equal Opportunity Employer: .....	24
About Salt Lake City and Utah .....	25
Training Staff.....	26
Parting Words.....	28

## LETTER FROM POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP CO-DIRECTOR

Dear Prospective Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship, PTSD Track, at the George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Salt Lake City Health Care System (VASLCHCS). The PTSD Track faculty and I are so pleased that you're considering our site. Put simply, we love training postdocs and are excited to be part of early career development in our fellows. This brochure should provide you with a good understanding of the experiences offered in our program, and specifically in the PTSD Track. In addition to describing the clinical rotations, training requirements, and application procedures, these materials describe the overall goals and philosophy of our program and will hopefully give you a sense of what it's like to train with us here at VASLCHCS.

The VASLCHCS has a long history of clinical psychology training across the field's training levels. The Psychology Predoctoral Internship has been in operation since 1952 and has been continuously APA-accredited since 1979; we currently offer 8 internship positions. The Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship has been operating since 2007, when the Salt Lake City VA was awarded two clinical psychology postdoctoral positions to focus on PTSD, polytrauma, and readjustment after deployment, with a particular emphasis on working with Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans. In 2013, the Fellowship expanded with three more positions: 2 in Health Psychology/Geropsychology and 1 in Addictions Treatment. We also typically have several psychology practicum students from local universities training with us throughout Psychology Service during the year.

At all these levels of training, our mission is to train and mentor the next generation of professional psychologists, who are called to help improve the lives of others and to foster a better society. These are challenging and rewarding tasks for which proper training is critical. For the PTSD Track, given that nearly every VAMC in the nation has a PTSD specialty team employing psychologists, and given the ubiquity of trauma, we feel an extra responsibility in preparing future psychologists to work with Veterans struggling with the complex sequelae of trauma exposure. All of us had teachers and mentors and supervisors who understood this responsibility and who took the time to guide and shape and nurture our growth in these domains. We train to continue this service. We train because it matters to us and to the Veterans we serve. In this work, fostering diversity and inclusion also matters to us, and is critically important for our diverse Veterans, for our program, and for the field of psychology. We serve all who served, and we work to ensure our training environment is a safe, supportive, and welcoming place for all who train with us.

PTSD work is truly some of the most rewarding and challenging work psychologists have the opportunity to do. We are committed to thoroughly supporting and fostering growth in our fellows to help them be effective, sensitive, competent, ethical, and culturally-responsive as they meet these challenges.

I hope this brochure reflects our enthusiasm for training, with professional development of fellows being our highest priority. That said, it is difficult to fully communicate the "feel" of the training program in a brochure so please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any questions. I wish you the very best during this exciting time in your training.

Sincerely,  
Cicely C. Taravella, PhD (she/her/hers)  
Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Co-Director  
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## ACCREDITATION STATUS

The clinical psychology postdoctoral fellowship at the VASLCHCS is accredited by the American Psychological Association through 2028. For information regarding APA accreditation of this or other accredited training programs, please contact:

Commission on Accreditation (CoA)  
American Psychological Association  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002-4242  
Phone: (202) 336-5979  
FAX: (202) 336-5978  
[APA Accreditation - Home](#)

## GEORGE E. WAHLEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SALT LAKE CITY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship is sponsored by the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System (VASLCHCS) located in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The main facility is located on an 81-acre campus adjacent to the Salt Lake City Veterans Affairs Regional Office and the University of Utah. It is a mid-sized, primary and tertiary care facility with 133 beds providing a full range of patient care services.

Comprehensive health care is provided through medicine, surgery, mental health, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care.

The VASLCHCS is part of VA Network (VISN) 19, which encompasses the largest geographic area in the 48 contiguous states. We serve an area covering the entire state of Utah, the majority of Montana, Wyoming and Colorado, and portions of Idaho, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, and Oklahoma. We have eleven Community Clinics (CBOCs) and two Outreach Clinics in remote areas of Utah, Idaho, and Nevada.



In terms of demographics, 79% of the veterans served by VASLCHCS identify as cisgender male; about 20% identify as cisgender female; and we serve nearly 500 transgender/gender-diverse veterans (just under 1%). Eighty-seven percent identify as European American, 6.5% as Latino/Latina, 5% as African American, 1% as Native American, and 0.5% as Asian American. The socioeconomic status of our veterans varies widely. A vibrant LGBTQ Veteran community is served by our VA, and the Utah Pride Festival is the largest PRIDE celebration, per capita, in the Western United States! Utah is home to over 60,000 Native Americans, representing approximately 50 Tribal Nations, including the Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation, Confederated Tribes of Goshute, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, and Navajo Nation.

As a Dean's Committee Medical Center, VASLCHCS is closely affiliated with the University of Utah School of Medicine, located less than one mile away. In addition to this longstanding affiliation, VASLCHCS maintains active affiliations with several other Utah colleges and universities and serves as a training site for students, interns, residents, and fellows from a variety of health care professions. VASLCHCS is also home to the Salt Lake City Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center (GRECC), Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC), and the VHA Office of Rural Health Resource Center (RHRC). Our MIRECC is the SLC branch of the VISN 19 Rocky Mountain MIRECC, for which suicide prevention is a targeted area of research. Finally, VASLCHCS serves as the location for the VHA funded Mental Health Strategic Health Care Group Informatics Section. In 2006, VASLCHCS was designated a

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VA does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of the external linked websites.*

Level III Polytrauma Center to respond to the needs of Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts who have experienced multiple traumatic injuries, including TBI and PTSD.

Further information about the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is available at <http://www.saltlakecity.va.gov>.

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Although officially designated a General Medical and Surgical facility, the VASLCHCS also provides extensive mental health treatment through a variety of inpatient, residential, and outpatient services and programs. The various programs of the Mental Health Services provide comprehensive mental health care by a multidisciplinary staff including psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, advanced practice nurses, RN case managers, vocational specialists, addiction therapists, and mental health associates. There are on average around 600 admissions per year to the Inpatient Psychiatry Unit. More than 20,000 unique patients per year are seen on an outpatient or consultation basis by Mental Health Service personnel, resulting in, on average, over 120,000 patient contacts per year.



## CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

The Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship is a full-time, 12-month continuous appointment. Fellows typically work 40 hours per week and complete a total of 2080 hours of training. The usual tour of duty is 8:00AM – 4:30PM, although some training experiences may involve a different one (e.g., 12:00PM – 8:30PM) due to scheduled activities on that rotation (e.g., evening therapy groups, weekend post-deployment health assessments, etc.). The parameters of each rotation are explained during the first week of orientation.

## TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

The Postdoctoral Fellowship ascribes to the practitioner-scholar model of training. As such, the goal of the program is to train psychologists to function in an informed, competent, independent, culturally-responsive, and ethical manner across a wide range of health care settings and with diverse populations. The program's structure allows for both breadth and depth of clinical experiences, as well as exposure to a variety of intervention approaches and professional development opportunities. Fellows are here for training and professional development, not service delivery; consequently, didactics, training seminars, and any other educational activities take priority in a fellow's schedule.



## COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

The VASLCHCS Psychology Service is committed to recruiting and maintaining a diverse psychology staff. As such, the Fellowship Program places a high value on attracting a diverse group of fellows and on creating an environment of respect and inclusion, where fellows feel safe to fully be the diverse, talented humans that they are. The program appreciates the fact that attracting a diverse group of fellows and staff makes our training program, MH Service, and our whole site stronger.

While onsite with us, fellows have the opportunity for involvement in the Psychology Training Program's Multicultural Diversity and Inclusion Committee (MDI; with workgroups for staff education, recruitment & retention, and publication of our quarterly MDI Newsletter). At the facility level, fellows can join VASLCHCS's Diversity and Inclusion Committee (with several Special Emphasis Programs). There are also often opportunities for fellows to get involved with our LGBTQ+ Veteran Care program and with the GIVE program (Gender Identity Veteran Experience program, health care specifically for our transgender and gender-diverse Veterans). Former fellows have applied and been selected to be Trainee Members of the National VA Psychology Training Committee's (VAPTC) Multicultural and Diversity Committee for their fellowship year.

Throughout the training year, the training program provides specific learning opportunities that build upon the diversity competencies fostered in graduate training. The program schedules a number of designated didactic trainings to directly train fellows in a range of diversity topics, and we are one of 13 VA postdoctoral programs participating in a monthly national diversity seminar series. Recent topics have included: cultural-responsiveness in evidence-based PTSD treatments, skills for talking about race and racism in clinical practice, developing programming for transgender Veterans, ethical and diversity considerations when using telehealth, understanding military culture, LGBTQ allyship/addressing anti-LGBTQ behaviors, and responding to sexism in the workplace, to name just a few. The topics vary year to year, in large part due to the requests of the individual training cohort and their needs as discussed with the training director. Our aim is to foster not only cultural competence, but also cultural humility in our work with others.

## FELLOWSHIP GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The VASLCHCS Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship provides advanced interdisciplinary education and training across multiple settings in outpatient mental health for the purpose of training future psychologists who are capable of providing the next generation of psychological services within Veterans Affairs. While the program is classified as a general fellowship in Clinical Psychology, our track of the program emphasizes honing skills in the assessment and treatment of **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder** (PTSD) and **Military Sexual Trauma** (MST) with diverse Veterans from every service era, as well as in assessment, treatment, and interdisciplinary consultation for **Polytrauma** associated with **Traumatic Brain Injury** (TBI), and **readjustment problems** in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and Operation Inherent Resolve (OEF/OIF/OND/OIR) Veterans.

Fellows gain expertise in assessing and treating the sequelae of an array of traumatic experiences (e.g., PTSD related to combat trauma, military sexual trauma (MST), mild TBI/polytrauma, and other military-related trauma, along with the co-occurring effects of civilian and childhood trauma) as well as experience in addressing commonly co-occurring difficulties associated with PTSD including substance abuse, moral injury, couple/family distress, sequelae of discrimination/harassment/-isms, and employment/educational difficulties.

## FELLOWSHIP GOAL

The fellowship is guided by an overarching goal:

To train clinical psychology postdoctoral fellows to be future psychologists who are especially equipped to work within Veteran's Affairs Medical Centers in clinical and leadership roles. Training focuses on working with diverse veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, polytrauma histories, and readjustment strains post-deployment.

## TRAINING OBJECTIVES

Within this goal, there are several training objectives:

### 1. ASSESSMENT

Fellows understand, select, implement, interpret, and integrate effective methods of assessment in Veterans accessing mental and medical care services through the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System.

### 2. INTERVENTION

Fellows implement effective psychological interventions in group and individual formats for Veterans with PTSD, MST, readjustment concerns, and polytrauma histories within the framework of interdisciplinary team involvement.

### 3. SUPERVISION AND CONSULTATION

Fellows develop and deepen their skills in receiving and giving supervision and consultation. This is demonstrated by understanding and delivery of effective supervision and providing consultative services as needed.

### 4. SCHOLARLY INQUIRY

Fellows demonstrate an ability to access and understand research with an emphasis on integrating science and practice for Veterans with PTSD, MST, readjustment concerns, and polytrauma histories. Fellows also share their knowledge by conducting professional presentations for psychologists, lay audiences, and other members of the healthcare community.

### 5. ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITIES

Fellows demonstrate understanding of the organization and mission of psychology within Veterans Affairs. They further exhibit organization, management, and administration skills pertinent to psychological service delivery, training, and research.

## 6. INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Fellows demonstrate awareness, sensitivity, and skills in working professionally with diverse individuals, groups, and communities who represent various cultural and personal backgrounds and characteristics defined broadly and consistent with APA policy.

## 7. PROFESSIONALISM

Fellows demonstrate awareness of their identity as developing psychologists to include professional deportment, self-reflection, integrity, accountability, and adherence to professional conduct, ethics, and law, and other standards for providers of psychological services.

## FELLOWSHIP TRAINING EXPERIENCES

Postdoctoral fellows are active members of two interdisciplinary treatment teams during the training year:

1. The **PTSD Clinical Team (PCT)** through Outpatient Mental Health Service, including **Outpatient PCT** and the **Warrior Renew Program for Veterans with MST**
2. The **Polytrauma Team** through the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department

Especially relevant to the VA Mental Health Strategic Plan, psychological services are provided within the complementary areas of emotional trauma (e.g., military combat, military sexual trauma), physical trauma (e.g., TBI, orthopedic injuries, especially with OEF/OIF/OND/OIR Veterans), substance abuse, suicide prevention, and couples/family discord.

