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PSYCHOLOGY Department

TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2016

New Faculty



Ramsey

New to the department is **Ashley Ramsey (ABD)**, a 2007 Psychology graduate from Truman. Ashley is defending her dissertation this spring to complete her **PhD** in **Cognition and Neuroscience from Mizzou.**

Ashley's past research interests include studying a specific neurotransmitter receptor called metabotropic glutamate receptor 7 (mGluR7) and its effects on cognition.

In her master's thesis, she studied its effects on learning and memory in rats via conditioned taste aversion.

More recently, Ashley has been looking at the effects of a glutamate/dopamine interaction on a mouse model of obsessive-compulsive disorder.

In the future, she plans to perform quantitative EEG research with humans by looking at certain perceptual processes like audiovisual integration and cortical activity.

Ashley exclaims,

"I've always loved education and looked up to my teachers and my coaches from when I was little. When I came as an undergrad at Truman, I could see myself at the front of the classroom. I was really lucky that an opening became available. Now I'm back home."

Ashley's advice to psychology majors is to get to know your professors because they are a great source for research projects and letters of recommendation, both of which are part of the graduate application process.

Ashley also encourages students to talk to other students who have gone on to graduate school; and, ask questions about GRE, qualifications, etc.

Jokingly, Ashley envisions herself having more free time in about five or ten years. Today she enjoys home projects and hopes to learn motocross on her dirt bike. Furthermore, she wants to learn to play piano.

In town, Ashley enjoys King's Buffet and Pancake City, but really likes sushi and wants to try Bonzai.

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When asked, “If you could meet any of the giants in the history of psychology, who would it be and why?”

Ashley response is “Behaviorist, John

Watson, because he’s such a crazy guy full of mischief.”

Dr. Ramsey bought her first home in Kirksville and lives with her four beloved cats, Sophie,

Colton, Elsa, and Zora. She also has a niece and nephew who she hopes to influence into becoming Bulldogs someday.

Interviewed by: Roberto Rentería, Senior Psychology Major



Dr. Yuna Ferguson

Dr. Ferguson finds working with students the most enjoyable part of her job, because she believes that Truman students are grounded, pro-social, and thoughtful

Dr. Yuna Ferguson

Dr. Yuna Ferguson, Assistant Professor of Psychology, joined the department in fall 2014. She is teaching Social Psychology and Psychological Research currently, as well as leading a research team.

Dr. Ferguson was born in South Korea, but grew up in Anchorage, Alaska. After high school she attended Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois where she was a Psychology Major and a McNair Scholar. It was through the McNair program that she began to consider becoming a professor. She received her **PhD in Social and Personality Psychology from the University of Missouri.**

After graduate school, Dr. Ferguson returned to Knox College where

she taught psychology for two years. She also taught in the Penn State system for an additional two years before coming to Truman State.

She chose to apply to Truman because she felt Truman offers a positive experience very similar to her own, at a small liberal arts college. In addition, she had met Truman graduates at the University of Missouri who had spoken well of their Truman experience.

Dr. Ferguson enjoys teaching a variety of classes at Truman, including Positive Psychology, Social Psychology, General Psychology, and the Senior Psychology Capstone.

She particularly enjoys teaching the Capstone, because she likes working closely with students

and seeing them pull together all that they have learned during college.

In addition to teaching, she also leads a research team. Currently, the team is studying music, personality, and mood. Dr. Ferguson’s usual research revolves around whether people can make themselves happier.

During her free time Dr. Ferguson enjoys crocheting, and she is currently making a blanket. She also enjoys board games. Although she does not have a favorite board game, she prefers strategy games. Finally, Dr. Ferguson enjoys playing badminton with her husband, who is also a Truman employee.

