

Fall 2020 / Winter 2021

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# The GrASP Gazette



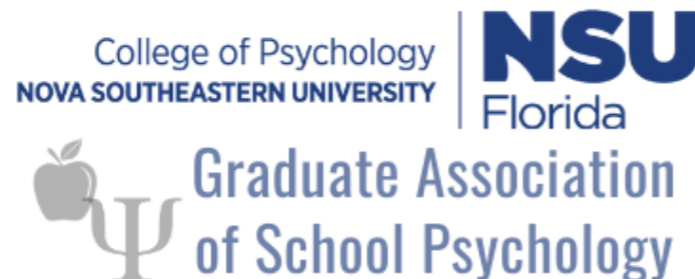
# Dear Readers,

Happy winter! The board members of Nova Southeastern University's Graduate Association of School Psychology are excited to welcome a brand-new edition of the GrASP Gazette! Congratulations to everyone for all of your continued hard work that you put into this program every day. Every individual is able to make an impact and that is what makes our program so special.

Thank you all for attending our monthly meetings, participating in professional development activities, attending social events, and volunteering for our fundraisers. If you are interested in gaining leadership experience by joining our executive board or getting more involved with GrASP to help make a difference in our program please contact us!

We hope you had a positive and successful winter break and we can't wait to see what exciting things the new year will bring! Please enjoy this new issue of the GrASP Gazette!

Best,  
Courtney Clayton, Chair  
cc3084@mynsu.nova.edu



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# Meet the Board

## GrASP Chair – Courtney Clayton



Courtney is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student in the specialist program. Her interests include preschool assessment and early intervention, particularly ASD and attachment. Her hobbies include hiking, kayaking, and anything outdoors. Fun fact: She studied Reggio Emilia in Italy the summer before starting grad school.

## Chair Elect – Nicole Jenoriki



Nicole is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Psy.S student. A fun fact about her is that she took Italian classes for six years! Her interests include Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Developmental Psychopathology and the promotion of resilience among disabled students, to name a few.

## Diversity and Social Justice Chair- Jessica Wright



Jessica (Jess) is a 4th year advanced standing Psy.D. student. Her interests are multi-faceted, but recently she has been reading more on the clinical implications of racial trauma among children and adolescents. In the future, she plans on working in the public schools as a school psychologist and teaching at a university. Her hobbies include going to the gym, exploring new places to eat (she is a huge foodie), and spending time with her family, friends, and fur-child Luna. Fun fact: She danced ballet for 10 years and taught baby ballet for 4 years.

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# Meet the Board

## Technology Chair- Morgan Oldham



Morgan is currently a 3<sup>rd</sup> year school psychology Psy.D. student. Her interests include pediatric psychology, neuropsychology, autism spectrum disorder, and all things assessment! Ideally, she would love to work in a hospital setting providing services to children with chronic illnesses or disabilities. Fun fact: She loves interior design and would love to design houses one day. She also has a cat named Theodore that she loves dearly.



## Public Policy Chair- Tyler McCoy

Tyler is currently a 2<sup>nd</sup> year school psychology Psy.D. student. The focus of her directed study is best practices for school reintegration after an extended absence due to hospitalization or alternative placement. Her career interests include childhood psychosis, behavioral skills training for parents and teachers, and consulting with public school systems in the areas of reintegration into school settings, positive behavioral support, and psychoeducational evaluations. Fun fact: She used to dance on an exhibition line dance team.

# Meet the Board

## Mentorship and Alumni Relations Co-Chairs- Alayjah Anderson, Alyssa Good, and Blanca Melero



Alayjah is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student in the School Psychology Psy.D. program. She is interested in working in settings focused on alternative education and community mental health. She enjoys running outdoors and cooking



Blanca is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year student in the School Psychology Psy.D. program. She has many interests but her main ones currently are psychopathology in youth, diversity issues, social justice, and the prison-to-school pipeline. In her free time, she loves to try new food, workout, visit animal sanctuaries, traveling, and more!



