



VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center Psychology Internship Program

VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center
Psychology Service

351 E. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213)253-2677 ext. 24819

<https://www.losangeles.va.gov/trainee/>

APPIC MATCH NUMBER 113911
Applications Due: Nov 1, 2019

Hello Prospective Applicants! Congratulations on achieving this level of your psychology training. We are glad that you are considering completing your doctoral internship at a VA, and more specifically at our site. We hope the following information will help you get to know our site, our staff, and our unique internship program. Best wishes on your internship application process!

Accreditation Status

The doctoral internship program in psychology at VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center (LAACC) is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) of the American Psychological Association (APA). We have been continually accredited by APA since 1977 and our most recent re-accreditation cycle granted us 10 years of accreditation, to be reviewed again in 2028.

CoA is located at 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242, and their telephone number is 202-336-5979.

Application Procedures

Applications for full-time doctoral internship positions in clinical psychology will be accepted from students who are enrolled in doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology that are accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). The training program is funded to support **four** full-time internship positions. The 2020-2021 internship year will begin on August 3, 2020.

Applications must be submitted through the AAPI Online portal by midnight PST on November 1, 2019, and must include the following:

1. Completed on-line APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI) , see www.appic.org and click “on-line application.”
2. Site-specific cover letter
3. Three (3) letters of recommendation from faculty members and practicum supervisors with whom you have worked. Letters are to be uploaded through the AAPI Reference Portal.
4. Curriculum Vitae
5. Transcripts from all graduate programs attended

We abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any ranking-related information from any intern. We also participate in the APPIC Internship Matching Program. To apply, please register for the Match using the online registration system at www.natmatch.com/psychint. Our program code number is 113911.

Please contact the Director of Training if you have any questions:

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Internship Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data

Internship Program Tables

Date Program Tables were updated: 7/12/19

Internship 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 intern selection and practicum and academic preparation requirements:

Admissions and Selection Process

Efforts are made to select interns consistent with the mission and values of VA LAACC and the population that it serves. We require that applicants' doctoral-level training includes experiences providing direct, face-to-face, psychological services to adult populations, treating a wide variety of presenting conditions. We look for applicants who have strong academic backgrounds and require that students come from APA- or CPA-accredited graduate institutions. We appreciate applicants who are well-rounded, with good basic training and experience in clinical interviewing, individual and group psychotherapy, and psychodiagnostic assessment. We value applicants with considerable direct patient care experience (at least 500 Intervention and 100 Assessment hours) because we have found that incoming interns with less experience can be challenged by the variety and intensity of clinical experiences encountered at our clinic. In addition, because interns engage in a wide variety of different professional activities from the beginning of the training year, it is helpful for interns to enter the program with confidence in their abilities. Often this confidence comes from prior experience. Lastly, because of the diversity of the patients at our clinic and the program's commitment to issues of individual and cultural diversity, we encourage applications from students who have completed multicultural coursework or "training tracks" and/or have strong experience working with culturally diverse populations.

The Psychology Director of Training must receive completed applications no later than November 1, 2019. Our training staff will review all submitted materials and meet to complete our initial application screening. Decisions are made consensually by the training staff. Depending upon the number of applications, approximately 1/2 to 2/3 of our applicants will be informed that they are no longer being considered for a position. The remaining applicants will be offered an interview in January of 2020. Interviews are mandatory. Applicants are notified of their interview status by December 15th at the latest. We generally offer 4 dates in January for interviews. Approximately 10-12 intern candidates attend each interview date, which begins with an overview of our program and then transitions to three 30 minute interviews (typically two interviews with staff members and one interview with a current intern). Some time is left over at the end of the interview day for intern candidates to meet the current

interns and attend a wrap-up question/answer session with the Director of Training (DOT) and/or Assistant DOT.

VA LAACC greatly values individual and cultural diversity. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds to apply, and we are an Equal Opportunity Employer. We honor our non-discrimination policy and respect diversity in all its forms. Our full *Intern Recruitment and Selection Policy* is available upon request for additional information.

Does the program require that applicants have received a minimum number of hours of the following at time of application? If Yes, indicate how many:

Total Direct Contact Intervention Hours	Y	Amount: 500
Total Direct Contact Assessment Hours	Y	Amount: 100

Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:

N/A

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for our program you must be in good standing at an American Psychological Association (APA) or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) accredited graduate program in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined psychology or Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS) accredited program in Clinical Science. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA or CPA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined Psychology are also eligible. You must be approved for internship status by your graduate Director of Clinical Training. We also require that applicants have successfully completed their dissertation proposal prior to the application deadline. Applicants should have a minimum of 500 hours of supervised experience in direct intervention and 100 hours of assessment experience at the time of application. If you have fewer than those hours at the time of application, but will be accruing substantial hours before the internship start date, please indicate that in the application materials.