Written by: Kenda Eberhardt, Senior Psychology Major

Center for Applied Psychophysiology



Zachary Bartochowski, Zachary Meehan & Alexis West—Lab Managers at the Center for Applied Psychophysiology, Barnett Hall (2015)

The Center for Applied Psychophysiology (CAP) located in Barnett Hall, currently includes twenty student researchers under the Directorship of Dr. Fred Shaffer. Recently appointed as Lab Manager is Zachary Meehan and two Associate Lab Managers, Taylor Watson and Zachary Bartochowski.

Current research examines whether deeper breathing increases the healthy variability of the heart (the difference in the time between successive heartbeats).

Last Spring, six Psychology Majors were sponsored to attend the 46th Annual Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback Conference (AAPB) in Austin, Texas.

AAPB is a professional meeting where undergraduate research abstracts compete with those from doctoral programs and licensed professionals.

Marissa Fabbri, Zachary Meehan, Daniel Owen Alexis West, Chris Williams and Christopher Zerr presented four oral papers and three poster sessions including the following titles:

“The nonlinear index SDI predicts diastolic blood pressure and HRV time and frequency domain measurements in healthy undergraduates”

“Does inhalation-to-exhalation ratio matter in heart rate variability biofeedback”

“Are blanketing and stem artifacts real?”

“The use of device-guided breathing in the treatment of hypertension: A meta-analytic review”

Dr. Fred Shaffer served as mentor for the CAP team.

The 2016 AAPB Committee accepted all of CAP’s five abstracts; two of these abstracts, on depression and hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating), will appear as literature reviews in the *Third Edition of Evidence-Based Practice in Biofeedback and Neurofeedback to be published in spring 2016.*

Previous abstracts presented at AAPB conferences can be viewed at fshaffer.sites.truman.edu

Written by: Zachary Meehan, Senior Psychology Major

Recent CAP Graduates

Christopher Zerr,
Lab Manager,
completing a **PhD** at **Washington University in St. Louis**

Chris Williams
Associate Lab Manager
studying at **Creighton Medical School**

Theresa Vodapest
Associate Lab Manager
attending nursing school in **St. Louis.**



Spring 2015 CAP Team

Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Conference



Amanda Crawford '16

Last Spring, seven faculty-mentored research teams presented their work at the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago.

Student research teams work with their faculty mentors to decide on a research subject; sometimes it is delving further into faculty's current research interests.

Oral Presentations Included:

“Building the Quintessential Comedian: A Demographic Analysis” by Max McDermott, Priyanka Prabhu, Danny Hearst, Sathya Anand, Emily Koeing, Melissa Stockwell, and Taylor Moore (Dr. Mark Hatala, Faculty Mentor)

“Racial Differences in Initial Contact Messages in Online Dating” by Elizabeth

Rehfeldt, Danny Hearst, Taylor Moore, Melissa Stockwell, Connor Madden, Emily Koenig, and Mike Rudy (Dr. Mark Hatala, Faculty Mentor)

Poster Presentations Included:

“The Effects of 3D Viewing” by Roberto Renteria, Amanda Crawford, Clare Fielding Bogle, and Jennifer Phillips (Dr. Karen Vit-tengl, Faculty Mentor)

“Change Deafness and the Association Between Language Proficiency and Word Recall” by Christopher Sotraidis, Carlyn Muehlhauser, Celeste Turnbull, John Wiesler, Amy Schwend, Dylan Ziegemeier, and Anna Wiskirchen (Salvatore Costa, Faculty Mentor)

“Meanings and Values of “Better” and “Worse” Moods” by

Christopher Zerr, Sarah Bussen, Erin Nyquist, Sarah Jo David, and Anthony Roberson (Dr. Jeffrey R. Vit-tengl, Faculty Mentor)

