



VA | Defining
HEALTH CARE | **EXCELLENCE**
in the 21st Century



2021 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM BROCHURE

VA MIRECC Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center
VA Central Virginia Health Care System
Richmond, Virginia

Director: Scott D. McDonald, Ph.D.

The Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center's (VAMC) Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment in Richmond, VA ("MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program") **anticipates two openings for a two-year, clinical or counseling psychology postdoctoral Fellow** to begin between July 1st and September 30th, 2021. Please refer to the Application & Selection Procedures section below for application deadline and selection procedures.

Table of Contents

Contents

Table of Contents	2
Overview	3
Guiding Principles	4
Training Goals	4
Research Training Activities.....	9
Clinical Training Activities.....	14
Core Clinical Rotations.....	15
Didactics and Additional Training.....	17
Evaluation Procedures	19
Program's Evaluation of Fellow	19
Fellow's Evaluation of Program.....	19
Requirements for Completion.....	20
Minimum Requirements for Successful Completion of our Program Include:	20
Additional Suggested Benchmarks:	20
Location and Resources	21
McGuire VA Medical Center.....	21
Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).....	22
Library and Information Resources	23
Richmond, Virginia.....	23
Administrative Policies and Procedures	24
Accreditations and Memberships.....	24
Postdoctoral Residency Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data.....	25
POST-DOCTORAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM TABLES	25
Application & Selection Procedures	27
Eligibility	27
Application.....	28

Overview

The [MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program at the McGuire VAMC](#) supports the professional development of health service psychologists to become leading clinicians and clinical researchers in post-deployment mental health recovery and rehabilitation for critical areas such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance use disorders (SUD). Over the course of the two-year program, Fellows receive intensive mentoring and didactics in clinical research competencies such as grant writing, research design, and ethics while receiving supervised clinical training in cutting-edge treatments and programs. Through our partnership with McGuire's Rehabilitation Psychology Fellowship, Psychology Fellows seeking board certification may develop a training plan that fulfills eligibility requirements for board certification in Rehabilitation Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). The McGuire VAMC's Advanced Fellowship Program is affiliated with the VA Mid-Atlantic Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

The Fellows' 40-hour work week is comprised of approximately 10-15 hours/week in supervised, direct service delivery; 10-20 hours/week in clinical research activities; 4 hours/week of didactics (including 2 hours of face-to-face, individual supervision from a licensed psychologist. At least one of those hours is for supervision of clinical activities); and up to 5 hours/week of administrative experiences that support the Fellow's professional growth and individual goals. In collaboration with research mentors, Fellows are expected to develop and implement a research pilot project, publish and present findings, and utilize the latest technology for educational activities and clinical service delivery.

Early in the first year of the fellowship experience, Fellows develop a written individualized Learning Plan collaboratively with the fellowship director. The Learning Plan contains organized, experiential, and sequential learning experiences in research, clinical service, and education during each year of the fellowship based on the goals and objectives as outlined below. The Learning Plan allows Fellows to tailor their learning experiences in order to best meet their individual training needs, while also providing sufficient structure to help ensure successful completion of training goals. Through the training plan, the program offers the potential for Fellows to develop expertise in an emphasis area within the scope of post-deployment mental health, such as assessment and treatment of trauma and stress-related disorders (e.g., PTSD), caregiver support after TBI, impulsivity and substance use, and resilience in response to adversity. Opportunities for clinical research training, supervised clinical training, and didactics are outlined separately below.



Downtown Richmond, Virginia. Courtesy of Richmond Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau

Guiding Principles

The structure and activities of the MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program are designed to meet the guidelines established by the American Psychological Association and the VA Guidelines for Postdoctoral Programs. Our program is based on a scientist-practitioner model of training and, as such, provides a foundation for our Fellows to develop as independent practitioners who (1) utilize evidence-based practice in psychology (EBPP) within the context of evidence-based medicine (EBM), (2) critically evaluate the research literature to inform treatment, and (3) engage in clinical research to enhance health care. More information about the VA MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program can be found at https://www.mirecc.va.gov/mirecc_fellowship.asp and in the following article:

O'Hara, R., et al. (2010). Increasing the Ranks of Academic Researchers in Mental Health: A Multisite Approach to Postdoctoral Fellowship Training. *Academic Medicine*, 85, 41–47.

Training Goals

The purpose of the MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program is to train professional psychologists for eventual leadership roles in clinical services, clinical research, and education: particularly in VA medical center, public sector, and academic settings. This eventual expected outcome rests on two primary aims of the fellowship program: 1) the development of advanced skills in the foundational and functional competencies of professional psychology, and 2) the further development of advanced competencies in working with U.S. military Veterans and their families seeking treatment for mental health problems associated with military deployment.

Our program offers Fellows a two-year, intensive training experience in which they may partake in a rich array of "hands on" experiential training activities that foster advanced clinical competencies for independent practice as a doctoral level clinical or counseling psychologist. Fellows enjoy a thoughtful, individualized, structured curriculum in which they receive protected time to develop advanced clinical research skills, as well as a coherent program of their own clinical research. Fellows receive advanced, supervised training in health service psychology through direct clinical care experiences in a variety of inpatient, residential, and outpatient settings. Distance education learning is not generally employed for clinical training.



Credit: Chrystal Smith

Consistent with the emphasis of the Mid-Atlantic (VISN-6) MIRECC, McGuire VAMC MIRECC Fellows are encouraged to pursue clinical research and clinical training activities that focus on U.S. military post-deployment mental health. In addition, Fellows seeking board certification in Rehabilitation Psychology may develop a training plan that is consistent with the APA Division 22 Guidelines for Postdoctoral Training in Rehabilitation Psychology and fulfills eligibility requirements for board certification in Rehabilitation Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP).

Fellows are provided with structured didactics that address an array of topics ranging from advanced research methodologies, professional writing, multicultural competency, and clinical research ethics. Fellows are also encouraged to participate in local opportunities for formal presentation of their clinical research findings.

In order to fulfill the goals of fellowship training, Fellows should demonstrate an advanced level of skill and knowledge in the following areas by the completion of the fellowship program, as measured by supervisors' evaluations of the specific competencies. Foundational and functional competencies are collapsed into the following domains for ease of dissemination and discussion with Fellows. The specific skills, behaviors and attitudes described below are assessed regularly across supervised clinical and research activities using standardized evaluation forms. All training experiences are supervised, sequentially organized and designed to follow a logical flow that facilitates the acquisition of increasingly advanced knowledge and skills in the practice of health service psychology. Moreover, all training experiences are designed around our service population, U.S. military Veterans accessing VA medical and mental health care. Below we describe the competencies required for successful completion of fellowship.

Level 1—Advanced Competency Areas Required of All Programs at the Postdoctoral Level

Competency 1: Integration of Science and Practice: APA's Commission on Accreditation (CoA) recognizes science as the foundation of health service psychology. Individuals who successfully complete this program must demonstrate knowledge, skills, and competence sufficient to produce new knowledge, to critically evaluate and use existing knowledge to solve problems, and to disseminate research. This area of competence requires substantial knowledge of scientific methods, procedures, and practices. These activities conducted under mentorship provide a strong experiential learning environment. Specific areas of development include:

- an awareness of VA clinical research priorities.
- advanced skills in mental health research methodology and statistical analyses;
- skills in presenting research findings; and
- scientific writing.

Activities:

- The Fellow will identify a Research Mentor early in his or her fellowship. This Research Mentor (or alternately, a Mentorship Team) will assist the Fellow in developing a cogent and cohesive research program. The Fellow will meet with the primary Research Mentor weekly, on average.
- The Fellow will identify an area of expertise to be developed during fellowship and develop an individualized training plan that outline specific activities to develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, scientific contributions, and qualifications that are markers of success.
- The Fellow will practice evidence-based practice in psychology during supervised clinical rotations. That includes learning to critically evaluate the research literature to inform treatment.

