FIRST YEAR REFLECTIONS

What were your expectations coming into your first year and how did they line up with your experiences?

Before starting the program I worked closely with faculty member Dr. Varghese, and I had friends that were current students. For this reason, my expectations of the course load were pretty accurate! I knew the first year was going to entail classes that largely reflected what I had learned in my undergraduate studies. Everyone told my cohort and I to enjoy the first year as it gets more intensive the farther we progress into the program. As expected, some classes were a little more challenging than others, but overall nothing was too surprising from the courses.

However, there were definitely some unexpected challenges that arose. One of those being the global pandemic known as COVID-19. That definitely was not expected to happen in my first year of graduate school. Moving classes online came with some positives and negatives. I was pretty excited that I did not have to physically go to class every day, but that was also one of the biggest negatives. I was, and still am, worried that an online classroom might result in a lack of mastery and competency in skills and education. One of my largest concern still revolves around how this change in classroom setting is going to affect my abilities as a future psychologist, but the faculty in our department have taken every step possible to make sure we are receiving a quality education. There were definitely some hiccups along the way, but I am proud of our department and how they are striving to meet these new challenges.
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

2020 APA DIVISION 18
PSYCHOLOGISTS IN PUBLIC SERVICE
STUDENT AWARD

Sydney Skaggs was awarded the 2020 APA Division 18 Psychologists in Public Service Student Award on August 8th 2020.

This is a national award open to all graduate psychology students.

"I was nominated by Dr. Bihm and Dr. Varghese for my dedication to justice-involved persons, both in research and clinical training."

Some of those projects include health initiatives for people with severe and persistent mental illness with Arkansas State Hospital, providing counseling services to people on parole or probation through Arkansas Community Correction with Dr. Varghese, and my dissertation which is on a brief cognitive intervention to reduce impulsivity in justice-involved persons. I’ve also participated in trainings with the hospital since 2017 and have been a practicum student there providing counseling and assessment.
PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

**Publications**


**Presentations & Posters**


APA INTERNSHIP MATCH

Mattie Bogoslavsky
University of North Florida
Counseling Center
Jacksonville, FL

Robyn Hunter
Alaska Psych Intern
Consortium/Norton Sound Health
Nome, AK

POSTDOC

Dr. Amy Hufstedler
VA Pacific Islands Healthcare System
Specialty emphasis:
Military Sexual Trauma and Women's Health, and learning leadership and program development in the VA system

AMAZING ALUMNI

Dr. Cindy Mikeal

"I'm currently living in Finland. Last year I accepted a contract to work with a nonprofit (Samaria Group) here as a consultant/trainer on trauma and human trafficking. I also provide support services to the staff when experiencing burnout or vicarious trauma. It's been interesting to work not only in a safe house for women and children but in a very multicultural context. Most of our clients are from outside of Europe and have experienced various types of trauma related events."