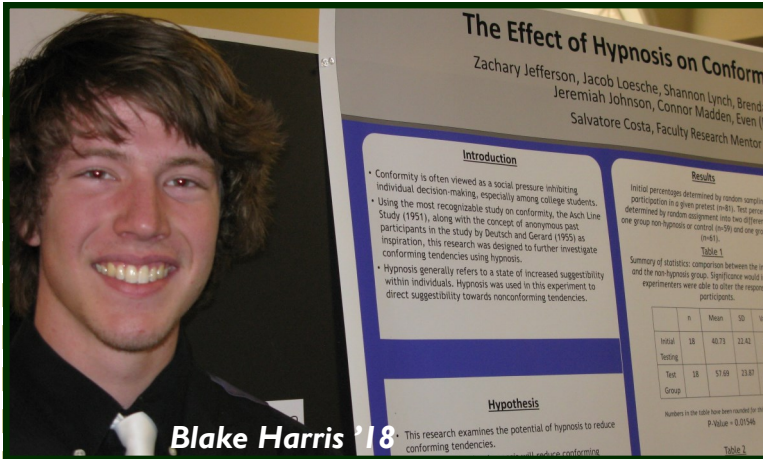
“The Effect of Hypnotic Relaxation Techniques on Sleep” by Jacob Sloan, Emily Berry, David Gambino, John Scofield, Mark Roberts, Emily Starkey, Charlie Schaeffer, and Xiaochen Jin (Salvatore Costa, Faculty Mentor)

“The Effect of Hypnosis on Conforming Tendencies” by Connor Madden, Zachary Jefferson, Shannon Lynch, Brendan Cirillo, Jacob Loesche, Roxanne Chong, Blake Harris, and Jeremiah Johnson (Salvatore Costa, Faculty Mentor)



Christopher Zerr '15

Student Research Conference



Blake Harris '18

C. Bussen, Meghan E. La-marche, and Erin Nyquist. (Dr. Jeffrey Vittengl, Faculty Mentor)

“Dark Humor and Physiological Responses” by Jennifer L. Phillips*, Amanda M. Crawford, and Roberto Renteria. (Dr. Karen L. Vittengl, Faculty Mentor)

Oral Presentations included:

“The Irony of Loss Aversion Part I: How Avoiding Losses Makes Us Losers” by Roxanne K. Chong*, Sarah A. Hemme, and Mattea Pezza (Dr. Robert Tigner, Faculty Mentor)

“The Irony of Loss Aversion Part II: The Hidden Cost of Hidden Gains” by Roxanne K. Chong, Sarah A. Hemme*, and Mattea Pezza (Dr. Robert Tigner, Faculty Mentor)

Poster Presentations included:

“Racial Differences in initial contact message in online dating” by Elizabeth S. Rehfeldt*, Max V. McDermott, Deyvnn C. Campbell, Jared S. Luebbert, Taylor M. Moore, Evan C. Bruce, Danny L. Hearst, Melissa L. Stockwell, Priyanka Prabhu, and Emily E. Koenig (Dr. Mark Hatala, Faculty Mentor)

“Building the Quintessential Comedian: A Demographic Analysis” by Danny L. Hearst*, Max V. McDermott, Evan C. Bruce, Emily E. Koenig, Taylor M. Moore, Priyanka Prabhu, Jared S. Luebbert, Elizabeth S. Rehfeldt, Melissa L. Stockwell, and Deyvnn C. Campbell (Dr. Mark Hatala, Faculty Mentor)

“The Meritocracy of Shark Tank: The Impact of Gender, Race, Age, and Attractiveness on Funding Business Proposals” by Melissa L. Stockwell*, Samuel Hatala, Evan C. Bruce, Deyvnn C. Campbell, Priyanka Prabhu, Max V. McDermott, Taylor Moore, Jared S. Luebbert, Danny L. Hearst, Emily E. Koenig, and Elizabeth S. Rehfeldt (Dr. Mark Hatala, Faculty Mentor)

“Daily Mood Changes” by Kenda R. Eberhardt*, Christopher L. Zerr, Sarah

“Effects of Polarized Opinions on Moderately-Opinionated Individuals” by Joshua D. Simons*, Caleb J. Scarborough, Yu Men, and Daniel R. Robison. (Salvatore Costa, Faculty Mentor)

“You at 21: A Course in the Quantified Self” by Priyanka Prabhu*, Melissa L. Stockwell, Danny L. Hearst, Emily E. Koenig, Taylor M. Moore, and Evan C. Bruce. (Dr. Mark Hatala, Faculty Mentor)



Danny Hearst '17 & Jared Luebbert '17

TruScholars Program



Danny Hearst, Kenda Eberhardt & Devynn Campbell — TruScholars '15

“I gained valuable experience in learning how to interact with victims..