- The Fellow will meet with the fellowship director(s) at least 3 times a year to discuss progress and address barriers to meeting competencies that cannot be achieved working with the Research Mentor alone. For example, the fellowship director(s) can assist the Fellow in developing a network of collaborators to further his or her training and development of a research program.
- Fellows will submit at least one research manuscript as first author to a peer-reviewed journal each year, in collaboration with local mentors and/or collaborators.
- Fellows are strongly encouraged to present research findings at local meetings, academic grand rounds, and/or local, national, and international conferences.
- Fellows are expected to initiate a pilot project within their first year of fellowship. The pilot project involves collecting new data or utilizing extant data that will independently add to the literature base or provide pilot data for a subsequent grant proposal. With mentors, the Fellow will develop and submit the proposal for regulatory review and approvals (e.g., IRB).
- Fellows are also encouraged to participate in other professional research activities such as journal and grant reviews. They are also encouraged to take advantage of educational opportunities at our academic affiliate and beyond, such as joining a professional association, attending grand rounds, joining research teams, and taking advanced statistics or research methods classes.

Competency 2: Individual and Cultural Diversity Issues: For a health service psychologist to be effective, he or she must develop the ability to conduct all professional activities with sensitivity to human diversity, including the ability to deliver high quality services to an increasingly diverse population. Therefore, our Fellows must demonstrate knowledge, awareness, sensitivity, and skills when working with diverse individuals and communities who embody a variety of cultural and personal background and characteristics. The APA CoA defines cultural and individual differences and diversity as including, but not limited to, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, national origin, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. The CoA recognizes that development of competence in working with individuals of every variation of cultural or individual difference is not reasonable or feasible.

Fellows are expected to demonstrate:

- an understanding of how their own personal/cultural history, attitudes, and biases may affect how they understand and interact with people different from themselves;
- knowledge of the current theoretical and empirical knowledge base as it relates to addressing diversity in all professional activities including research, training, supervision/consultation, and service;
- the ability to integrate awareness and knowledge of individual and cultural differences in the conduct of professional roles (e.g., research, services, and other professional activities). This includes the ability apply a framework for working effectively with areas of individual and cultural diversity not previously encountered over the course of their careers. Also included is the ability to work effectively with individuals whose group membership, demographic characteristics, or worldviews create conflict with their own; and

- demonstrate the ability to independently apply their knowledge and demonstrate effectiveness in working with the range of diverse individuals and groups encountered during residency, tailored to the learning needs and opportunities consistent with the program's aim(s).

Activities:

- Training in cultural and individual diversity is part of every clinical rotation. Fellows are encouraged to take at least one clinical rotation in SCI or Polytrauma, in which disability services are at the forefront of the learning experience.
- Fellows also attend diversity-focused seminars, facilitated by the Multicultural Training Committee within the Psychology Section of the Mental Health Service.

Competency 3: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues: Fellows will become competent (as appropriate for an entry level professional) in professional and collegial conduct and will demonstrate competency in each of the following areas:

- Be knowledgeable of and act in accordance with each of the following:
 - the current version of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct;
 - relevant laws, regulations, rules, and policies governing health service psychology at the organizational, local, state, regional, and federal levels;
 - relevant professional standards and guidelines;
 - ethical guidelines that govern the appropriate conduct of human subjects research; and
 - become appropriately familiar with the wide array of legal issues pertinent to the proper conduct of human subjects related research.
- Recognize ethical dilemmas as they arise and apply ethical decision-making processes in order to resolve the dilemmas.
- Conduct self in an ethical manner in all professional activities.

Activities:

- These competencies will be observed across all aspects of the Fellow's professional practice and will be assessed through clinical and research supervisor evaluations.
- Fellows will complete VA research ethics and CITI training programs.
- Fellows will be encouraged to attend Grand Rounds and training seminars that are focused on clinical and research practice ethics.

Level 2—Program-Specific Competencies

Competency 4: Direct Service Delivery: Fellows will demonstrate independent-practitioner competence in differential diagnosis, psychological assessment, and empirically supported psychological treatments.

- Fellows are required to complete at least six (6) supervised clinical rotations during

the 2-year fellowship program at approximately 10-15 hours per week. A rotation in a particular clinic or population can be repeated, given substantial addition to training goals to foster advanced skills.

- At least two of the rotations are directly applicable to post-deployment mental health (e.g., PTSD Clinic, Polytrauma Network Site Clinic). Rotations can be extended in order to develop advanced skills (e.g., a second rotation in the PTSD Clinic to complete training in Prolonged Exposure) or to focus on developing new skills (e.g., a neuropsychology rotation followed by an individual psychotherapy rotation in the Polytrauma Network Site clinic).
- Fellows are encouraged to shape rotations that advance their training needs, while also complementing their research interests. For example, a Fellow who is interested specifically in women's mental health care may seek supervision to develop a clinic and outreach program specifically targeting female Veterans.

Competency 5: Organization, Management, Administration, and Program Evaluation:

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

Activities:

- Fellows are encouraged to attend psychology staff meetings as well as staff meetings of other services in which the Fellow performs clinical work (e.g., Polytrauma).
- Fellows will be assigned readings relevant to VA systems issues (e.g., peer-reviewed articles, VA Directives) by the fellowship director that will be discussed during monthly meetings.
- Fellows may have the opportunity to assist in organizational planning and evaluation, such as facilitating intern didactic seminars, serving as a committee member on quality improvement projects, and coordinating research lab activities.
- Competencies in this area will largely be demonstrated by efficient and autonomous successful navigation of the VA system of care.

Competency 6: Post-Deployment Mental Health: Fellows will develop specialized, advanced competencies in working with U.S. military veterans presenting with deployment-related mental health problems.

Activities:

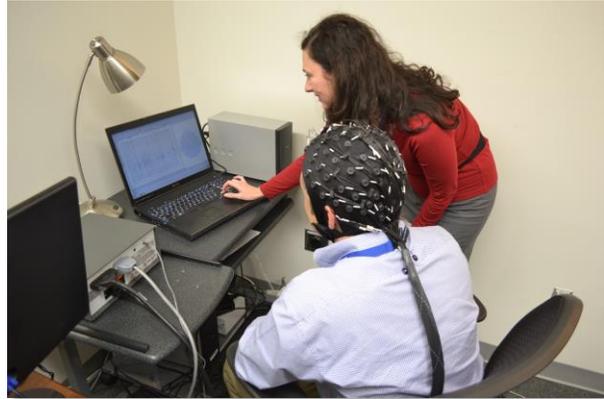
- Fellows will gain experience through providing clinical services to a diverse Veteran population seeking treatment for conditions such as PTSD, substance abuse, and TBI.
- Fellows will gain advanced skills in conducting clinically focused research pertinent to the mental health needs of today's Veterans.

Research Training Activities

The McGuire VAMC offers many unique training opportunities in research. It has a vibrant research infrastructure, with over 80% of the medical center's research having a direct impact on patient care in the VA system and in the community. McGuire VAMC MIRECC Fellows are afforded opportunities to become involved in research regarding service delivery (e.g., intervention and performance evaluation) as well as archival data analysis and experimental studies.

Research resources for Fellows include access to data analysis software (e.g., SAS and R) through the VA's [VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure](#) (VINCI) and access to archival data collected from over 3500 Veterans in the MIRECC's PDMH Study. Fellows traditionally apply for and are offered an academic appointment in the Department of Psychology at our academic affiliate, VCU. An academic affiliation provides the Fellow an opportunity to audit select classes, access to library resources and electronic articles via a wide assortment of online databases (e.g., PubMed, World of Science, PsycINFO), and the prospect of providing training and research collaboration in the academic community.