Other VA-wide eligibility requirements include:

1. U.S. citizenship. VA is unable to consider applications from anyone who is not currently a U.S. citizen. Verification of citizenship is required following selection. All interns and fellows must complete a Certification of Citizenship in the United States prior to beginning VA training.
2. A male applicant born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the draft by age 26 to be eligible for any US government employment, including selection as a paid VA trainee. Male applicants must sign a pre-appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration before they can be processed into a training program. Exceptions

can be granted only by the US Office of Personnel Management and are very rarely granted.

3. Interns are subject to fingerprinting and background checks. Match result and selection decisions are contingent on passing these screens.
4. VA training occurs in a health care setting. Some of the patients served by VA are elderly or infirm, and could succumb to common illnesses like influenza. It is important to be able to document that your vaccinations are up to date and that you have been screened for active tuberculosis prior to starting your training at VA or other hospitals. Securing a statement from university student health center, your regular health provider, or an urgent care clinic can expedite your appointment. Additionally, maintaining a current flu vaccination during the training year (or taking additional preventative measures to limit patient exposure to the flu) will be required. Please discuss this with the program training director after you have matched and well before to your start date to facilitate your onboarding.

For more information, please visit <http://www.psychologytraining.va.gov/eligibility.asp>

Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year

Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Interns	\$29,613
Annual Stipend/Salary for Half-time Interns	N/A
Program provides access to medical insurance for intern?	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?	No
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation) (4 hours accrued every 2 weeks)	104
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave (4 hours accrued every 2 weeks)	104
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
Other Benefits (please describe): - Interns are also eligible for life insurance, as well supplemental dental and vision insurance. - Interns also receive 80 hours of federal holiday leave	

Post-Internship Activities

Because of the generalist nature of our internship program, interns are prepared for postdoctoral residencies in a number of different sub-specialty areas. Interns from LAACC have been highly competitive for postdoctoral positions. Below is a table listing the initial post-internship positions for the preceding 3 cohorts (2015-16 through 2017-18):

Initial Post-Internship Positions

	2015-2018	
Total # of interns who were in the 3 cohorts	12	
Total # of interns who did not seek employment because they returned to their doctoral program/are completing doctoral degree	0	
	PD	EP
Community mental health center	0	0
Federally qualified health center	0	0
Independent primary care facility/clinic	0	0
University counseling center	0	0
Veterans Affairs medical center	6	1
Military health center	0	0
Academic health center	0	0
Other medical center or hospital	4	0
Psychiatric hospital	0	0
Academic university/department	0	0
Community college or other teaching setting	0	0
Independent research institution	0	0
Correctional facility	0	0
School district/system	0	0
Independent practice setting	1	0
Not currently employed	0	0
Changed to another field	0	0
Other	0	0
Unknown	0	0

Note: "PD" = Postdoctoral residency position; "EP" = Employed Position

Postdoctoral Residency Positions for Interns from the 2015-16 through 2018-19 Classes:

Advanced Mental Health Interprofessional Residency, VA Long Beach Healthcare System

Chronic Pain Management Postdoctoral Residency, VA Phoenix Healthcare System

Chronic Pain Postdoctoral Fellowship, Kaiser Permanente-San Francisco

Health Psychology and HIV Postdoctoral Residencies at Harbor UCLA Medical Center (multiple interns)

Health Psychology Postdoctoral Residency, VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center

Holistic Mental Health Postdoctoral Residency, VA Loma Linda Healthcare Center
Integrated Care for Homeless Veterans, VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center
Integrated Care and Behavioral Medicine Fellowship, VA Northern California HCS
PTSD Focus Postdoctoral Residency, VA Palo Alto Healthcare System
PTSD/SUD Postdoctoral Fellowship at Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center
Women's Mental Health and Trauma Postdoctoral Residency at VA San Francisco

For those who prefer to seek employment versus a formal postdoctoral residency, our alumni have had considerable success obtaining jobs in a variety of settings such as the VA (as a graduate psychologist), prison system, community mental health, and private practice.

Lastly, a very high percentage of our staff were psychology interns at LAACC. A number of additional intern alumni hold staff psychologist positions through the Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System.

Program Setting



VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center (VA LAACC) is an outpatient care clinic located in downtown Los Angeles. Our clinic is part of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS), serving approximately 1.4 million Veterans in the central and southern California region. VAGLAHS has the largest number of healthcare trainees in the VA system and consists of one flagship medical center (West Los Angeles Healthcare Center), two ambulatory care facilities (Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center and Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center), and eight community-based outpatient clinics (Bakersfield, East Los Angeles, Lancaster, Oxnard, Santa Barbara, San Gabriel Valley, Santa Maria, and San Luis Obispo). VAGLAHS is part of the larger VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (VISN22), serving Veterans who live in California and Nevada.