Personally, the experience helped direct my future career path..”

—Devynn Campbell '16

TruScholars Summer Undergraduate Research Program allows students to work on a research project with a Truman faculty member as a full-time mentor during the eight-week summer session.

Students present their completed research at the Summer Research Symposium, and many TruScholars present at additional conferences. There are several steps to the application process, which can be found at <http://osr.truman.edu/truscholars/>, along with additional information and FAQ.

This competitive program, administered by Truman State Universi-

ty's Office of Student Research, provides financial support for students' research.

During the summer of 2015, three Psychology Majors were awarded grants. **Devynn Campbell** and **Kenda Eberhardt** were interviewed about their experience:

Devynn Campbell, Junior Psychology Major and Sociology Minor. (Dr. Mark Hatala, faculty mentor)

Q: What was your research about?

My research looked at the relationship between Big Five personality traits and leaving an abusive relationship. I worked with women at several domestic violence shel-

ters and counseling centers in the St. Louis area.

We found a statistically significant negative correlation between the amount of time it took to decide to leave once the abuse started and conscientiousness, and a strong negative correlation with extraversion.

Extraversion and agreeableness had a significant inverse relationship with total relationship length. Women in the sample were significantly higher than the population in agreeableness. Finally, there were several significant interactions between extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness and the level of physical violence.

Q: What was your best experience?

The best part of my research was getting to interact with the women who participated in the research. Getting to hear a little of their stories and how far they had come made a big impact on me. In fact, the research experience helped solidify my decision to work with women in similar situations as a career.

Q: What was most challenging?

The most challenging part was trying to coordinate all the aspects of my research. One included finding shelters and counseling centers willing to let me approach the women about participating in my research.

Q: What knowledge/experience did you gain?

I gained valuable experience in research and learning how to interact with victims. It gave me insight into the strengths-based practices and language that is used when working with victims of domestic violence.

Kenda Eberhardt, a Senior Psychology Major and Statistical Methods Minor. (Dr. Jeffery Vittengl, faculty member)

Q: What was your research about?

We know that people who live in poverty are more likely to experience less well-being and more depression. What is less clear is the direction that this occurs. Are people that are poor developing mental disorders, or do mental disorders lead to loss of income and net worth?

Using national longitudinal data sets, I was able to look at the direction that this was occurring. In addition, I looked at the same pattern for vehicle ownership. I found evidence that this occurs in both directions. However, there was a small advantage for the ability of loss of income/net worth and loss of vehicle ownership to predict decreases in well-being and increases in depressive symptoms than vice versa.

Q: What was your best and most challenging experience?

My data came from three large longitudinal studies that had thousands of participants and hundreds of different variables were measured, most of which had little to do with the questions I was testing. While it was great not having to collect my own data, it was really challenging restructuring the data in a way to test my hypotheses. However, I think it's fascinating that data can be repurposed to answer multiple research questions.

Q: What knowledge/experience did you gain?

I think it was such a privilege to see an entire project from beginning to end. It gave me an entirely different perspective on persistence it takes to complete a study. I learned that problem solving is more much about being flexible and patient than having a certain skill set. However, I found it much more rewarding than I thought it would be. Seeing a project from beginning to end is tremendously satisfying and builds a great deal of confidence.

*Written by: Bailey Holm,
Sophomore Psychology Major*

“Seeing a project from beginning to end is tremendously satisfying and builds a great deal of confidence” —

Kenda Eberhardt '16

McNair Scholars



Hannah Rogers '15

The McNair Scholars Program provides first-generation college students and under-represented minority students an opportunity to attend graduate school and earn a doctoral degree.