Alyssa is currently a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Psy.S. student! She is interested in Applied Behavior Analysis and hopes to become a BCBA in addition to being a practicing School Psychologist. In her free time, she loves to travel, watch Netflix, play with her dog, and exercise. Fun fact: She has been on several mission trips and has got to help build lots of different things for people in need! She loves helping people!

# Meet the Board

## Social and Professional Development Chair- Laurie “Elle” Pope



Elle is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year School Psychology student in the Psy.D. program. Her clinical interests include grief support for students and crisis intervention. During her free time, she enjoys going to the beach and traveling. Fun fact: She graduated from Florida State University.

## Philanthropy/Fundraising Chair and Treasurer- Victoria Lavinio



Victoria is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year School Psychology Student in the Psy.D. program. Her interests include students with disabilities in postsecondary education. Her directed study is on academic, social, and emotional support for college students with learning disabilities. Fun fact: She has a minor in Architecture and her second dream job is to flip homes.

# Meet the Board

## 1st Year Clinical Psychology Representative- Megan Rittenberg



Megan is a 1st year clinical psychology Psy.D. student. In the future, she hopes to work with children and adolescents who have anxiety, obsessive-compulsive and related disorders. Fun Fact: She has donated her hair 10 times to women and children who have lost their hair from medical diseases.



## 1st Year School Psychology Representative- Melissa Grobler

Melissa is a 1st year school psychology specialist student. She is currently working as a BCBA in an early intervention program. In her free time, she loves being outdoors, being that paddle boarding, snorkeling, kayaking, or fishing etc., she's in!

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# Meet the Faculty

Dr. Laura Cruz

Professor - Social and Cultural Bases of Assessment and Counseling

Psychologist - Palm Beach County Youth Services Department's Education and Training Center

## **Why did you choose School Psychology?**

My mother was a first grade teacher so I think the value of early intervention and the importance of literacy development was instilled in me at an early age.

## **What are some of your main interests in the field?**

My main interests in the field include best practices in English Language Learners (ELL) assessment and the assessment of neurodevelopmental disorders. I also really enjoy providing training and intervention related to positive behavioral supports.

## **What are some of your future goals? / What would you like to add to your career/ professional experience?**

I am in the process of becoming a certified Within Agency PCIT Trainer. I look forward to training future clinicians in becoming certified in PCIT to continue to expand the access of EBTs to those most in need in the community.

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program here at NSU?**

What I like most about the school psychology program at NSU is how much they invest in preparing their students to be successful school psychologists. I think the program not only offers a strong curriculum that addresses various competencies (e.g., assessment, intervention, diversity, etc.)

but also excellent field experiences and training opportunities via school affiliations and on site clinics.

## **What are your current leadership positions?**

I am currently an onsite supervisor for practicum trainees, pre-doctoral interns, and post-doctoral fellows. This is one of my favorite roles because I have the chance to help emerging psychologists develop across competencies.

## **Do you have any advice for current students?**

The words of the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg come to mind, "Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

## **How do you practice self-care?**

I really like engaging in self-compassion on a daily basis. For me, self-compassion entails being understanding with myself if I make mistake or things do not turn out how I hoped. It essentially means showing yourself the same kindness you would give to a friend in need (Neff, 2011). I find this to be so powerful because I can implement this at any time.