VA LAACC is a dynamic and exciting place to work. Located in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, the clinic is situated in one of the most diverse cities in the nation. Veterans who come to LAACC represent a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. Recent statistics show that the Veteran population at LAACC is approximately 46% White, 30% African American, 24% Latino/a, and 8% Asian and Pacific Islander, with 14% unknown or declined to answer. Our clinic serves all socioeconomic levels; however, the majority of Veterans whose data was reported have low incomes. Within this population of Veterans, trainees at LAACC have the opportunity to work with specific minority groups, including serving the unique needs of women Veterans, LGBT Veterans, homeless Veterans, etc. Staff at LAACC also represent many different cultural groups and the clinic celebrates the diversity of its staff.

VA LAACC provides comprehensive medical and mental health services to its Veteran population. The twelve full-time and four part-time psychologists on staff at LAACC coordinate

the following mental health programs: Addictive Behaviors Clinic (ABC), Behavioral Medicine program, mental health services of the Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT), Mental Health Clinic, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI), and Trauma Recovery Services (TRS) program. TRS includes services provided at LAACC, as well as a formal PTSD Clinical Team located at our satellite clinic in East Los Angeles.

Our mission is to provide training that prepares interns for the practice of clinical psychology. We aim to train interns in a wide variety of clinical psychological services and prepare them for successful entry into a postdoctoral residency or entry-level clinical psychology position. With this in mind, we provide generalist training in a wide spectrum of outpatient services. We offer practical experience, didactic training, and intensive supervision in order to help our interns become competent and prepared for the professional practice of psychology.

Training Model and Program Philosophy

The philosophy of the LAACC internship program is that internship is a time for applied clinical and training based on current psychological science. Our training year prepares our interns to “wear many different hats” and depart from our program ready for postdoctoral residency or entry-level practice. An important principle of our program is that training and supervision is a priority. All of our staff psychologists participate in training, and interns’ training and professional development takes precedence over clinical service delivery. We view delivery of services as the platform upon which interns’ learning takes place and provide generalist training to prepare interns for practice within a variety of clinics, a host of different patient conditions and diagnoses, and with diverse patient populations.

Our internship provides training according to a practitioner-scholar model. We offer a supervision-rich atmosphere, and interns have the opportunity to work with many different staff members who are very committed to training and take supervision seriously. Students are exposed to a variety of supervision orientations including Cognitive-Behavioral, Psychodynamic, Acceptance-based, Interpersonal, and Experiential. While supervision styles vary, the quality of supervision is regularly regarded as one of the program’s signature strengths.

At LAACC, interns are well-respected by the psychology training staff as well as by other staff from a variety of other disciplines and departments. We believe that training is best provided through good working relationships and mutual respect. We work beside our interns every day. In this way, staff members serve as interns’ role models in addition to supervisors. While they are on internship, we support interns as advanced practitioners while embracing them with support through numerous opportunities for supervision and learning. Our goal is to help interns attain the competence and confidence they will need to take the next step in their careers, by providing them with diverse experiences relevant to the profession of psychology. We believe that we are successful in this mission because of the success of our alumni who have secured a wide variety of positions as practicing psychologists, many of them within our own clinic and the VA healthcare system.

Program Competencies & Goals

Our program goals are based on our training model, program philosophy, and competency-based supervision. The nine profession-wide competencies that we consider central to internship training at our site and are consistent with APA's Standards of Accreditation are as follows:

COMPETENCIES

Intervention

This competency includes the development and maintenance of effective therapeutic relationships, the establishment of evidence-based intervention plans specific to service delivery goals, and the application of relevant research in clinical decision-making. Interns will demonstrate competency in providing evidence-based individual and group interventions that are informed by assessment findings, therapeutic goals, context, diversity characteristics, and the scientific literature. They will also evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions and adapt their approach effectiveness using appropriate methods or measures, and modify the approach as appropriate

Assessment

Interns will be able to select and apply appropriate assessment methods based on the scientific literature, the referral question and goals for assessment, and relevant diversity characteristics. Test interpretation, case conceptualization, and recommendations will be informed by current research and professional standards, and information will be obtained from multiple sources. Interns are expected to demonstrate the ability to communicate findings and recommendations in an accurate, effective manner.

Ethical and Legal Standards

This competency includes knowing and acting in accordance with all professional ethics, laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines governing health service psychology. Interns will recognize ethical dilemmas when they arise and apply ethical decision-making to resolve them appropriately. Interns are expected to conduct themselves ethically in all professional activities.

Individual and Cultural Diversity

This competency involves the ability of interns to demonstrate and apply an understanding of individual and cultural diversity to psychological assessment, treatment, consultation, supervision, and research activities. Interns are expected to demonstrate an understanding of how their own culture impacts their relationships with others, to work effectively with new areas of individual and cultural diversity, and to work effectively with others whose cultural identity or worldview conflict with their own.

Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors

For this competency, interns are expected to act in ways that reflect the values and attitudes of the profession, including integrity, deportment, professional identity, accountability, and concern for the welfare of others. They will engage in self-reflection regarding their own personal and professional functioning, and work to improve performance and wellbeing. They will demonstrate an openness and responsiveness to supervision and feedback and develop greater independence as they progress across the training year.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

This competency involves developing and maintaining effective relationships with patients, peers, supervisors, staff members, and professionals from other disciplines. Interns are expected to use effective interpersonal skills and manage difficult communication well. This competency also includes the effective use of verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills, and a thorough understanding of professional language.

Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills

This competency includes a knowledge and respect for the roles and perspectives of other disciplines. Interns will demonstrate the ability to function effectively as a member of an interprofessional or interdisciplinary team and to engage in the practice of consultation with individuals/families, other healthcare professionals, interprofessional groups, and/or systems.

Supervision

Interns will demonstrate knowledge of supervision models and practices and apply this knowledge in either direct or simulated practice. Competency in supervision includes awareness and knowledge of ethical and legal issues and diversity factors as they relate to the supervisory role.

Research

This competency includes the ability to critically evaluate research literature, integrate scientific literature into clinical practice, and disseminate clinical research or engage in other scholarly activities. Interns will apply clinical research findings to clinical decision making, integrate research into case conference presentations, attend seminars and workshops on evidence-based practices, and present current research in the Team Training Seminar.

PROGRAM GOALS

Our goal is to train interns to be generalist clinicians who are competent in these nine areas listed above. Consequently, upon graduation, our interns will be ready to handle the demands of a job as a postdoctoral resident or entry-level psychologist in most mental health settings. Psychologists within the VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center provide a wide variety of psychological services throughout the clinic. Interns are trained to provide these same services, and the staff clearly models the roles that interns are expected to develop.

Interns are provided with training to increase their competency in each of the required areas throughout the training year. For instance, training in the area of individual and cultural diversity is an ongoing year-long practice that is integrated into all other areas of clinical and professional work. Issues of diversity are explored in supervision, didactics, and the Diversity Seminar that all interns attend regularly. Respect for, and understanding of, the importance of individual and cultural diversity issues as they relate to psychological and professional practice is a core value of the training program at VA LAACC. Training in ethical and legal standards are also incorporated into the training program year-long, through clinical experiences, supervision, and the weekly Law & Ethics seminar that all interns attend.

Training in assessment includes clinical interviewing, psychodiagnostic assessment, and opportunities for neuropsychological assessment. Students will learn how to administer the VA-wide Mental Health Initial Assessment interview. Interns will also learn how to hone their skills in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of comprehensive test batteries including numerous psychological and cognitive screening tests, as well as neuropsychological tests. Assessment training at VA LAACC also includes teaching interns to improve skills in assessment report writing, communicating assessment findings, and incorporating test results into case conceptualization and treatment planning.

Program Structure

Internship activities are structured to provide training in evidence-based assessment, treatment, and consultation for Veterans with behavioral and mental health problems as part of interprofessional teams. We provide a broad range of opportunities, of varying lengths and time commitments. Beginning in 2020, interns at LAACC will participate in two **major** 6-month rotations, which will provide: a) the generalist training needed to implement care for a wide range of psychiatric disorders, and b) the training required to deliver trauma-focused treatments to Veterans who have been exposed to traumatic events across their lifespan. Concurrently, interns will rotate through 3-4 briefer **minor** rotations to allow for training in additional VA clinics. Interns also will participate in **year-long** activities related to assessment and Behavioral Medicine and have the opportunity to participate in **electives** designed for specialized training in an area of the trainee's interests. Additionally, interns attend didactic and discussion-based **seminars** dedicated to topics such as diversity, law and ethics, research, and supervision. We believe this training structure emphasizes generalist training while allowing room for interns to enhance their knowledge and skills in areas they view as important to their professional development.

Throughout all of these different training experiences, we expect that interns will spend about 12-18 hours per week engaged in direct patient contact. The minimum number of hours of direct patient care expected on internship is 10 hours per week. These hours spent in patient care include: conducting psychological assessments, completing intake assessments, providing individual psychotherapy, and facilitating group psychotherapy.

Major Rotations

The required major rotations provide training in general outpatient mental health (Mental Health Clinic) and trauma-related disorders (Trauma Recovery Services). Given the high prevalence of trauma in both Veteran and general population settings, we believe it to be important that all interns receive training in this area. Interns will spend 16 hours per week in their rotation (two interns are in each rotation at a time), which switches half-way through the year. Within each rotation there will be the opportunity to gain experience in assessment, individual and group based interventions, and interprofessional consultation. Each major rotation will also include at least one hour of individual supervision.

Minor Rotations

Interns rotate through three four-month rotations to allow for experience in VA clinics focused on specific populations or intervention models. Interns will spend 8 hours per week in the minor rotation, including one hour of individual supervision. Consistent with our generalist model, in minor rotations, interns can gain experience in substance use disorders, homelessness, psychosis, primary-care mental health integration (PCMHI), and neuropsychology.