### PTSD CLINICAL TEAM (PCT)

As a member of our large and enthusiastic PTSD Clinical Team, you will provide assessment and treatment to Veterans from diverse backgrounds with PTSD. Sources of PTSD are often combat-related (from any era of service) and/or related to military sexual trauma, but may also include other traumatic events occurring before, after, and during military service. The PCT rotation consists of two core experiences: a year-long core rotation in Outpatient PCT and a 6-month minor rotation in Military Sexual Trauma, including our targeted MST recovery program, Warrior Renew. Goals for trainees at the completion of their postdoctoral fellowship are to have developed competency and expertise in the assessment of PTSD, to become familiar with dynamics of PTSD and frequently co-occurring conditions, and to have developed competency and expertise in providing evidence-based treatments for PTSD in individual and group settings.

As we do, we hope you'll find that our PCT is incredibly collegial and supportive, and is committed to the mission of facilitating Veterans' recovery from PTSD. Our fellows are important members of the team, and their contributions are often evident long after fellowship ends.

## OUTPATIENT PCT

In their 12-month core outpatient PCT rotation, fellows gain expertise in diagnostic interviewing and administering the *Clinician Administered PTSD-Scale (CAPS)* to assess for PTSD, while also assessing for the presence of other comorbid disorders. They will learn and deliver evidence-based psychotherapies (EBPs) for PTSD, including *Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)* and *Prolonged Exposure (PE)*, with sensitivity to Veterans' individual needs and preferences and with responsiveness to relevant aspects of identity/culture. Fellows receive intensive training in specialty PTSD treatment and assessment, getting significant depth both of these domains, while working with a complex population of Veterans. Fellows participate in structured CAPS training, typically with ongoing group consultation, and they receive specific training and supervision in PE and CPT, including the opportunity for VA certification training and consultation in CPT, if the fellow has not already had this. With regard to the EBPs specifically, fellows have opportunities to hone their skills, both in the technical aspects of the delivery of these treatments and also in the art of these therapies: learning to bring your therapist self into the manualized treatment and to make model-consistent adaptations to meet Veterans' individual needs and to help keep them in therapy. Our team serves Veterans from all service eras, with widely varied types of trauma, and with diverse and intersecting identities. Fellows are encouraged and have opportunities to seek individual therapy cases with populations both in whom they are especially interested and with whom they may have less experience. In addition, there may be opportunities on rotation to learn and deliver additional evidenced-based psychotherapies for co-occurring disorders (e.g., *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)* for depression, *Dialectical Behavior Therapy*), as well as opportunities for providing PTSD process/integration/adjunctive treatments, including Present-Centered Therapy and brief manualized treatment (e.g., *Written Exposure Therapy*). Fellows may also have opportunities to co-facilitate CPT, skills-based, and/or supportive/psychoeducational groups for Veteran with PTSD.

## MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA RECOVERY

During their 6-month MST minor rotation, fellows gain additional expertise in assessing and treating the unique and complex mental health needs of Veterans who have experienced rape, sexual assault, and/or sexual harassment while in the military (also known as Military Sexual Trauma, or MST). This rotation has a heavy emphasis on group psychotherapy and the primary learning experience involves the cofacilitation of Warrior Renew (WR), a targeted outpatient psychotherapy program for women Veterans designed to address the unique aspects of MST and other issues related to complex histories of interpersonal trauma across the lifespan. Fellows function as integral members of the Warrior Renew team and will conduct intake assessments and write reports, cofacilitate bi-weekly group sessions of WR for 15-week cohorts, and carry a caseload of 2-3 individual therapy cases. Fellows may also have opportunities to participate in a variety of additional programmatic activities such as equine-assisted psychotherapy, recreation therapy, community outreach, and staff/team meetings. In addition, fellows may have opportunities to cofacilitate MST Support groups and/or skills-based groups (e.g., DBT Skills for MST). While the main focus of this rotation involves gaining familiarity and experience working with women Veterans and sexual trauma survivors, the rotation continues to evolve and additional relevant training opportunities with other specialized populations may arise over the course of the rotation. For

example, in years past, there have been opportunities to cofacilitate a 6-week equine-assisted psychotherapy group, the Men's MST Support Group, a Sexual Health group for MST survivors, and a mixed-gender cohort of Warrior Renew for LGBTQ+ survivors of MST, when they have been offered and if they were compatible with the trainee's schedule.

#### ***PCT/MST ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:***

1. **Assessment:** Fellows conduct 1-2 PTSD diagnostic assessments through consults each week throughout the year on their outpatient PCT core rotation. Fellows complete intake assessments for Warrior Renew (in the first and/or last month of their MST minor rotation). Fellows also have an opportunity to conduct additional secondary level assessments, if indicated subsequent to initial assessment results.
2. **Individual Psychotherapy:** Fellows carry a caseload of 4-6 Veterans participating PE or CPT; caseload during their MST minor rotation is adjusted to include MST-focused cases for PE/CPT and cases in support of participation in Warrior Renew.
3. **Group Psychotherapy:** Fellows co-facilitate at least one round of the 15-week Warrior Renew group during their MST minor rotation. Fellows have the opportunity to be involved in several other outpatient PCT therapy groups over the training year as interested.
4. **Community Outreach:** Fellows often have opportunities to participate in community/hospital outreach with other members of the PCT by offering services to returning military personnel, sharing resources with the local community, and providing specific education/training about PTSD/MST.
5. **PTSD Clinical Team Meeting:** Fellows attend this weekly team meeting.
6. **Supervision/Training:** Fellows receive a weekly minimum of one hour of individual supervision from each rotation, along with formal didactic seminars and learning activities, and group supervision/consultation regarding the CAPS/EBPs.

#### **POLYTRAUMA TEAM**

The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is a Level III Polytrauma Support Clinic Site that provides outpatient assessment and treatment services to returning OEF/OIF/OND/OIR service members and Veterans with Polytrauma and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Fellows are members of the dynamic Polytrauma treatment team during this 6-month minor rotation. This interdisciplinary Polytrauma rehabilitation team includes staff from Medicine, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Pathology, Social Work, and Psychology. The team works together to evaluate and treat Veterans with complicated physical and psychological presentations. Fellows assist in evaluating and treating OIF/OEF/OND/OIR veterans with possible brain injury and other co-morbid physical injuries and psychological concerns and in providing consultation to the other professional disciplines.