# Student Spotlight

Riley Christoph

1st year, Doctorate Program

**What do you really enjoy doing?**

Beaching, eating, baking, Netflix, poetry,  
and crafts

**If you had one superpower, what would  
it be?**

Teleportation

**What is your favorite book?**

The Art of Loving by Erich Fromm

**What place do you really want to visit/  
travel to?**

South Korea



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# Student Spotlight

Roni Gerard

1st year, Doctorate Program

**What do you really enjoy doing?**

Yoga, biking, Netflix, and swimming

**If you had one superpower, what would it be?**

Predict the future

**What is your favorite movie?**

Inglourious Basterds

**What place do you really want to visit/ travel to?**

Australia

**What is something that is fun and unique that makes you, you?**

I can stand on my head with both of my little kids running around



# Student Spotlight

Dyia Arun

1st year, Specialist Program

**What do you really enjoy doing?**

Listening to music, watching movies, and going to the beach

**If you had one superpower, what would it be?**

Reading minds

**What is your favorite movie?**

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

**What place do you really want to visit/ travel to?**

Rome

**What is something that is fun and unique that makes you, you?**

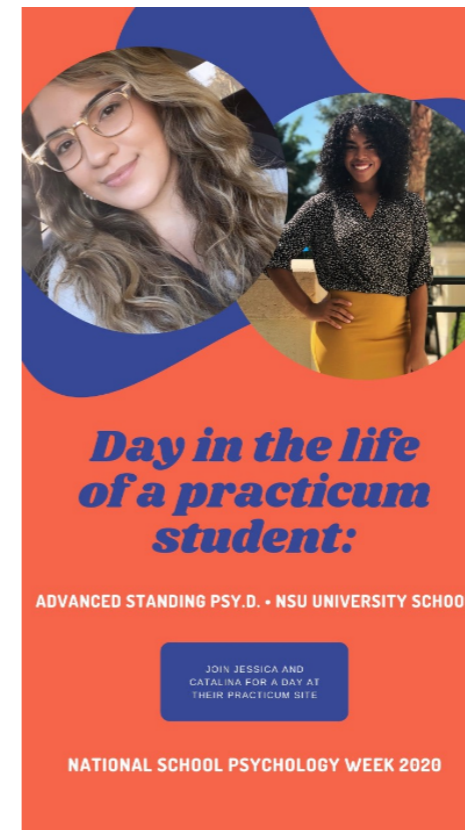
The fact that I collect vinyl records and painting



# GrASP's Impact

With the creation of GrASP's Diversity and Social Justice committee the organization, under the leadership of it's chair Jessica Wright, has been working with local undergraduate students at Miami Dade College through the NASP Exposure Project. The project aims to expose high school students and undergraduates, especially those of diverse backgrounds, to school psychology as a career. Through this work we are trying to diversify, fill in the gaps and take small steps to alleviate the critical shortage that is present in our field one presentation at a time.

Trying to make us feel not so distant in these socially distant times, GrASP focused on the theme of gratitude for this year's National School Psychology Week (NSPW) (November 9-13th). During this time once again we utilized the NASP Exposure Project platform to spread our message of "Why I chose/ love School Psychology". While sharing what it is like in the field as a practicum student during our NSPW social media takeovers, our school psychology program was shared, supported, and recognized by our students, other programs, practicing school psychologists and other organizations. These takeovers helped show not only what we do but also why we do it.

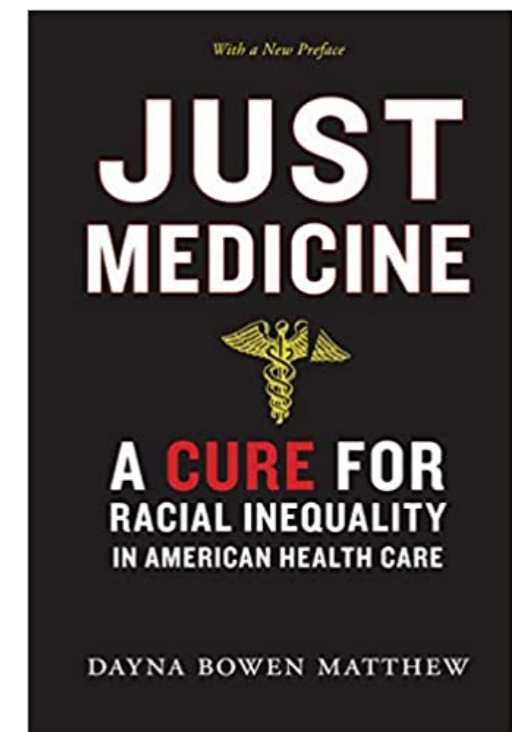


# Diversity

The first step in learning about diversity and inclusivity is learning about your own biases. The NASP Social Justice Committee (SJC) is dedicated to increasing school psychologists' awareness, knowledge, and skills related to social justice. The recommended group read for the 2020–2021 school year is Just Medicine: A Cure for Racial Inequality in American Healthcare by Dayna Matthew, PhD which can be found [here](#).