SUPERVISION:

In the interest of providing a broad-based training experience, interns have the opportunity to work with multiple supervisors who operate from different theoretical orientations and modalities, such as CBT, experiential, humanistic, interpersonal, psychodynamic, and time-limited psychodynamic. In addition, our supervisors strongly value cultural and individual diversity and integrate diversity issues throughout supervision. Through their exposure to a variety of supervisors, interns are introduced to different supervision styles, therapeutic approaches, theoretical orientations, specialty areas, and cultural backgrounds. As required by APA and the CA Board of Psychology, interns spend at least 10% of their time in supervision and receive at least two hours of individual, face-to-face supervision per week. Actually, interns typically receive well above these minimum requirements, with about two to three hours of individual supervision each week and three to four hours of group supervision. We also offer didactic training in our seminars. The majority of supervision includes the analysis of audio recordings of sessions.

Our full Supervision Policy is available upon request.

EVALUATION:

Upon arrival, interns perform a self-assessment of their strengths and weaknesses and then organize their training goals in consultation with their primary supervisors (primary supervisors are assigned based on current rotation). They develop a statement of goals which outlines the number and types of patients to be seen, hours to be spent in various activities, and guidelines for evaluation. This "Goals and Objectives" statement helps interns to organize their internship training goals while making sure that their daily activities fulfill program requirements. Interns then set up their schedules accordingly. They receive ongoing informal feedback during their regular supervision about their competency development and how well they are fulfilling their

requirements. Interns also routinely discuss how well they are addressing their training goals in supervision.

With the help of their primary supervisors, interns develop plans at the beginning of the year and at the mid-year mark to address areas of underdeveloped competency. Staff formally reviews each intern's competence at 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months. Staff also informally reviews students' progress at a monthly training meeting. Written feedback is provided at 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months. The evaluations all include descriptions of the intern's training activities, numerical ratings based on staff consensus, and a brief narrative summary of the intern's performance, as well as their strengths and areas for growth. Interns are evaluated with regard to their performance in all required skills areas and profession-wide competencies as well as any elective areas they are pursuing. At 3 months, the interns receive a copy of this form, but it is not automatically sent to the student's graduate program unless there is some concern about the student's performance. The 6- and 12-month evaluations, are both sent to the interns' graduate schools. Copies of all evaluations are kept in the interns' files. Interns are also asked to provide self-assessments upon commencement of the internship and during their 6-month and 12-month evaluations in order to review gains and assess areas for continued growth.

Training records are maintained in a locked cabinet within a locked room and are kept indefinitely. Interns are asked to comment upon the evaluations both orally and in writing. Any disagreements are discussed, and evaluations are modified, as appropriate.

Our numerical evaluation forms directly assess our interns with regard to their required competencies. Each of the areas that our internship program has deemed as an essential competency is measured on these forms. Thus, the mid-year and final evaluation forms provide us with a measure of the program's on-going effectiveness in meeting its training goals and objectives. Consistent with APA requirements for internship training, intern competency evaluations are based in part on direct observation of practice during each evaluation period. This involves in-room observation or co-facilitation of intake interviews and/or group psychotherapy. Observation of individual interventions is conducted through audio recording of sessions.

Interns provide feedback to staff on an ongoing basis as well. Interns fill out program evaluation forms at mid-year and the end of the year and these are distributed to all staff. Special "program feedback" meetings are scheduled twice each year, at mid-year and at 12 months, when interns provide their comments and suggestions to the Director of Training and Assistant Director of Training in a formal context. The Director of Training then communicates the feedback to the full Psychology Training Committee. In addition, periodic meetings with the Director of Training are arranged to provide feedback about requirements, policies, procedures, and potential conflicts. This feedback is appreciated and utilized in program planning. Interns also participate in and provide feedback during our monthly training meetings. Lastly, interns evaluate their supervisors on supervisor competency evaluations forms. Interns are asked to fill out two separate forms. One form is confidential and used for aggregate ratings of supervisors.

The other form is used for communication between interns and their primary and additional supervisors for purposes of improving supervision. These forms are completed at mid-year and at the end of the year.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Professional development is emphasized through a variety of methods including through routine supervision with the primary supervisor, Team Training presentations focused on professional development issues (e.g. postdoctoral applications, licensure, etc.), and intern support lunches with the Director of Training and Assistant Director of Training. In addition, our program maintains close contact with former interns in order to help facilitate the transition into professional positions.

Training Experiences

TRAINING COMPONENTS

The program consists of a variety of training experiences to develop competency in the following nine areas: psychological intervention (e.g. individual and group psychotherapy), psychological assessment, ethical and legal standards, individual and cultural diversity, professional values, attitudes, and behaviors, communication and interpersonal skills, consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills, supervision, and research. Training in these competency areas is provided through the programs outlined below.

This transition to rotation-based programming is a new step for the LAACC Psychology Internship Training program, and the staff has been thoughtful about choosing major and minor rotations that will best meet the program's goals and interns' training needs. Given that this structure is new and we anticipate some staffing additions in the next training year, some of the details are subject to change, but the major components/training experiences should remain stable.