Training for the clinic is provided, and prior experience treating/assessing TBI is not required. During their Polytrauma minor rotation, fellows receive specific training in TBI and in assessing for the associated physical, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional sequelae through individualized instruction and supervision. Fellows learn to distinguish persisting effects of mTBI from those that may be better accounted for by PTSD or other co-occurring mental health conditions, and to make helpful treatment

recommendations for Veterans with challenging neuropsychiatric presentations, in a fast-paced, dynamic clinical setting as an integral part of a skilled interdisciplinary team.

#### ***POLYTRAUMA ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:***

1. Polytrauma Clinic: Fellows, with their supervisor, represent Psychology in this weekly 3-to-4-hour interdisciplinary rehabilitation clinic, evaluating Veterans/service members for potential persisting effects of mTBI and associated mental health concerns, collaborating with the team on treatment recommendations, and providing feedback to the Veterans.
2. Individual Psychotherapy: Fellows are provided the opportunity to work with Veterans with mental health concerns associated with polytrauma.
3. Colleague Education: Fellows help educate other mental health providers about mild traumatic brain injury.
4. Community Outreach: Fellows work closely with other members of the Polytrauma team by offering services to returning military personnel, sharing resources with the local community, and providing specific education/training about Polytrauma and mTBI. These experiences may include participating in social gatherings for patients and their families, speaking at local conferences, providing formal education to community members.
5. Community Consultation: Fellows may be consulting with employers and academic institutions to set up appropriate accommodations to facilitate best possible functioning for Veterans.

#### **POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW DIDACTICS**

Several hours each month are designated for attendance at required didactic activities. Because your training is our priority, attendance and participation in these activities takes precedence over service delivery activities or other meetings. Formal didactics typically occur on Wednesday and Thursday mornings and currently include a monthly national diversity series (covering an array of timely and important diversity topics), a monthly series for training in providing supervision, and didactics on PTSD-specific and co-occurring concerns. Fellows and fellowship staff collaborate on many of the potential topics for these latter didactics, based on the fellows' needs/preferences.

#### ***POLYTRAUMA TEAM DIDACTIC SERIES***

Fellows are provided with a formal overview of the Polytrauma System of Care and services available at our VA. These are discussions and training about the Veteran patient population with respect with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and other polytrauma injuries. There is also detailed training on diagnosis and expected recovery following mild TBI (mTBI). Supervisors will also review the role that Rehabilitation Psychology and Neuropsychology has had with regard to adjustment and recovery from brain injury. Finally, this training exposes fellows to the most recent research on OEF/OIF/OND/OIR Veterans with TBI.

#### ***EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT DIDACTIC SERIES***

In 2001, the *New Freedom Commission on Mental Health* study indicated that the nationwide system of delivering mental health services needed to be "transformed." One of the recommendations from the commission was facilitating "knowledge about evidence-based practices (the range of treatments and services of well-documented effectiveness), as well as emerging best practices (treatments and services

with a promising but less thoroughly documented evidentiary base)." In response, the VA developed a strategic plan for transforming mental health care that lead to the *Uniform Mental Health Services Handbook* (Department of Veterans Affairs, 2008) and several initiatives to train clinicians in Evidence-Based Psychotherapies. Current initiatives include:

- Prolonged Exposure (PE) for PTSD
- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for PTSD
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for depression

Early in the training year, fellows receive formal training in PE and CPT. Over the course of the training year, fellows participate in ongoing training, individual supervision, and group consultation in one or more of these EBPs.

### *PSYCHOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES*

This seminar series is designed for the predoctoral interns at the Salt Lake VA and is conducted by psychology staff members, other disciplines from the medical center, and community professionals. Fellows are welcome to attend these as their training interests develop and as their schedules allow.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fellows develop presentation and teaching skills by preparing and delivering seminars to predoctoral Psychology Interns. Specifically, fellows will prepare and deliver at least one independent seminar for the interns' ***Psychology Seminar Series***. Fellows are encouraged to review the topics that have been presented in the past and to offer training that will contribute meaningfully to the series. For example, fellows may wish to share expertise about a clinical topic, offer training that addresses "gaps" in the current schedule, and/or ask our current interns for topic suggestions. Seminars on diversity and inclusion topics are highly encouraged. Feel free to consult with Dr. Taravella, Dr. Cochran, and/or Dr. Sweeney for specific suggestions. These presentations are typically scheduled for the spring or summer of the training year.

### POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP PROJECT

Over the course of your training year, fellows develop and conduct a yearlong Postdoctoral Fellowship Project. This project should exemplify the use of the Practitioner-Scholar model of psychology and be based on a clinical topic about which you are interested in learning more. Each fellow will select a specific supervisor-mentor for the project and should ensure that the project meets the following goals/objectives:

- Is based on research
- Increases your knowledge and expertise in a topic of interest
- Advances the understanding of the needs/problems facing Veterans
- Contributes to the knowledge-base and/or improves clinical practice in the PTSD Clinical Team and/or Polytrauma Team

- Provides you with a foundation and/or skill set that will increase your opportunities for VA employment

Fellows are responsible for delivering a formal presentation of this project to the Psychology Staff, fellows, and psychology interns. Written evaluations of the presentation are based on Professional Competency development, as well as the above goals/objectives, and will be completed by the audience following the presentation. Evaluations will be given to Dr. Taravella, who will discuss feedback with the fellow; copies of all evaluations will also be included in the fellow's training file.

Fellows should be considering topics for the fellowship project early in the training year and have a solid idea of their project within three months after starting the fellowship. Here, too, diversity and inclusion-focused topics are highly encouraged.

### PSYCHOLOGY INTERN PRESENTATION SERIES

Over the course of the training year, predoctoral interns each conduct a formal presentation, focused on a clinical topic of interest. Fellows are required to attend this series as professional colleagues.