The following are other great book recommendations:

- It's Always About the Children & Today in School Psychology by Charles A. Barrett
- So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo.
- Yellow by Frank H. Wu
- The Latino Threat by Leo R. Chavez
- Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald.
- The Memo by Minda Harts
- We Are Everywhere: Protest, Power, and Pride in the History of Queer Liberation by Matthew Riemer and Leighton Brown
- Between the World and Me by Ta-nehisi Coates
- No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement by Joseph P. Shapiro



In addition, the Diversity and Social Justice Committee initiated the NASP Exposure Project presentations this semester. The purpose of this project is to expose high school students and undergraduates, especially those of diverse backgrounds, to school psychology as a career! So far, the committee has completed **nine** presentations this semester at local high schools and colleges!

# Self-Care Corner

During the new times that we have found ourselves living in, some of us have chosen to attend in-person classes while others are attending classes via Zoom. Either way, self-care is important to prevent burn out. A couple of students from the school psychology program have shared what they have been doing to participate in self-care. Blanca Melero, a doctoral student, has been getting in touch with her creative side. She has been setting aside time to do arts and crafts, gardening, and cooking! Catalina Uribe, an advanced standing student, noted that she takes her computer with her outside and works there. She finds the weather to be really relaxing. She is also taking time to work on her small business which has been “off and on for the past 4 years.” Morgan Oldham, a doctoral student, has been embracing the outdoors every weekend at a ranch in Punta Gorda.

The first-year cohort got together at the start of the semester and hosted a virtual yoga session. Meanwhile, the second-year doctoral cohort met up at the Maltz parking lot after picking up testing kits, and caught up on life while maintaining social distance. The third-year cohort has been busy with finishing directed study and applying to internship. However, they have made time to incorporate self-care through exercise, cooking, crafts, and virtual happy hours.

This is the first year that the school psychology program is offering a self-care module to assist students in being more active in their self-care. The module helps one to explore the different variations of the “Self”. It also offers psychoeducation, self-care planning calendars, ideas for self-care activities, and opportunities to share with peers some of the self-care that you have been partaking in. For more information on self-care in quarantine you can visit: [Quarantine Self-Care](#).

Don't forget to review the weekly Feel Good flyers which have lots of strategies for engaging in self-care on a regular basis!



# Ask the Interns

Matthew Hoy

4th year, Specialist Program

Broward County Public Schools

## What do you like most about the school psychology program?

I love all the different assessments we are trained in along with the valuable information they can provide about students and how to better assist them.

## Why did you choose school psychology ?

Through high school and college I had been working at an after school program in an elementary school so this field perfectly brought together my interests in psychology and working with kids.

## What steps did you take to prepare for internship?

Last year I attended the internship fair at FASP as well as a meeting our program held with current interns and first year school psychologists. Other than that I took advantage of meeting with faculty at NSU to prepare for interviews and spent a lot of time researching about the districts I was applying to, practicing potential interview questions, and reviewing eligibility criteria.

## What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?

I just completed my first case completely independent from my supervisor and I'm going to be doing my first staffing next month!

## What graduate school experience best prepared you for internship?

Probably our assessment courses and practicum experiences. Practicum in particular prepares you a lot for what to expect on internship and gives you a good base of skills to work from once you're in the field.

## What do you want to do after you graduate?

I'm still not entirely sure where the future will take me but I'm looking to practice in the public schools and eventually open up a private practice. From there, who knows!

## What has been a highlight of your time in our program?

Getting my internship offer from Broward County on call day is definitely one of my highlights. Also presenting at FASP last year was a great experience.