MAJOR ROTATIONS

1. Mental Health Clinic (MHC)

Within the LAACC MHC, Interns will receive training in assessing and providing individual and group psychotherapy for Veterans with a variety of emotional and psychological difficulties, in the context of an interprofessional mental health team (psychology, social work, psychiatry, psychiatric nursing, medical support assistant). Each Wednesday, a group of Veterans are scheduled for a Mental Health Clinic intake assessment, during which both interns and staff participate in completing a Mental Health Initial Assessment with a Veteran new to mental health treatment. The Mental Health Clinic team (psychologists, psychiatrists, and interns) then meets following the intake assessments to discuss differential diagnosis, treatment planning, and referrals in a case conference. Additionally, numerous groups are operated through the MHC and interns have the opportunity to co-facilitate with staff, (e.g., CBT for Depression & Anxiety, Depression Management, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Stress Management, Interpersonal Issues, and Depression Process Group).

Supervisors: Drs. Goguen, Jablon, Lo, and Newsom
Hours per week: 16-18
Number of months: 6

2. Trauma Recovery Services (TRS)

Located at both LAACC and the East Los Angeles (ELA) Community-Based Outpatient Clinic, Trauma and Recovery Services serves Veterans diagnosed with PTSD. During the six-month program, interns receive education and training in all aspects of trauma-related disorders, including etiology, diagnosis, and utilizing empirically based treatments for trauma, including Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) and/or Prolonged Exposure (PE) protocols for PTSD. The patient population is ethnically diverse and consists primarily of persons with combat-related disorders at the ELA clinic and military-related disorders at LAACC. Interns on this rotation will spend Tuesdays at the ELA clinic and Wednesdays at LAACC. At the ELA clinic treatment includes psychological assessment, individual psychotherapy, psychiatric treatment, and group work. Most groups are built on a cognitive-behavioral framework and emphasize the development of coping skills. Trainees will likely complete an intake interview and write-up including assessment measures each week. They will co-facilitate a psychoeducational PTSD group and an ACT for PTSD Group with Dr. Feigel. At LAACC, interns will complete weekly 90-minute PTSD-specific intakes (i.e., CAPS-5, PCL-5, PHQ-9, LEC), carry two individual therapy cases, co-facilitate a Skills Training in Affect and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR) group, and engage in group and individual supervision. Interns will also be given time for session preparation and to write up their intake report.

Supervisors: Drs. Argueta and Feigel
Hours per week: 16-18
Number of months: 6

MINOR ROTATIONS

1. Addictive Behaviors Clinic (ABC)

During the course of the year, interns can learn about the clinical issues, administration, and treatment practices of a multidisciplinary substance use disorders (SUD) treatment program. Many of the patients served are homeless and unemployed. Referrals come from the clinic's Community Care Program servicing homeless Veterans, Mental Health Clinic, Primary Care, residential treatment programs in the VA system or surrounding community, inpatient programs, the court/probation system, and the Veterans themselves. Interns will learn about the Matrix Model of substance use disorders (SUD) treatment and recovery, as well as other evidence-based treatments. During the training year, interns may elect to have individual psychotherapy patients from ABC, and co-lead one or two ABC psychotherapy groups on various topics such as relapse prevention, managing emotions, and mindfulness. All therapy and assessment cases assigned through ABC go toward fulfilling general training requirements.

Supervisor: Dr. Barglow
Hours per week: 8-10

Number of months: 4

2. *Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI)*

Nationally, the VA has implemented Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI) programs (also referred to as integrated care). PC-MHI programs embed mental health specialists such as psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers in primary care settings to assist healthcare providers with the management of common psychological conditions that often co-occur with chronic health conditions among Veterans (i.e. depression, PTSD, substance abuse). The goal of psychologists in these settings is to provide specialized evidence-based care of mild to moderate mental health conditions to primary care patients. Distinct from the services offered in the mental health specialty clinic, PC-MHI provides short-term services to primary care patients, who may present with acute mental health issues as well as longstanding psychological conditions that can interfere with medical compliance. PC-MHI offers a rich training experience in fast-paced primary care and women's health clinic settings in which the intern will advance their skills of: assessment, consultation, working with a multidisciplinary team, facilitating brief individual and group treatments, treatment planning, and differential diagnosis. Additionally, this experience exposes the intern to the growing and unique role of psychologists in medical settings, while increasing the interns' familiarity with cutting-edge mental health practices in primary care. The services offered as part of PC-MHI are based on an integrated care model that focuses on care coordination with other healthcare providers and short-term management of psychological conditions.