### RESEARCH

Although the primary focus of our training program is the development of applied skills, fellows who are interested in conducting research during the course of the postdoctoral year have opportunities to participate in ongoing clinical research activities and to develop their own research interests, including via their postdoctoral fellowship project. Dr. Erika Roberge is the contact for the PCT Research Group and can help with questions about current research projects happening within the PTSD Clinical Team. Members of the PCT Research Group have several recent publications, and research from the team is routinely presented at the annual conference for the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS).

### POSTDOC TEA

On the third Friday of each month, the time from 3:00pm-4:30pm is reserved for Postdoc Tea. This monthly gathering of fellows and fellowship co-directors at various eateries around town is an opportunity for the postdoc program to come together in a social setting and process fellows' experiences from the last month. Postdoc tea has been a beloved activity since the inception of the fellowship program, and is a wonderful opportunity to get to know your fellow postdocs and staff and to experience all things yummy in SLC.

### LEADERSHIP

Fellows have various opportunities to gain leadership and administrative experience. There are a variety of ways that fellows can be involved in these kind of experiences throughout the year. Some of the ways that fellows have participated in the past have included:

- Attending and participating in Mental Health Supervisor's meetings
- Participating in quarterly state-wide OEF/OIF/OND/OIR stakeholder meetings



- Delivering presentations to community organizations (i.e., schools, military organizations, local conferences)
- Playing a role in Utah State legislative projects for Veterans and their families
- Participating in the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for law enforcement officers regarding the nature of PTSD and how to react to a person who may be displaying PTSD symptoms
- Offering treatment to Veterans in offsite locations, such as Camp Williams (home to the Utah National Guard), Hill Air Force Base, and/or at local colleges and universities

## OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Fellows have opportunities to provide education and training related to PTSD/MST/Polytrauma to other professionals, within the hospital and within the Salt Lake City community. The PCT is frequently invited to give educational presentations in a variety of settings, across VASLCHCS and for community stakeholders, and fellows are encouraged to participate.

In addition, in our catchment area, there are bases for the Utah National Guard, Army Reserves, Marine Corps Reserves, Navy Reserves, and the Air Force. The PCT is often involved in OEF/OIF/OND/OIR outreach in order to establish a good relationship with all of these branches. The largest branch is the Utah National Guard, and the PTSD team works closely with them and provides psychoeducational presentations, assessments, consultations, and direct clinical contact when invited. This relationship is valuable for reaching Veterans who are having difficulties but are unsure of the resources available to them. PCT clinicians, including our fellows, may have opportunities to interact one-on-one with service members in a "check-in" style of interaction during official National Guard trainings and activities. This allows Guard members to become familiar with VA staff and make them more approachable if needed in the future.

Fellows have additional opportunities to outreach to Veterans in the community outside of the medical center by providing PTSD assessment and treatment on campus for Veterans enrolled in local colleges and universities as part of our VITAL program.

## COMPETENCY EVALUATION

Evaluation is an ongoing, continuous, and reciprocal process. The Postdoctoral Training Committee encourages and supports open and thorough communication between supervisors and fellows regarding training needs, objectives, and competencies. In addition, scheduled, formal evaluation processes occur throughout the postdoctoral year.

Evaluation forms used throughout the training year:

- Professional Competency Assessment of Fellows: Completed by supervisors at the end of each quarter
- Fellow Self-Evaluation: Completed by fellows at the start of fellowship, at the end of the second quarter, and at the end of the fourth quarter

- Fellowship Presentation Evaluation: After all presentations
- Fellow Evaluation of Training Site: Completed the end of the second quarter and near the end of the fourth quarter
- Fellow Evaluation of Training Supervisors: Completed by fellows at the end of each quarter

## FELLOW RESOURCES

Fellows have private offices for use in assessment and psychotherapy. Fellows have access to computers with a Microsoft Office Suite, printer access, and a nationwide integrated electronic medical chart, CPRS. There is also computer support through IRMS. There are several group therapy rooms available for fellows to reserve if needed. While training in the Polytrauma Clinic, fellows have access to workstations with computer and network access. Fellows have access to neuropsychological testing materials. The VA Salt Lake City has a medical library that provides a wide range of psychology, psychiatry, gerontologic, and other journals consistent with the needs of staff and the training program. Fellows have access to the VA library and may access the libraries at the University of Utah by either personal access or inter-library loan.

Fellows receive administrative support from administrative support assistants who help fellows with several aspects of the fellowship.

Should telework become necessary due to global health concerns, training staff will work to ensure fellows have the equipment and materials they need to effectively work from home and to provide services via video telehealth.

## FELLOW TRAINING YEAR

The tentative fellowship start date for 2025 is August 11, as we are transitioning, like all VA psychology training programs, to standard start dates for internships and fellowships. Postdocs begin the year with a full orientation from VA Human Resources, Mental Health Service, and their specific Postdoctoral Track training faculty. The fellowship ends after one full year of training at full time.

Fellows typically devote a minimum eight hours per day, 40 hours per week, to the training program. The usual tour of duty is 8:00AM – 4:30PM, Monday-Friday, although some experiences may require evening work with a shifted tour of 11:30AM – 8:00PM. Some weekend work may be a part of available outreach activities.

The completion of clinical duties may require working extra hours at times (e.g., documenting notes following crisis intervention). The parameters of each training experience are detailed the first week of orientation. Our aim at completion of the fellowship is for fellows to have accrued enough training hours for licensure in any state they may pursue and for board certification (ABPP) should they choose to pursue that in the future. Completing at least 2000 postdoctoral training hours with at least 500 hours in direct clinical care during fellowship meets the postdoctoral hours requirements for board certification.

and for many, but not all, states. We provide ample opportunity to meet these hour requirements and strongly recommend that fellows reach these benchmarks by the end of the training year. However, licensure requirements vary widely by state. Fellows are responsible for tracking their hours and for learning and meeting the licensure requirements in the state(s) in which they intend to apply for licensure.

### **Of Note for the 2025-2026 Training Year: COVID-19 Training Considerations**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created numerous personal and professional challenges for us all. Since March 2020, however, VA Salt Lake City Healthcare System has been fortunate in that we have had a relatively low number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized in our facility.