## What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?

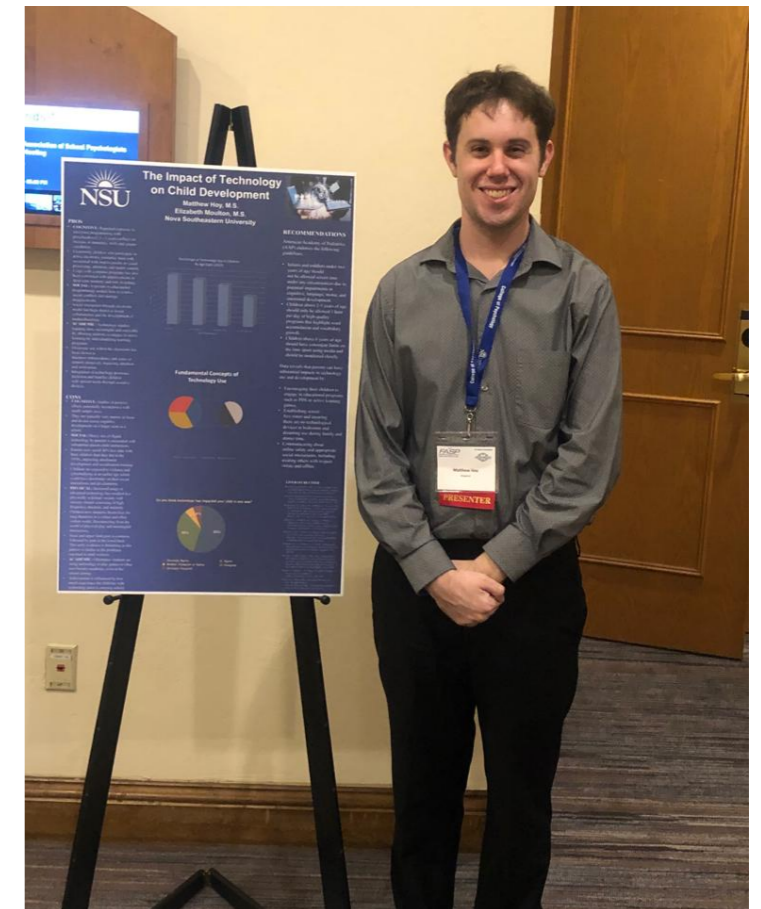
It's really hard to pick just one but I'd say don't be afraid to turn to your cohort for help. You're all going through the same thing together so build those bonds and work with each other to get through the tough times. It'll help a lot to have those people to lean on; I know I wouldn't have made it this far without all the people in my cohort!

## What do you do for self-care?

It kind of depends but I try to take at least an hour a day to completely decompress and detach from anything school or work related. Whether it's watching a TV show, reading a book, or spending some time with family, I think it's important to step away and take time for ourselves to try and avoid getting overwhelmed.

## One interesting fact that people may not know about you?

I've been skydiving and I'm looking to go again one day!



# Ask the Interns

Brooke Newton

3rd year, Specialist Program (accelerated track)

Broward County Public Schools- Gulfstream Academy of  
Hallandale Beach K-8 and Gulfstream Early Learning Center

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program?**

I like how varied our training is. After having courses in so many areas, I felt prepared going into my internship year.

## **Why did you choose school psychology ?**

I chose school psychology for multiple reasons; our roles are extremely diverse along with the types of people we get to work with. Not only do we utilize interpersonal skills while connecting with students and families but also use research and data-based methods to make decisions. Most importantly, I saw the impact of school psychologists in my own community while growing up and what a difference they can really make.

## **What steps did you take to prepare for internship?**

I made a document with possible questions that would be asked during the interview and practiced my responses. I refreshed myself on many of the assessments we had learned throughout our courses, and made sure to organize relevant documents from courses so that they would be easily accessible when I wanted to refer to them during my internship year.

## **What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?**

My highlight has been getting my own cases and seeing the full evaluation process take place. I am learning so much from getting such hands-on experience.

## **What graduate school experience best prepared you for internship?**

So far, the assessment courses have been most helpful. All of the practice testing that was required during those courses really prepared me for my current evaluations

## **What do you want to do after you graduate?**

I plan to work as a school psychologist in the public schools.

## **What has been a highlight of your time in our program?**

The amazing friends and future colleagues I have met through the program. It has been so great getting to know everyone and creating such strong bonds with like-minded others.

## **What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?**

Talk to your cohort! I was very close with everyone in my courses, which made collaborating and getting advice very convenient. We are all in this together!