All MIRECC Fellows have the opportunity to participate in the Mid-Atlantic MIRECC's multisite Post-Deployment Mental Health-Longitudinal (PDMH-L) Study (Site PI: Scott McDonald, PhD), that collects health, psychiatric, and genetic information from the over 3500 Iraq and Afghanistan war-era Veterans who have served since 2001 and are in our extant research database. Fellows may receive comprehensive training on administration of the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM Disorders (SCID), administer about one a month, and join monthly SCID fidelity calls. Fellows can also participate in other MIRECC-affiliated studies, such as the MIRECC Neurocognitive Core's investigation of neuropsychiatric sequelae associated with TBI and PTSD in Iraq and Afghanistan war-era Veterans.



There are many possibilities for research collaboration with other on-site centers, including the [Long-Term Impact of Military-Relevant Brain Injury Consortium and Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium](#) (LIMBIC and CENC), and the [TBI Model Systems](#). Past Fellows and trainees have also received mentorship or enjoyed collaboration with researchers at our academic affiliate, [Virginia Commonwealth University](#) (VCU) in the Departments of Psychology, Psychiatry, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation; the Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics (VIPBG); and the [Center of Researcher Sciences and Engineering](#) (CERSE). Areas of research include substance abuse research (Jim Bjork, PhD), risk and resiliency for traumatic-stress-related conditions (Ananda Amstadter, PhD), social justice in disability and health (Paul Perrin, PhD, ABPP), and insomnia (Bruce Rybarczyk, PhD, ABPP).



Research goals are achieved through mentored research activities, provision of research resources, and didactics. Research mentorship provides Fellows the opportunity to learn from an established local investigator as well as co-mentors from within the local research community, within the network of Mid-Atlantic MIRECC investigators, or VA investigators across the nation. Fellows who develop a mentorship team that combine expertise from researcher-clinicians at the McGuire

VAMC, researcher-clinicians at VCU, and beyond, are especially likely to be successful, as establishing an integrated team maximizes learning opportunities in each venue.

A list of potential primary and secondary/co-mentors can be found in the list below. In the past, Fellows have successfully integrated others into the mentorship team to round out research goals.

Research Advisors and Mentors:

Ananda B. Amstadter, Ph.D., 2008, Auburn University

Location(s): Virginia Commonwealth University, MCV Campus

Faculty Appointment: Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Research Interests: Identification of risk and resiliency factors, biologic and psychosocial in nature, for traumatic-stress related conditions.

Role of Fellow: TBD.

Biosketch/CV: <http://vipbg.vcu.edu/people/ananda-amstadter/>

James Bjork, Ph.D., 1999, University of Texas-Houston (Biomedical Sciences with a Concentration in Neuroscience)

Location(s): McGuire VA Medical Center (RICVAMC)(5/8) and Virginia Commonwealth University

Faculty Joint Appointment: Associate Professor, Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies (IDAS) and Departments of Psychiatry, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Research Interests: My interests focus on the neurobiological underpinnings of impulsivity, incentive processing as they relate to health outcomes affected by self-control. I use neurobehavioral tasks, eye-tracking, physiological monitoring, and functional MRI to probe how neurocircuit function relates to each of: risk for suicide, risk for substance use disorder (SUD) and consequences of SUD. Two key goals are to identify individual differences in neurocircuit function or cognition that could identify select patients suitable for certain psychotropic medications (personalized medicine), and to identify neurocircuit abnormalities that could serve as intermediate outcomes/targets for trials of psychotropic medications or other interventions for addiction treatment.

Current Research: At RICVAMC, I am currently funded by the American Foundation for

Suicide Prevention to apply a spectrum of specialized decision-making and perceptual processing tasks to Veterans with and without suicide attempt histories and with and without traumatic brain injury histories, to determine if behavioral tendencies toward facile cognitive processing on these tasks correlate with suicide attempt histories. I am also collecting pilot data on impulsivity as it relates to health outcomes in addiction, spinal cord injury, and obesity. I am also a site investigator for clinical trials of pharmacogenetics and medications that may improve self-control for addiction recovery. At VCU, I am site PI of the NIH signature Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) longitudinal neuroimaging study of youth. I also have an NIH grant to study developmental differences in reward processing in the brain as a function of difficulty/context. I am also conducting industry-funded fMRI research on reward, threat, and inhibitory processing in borderline personality disorder, and I am investigating brain signatures of proactive cognitive control in cocaine use disorder.

Role of Fellow: A research fellow would be expected to provide data-collection support, including administration of structured clinical interviews for DSM-IV/5 (SCID; training available at VCU joint appointment laboratory), administration of desktop neurocognitive research tasks with and without eye-tracking and physiological monitoring, and administration of tasks for fMRI, as well as in identifying suitable veterans for study using astute IRB-approved medical records searches. Fellows may be able to initiate side projects within scope and budgetary constraints of funded projects, and would have latitude for designing and executing lower-cost behavioral studies. Some activities (notably fMRI) may take place at VCU, at the discretion of MIRECC program directors. MIRECC fellows with a bona-fide long-term goal of independent research using fMRI can be trained in design, administration and analysis of fMRI tasks and brain image data. In return, the fellow can expect comprehensive hands on experience in human biobehavioral neuroscience research, with conference presentations and co-authorship or even primary authorship on publications resulting from the research, commensurate with intellectual effort.

Biosketch/CV:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/myncbi/1j9kg7s9ygtQM/bibliography/46566241/public/?sort=date&direction=ascending>

Daniel W. Klyce Ph.D., ABPP, 2012, Purdue University

Location(s): McGuire VA Medical Center and Virginia Commonwealth University, MCV Campus

Faculty Appointment: Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, VCU School of Medicine

Research Interests: Serves as Site Co-Principal Investigator for the VA Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems (VA TBIMS) study.

Role of Fellow: Fellows will have the opportunity to receive training, obtain certification, and subsequently assist with VA TBIMS data collection; first-author or co-author TBIMS manuscripts in collaboration with national colleagues; collaborate with members of various TBIMS special interests groups in developing new projects; and collaborate on local projects across agencies in the Richmond area (i.e., VCU and the Sheltering Arms Institute).

Biosketch/CV: See CV/Profile on [LinkedIn](#)

Scott D. McDonald, Ph.D., 2006, Virginia Commonwealth University

Location(s): McGuire VA Medical Center

Faculty Appointments: Affiliate Assistant Professor, Departments of Psychology and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Clinical Duties: SCI Neuropsychologist at the McGuire VAMC. Dr. McDonald serves as Director for the MIRECC Psychology Fellowship program.

Research Interests: Adjustment and resilience after acquired physical disability such as TBI and SCI. PTSD assessment.

Current Research: Site-PI for the VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post-Deployment Mental Health Longitudinal Study. Neilsen Foundation funding (PI: Paul Perrin, PhD at VCU) to examine a transitional assistance program for caregivers of Veterans with SCI. MIRECC pilot funding to adapt the Resilience and Adjustment Intervention for Veterans (RAI-VA) with mild TBI. Other projects include an evaluation of mental health and adjustment among Veterans living with SCI and development of an intervention to aid the adjustment and lower risk of suicidality among Veterans with lower-severity, AIS D-rated SCI. I am also a collaborator of the LIMBIC and CENC consortiums.