Supervisors: Drs. Karakashian and Chereji
Hours per week: 8-10
Number of months: 4

3. *HPACT/PRRC*

On this rotation, interns will split a day between the *Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT)* and *Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)*. The clinic's Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), is an outpatient interdisciplinary treatment program that provides mental health services for Veterans diagnosed with serious mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and PTSD) with significant functional impairment. The PRRC provides group and individual therapy, assessment, and treatment planning services designed to prevent relapse, foster independence and self-esteem, maximize functioning in the community, and assist in the acquisition of new skills and understanding to promote mental health recovery. PRRC programming implements a recovery model to help Veterans reach their personally-identified goals, develop new meaning and purpose in their lives, and increase engagement in their communities. The LAACC HPACT uses a Housing First model to provide wrap-around services within the context of a patient-centered medical home with highly integrated mental health and social work services. The mission of HPACT is to identify and engage in care the highest-risk, highest-need homeless Veterans who are not able to get the care they need through traditional channels and then to provide care that facilitates stabilization of mental health and medical

problems, incorporates social determinants of health into their care delivery, and expedites placement in housing. HPACT psychologists provide assessment, individual and group psychotherapy, consultation and coordination with other HPACT providers, as well as staff involved in Veterans' Justice Outreach, Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH), supported employment services, as well as the general Mental Health Clinic.

In PRRC, interns have the opportunity to participate in 1 hour of group therapy co-facilitated with Dr. Leshner; 1 hour of individual psychotherapy or treatment planning; and supervision with Dr. Leshner. In HPACT, interns will participate in the interprofessional team huddle, conduct assessments, 1 hour of individual psychotherapy, 1 hour of group psychotherapy facilitated with Dr. Schweizer, and receive individual supervision.

Supervisors: Drs. Leshner and Schweizer
Hours per week: 8-10
Number of months: 4

4. *Neuropsychological Assessment*

Interns will have exposure to the administration, scoring, and interpretation of neuropsychological measures with an emphasis on differential diagnosis of neurocognitive disorders as well as associated care and treatment planning.

Training opportunities include evaluation of 1) suspected dementia in older adults, 2) neuropsychological and neuropsychiatric effects of medical conditions, and 3) the impact of psychiatric on neurocognitive functioning. Training may also include exposure to the use of video telehealth in service delivery.

In addition to weekly supervision, didactics will be provided on neuropsychology-specific material as part of the assessment seminar.

Supervisors: Dr. Harrell and other supervisory faculty
Hours per week: 8-10
Number of months: 4

YEAR LONG ACTIVITIES

I. *Psychodiagnostic Assessment*

The goal of the training in psychodiagnostic assessment is to facilitate intern competence in the area of psychodiagnostic assessment by the end of the year. Assessment training is provided via didactic seminar(s) and through supervision of testing cases. Interns are required to complete a minimum of two (2) comprehensive batteries during the year. Psychological testing is often conducted as part of initial assessment and diagnostic clarification, treatment planning, and/or to gauge progress in therapy. Referrals for comprehensive assessments come from psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and other professionals throughout the clinic. Computerized administration, scoring, and interpretation are available for most tests.

Supervisors: Various
Hours per week: Variable
Number of months: Year-long

II. Behavioral Medicine

This multidisciplinary program evaluates and treats Veterans with problems such as headaches, chronic pain, hypertension, diabetes, tinnitus, anxiety disorders, and insomnia. In a weekly one-hour seminar, interns develop an understanding of the etiology, assessment, and treatment of such disorders. Many presenting issues and corresponding interventions incorporate therapeutic lifestyle changes (e.g., weight management, smoking cessation, exercise). Specific interventions are taught including relaxation training, guided imagery, cognitive strategies, hypnosis, breathing exercises, and mindfulness practice. Interns have the opportunity to co-facilitate chronic pain management support groups. The behavioral medicine program interacts with many clinical services, including Primary Care, Audiology, Neurology, Pharmacy, Psychiatry, and other specialty clinics. Interns will have a chance to participate in several new multidisciplinary programs. For instance, TARGET DIABETES is improving health outcomes for Veterans at risk for diabetic complications. TARGET PAIN is introducing Veterans living with chronic pain to alternative non-pharmacological treatment options. TARGET TINNITUS addresses the distress of living with tinnitus through a mindfulness-based program in collaboration with audiology. Interns typically carry one individual Behavioral Medicine patient at a time.

Supervisors: Drs. Sobol and Newsom
Hours per week: 4-6
Number of months: Year-long

ELECTIVES

Interested interns may also take part in the following elective programs. Generally, students participate in only 1-2 elective programs over the course of the training year. Elective programs make up a small (~15%) percentage of our training. Entry is at the discretion of the Director of Training, primary supervisor, and program supervisor(s).

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Trainees are invited to take part in the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) team at LAACC. DBT is a cognitive behavioral treatment originally designed to reduce suicidality among individuals with borderline personality disorder, by addressing difficulties with emotion regulation and impulsive behaviors and enhancing connection to a “life worth living.” The DBT team at LAACC includes psychologists, social workers, fellows and interns who provide DBT to Veterans in their own clinics (we do not have a separate DBT program) and meet weekly for team consultation. Trainees who elect to participate make a 6 month – 1 year commitment to providing DBT, either co-facilitating the DBT skills group and/or seeing 1-2 individual therapy patients, attending the DBT team consultation, and individual DBT supervision. There may also be the

opportunity to conduct psychosocial assessments and diagnostic interviews for borderline personality disorder.