## **What do you do for self-care?**

I spend lots of time outside, read, and exercise.

## **One interesting fact that people may not know about you?**

I am a fitness instructor on the evenings after work!



# Ask the Interns

Crystal Czech

4th year, Specialist Program

Citrus County Public Schools

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program?**

Assessment

## **Why did you choose school psychology ?**

During my last year of teaching I living in a small town in Northern Nevada. The school district did not have a school psychologist and being a special education teacher, I saw how kids who needed special education services were impacted by that. I realized I could either be any about the lack of school psychologists and I realized to do something about it.

## **What steps did you take to prepare for internship?**

I talked to a lot of district representatives at the FASP internship fair, took day trips to visit some of the districts I liked, practiced interviewing with faculty, and then emailed each district and kept all the information in a file folder for each specific site. I also utilized the Career Center to help update my resume and create cover letters. Lastly, I prayed about where I was supposed to go and walked through the door that was open for me.

## **What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?**

The connections that I've made with my supervisors, co-workers, and students.

## **What graduate school experience best prepared you for internship?**

Assessment classes and practicum

## **What do you want to do after you graduate?**

Work in a public school

## **What has been a highlight of your time in our program?**

In our last class of the summer semester, our cohort went out to celebrate that we had finished.

Also , when writing our final paper for Seminar II, a bunch of my cohort met at my apartment for a writing party, which was a lot of fun. My cohort also did an awesome job at celebrating everyone's birthdays!

## **What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?**

Breathe! Don't wait until the last minute to write some of the big papers, especially in Seminar and Research Design/Directed Study

## **What do you do for self-care?**

Go to the beach, sing, take a bath, and cook.

## **One interesting fact that people may not know about you?**

My junior year of high school I auditioned to be a part of Up With People, a performing arts group that travels the globe to teach young adults how to interact in a multi-cultural environment and create change in communities with varying needs.



# Ask the Interns

Jennifer Minogue

3rd year, Specialist Program (accelerated track)

Commack School District, NY- Commack Highschool , Commack Middle School

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program?**

My friends, professors and knowledge I gained.

## **Why did you choose school psychology ?**

I have anxiety and want to be able to give back in the school community. I like the school setting and what it has to offer, benefit wise and environment wise.

## **What steps did you take to prepare for internship?**

I called many schools and went to the conference hosted in my state.

## **What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?**

The relationships I am building with co-workers and students.

## **What graduate school experience best prepared you for internship?**

Paying attention in class.

## **What do you want to do after you graduate?**

Work in the school setting

## **What has been a highlight of your time in our program?**

Everything!

## **What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?**

Remember that everything is being taught for a reason, and that you will need it when you get into the field.

## **What do you do for self-care?**

Surfing, snowboarding, boating, drinking wine, and reading.

## **One interesting fact that people may not know about you?**

I have a pet ferret named Ruka.



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# Ask the Interns

Luciana Blackshear

3rd year, Specialist Program (accelerated track)

Palm Beach County Schools- JFK Middle School and West Riviera Elementary

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program?**

Getting to know everyone in my cohort while building relationships and learning from them.

## **Why did you choose school psychology ?**

I chose school psychology because I wanted to understand the process of how students were being placed in special education and to determine if a lot of African Americans were being assessed fairly. I have been employed as a Varying Exceptionalities (VE) Teacher for the majority of my teaching experience and have found that although some of my students were placed correctly, quite a few of them were not. This sparked my interest within the field. I understood the back end of special education, there was a pull inside of me to research and learn how I could help in this practice from the beginning.

## **What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?**

The highlight of my experience so far has been given autonomy of cases to support students and learn with real-world activities.

## **What graduate school experience best prepared you for internship?**

Learning how to research and administer the assessment measures has helped prepare me for my internship. My

background knowledge of ESE has helped me prepare and comprehend what I'm learning hands-on.