Role of Fellow: Fellows working in my lab can expect to receive “in the trenches” exposure to VA mental and behavioral health rehabilitation research. They will learn about VA research processes and procedures including IRB workings, grant management, and how to develop relationships with clinic leadership and staff to successfully carry out VA clinical research. Fellows have access to several clinical research databases for writing manuscripts and generating research ideas. They are expected to choose an area of interest early in fellowship and collaboratively develop a pilot project that fits with Dr. McDonald’s current research interests. Fellows may attend research staff meetings and will have the opportunity to supervise research assistants. Finally, Fellows will receive an introduction to multi-site research, have the opportunity to collaborate with Mid-Atlantic MIRECC investigators and other colleagues, and develop professional networks.

Biosketch/CV: See CV on [LinkedIn](#)

Paul B. Perrin, Ph.D., ABPP

Location(s): McGuire VA Medical Center and Virginia Commonwealth University, Monroe Park Campus

Faculty Appointments: Associate Professor, Departments of Psychology, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Director of the Health Psychology Doctoral Program

Positions: Psychologist (Clinical Investigator) and Co-Principal Investigator, McGuire VA Medical Center Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems Study

Research Interests: My research area of “social justice in disability and health” encompasses three facets: (a) cultural, familial, and international approaches to disability rehabilitation and adjustment, particularly in underserved and minority populations with neurological conditions; (b) social determinants of health (e.g., stigma, access to integrated care, personal and collective strengths); and (c) social justice approaches to understand and dismantle oppression. I have a split appointment between VCU and the McGuire VA Medical Center, and at McGuire, my primary goal is to facilitate research on psychosocial adjustment to neurological injury among

Veterans.

Clinical Interests: Behavioral medicine, trauma, cultural sensitivity, rehabilitation psychology.

Role of Fellow: Fellows working with me often perform secondary data analyses of data I or my colleagues have collected and write their own manuscripts. I provide hands-on training in advanced statistical analyses and work closely with fellows in manuscript writing and submission. Fellows often join my lab, attend biweekly lab meetings, have access to my VCU lab space, and work collaboratively with my large team of PhD students and other fellows. I also help to facilitate fellows' ideas and efforts in launching new studies in areas that overlap with some of my own or my doctoral students' research areas.

Biosketch/CV: <https://psychology.vcu.edu/people/faculty/perrin.html>

Bruce Rybarczyk, Ph.D., ABPP-Rp, 1988, Virginia Commonwealth University

Location(s): Virginia Commonwealth University, Monroe Park Campus

Faculty Appointments: Professor, Department of Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Positions: Director of the Clinical Psychology Program at Virginia Commonwealth University.

He is board certified in Rehabilitation Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. He serves as Associate Editor for the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*.

Research Interests: *Understanding and facilitating the psychological adaptation to chronic medical illness and disability.*

Clinical Interests: *Clinical health psychology, behavioral sleep medicine, primary care psychology, and clinical geropsychology.*

Role of Fellow: Learn assessment and intervention methodology for CBT-I protocols and implement a study at the VA during the training year under supervision of mentor.

Biosketch/CV: <https://psychology.vcu.edu/people/faculty/rybarczyk.html>

Zina Trost, Ph.D., 2010, Ohio University (Clinical Health Psychology); Residency, University of Washington Medical Center (Rehabilitation Psychology); Fellowship, McGill University (Pain Psychology)

Location(s): Virginia Commonwealth University, MCV Campus

Faculty Appointment: Associate Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation; Affiliate Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, VCU; CERCE

Research Interests: My research interests fall into three broad categories.

- 1) First, I am interested in cognitive, affective, and behavioral factors that may contribute to development of chronic pain/disability or facilitate positive adjustment following physical injury. Currently my work focuses on the role of *perceptions of injustice* regarding one's pain, injury, or circumstance. I am especially interested in the intersection of injury-related injustice perceptions with larger societal inequities, such as discrimination.
- 2) Second, I am interested in how we understand the pain and suffering of others, and in particular whether individuals (e.g., healthcare providers) may make decisions based on unconscious bias regarding patient characteristics, such as gender, weight, or race.
- 3) Finally, my work applies emerging virtual technologies to pressing issues in chronic pain, disability, and rehabilitation. My currently funded research employs a "virtual walking" paradigm to alleviate chronic neuropathic pain in individuals with spinal cord injury. We

are also using haptic virtual reality to restore touch perception among individuals with 'discomplete' SCI. These are Department of Defense-funded international and multisite projects.

Role of Fellow: The role of the fellow would be shaped in collaboration with the mentor and would reflect the fellow's specific interests in the above areas and individual career goals. As such, the fellow may have opportunity to (1) collect data as part of ongoing projects, (2) prepare manuscripts or presentations from existing data sources, (3) initiate and execute an original project of interest, (4) contribute to grant preparation, or a combination thereof.

Biosketch/CV: <https://medschool.vcu.edu/expertise/detail.html?ID=trostrz>

William Walker, M.D., 1987, Virginia Commonwealth University

Location(s): Virginia Commonwealth University, Medical College of Virginia

Faculty Appointments: Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R), Virginia Commonwealth University.

Positions: Ernst and Helga Prosser Professor and Vice Chairman of Clinical Care in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation. Study Chairman for the Long Term Impact of Military Brain Injury Consortium (LIMBIC) prospective longitudinal study (PLS), a continuation and expansion of the Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium (CENC) PLS.

Research Interests: Traumatic brain injury and pain assessment.

Clinical Interests: Brain injury, concussion, neuro-rehabilitation, and spasticity.

Role of Fellow: TBD.

Biosketch/CV: Dr Walker is board-certified in PM&R with over 30 years of experience performing clinical care and clinical research in persons with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and other neurologic disorders. He has been on the VCU PM&R faculty continuously since completing his residency in 1991. He is an attending physician for the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit at Sheltering Arms Institute, a collaboration with VCU Health; Medical Director of the Concussion Care Clinic at VCUHS; and has office hours at the McGuire VAMC in Richmond. He is active on multiple clinical research grants involving persons with TBI including the LIMBIC-CENC multicenter PLS of U.S. military personnel and Veterans with prior combat deployments and variable mild TBI histories, from none (controls) to many. Dr Walker is also a long-standing investigator on the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) funded TBI-Model Systems of Care (TBIMS), has over 80 peer reviewed original research manuscripts published, and has garnered multiple research awards. His varied research interests include TBI outcomes and prediction, post-traumatic headaches, other TBI effects and comorbidities, neurorehabilitation treatments, and military and Veterans health.

Clinical Training Activities

Fellows dedicate approximately 10-15 hours/week to supervised training in direct patient care. Fellows receive training in inpatient, outpatient, and specialty care settings to provide them with

opportunities to build clinical specialization in post-deployment mental health. Fellows complete six, 4-month clinical rotations in their two-year fellowship, reflective of their interests, training needs, and availability. Multiple rotations may be completed within one clinic as long as the learning experiences are cumulative and graduated in complexity. That strategy is especially useful for learning interventions that take longer, such CBT and exposure-based treatments that require 12-20 weekly sessions. Fellows will generally select a focus for the rotation in collaboration with the clinic director or primary supervisor when developing a rotation training plan (e.g., intake assessment, psychotherapy, or neuropsychological assessment). Many rotations emphasize post-deployment mental health (e.g., PTSD Clinic and Polytrauma Network Site). Regardless of rotation choice, the rotation training plan should include a strategy for learning about post-deployment mental health in the context of the patients and setting. Although the core rotations have been consistently available for several years, **available clinical rotations may change unexpectedly depending on clinical needs, patient flow, and availability of supervision.** Additional information regarding potentially available rotations and a list of supervisors can be found in [McGuire's Internship Program Brochure](#).