VA Salt Lake City requires masking in high-risk areas of the hospital for staff, visitors, and patients. Masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer are located at building entrances. VA Salt Lake City is committed to providing all necessary PPE for its employees and trainees, as well as providing a hygienic work environment. The Department of Veterans Affairs, like all federal government agencies, has mandated that all employees and trainees be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 as a condition of employment. Trainees may request a medical or religious exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine. The health and safety of our psychology trainees, along with the competent care of our nation's Veterans, is of utmost importance to us. We will continue to provide high quality training in professional psychology while simultaneously keeping our trainees' health and wellness at the forefront. These will always be cornerstone elements of the VA Salt Lake City psychology program.

Fellowship training orientation will include a discussion of COVID-19 including information about how health and safety are maintained at the Salt Lake City VA. Trainees typically complete a telehealth training during their first two weeks. Each fellow will complete a telework agreement which will be submitted for approval to allow the training program the most flexibility in arranging training and responding to concerns during the year. At the time of this writing, trainees at VASLCHCS are providing services fully on-site, both in-person and via video telehealth, based on Veteran preference. Trainees will not be providing services to patient known to have COVID. Patients with COVID are treated in separate, isolated medical units in the hospital. All trainees will continue to receive the required hours of weekly supervision. Psychology fellows should expect routine supervisory observation using in-person or telehealth modalities, as well as co-treatment with supervisors and other licensed mental health staff. Fellows are expected to communicate with their supervisors and training director regularly regarding health and safety concerns and issues.

Trainees with exposure to a person with COVID and/or experiencing potential COVID symptoms should not report to work. Employee health should be notified to allow for contact tracing and COVID testing by the VA. If the fellow tests positive for COVID, then they will not return to work until CDC guidelines allow. Employee health will communicate guidance to the fellow and the training program. Telework may be authorized in these circumstances if the trainee is well enough to work but still required to isolate.

The situation continues to evolve, with guidance changing frequently. However, we want to assure you, that even through these challenging times, our dedication to high-quality clinical care, psychology training, and our dedication to the trainees endures.

We will update our public materials as we know more about how things will be for the 2025-2026 training year. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

## **STIPEND AND BENEFITS**

For 2025-2026, fellows will receive a stipend of \$52,806.00 paid in equal installments over 26 bi-weekly pay periods. Fellows are not covered by civil service retirement, but are eligible for federal employee group life insurance and health benefits.

Over the course of the year, fellows earn approximately 13 vacation days and 13 sick days, in addition to federal holidays.

Fellows who work 40 hours per week can fulfill their commitment to the site and still have time for vacations and sick leave. Fellows should track their total training and clinical hours to ensure they are meeting licensure requirements in their chosen state and meeting the recommended number of hours for fellowship (i.e., 2000 total training hours including 500 hours of direct clinical care).

Postdoctoral fellows at the VASLCHCS are appointed in the VA as temporary employees. As such, they are expected to comply with all medical center policies pertaining to employee behavior, including leave policies.

Fellows may also apply for limited hourly credit for attendance at national and regional professional meetings and workshops through their primary supervisor and Postdoctoral Training Committee. The VA Salt Lake City Healthcare System's policy on Authorized Leave is consistent with the national standard. You are welcome to discuss this with the Director of Training.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements for the postdoctoral training program:

1. Completion of doctoral degree, including defense of dissertation, from an APA-, CPA-, or PC-SAS-accredited Clinical or Counseling, or Combined Psychology doctoral program before the fellowship start date.\*
2. Completion of an APA-accredited psychology internship program before the fellowship start date.\*
3. U.S. citizenship: applicants must be U.S. citizens; please see eligibility qualifications for psychology training within the Department of Veterans Affairs, which are described at: [Resources for Health Professions Trainees Coming to VA | Eligibility and Forms - Office of Academic Affiliations](#)
4. Selective Service Registration: the Federal Government requires that male applicants to VA positions who were born after 12/31/1959 **must have registered** for Selective Service between the ages of 18 and 25, and they must sign a Pre-appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration before they are employed. It is not necessary to submit this form with the application, but if you are selected for this training experience and fit the above criteria, you will have to sign it. Click to [Register or Check Registration](#).

In addition, fellows are considered temporary federal employees and, therefore, must meet all federal employee requirements, including passing a federally-mandated background check and health status verification (including up-to-date vaccinations for healthcare workers as noted below; see also [Am I Eligible v5.pdf \(va.gov\)](#)).

5. Training occurs in a health care setting. Some of the patients served by VA are older adults or infirm and could succumb to common illnesses like influenza. It is important to be able to document that your vaccinations are up to date and that you have been screened for active tuberculosis prior to starting your training at VA or other hospitals. Securing a statement from your university student health center, regular health provider, or an urgent care clinic can expedite your appointment. Additionally, maintaining a current flu vaccination during the training year (or taking additional preventative measures to limit patient exposure to the flu) will be required. Please discuss your concerns about vaccinations with the Director of Training after you have matched and well before your start date to facilitate your onboarding.
6. It is VHA policy that all VHA Health Care Personnel (HCP) are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or obtain an approved accommodation for medical, pregnancy, or religious reasons, when required by law. All VHA entities will implement a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination program by requiring all VHA HCP to be fully vaccinated or obtain an accommodation. Compliance with this directive is a requirement. Please discuss this with the Director of Training after you have matched and well before your start date to facilitate your onboarding.
7. The VA conducts drug-screening exams randomly on selected personnel as well as new employees. Trainees are not required to be tested prior to beginning work, but once on-site they are subject to random drug screening selection in the same manner as other staff. Please see [VHA\\_HPTsDrug-FreeWorkplaceOAA\\_HRA.pdf \(va.gov\)](#) for details. Please note that marijuana remains illegal at the federal level and is among the substances included in drug testing,

regardless of any state marijuana laws. Official hiring is contingent on meeting these federal requirements.

8. As an equal opportunity training program, the fellowship welcomes and strongly encourage applications from all qualified candidates, regardless of gender, age, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, disability, or other minority status.

Acceptance of trainees is contingent upon the result of a federal background check and health status verification. Failure to meet the above qualifications or failure to pass a federally-mandated background check for employment prior to the fellowship start date could nullify an offer to a candidate.