## **What do you want to do after you graduate?**

Hopefully, I will be hired as a School Psychologist in Palm Beach County

## **What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?**

I worked full-time as a VE Teacher during my 2 years completing courses at NSU for the school psychology program. This may be difficult for some, but it became a thrill for me. I had a vision that I didn't want to retire as a teacher and I let that be my motivator. In the beginning, I felt a lot of pressure with work and school. But once I got the hang of everything, my drive allowed me to thrive. My advice would be that you pace yourself if that's what works best for you. The late classes can be difficult for some, but know that you can get through them. Reach out to the staff if you are having issues. There's always someone to help you.

## **What do you do for self-care?**

I enjoy taking naps for rejuvenation and relaxing.

## **One interesting fact that people may not know about you?**

I have 4 Master's Degrees so far.

# Ask the Interns

Michelle Rodriguez

4th year, Specialist Program

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program?**

There is a lot to like about the school psychology program, whether it be the great professors, the small classroom sizes, and the wonderful experiences that are provided to us :)

## **Why did you choose school psychology ?**

After some research during my undergrad, I chose school psychology because I had a passion for both education and psychology. I learned that school psychologists are experts in mental health, learning, and behavior and they use all this knowledge to help children and youth succeed. This assured me that this was the career for me.

## **What steps did you take to prepare for internship?**

I think the best preparation for internship I did was familiarizing myself with the district and its protocols.

## **What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?**

I have really enjoyed talking to parents and seeing how much they appreciate the services that are being provided to their child.

## **What graduate school experiences best prepared you for internship?**

I feel that every bit of our coursework in graduate school has helped prepare me for internship.

## **What do you want to do after you graduate?**

I would like to work for a school district

## **What has been a highlight of your time in our program?**

I absolutely loved my practicum experiences, but I think the relationships that I have formed with my classmates has definitely been



a highlight for me. I know that these relationships will be long term and we will be helping each other throughout our career.

## **What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?**

KEEP YOUR NOTES! I find myself going back to old report samples, notes from 1st-year classes, and resources that my classmates and teachers have given to me. I am so thankful I kept many documents because it has helped me a ton!

## **What do you do for self-care?**

Now that things are picking up and I find myself working past the usual hours, I try to keep my Saturday's work free and spend time on myself and with my family.

## **One interesting fact that people may not know about you?**

I love to bake!

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# Ask the Interns

Youmeizi Peng

Doctorate Program

NSU University School & Reading Explorers Program

## **What do you like most about the school psychology program?**

It's flexibility to offer the trainings I want and the amount of supervision I received

## **What steps did you take to prepare for internship?**

Following the APPLIC procedures

## **What has been the highlight of your internship experience so far?**

Counseling skills

## **What graduate school experiences best prepared you for internship?**

Practicum experiences

## **What do you want to do after you graduate?**

Postdoc and licensure

## **What has been a highlight of your time in our program?**

Closeness with peers and faculty

## **What is one piece of advice about surviving and thriving during the 1st/2nd year of the program?**

Self-care! and try to enjoy the content instead of focusing on grades

## **What do you do for self-care?**

Cooking and hanging out with friends

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# Events

## Upcoming Webinars

January 22, 2021

*10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Presenter: Lenore Walker,  
Ed.D. Domestic Violence Update*

February 5, 2021

*10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Presenters: Chris Huzinec,  
M.S.Daniella Maglione, Ed.S.  
Charge: Striving Forward to Combat Adversity  
with Resiliency*

## Upcoming Conferences

February 23-26, 2021

*National Association of School  
Psychologists*

*2021 Annual Convention*

*The Power of Possibility*

*Early Registration (through 1/27/21) - \$29*

March 19 & 26, 2021

*Trainers of School Psychologists*

*2021 Annual Conference*

*Connecting for Action: Social Justice and  
Advocacy for the Profession*

*\*This is for aspiring faculty. Contact Dr. Valley-Gray or Dr.  
Cash to attend.*

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# Thank you to our contributors!

Morgan Oldham

Jessica Wright

Courtney Clayton

Nicole Jenoriki

Blanca Melero

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# Social Media

Find us on Facebook and Instagram!



[NSU GrASP Facebook Group](#)



[NSU GrASP Instragram Page](#)