Clinical supervision is monitored for quality by the Director of Psychology Training, the Psychology Executive Training Committee, and leadership of the Mental Health Service. Fellows receive at least one hour per week of individual, face-to-face, regularly scheduled clinical supervision, conducted by licensed psychologists with expertise in the areas being supervised. Supervision provided is relevant to the actual clinical services rendered by the Fellow. Fellows receive guidance for how to track aggregate clinical hours towards Virginia or other state licensure requirements for clinical psychologists, if needed. The state of Virginia allows the use of pre-doctoral clinical hours toward licensure. Thus, if seeking Virginia licensure, Fellows are expected to determine whether they will need to contribute post-doctoral residency hours to licensure. If so, Fellows must request approval to begin a residency from the state of Virginia prior to initiation of clinical activities.

Core Clinical Rotations

Post-Deployment Mental Health Clinical Rotations:

Polytrauma Network Site (PNS): Fellows provide a variety of psychological and neuropsychological services to outpatients in the Polytrauma outpatient program including psychological assessment, comprehensive neuropsychological evaluations, treatment planning, psychotherapy, family counseling, suicide and violence risk assessment, as well as provide behavioral health and pain management interventions. PNS patients include a large percentage of Iraq and Afghanistan War-era Veterans with complex needs for conditions such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), limb amputation, post-concussion syndrome (PCS), PTSD, and chronic pain. Fellows participate as part of an interdisciplinary outpatient team involving medical, rehabilitation, and mental health providers assessing and treating PCS, PTSD, pain, and other comorbid problems. Fellows with limited experience with inpatient rehabilitation of moderate-to-severe TBI may request hands-on experience in our Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center as a prerequisite (concurrent experience is acceptable) to learn more about a patient's transition from

inpatient to outpatient care. The Fellow generally chooses an emphasis area prior to the rotation such as neuropsychology, cognitive processing therapy (CPT)/prolonged exposure (PE) for PTSD psychotherapy, or individual and family psychotherapy.

PTSD Clinical Team (PCT): The PTSD Clinic accepts patients with military-related PTSD, although psychiatric comorbidity, medical issues, and challenging psychosocial issues are also common. Fellows have the opportunity to: 1) administer program intake interviews, 2) co-lead PTSD skills and education groups, 3) co-lead evidence-based PTSD groups (e.g., CPT), and 4) conduct individual psychotherapy. Periodically, Fellows may also participate in the PTSD/Substance Use Disorders sub-rotation (Dr. Meyer) that involves co-leading treatment using the evidence-based "Seeking Safety" program. Fellows are also encouraged to attend PTSD Treatment Team meetings. Through these opportunities, Fellows are provided the opportunity to hone their skills in clinical interviewing, differential diagnosis, evidence-based psychotherapy (EBP) for PTSD (e.g., individual and group-based CPT), and the delivery of psycho-education. Fellows are also provided exposure to systems and administrative issues in the management of a VA PTSD Clinic.

Other Available Clinical Rotations:

Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center (PRC): Fellows provide neuropsychological and rehabilitation psychology services to inpatients on the 16-bed, CARF-accredited acute inpatient brain injury (TBI) rehabilitation program. This program admits Veterans with acute combat and non-combat injuries including TBI. These patients require a comprehensive, interdisciplinary rehabilitation program to optimally treat the complex medical, psychological, rehabilitation, and prosthetic needs of these individuals. Fellows participate in psychotherapeutic and behavioral interventions, neuropsychological evaluations, interdisciplinary rounds and meetings, and family conferences. Fellows participate in providing interventions to patients and family members, who often stay in a special residence on grounds for the duration of the inpatient rehabilitation stay.

Spinal Cord Injury: RVAMC is one of twenty-four VAMC specialty care center for Spinal Cord Injury. This eight-bed, CARF accredited program provides fellows with knowledge, skills and abilities in the following areas: Understanding of the basic physiologic changes which occur with various levels and degrees of spinal cord injury and the physical medicine, pharmacological and adaptive/assistive equipment available; Participation on a multidisciplinary rehabilitation team; assessment of personality, emotional, and cognitive functioning in relation to Veterans successful participation in rehabilitation; Provision of individual, family and group therapies to address psychosocial, sexual, vocational and pain problems arising from spinal cord injury; and understanding of basic interventions to assist with adopting healthier lifestyles (e.g., smoking cessation, substance use, weight management, recreational activities).

Mental Health Clinic: Fellows will carry a caseload of short-term psychotherapy patients, lead or co-lead psychotherapy, skills, and psycho-education groups, and administer intake interviews. The Fellow will be exposed to a wide range of presenting problems including acute crisis stabilization, severe mental illness, and personality disorders. Fellows will be exposed to

evidence-based treatments, interdisciplinary treatment planning, and consultation.

Substance Abuse: The substance abuse rotation provides opportunities for supervised clinical training in inpatient, outpatient, and residential settings.

Other clinical rotations are periodically available, including the Polytrauma Transitional Rehabilitation Center (PTRP), Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), pain management, health psychology, mental health clearance (e.g., organ transplant and spinal cord stimulator), primary care mental health, home-based primary care and geriatrics, women's health, geropsychology, and inpatient psychiatry. In the past, Fellows have also developed clinical rotations with eligible supervisors in areas of interest.

Didactics and Additional Training

Mentored research and supervised clinical training are enhanced with a progression of didactic opportunities including research methods, statistics, epidemiology, grant writing, mental health systems, quality improvement methods, and evidence based clinical assessment and intervention. Educational opportunities include not only didactics, but also mentored research training, training in evidence-based psychotherapies (EBPs), supervised supervision of junior clinicians and research assistants, teaching activities, and opportunities to hone their research presentation skills.

The **core, mandatory didactics** include a national didactic seminar series offered via distance education technology featuring nationally renowned presenters, a local didactic seminar series featuring McGuire VAMC staff, and a diversity seminar. The system-wide MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program videoconference seminar series ("V-Tels") offers Fellows a broad range of topics including those covering state-of-the-art research methodologies, biostatistics, intervention and services research, quality improvement methods, grant funding, and career development. The local didactic seminar for McGuire trainees highlights VA staff presenting various issues related to research and treatment of Veterans within the VA system, such as PTSD and SUD comorbidity, military culture and perceptions of mental health, psychological factors of diabetes mellitus, and clinical considerations for patients with history of TBI. The diversity seminar offers structured training in awareness of individual differences and cultural competence and features internal and external presenters as well as case discussions. In addition to organized learning activities, Fellows are expected to identify specialized didactic experiences (e.g., APA-accredited trainings through VA TMS, regional MIRECC webinars and grand rounds, web-based lectures from professional organizations) based on an individual Fellow's identified learning interests and needs. In total, Fellows participate in an average of at least two hours per week of structured learning activities beyond clinical supervision and research mentorship.

Additionally, Fellows have a host of other **optional training and educational opportunities** available to them, including:

- Auditing of graduate courses offered by VCU's Department of Psychology to support each Fellow's specific learning needs and objectives.

- VA (local and national) and VCU grand rounds.
- VA journal clubs and seminars.
- Online trainings in leadership, clinical proficiencies, and personal growth through the VA Learning University (VALU).
- Clinical training in evidence-based psychotherapies (EBPs).