\*If you have not yet completed your internship and degree by the time of the application, the Training Directors of both your doctoral programs and internship must verify that you are expected to complete these requirements prior to the start of the postdoctoral fellowship. Incoming fellows must provide verification of a degree prior to an agreed upon postdoctoral training start date. In unique situations, extensions may be applied as deemed appropriately by the training committee.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Application materials due: December 8, 2024 5:00PM (Eastern Time)
- Interviews of candidates: Mid to late-January

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Submit the APPIC APPA CAS Online application no later than 5:00PM on the application due date listed above. Please use the following web address to access the application website:

[APPA CAS | Applicant Login Page Section \(liaisoncas.com\)](https://liaisoncas.com)

All application materials must be received by the due date listed above. Please submit the following with your application:

1. Letter of interest including the following elements:
  - A description of your educational, clinical, and research experiences relevant to this fellowship
  - A statement of your training and career goals and how this fellowship may meet those goals
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. Graduate transcripts
4. Three letters of recommendation including:
  - At least one from a **faculty member** personally familiar with your graduate school performance
  - At least one from a **primary clinical supervisor** during your pre-doctoral internship
5. A brief statement regarding the **status of your dissertation or research project and expected graduation date** from your graduate school program (either from your **graduate training**

**director or dissertation chair**; this statement can be included in their letter of recommendation for you, if your graduate training director or dissertation chair is writing one of your 3 recommendation letters)

6. A letter of certification from your Internship Training Director verifying that you are in **good standing** and that they expect you to **complete internship on time**, in addition to noting the **date of your last day of internship**

## APPLICATION EVALUATION

Each set of application materials received by the due date will be reviewed by two members of the selection committee. Independent ratings are based on educational, intervention, and assessment experiences, cover letter, and professional letters of recommendation. The selection criteria focus on all aspects of the application materials, with emphasis placed on background training, experience, and an applicant's clear articulation of training goals and professional aspirations.

After an average score is calculated, the selection committee addresses any significant discrepancies in scores, and determines the cut-off score to participate in the interview process.

We plan to conduct interviews on 1-2 scheduled interview days in mid to late January, based on the number of applications received (dates for interviews are TBD). Our current plan is to hold all interviews for the 2025-2026 application season via individually scheduled video conference or telephone call. Applicants will be interviewed by two members of the Selection Committee and will be connected via email or video conference to the current fellows who can answer questions about their experiences and to other staff members as needed for specific questions.

We are currently planning to offer an optional virtual open house with opportunities to meet current fellows and staff members, to ask additional questions, and to get a better feel for the program. Applicants selected for interviews will be notified of the date of the virtual open house.

Following all interviews, the Selection Committee will meet to identify the top candidates and alternates for the two PTSD Track postdoctoral positions. These selections are based on an integration of file and interview ratings, with the entire list of interviewees being reviewed to ensure that all candidates have received fair and equal consideration.

The Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Program at VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and will abide by all APPIC guidelines regarding fellowship recruitment and notification procedures.

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Psychology fellows are Health Professions Trainees (HPTs) in the VA system and are appointed as temporary employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs. As such, HPTs are subject to laws, policies, and guidelines posted for VA staff members. There are infrequent times in which this guidance can

change during a training year which may create new requirements or responsibilities for HPTs. If employment requirements change during the course of a training year, HPTs will be notified of the change and impact as soon as possible and options provided. The VA Training Director for your profession will provide you with the information you need to understand the requirement and reasons for the requirement in timely manner.

#### MEDICAL/FAMILY LEAVE:

The fellowship program understands that fellows may need to request extended leave for certain life events that occur during the training year; therefore, our program allows for parental leave and/or extended leave in the event of a serious illness. Leave can be granted for the birth of a child and care of a newborn, placement of a child with oneself for adoption or foster care, a serious health condition of a spouse, child, or parent/caregiver, or one's own serious illness. Any approved extended leave will result in an extension of the training contract to ensure that the fellow completes the required full 2080-hours of training. Fellows are encouraged to address any requests for leave with the Director of Training as early as possible.

#### DUE PROCESS:

All trainees are afforded the right to due process in matters of problematic behavior and grievances. Due process documents are a part of the orientation handbook and are reviewed during orientation. A copy of our due process policy is available on request.

#### PRIVACY POLICY:

We collect no personal information from you when you visit our website.

#### SELF-DISCLOSURE:

We do not require trainees to disclose personal information to their clinical supervisors except in cases where personal issues may be adversely affecting a trainee's performance and such information is necessary to address these difficulties. That said, we welcome and model discussions of important aspects of identity that are relevant in our work with Veterans, in supervision, and with our colleagues.

#### LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR TRAINEES:

VA-sponsored trainees acting within the scope of their educational programs and when providing professional services at a VA healthcare facility are protected from personal liability under the Federal Employees Liability Reform and Tort Compensation Act 28, U.S.C.2679 (b)-(d).

#### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER:

The VASLCHCS is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Psychology Service actively supports and is in full compliance with the spirit and principle of Affirmative Action in the recruitment and selection of staff and fellows. We provide equal opportunities in employment and training for all qualified persons and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disabilities, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. In accordance with federal government employment regulations, only citizens of the United States are eligible for training positions funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs.



Our fellowship program will provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with disabilities when such an adjustment or change is requested and needed at work for a reason related to a medical condition or other extenuating life circumstances. Requests for accommodation do not need to be made during the application process. However, if accommodations are needed, requests should be submitted as soon as possible after selection to enable the program to make necessary arrangements.

## **ABOUT SALT LAKE CITY AND UTAH**

According to the 2020 census, Salt Lake City has a population of approximately 200,567 with the surrounding metropolitan area having approximately 1.2 million people. Individuals unfamiliar with Salt Lake City and the state of Utah are often quite surprised at the extensive array of indoor and outdoor activities available. Salt Lake City, nestled in the valley between the Wasatch and Oquirrh Mountains, is a montage of modern high-rises, commercial centers, colorful neighborhoods, unique sightseeing attractions, historic sites, excellent restaurants, and lovely shopping areas. The city is also home to acclaimed ballet dance companies, the Utah Opera Company, the Eccles Theater (for Broadway shows), many fine art galleries, history and art museums, indoor and outdoor concert venues, and annual film, art, and culinary festivals. Each year in June, the VASLCHCS participates in the city's many PRIDE celebrations. In addition, sports fans can enjoy professional basketball, hockey, and soccer games, semi-pro baseball, and a variety of college sporting events via the University of Utah, Utah State University, and Brigham Young University.