As a part of the program, scholars complete a summer research project that is relevant to their field of study and present their findings at local, regional or national conferences.

The 22nd Annual McNair Research Presentations were held on campus in September, 2014. **Hannah Rogers '15** presented *"A Comparison of Simultaneous and Sequential Lineups in Eyewitness Identification: From Bad to Worse"* (Dr. Rob Tigner, Mentor).

Her research compared two methods of line-ups, simultaneous line-ups, and sequential line-ups, to see which produced more correct identifications of guilty suspects.

Hannah graduated as one of 37 valedictorians. She is currently pursuing a **PhD in the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Program at the University of Missouri** with a funding package worth over \$147,000.

Vanessa Alexander '16 presented her research proposal titled, *"The Relation between Beliefs on the Biological Origin of Schizophrenia and the Intensity of Symptoms Exhibited on a Blog"* (Dr. Jeffrey Vittengl, Mentor) at the **18th Annual McNair Heartland Research Conference in Kansas City, Mo.** on September, 2014.

Last fall, **Roberto Renteria '16**, one of six Truman students, presented *"Do Anger and Aggression Mediate Relations between Depression and Impairment?"* (Dr. Jeffrey Vittengl, Mentor) at the **Annual McNair Scholars Research Conference** held at the University of

Maryland, Baltimore Country.

Roberto's study tested whether anger and aggression account for relations between depression and functional impairment, such as missing work.

Roberto will enter a **PhD Program in Counseling Psychology** in Fall 2016.



Roberto Rentería '16

Written by: Emily Kinkade,
Sophomore Psychology Major

Internships & Service Learning



Derek Bischof, *Park Liaison*,
 Meghan LaMarche, *Volunteer
 Manager*, and Kelly Kochanski,
Kitchen Manager

The Food 4 Kids program is a partnership between the Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri and local churches, civic groups and businesses. They provide daily lunches for children from low income families in the summer months. 57,800 children were eligible in the 2014-2015 school year.

In summer 2015, over 120 volunteers from 13 different organizations helped staff three Kirksville parks. Hy-Vee provided delicious and healthy lunches for the children.

The motto for Food 4 Kids is, "It's not just lunch." Food 4 Kids volunteers provide a sense of community and build relationships with the children they serve. Volunteers wel-

come families, play with the children, and build positive relationships with volunteers and participants.

Last summer, three Truman students were in charge of running the program with the guidance of **Rebecca Zimmer, LCSW**, and **Truman Psychology Professor**.

Meghan LaMarche '16 served as **Volunteer Manager**. She describes the internship as

"A transformative experience valuable to anyone interested in child health, community development, and social work."

Former intern, **Sarah Busen '15**, said this about her experience:

"It was a great way to gain experience working with kids affected by rural poverty. Food 4 Kids is just a fun program and the supervisor made sure we really learned a lot."

Sarah is now pursuing a **PhD in Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City**.

For more information, or if you're interested in getting involved with Food 4 Kids, contact **Rebecca Zimmer**.

*Written by: Meghan LaMarche,
 Senior Psychology Major*

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Alums,

Feel free to fill out the survey below, we always enjoy hearing what you are up to.

— Sincerely,
Dr. Jeffrey Vittengl
Chair & Professor of
Psychology



A L U M N I S U R V E Y

Psychology Reunion Event

Last Fall, a Psychology Reunion Event for Alums was held at Les Bourgeois Vineyards near Columbia, Mo. Dinner was provided courtesy of Preferred Family Healthcare in Kirksville, Mo.

Truman's **President, Dr. Troy Paino**, was the featured speaker and **Sal**



Sal Costa

Costa, gave the faculty lecture and department update. Lastly, **Alumna Katie Judd, '11** gave a lecture on **“Moving Beyond the Taboo: Religious Beliefs and Clinical Practice”**.

The event was sponsored by the Psychology Department and Mid-Missouri Alumni Chapter.