Several **other learning activities** foster development across professional competencies. These include:

- **Staff meetings:** Fellows participate as members of the McGuire VAMC's professional community in a variety of ways. Fellows attend the monthly Psychology Section staff meetings, the monthly Mental Health Service staff meetings, and if possible, the staff meetings of the unit(s) or services on which they provide clinical service. Staff meetings provide Fellows with an opportunity to learn about pragmatic issues of professional relationships in a complex organization. They are exposed to systems-level considerations that affect healthcare delivery systems, work conditions, and the discipline of psychology.
- **Professional meetings:** Fellows are encouraged to attend professional meetings and conventions of their choice as a means of participating in the larger professional world, and of pursuing individual professional interests. The McGuire VAMC provides funding for travel and registration for MIRECC Fellows to attend one combined national mental health research and planning meeting per year (*NOTE: all travel funding is subject to VA-wide travel approvals and cannot be guaranteed*). Authorized absence may be granted for such activities in an amount comparable to other Psychology staff. Absences for such meetings must be negotiated with the supervisor and submitted electronically to the supervisor for approval.
- **Instruction and supervision of other trainees:** Fellows are able to be involved in training more junior psychology trainees at McGuire VAMC through lecturing, mentoring, and clinical supervision.
- **Professional presentations:** Fellows are expected to present at least once for the MIRECC Advanced Fellowship video teleconference seminar series, as well as for the local didactic series and diversity seminar. Fellows may seek out additional presentation options with local grand rounds, in-service, VCU course, or other appropriate venue. Fellows are also expected to present research data (e.g., poster, oral presentation, symposiums) at a national or international professional meeting or conference.

A Note About Telework

In the past, and under normal operating procedures, Fellows were not eligible for telework. Should circumstances warrant Fellows work from home, all clinical team meetings and didactics will be available via online options. The VA offers a secure telehealth option for patients, VA Video Connect, which can also be used by Fellows working remotely. Inpatient rotations may need to be modified to maintain the safety of both patients and providers. If telework is necessary, Training Directors and rotation supervisors will work with Fellows to modify their individual training plans to maintain continuity of care for patients and continuity of training.

Evaluation Procedures

Program's Evaluation of Fellow

Core training goals and objectives will be discussed with the Fellow at the beginning of the fellowship training period and an individualized learning plan will be collaboratively drafted. Fellows are encouraged to work with the fellowship director(s) and research mentors to individualize goals and objectives that are consonant with his or her research program and career plan within the structure of the goals and training activities noted above.

Clinical rotation supervisors and research supervisors complete standardized evaluation at the mid-point and at the end of each 4-month rotation using the "Supervisor's Evaluation of Postdoctoral Fellow General Clinical Competencies" form. Feedback is expected to be as specific as possible and communicated in a respectful manner. The supervisor and Fellow discuss the formal evaluation, and both sign it before it is placed in the Fellow's training file.

At the end of each rotation, the "Fellowship Director's Overall Summary of Areas of Competence" is completed by the fellowship director and discussed with the Fellow. The fellowship director's summary is written feedback, structured to match the competencies on the supervisor ratings forms as well as feedback and tracking of the individualized learning goals and requirements for fellowship completion. The fellowship director's summary is based on feedback from clinical supervisors, research mentors, the fellowship director's observations, the Fellow's self-assessment (summarizing key activities and achievements during the rating period), and other available information. The supervisor and Fellow discuss the formal evaluation, and both sign it before it is placed in the Fellow's training file. The fellowship director(s) and the Fellow also use this meeting to collaboratively assess progress toward achieving goals and objectives and modify the training plan as needed.

Because feedback and instruction are most valuable when immediate and specific, supervisors, training directors, and Fellows are expected to exchange feedback routinely as a normal part of their daily interactions.

Fellow's Evaluation of Program

A formal system of evaluation is used for Fellows to provide feedback on Fellow's clinical supervisory, mentorship, and overall fellowship program experience. The Fellows complete formal rating scales of their experience in clinical rotations at the end of each rotation and in the overall fellowship after their first year and at the end of the training program to indicate their satisfaction with the training experiences, outcomes, quality of supervision provided, didactic experiences, research involvement, and facilities and resources available. However, keeping in mind that feedback is most useful when it is immediate and specific; Fellows are encouraged to provide informal input and feedback as a routine part of the supervision process, in their weekly meetings with their research mentor(s), and in meetings with the fellowship director. Clinical supervision evaluations are to be discussed and signed by the Fellow and supervisor/mentor prior to being submitted to the fellowship director. A copy is provided to the fellowship director as a means of monitoring program quality. The fellowship director and Fellow will review the Fellows' ratings and work collaboratively to address any areas of concern. Fellows receive a

copy of the Fellowship Training Manual which provides additional detail about due process procedures in the event of trainee grievance.

Requirements for Completion

To successfully complete the program, Fellows must successfully meet or exceed expectations in competencies set based on the goals of the fellowship. Core objectives and goals for our program, associated competencies, and methods for evaluation are delineated above. Applicants may request a copy of the program's competency evaluation forms for more information. Below we outline the minimum requirements for successful completion of our program. These requirements are consistent with the overall mandate from the VA Office of Academic Affiliations of the national program.

Minimum Requirements for Successful Completion of our Program Include:

1. Successful completion (via formal evaluation with supervisors and reflected in the "Fellowship Director's Overall Summary of Competence") of assigned training activities in health service psychology.
 - Completion of requisite hours (4160 hours).
 - Successfully met or surpassed expectations for developing competencies based on goals of the fellowship as described above via formal evaluation by supervisors and fellowship director(s).
2. Successful completion of research goals (via formal evaluation by supervisors, research mentors, and fellowship director(s)).
 - Fellows will submit at least one research manuscript as first author to a peer-reviewed journal each year, in collaboration with local mentors and/or collaborators.
 - Fellows are expected to initiate a pilot project within their first year of fellowship. The pilot project involves collecting new data or utilizing extant data that will independently add to the literature base or provide pilot data for a subsequent grant proposal. With mentors, the Fellow will develop and submit the proposal for regulatory review and approvals (e.g., IRB).
 - Fellows will demonstrate advanced research competencies such as study design, an ability to critically review literature, scientific writing skills, effective collaboration, and knowledge of research regulatory mechanisms and ethics.
 - Fellows will develop an area of expertise, demonstrated by the knowledge, skills, scientific contributions, and qualifications that are appropriate for that area.
3. Successful completion of required didactics.
4. Maintenance of consistently professional and ethical conduct in professional setting throughout duration of training.

Additional Suggested Benchmarks:

1. Licensure (or at least successful completion of EPPP).
2. Job market preparation (successful submission of grant and/or completion of job search).

Finally, our expectations of Fellows (and staff) extend beyond performance and achievement. We expect Fellows to consistently behave in a fully professional and ethical manner consistent with guidelines, laws, and regulations of the APA, VA, and the State of Virginia:

- APA's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>)
- McGuire VAMC's Behavioral Code of Conduct
- Laws and Regulations of the State of Virginia (<http://www.dhp.state.va.us/psychology>)

Fellows are expected to adhere to all relevant McGuire VAMC policies regarding the diagnosis, treatment and clinical management of patients and the appropriate conduct of research. Fellows are to ensure patient privacy and confidentiality by adhering to HIPAA guidelines and McGuire VAMC policies regarding the secure storage of clinical research data, etc.

Upon fulfillment of these requirements, a Certificate of Completion is awarded, verifying the Fellow's completion of a postdoctoral training program.

Location and Resources

McGuire VA Medical Center

The [McGuire VAMC](#) is a 1A designated, tertiary care referral center located in Richmond, Virginia and is part of the VA Central Virginia Health Care System (CVHCS). The training and research infrastructure is shared with our Academic Affiliate, [Virginia Commonwealth University](#) (VCU). The medical center offers a full range of health care services including comprehensive outpatient care to complex inpatient services. The medical center has 427

operating beds, which includes internal medicine, surgery, neurology, physical and rehabilitation medicine, intermediate care, acute and sustaining spinal cord injury, skilled nursing home care, palliative care, and primary and secondary levels of psychology and psychiatric care programs. There are approximately 53,000 Veterans enrolled at the RVAMC, including 5,600 female Veterans. About 44,000 Veteran patients were served in calendar year 2009.