For the outdoor recreational enthusiast, Utah is truly a paradise, and Salt Lake City is surrounded by picturesque mountains and canyons. During the winter months, Utah has "The Greatest Snow on Earth." The average snowfall in the mountains near Salt Lake City is 500 inches, and 11 ski resorts are within an hour drive. During the summer months, Utahans take advantage of over 1,000 lakes, rivers, and streams and over 9,500 miles of hiking trails. Sailing, wind surfing, kayaking, rock climbing, and mountain biking are extremely popular during the warmer months as well. Utah is home to five national parks: Arches National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Capitol Reef National Park, and Zion National Park. Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park are within reasonable driving distances as well. Be sure to ask the staff what they love about living in Utah.

## TRAINING STAFF

We encourage you to contact staff members if you have any specific questions for them.

*D. Aaron Ahern, PhD (he/him)*

**Training Background:** PhD, Clinical/Counseling Psychology, Utah State University

**Predoctoral Internship:** Huntsman Mental Health Institute, Salt Lake City, UT

**Current Position:** PTSD Clinical Team, VITAL Program Manager

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** Working with Student Veterans, Prolonged Exposure, Cognitive Processing Therapy, EMDR, Written Exposure, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Outcomes Research/Measurement Based Care, Peer to Peer Interventions for Student Veterans, Utilization of qEEG/Neurofeedback for PTSD Assessment/Treatment and Learning Difficulties

Email: [Dennis.Ahern@va.gov](mailto:Dennis.Ahern@va.gov)

*Jacek Brewczyński, PhD (he/him)*

**Training background:** PhD, Clinical Psychology, University of Detroit

**Predoctoral Internship:** Tampa VAMC

**Postdoctoral Fellowship:** Clinical Psychology, VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

**Current Position:** PTSD Clinical Team and the Substance Abuse Residential Treatment unit.

**Areas of interest/expertise:** Psychological interventions for veterans with co-morbid diagnoses of PTSD & SUD; psychological & neuropsychological assessment, including personality assessment; transpersonal interventions, such as mindfulness & meditation-based treatment.

Email: [Jacek.Brewczynski@va.gov](mailto:Jacek.Brewczynski@va.gov)

*Alison Conway, PsyD (she/her)*

**Training Background:** PsyD, Clinical Psychology, Pepperdine University

**Predoctoral Internship:** VA Loma Linda Healthcare System

**Postdoctoral Fellowship:** Clinical Psychology, VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

**Current Position:** PTSD Clinical Team, Warrior Renew Program Coordinator

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** Military Sexual Trauma, PTSD and Complex Trauma, Evidence-Based Treatments for PTSD (Cognitive Processing Therapy and Prolonged Exposure), Moral Injury, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and Equine Therapy/Equine-Assisted Learning.

Email: [Alison.Conway@va.gov](mailto:Alison.Conway@va.gov)

*Sandy Diaz, LCSW, PsyD (she/her)*

**Training Background:** PsyD, Clinical Community Psychology, University of La Verne; MSW, Arizona State University

**Predoctoral Internship:** VA Long Beach Healthcare System

**Postdoctoral Fellowship:** Clinical Psychology, VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

**Current Position:** PTSD Clinical Team and Dialectical Behavior Therapy Team

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** PTSD, coping, emotional dysregulation, valued living, achieving a life worth living, suicide prevention, DBT, STAIR

Email: [Sandra.Diaz@va.gov](mailto:Sandra.Diaz@va.gov)

*Tom Mullin, PhD (he/him)*

**Training Background:** PhD, Counseling Psychology, University of Utah

**Predoctoral Internship:** VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

**Current Position:** Acting PTSD Team Lead

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** PTSD, readjustment after OEF/OIF/OND/OIR deployment, psychological assessment, evidence-based treatment for PTSD, Prolonged Exposure Consultant, veteran outreach programs

Email: [Thomas.Mullin2@va.gov](mailto:Thomas.Mullin2@va.gov)

*Jen Romesser, PsyD (she/her)*

**Training Background:** PsyD, Clinical Psychology, Pepperdine University

**Predoctoral Internship:** SLC VA Healthcare System (2004/2005)

**Postdoctoral Fellowship:** Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, Downey, California (2005/2006)

**Current Position:** Clinical Psychologist (Outpatient Mental Health, Polytrauma Clinic) and the Director of the SLC Network of Dedicated Enrollment Site for the VA Cooperative Studies Program

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** rehabilitation neuropsychology, post-traumatic stress disorder, brain injury, chronic pain, clinical trial research

Email: [Jennifer.romesser@gmail.com](mailto:Jennifer.romesser@gmail.com)

*Renn Sweeney, PhD (she/her)*

**Training Background:** PhD, Clinical Psychology, University of Utah

**Predoctoral Internship:** VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

**Current Position:** Psychology Training Director; Health Behavior Coordinator

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** Integrative healthcare, health and behavior change, brief treatment, stress and coping with chronic illness, tobacco cessation, and insomnia

E-mail: [caroline.sweeney@va.gov](mailto:caroline.sweeney@va.gov)

*Cicely Taravella, PhD (she/her)*

**Training Background:** PhD, Clinical Psychology, University of North Texas

**Predoctoral Internship:** VA North Texas Health Care System, Dallas Veterans Affairs Medical Center

**Postdoctoral Fellowship:** VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

**Current Position:** PTSD Clinical Team, Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Co-Director

**Areas of Interest/Expertise:** Prolonged Exposure, Cognitive Processing Therapy, trauma-related guilt, moral injury, culturally-responsive PTSD treatment, secondary traumatic stress/compassion fatigue, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, third wave behaviorism, training/supervision

Email: [Cicely.Taravella2@va.gov](mailto:Cicely.Taravella2@va.gov)

## **PARTING WORDS**

Thank you for your interest in our fellowship program, and we wish you the very best during this exciting time. If you have questions about the postdoctoral fellowship or about the Salt Lake City VA please do not hesitate to contact me:

Sincerely,

Cicely C. Taravella, PhD (she/her/hers)  
Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Co-  
Director  
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System  
500 Foothill Blvd. (116OP)  
Salt Lake City, UT 84148  
Phone: (801) 585-1565 ext. 2709  
[Cicely.Taravella2@va.gov](mailto:Cicely.Taravella2@va.gov)