McGuire VA Medical Center

The McGuire VAMC is the host site for several notable specialized clinical and research centers in addition to the [VA Mid-Atlantic MIRECC](#), including:

- [Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers](#) (PRC)
- VA Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Center (PADRECC)
- VA Epilepsy Center of Excellence (ECOE)
- Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders regional center
- VA Amputation System of Care (ASoC) regional center
- [Long-Term Impact of Military-Relevant Brain Injury Consortium and Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium](#) (LIMBIC and CENC),

Learn more about the McGuire VAMC at www.richmond.va.gov.

Research: The RVAMC has a vibrant research program with annual budgetary allocation that consists of approximately seven million dollars. The McGuire VAMC has a sound research infrastructure including an onsite institutional review board (McGuire IRB) and the McGuire Research Institute, a non-profit organization that supports grant management and other research activities at the McGuire VAMC. Over 80% of the medical center's research has a direct impact on patient care, studies in the VA system, and in the community. Seventy-five investigators conduct over 300 research studies with clinical research focus areas that include Hepatitis C, Diabetes Lipid Disorders, as well as in areas of Polytrauma, TBI, and mental health conditions that frequently present with TBI.

Psychology Section: More than 60 psychologists provide assessment and treatment services at the McGuire VAMC, which also supports three community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) in Emporia, Fredericksburg, and Charlottesville, Virginia. Psychological assessment and treatment services are often provided in the context of interdisciplinary teams in specialty clinics such as the PTSD Clinic, Substance Abuse and Disorders Clinic, Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center, Primary Care, the Spinal Cord Injury & Disorders Service, and Geriatrics. Psychologists also provide consultation & liaison assessment services across the medical center including those for spinal cord stimulator placement, transplant (heart, liver, kidney, and lung), pre-surgical assessments for bariatric and other conditions, mental health evaluations, neuropsychological assessment for a spectrum of neurologic conditions, pain management classes, and CBT for insomnia.

Psychology Training: Our training program includes an APA-accredited pre-doctoral psychology internship program, an APA specialty-accredited Rehabilitation Psychology fellowship, the APA contingent-accredited MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program, and pre-doctoral practicum positions. Currently, we have five Psychology Interns, two Rehabilitation Psychology Fellows, two MIRECC Psychology Fellows, and several research and clinical practicum students.

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)

One of the nation's top research universities, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) enrolls more than 32,000 students on two Richmond campuses—the Monroe Park Campus and Medical College of Virginia (MCV) Campus. The VCU Medical Center, including the university's health sciences schools, offers state-of-the-art care in more than 200 specialty areas and serves as the region's only Level 1 Trauma Center. VCU boasts more than \$255 million in sponsored research, bringing together faculty experts and student scholars to collaborate across multiple disciplines.



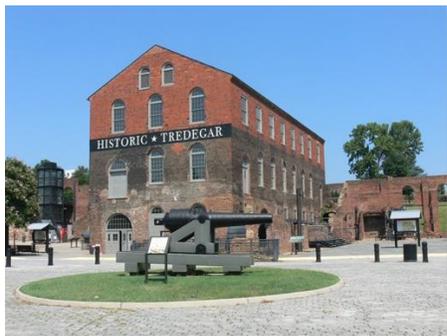
The McGuire VAMC enjoys a strong and mutually beneficial affiliation with VCU. Residency and fellowship programs exist in virtually every general and specialty areas of internal medicine, rehabilitation, surgery, dentistry, psychiatry, and psychology. Most of our psychology training faculty hold affiliate professor appointments either through the VCU Department of Psychology

or through the VCU Department of Psychiatry on the VCU medical campus. Historically, fellows have received affiliate faculty appointments in the VCU Psychology Department as well.

Library and Information Resources

The McGuire VAMC medical library offers article retrieval services, online article databases and electronic articles, and interlibrary loan services. In addition, MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program Fellows will be provided access to library services at our academic affiliate, Virginia Commonwealth University, through an academic appointment.

Richmond, Virginia



Tredegar Iron Works
Credit: Morgan Riley

An historic city and Virginia’s capital, Richmond offers an attractive array of leisure, cultural, and social opportunities not usually found in mid-sized cities. Beautiful neighborhoods juxtaposed to modern high rises with striking architecture set the stage for the numerous cultural, educational and recreational events befitting its nearly 200,000 citizens (approximately 1,000,000 in the metro area).

Nationally recognized for its vitality and new economy, Richmond’s diversified employment base extends from chemical, food and tobacco manufacturing to cutting edge biotechnology, semiconductors and high-tech fiber production. The city consistently ranks among “Best Places in America” to live, work, and visit in several national publications ([Frommers](#), [Niche.com](#), [Huffington Post](#), [Men's Journal](#)).

Bisected by the James River, its [numerous parks and woodlands](#) offer the chance for solitude in nature as well as outdoor sports such as mountain biking and kayaking even when close to the city center. Richmond annually hosts the [Dominion Riverrock Festival](#), the [SunTrust Richmond Marathon](#), the UCI America Tour Commonwealth Cycling Classic (starting 2017), and the [nationally renowned Ukrop’s Monument 10k](#). Richmond also hosted the 2012 Veteran's Wheelchair Games and the 2015 UCI Road World Championship of cycling. For these reasons and more, it is easy to see why Richmond was voted “[the best river town in America](#)” by readers of *Outside Magazine* (October, 2012).



Dominion Riverrock Festival

Richmond is proud to support several first-class museums, three prominent universities, a symphony, the American Youth Harp Ensemble, professional ballet and opera companies, and numerous theater groups and art galleries. Richmond also hosts the annual [Richmond Folk Festival](#), a free festival featuring live performances by some of the world's greatest folk musicians. The Richmond Region is home to exceptional opportunities to learn about African-American history, including the [Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia](#), the [Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site](#), and the Richmond Slave Trail.



The Richmond Folk Festival

While offering easy access to the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay, Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains as well as being only 90 minutes south of Washington, D.C., Richmond features countless pastimes right at home. Trendy boutiques, [varied bistros and restaurants](#), numerous sports and entertainment attractions, outdoor pursuits among one of the nation's largest river park systems, and a treasure trove of historic landmarks provide opportunities for nearly endless learning and relaxation.

Learn more about the city of Richmond, Virginia at: <https://www.vcu.edu/life-at-vcu/all-about-richmond/> and <https://www.visitrichmondva.com/>.

Administrative Policies and Procedures

This program supports and adheres to Equal Employment Opportunity policies and the Americans with Disabilities Act. No applicant will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor. We do not require self-disclosure. Per APA Commission on Accreditation's Standards of Accreditation for Health Services Psychology and Accreditation Operating Procedures (SOA), this program implements strategies to ensure resident cohorts are diverse.

Accreditations and Memberships

The MIRECC Psychology Fellowship at the Richmond VA Medical Center holds contingent accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association (APA). The next site visit is expected in 2019. Questions related to the program's accreditation status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation at the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, American Psychological Association, 750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242, (202) 336-5979.

Our program is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC).

Postdoctoral Residency Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data

POST-DOCTORAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM TABLES

Date Program Tables are updated: 6/27/2020

Postdoctoral Program Admissions

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

We seek applicants who have a sound clinical and scientific knowledge base from their academic program and internship and a history that is consistent with scientist-practitioner training; evidence of strong entry-level professional skills in psychological assessment, intervention, and research; personal characteristics necessary to function well as a doctoral-level professional in a medical center environment, and a documented pattern of research productivity. Applicants should be able to demonstrate how this fellowship fits into his or her career trajectory. Ideal applicants also have had supervised clinical experience with military Service Members or Veterans and have experience in a medical center. We seek the best fit between applicants and our training program, and it is essential that the applicant's research interests match our emphasis area. The McGuire VA Medical Center, as a facility of the US Government, does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor.

Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:

Eligibility:

1. United States (U.S.) citizen.
2. Completed all requirements of an APA-Accredited doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology.
3. Have successfully completed a professional psychology internship training program that has been accredited by APA. Exceptions: (1) new VHA psychology internship programs that are in the process of applying for APA accreditation are acceptable in fulfillment of the internship requirement, provided that such programs were sanctioned by the VHA Central Office Program Director for Psychology and the VHA Central Office of Academic Affiliations at the time that the individual was an intern and (2) VHA facilities who offered full one-year pre-doctoral internships prior to PL 96-151 (pre-1979) are considered to be acceptable in fulfillment of the internship requirement.
4. Meet all VAMC hiring and credentialing requirements.

Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year

Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Residents	\$47,704 (Year 1 Fellows) \$50,283 (Year 2 Fellows)
Annual Stipend/Salary for Half-time Residents	N/A
Program provides access to medical insurance for resident?	Yes
If access to medical insurance is provided Trainee contribution to cost required?	Yes
Coverage of family member(s) available?	Yes
Coverage of legally married partner available?	Yes
Coverage of domestic partner available?	Yes
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation)	Sick leave is earned at a rate of four hours per two-week pay period.
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave	Vacation leave is earned at a rate of four hours per two-week pay period.
In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to interns/residents in excess of personal time off and sick leave?	Yes
<p>Other Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten (10) federal holidays. • Unused sick leave may be applied to future federal employment. • Additional leave (up to 5 days/year) may be approved for attendance at conferences and workshops or other continuing education activities. • Postdoctoral residents are not covered by Federal Employee retirement. • Postdoctoral residents are eligible for health insurance benefits. • Travel funds for training purposes (e.g., attending a professional conference) are available but are not guaranteed. • The Federal Tort Claims Act covers professional liability for services provided as a VA employee. • Note that most aspects of the Stipend and Benefits for VA Associated Health Fellows are determined by the VA at a national level and are subject to change. 	

Initial Post-Residency Positions*

	2018-2020	
Total # of residents who were in the 3 cohorts	3	
Total # of residents who remain in training in the residency program	2	
Type	PD	EP
Community mental health center	NA	NA
Federally qualified health center	NA	NA
Independent primary care facility/clinic	NA	NA
University counseling center	NA	NA
Veterans Affairs medical center	NA	NA
Military health center	NA	1
Academic health center	NA	NA

Other medical center or hospital	NA	NA
Psychiatric hospital	NA	NA
Academic university/department	NA	NA
Community college or other teaching setting	NA	NA
Independent research institution	NA	NA
Correctional facility	NA	NA
School district/system	NA	NA
Independent practice setting	NA	NA
Not currently employed	NA	NA
Changed to another field	NA	NA
Other	NA	NA
Unknown	NA	NA

Note. "PD" = Post-doctoral residency position; "EP" = Employed Position.

*Aggregated tally for the preceding 3 cohorts (year of entry into the 2-year program).

Prior Fellows and Current Positions

Name	Years	Current Position
NiVonne Thompson, LCSW, Ph.D.	2009-2011	Neuropsychologist, VA Northern Indiana Healthcare System
Kelcey Stratton, Ph.D.	2011-2013	Director of Resilience and Wellbeing Programs, University of Michigan
Lillian Stevens, Ph.D.	2012-2014	Voluntarily unemployed.
Christina Sheerin, Ph.D.	2013-2015	K01 Recipient (2018-2023) and Assistant Professor, Virginia Institute of Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics, Virginia Commonwealth University
Thomas Burroughs, Ph.D.	2015-2017	Staff Psychologist, VA Portland Health Care System
Erin Kurtz, Ph.D.	2016-2018	Staff Psychologist, VA St. Louis Health Care System
Joseph Tan, Ph.D.	2018	Assistant Professor, University of Virginia Health

Application & Selection Procedures

Eligibility

1. United States (U.S.) citizen.
2. Completed all requirements of an APA-Accredited doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology.
3. Have successfully completed a professional psychology internship training program that has been accredited by APA. Exceptions: (1) new VHA psychology internship programs that are in the process of applying for APA accreditation are acceptable in fulfillment of the internship requirement, provided that such programs were sanctioned by the VHA Central Office Program Director for Psychology and the VHA Central Office of

Academic Affiliations at the time that the individual was an intern and (2) VHA facilities who offered full one-year pre-doctoral internships prior to PL 96-151 (pre-1979) are considered to be acceptable in fulfillment of the internship requirement.

4. Meet all VAMC hiring and credentialing requirements.

Application

Applicants are encouraged to contact the fellowship director prior to applying to learn about faculty members who are currently available to provide research mentorship in the applicant's area of interest. Scheduled visits to the McGuire VAMC and VCU to meet with the fellowship directors, training staff, and potential research mentors prior to the application deadline are welcomed.

How to Apply:

Please contact the training director at the phone number or e-mail below to indicate your intent to submit an application and to receive the "Postdoctoral Fellowship Application Form." A completed application package includes the following components:

1. A completed "Postdoctoral Fellowship Application Form."
2. A cover letter that includes in detail the following elements (3 pp. limit):
 - a. Your research interests, research training goals, and the research program you would like to develop as a Fellow;
 - b. Your clinical orientation, strengths, and clinical training goals;
 - c. Previous clinical, educational and research experience that makes you a strong candidate for this fellowship; and
 - d. A description of your career goals and how the training we offer will advance them.
3. Curriculum Vitae.
4. Official or unofficial transcripts from graduate program (Official transcripts with PsyD or PhD date of completion will be required if an offer is made).
5. Three letters of recommendation, at least one of which should come from a recent clinical supervisor (within past 3 years) who is familiar with your clinical work. Letters of recommendation can be sent by mail (signed across the sealed envelope) or e-mail (from the writer's institutional or work e-mail address).
6. If you are currently an intern, a letter from your psychology internship director (or e-mail from the writer's institutional or work e-mail address) discussing progress on internship and anticipated completion date.
7. If your dissertation has not yet been defended, include a letter from your dissertation chair (or e-mail from the writer's institutional or work e-mail address) that notes the status of your dissertation and anticipated completion date.
8. A de-identified clinical work sample (integrated psychology assessment, neuropsychological assessment, intake report, etc.).

The deadline for applications is December 18, 2020. The position(s) will remain open until filled. Electronic submission of materials is appreciated but not required. Please send all completed application materials (by mail or e-mail) to:

Submission by E-Mail:

Please mark the e-mail subject line or envelope - "MIRECC Fellowship Application Materials" and send it to scott.mcdonald@va.gov. Letters of reference should be sent separately from the rest of the application by e-mail (from the writer's institutional e-mail address) or mail. The transcript may be sent separately by e-mail or mail.

Submission by Mail:

Scott McDonald, Ph.D.
Fellowship Director, MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program
McGuire VA Medical Center (128)
1201 Broad Rock Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23249

Application Review and Notification Process:

Applications will be reviewed by the fellowship director, members of the executive training committee and/or clinical supervisors, and potential research mentors. A standardized rating form is used to evaluate applications on experience and fit to the program and potential mentors. Applicants will be contacted for interviews or notified that they are no longer under consideration in January 2020.

For more information about the MIRECC Psychology Fellowship Program at the McGuire VAMC, please contact Scott McDonald, Ph.D. at 804-675-5000 x3633 or scott.mcdonald@va.gov.

This document can be found online at <http://www.richmond.va.gov/services/Psychology.asp>

This document may contain links to sites external to Department of Veterans Affairs. VA does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of the external linked websites.