Supervisors: Drs. Argueta and Schweizer

Hours per week: 3-5

Number of months: 6-12

Mindfulness Facilitation

Interns interested in specialized mindfulness training can create an elective to hone their skills in mindfulness facilitation. This may include participating in multiple ongoing mindfulness-based groups (e.g. Mindfulness Skills, Mindfulness in Recovery, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, etc.), other mindfulness-based interventions (e.g., individual mindfulness training, staff intervention, additional ACT cases, etc.), mindfulness self-study, and/or program development activities. Please note that interns who choose this elective will also be asked to commit to daily personal mindfulness practice.

Supervisor: Dr. Karakashian

Hours per week: 3-4 (plus personal practice)

Number of months: Varies

Program Development

This elective allows interns to design and implement a clinical treatment program in a need area. Staff provides guidance from the needs assessment stage through resource allocation, program implementation, and cost-benefit analysis. For example, under the direction of Dr. Sobol, previous interns have elected to engage in a 16-week Behavioral Medicine Program Development elective, which focused on enhancing psychological adjustment and improving disease-relevant outcomes in such areas as diabetes, hypertension, tinnitus, obesity, effective aging, sleep, etc. Multidisciplinary teaming is at the core of the program.

Supervisor: Various Staff

Hours per week: 3-4

Number of months: Varies

Clinical Research

This elective allows interns to devote a portion of their training time to research. Interns may use this time to develop an empirical project, carry out an existing study, work on their dissertation, obtain research-related training, etc. Staff is available to provide expertise, resources, and a variety of research opportunities. A number of our previous interns have worked with staff members on clinical research that resulted in co-authored publications, including a book. Previous students have conducted psychological research in Behavioral Medicine, TLDP, and in the Dental Program. There are opportunities for research in the PTSD Program as well.

Supervisors: Various Staff

Hours per week: Flexible; 4 maximum
Number of months: Varies

Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy (TLDP)

Interns have the opportunity to be trained in an empirically -based psychodynamic treatment developed by Hannah Levenson called Time-Limited Dynamic Therapy (TLDP). Dr. Steinberg, who was trained by Dr. Levenson and has offered this training at LAACC since 1990, will offer an elective TLDP seminar for interested students. It will combine didactic training and weekly group supervision for students to become proficient in the model.

Supervisor: Dr. Steinberg
Hours per week: 2
Number of months: 6-12 months

Women’s Mental Health

By 2020, it is predicted that 11% of Veterans receiving services from the VA will be women. As a result of the growing number of women Veterans served through the VA, LAACC provides Woman’s program to address their mental health needs. LAACC houses a Woman’s Primary Care clinic (Team C) where our Women’s Mental Health program is co-located. Medical providers in Team C refer women Veterans who screen positive for PTSD, depression, military sexual trauma, and/or suicidality for mental health services. Interns are supervised in the provision of empirically-based psychotherapies such as Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) and ACT for PTSD for treating trauma as well as DBT-informed treatment for Borderline Personality Disorder and Complex Trauma. In addition, longer-term individual therapy and Couple’s therapy are provided as needed. Interns can participate in the Women’s Wellness group, which is a DBT-informed skills group promoting emotional regulation. Interns are also invited to participate in a Women’s Self-Compassion Training group modelled after Kristen Neff’s Mindful Self-Compassion Training as well as a Women’s Military Sexual Trauma (MST) group. We also encourage interns to become part of our monthly Women’s Committee meeting that combines interdisciplinary consultation with event and program planning for women Veterans.

Supervisor: Dr. Steinberg
Hours per week: 3 hours minimum
Number of months: Varies

DIDACTICS

At the beginning of the year, all interns receive training via didactic seminars in several evidence-based psychotherapies (e.g. Cognitive Processing Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and Prolonged Exposure). Additionally, interns participate in several ongoing seminars and attend day-long continuing education workshops offered throughout the year.

Assessment Seminar

This weekly seminar will provide interns with information about test administration, clinical interviewing skills, and applied neuropsychology topics such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), healthy aging, and how to use neuropsychology as a complementary service to inform other clinical service delivery. The seminar will support interns competency in assessment as they also engage in administering, scoring, and interpreting psychodiagnostic and/or neuropsychological tests.

Behavioral Medicine

This weekly seminar (August-February) incorporates education about specific behavioral medicine skills such as interviewing, assessing, and treating behavioral medicine patients as well as education about specific disorders such as diabetes, headaches, musculoskeletal pain, hypertension, tinnitus, insomnia, anxiety, and fibromyalgia. Trainees learn about the etiology and clinical presentation of such disorders and about appropriate treatment interventions. Treatment approaches include pain management techniques, biofeedback, hypnosis, relaxation training, stress management techniques, mindfulness practice and cognitive-behavioral strategies.

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

The Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) Seminar is a one-time, 4-hour introduction to one of the most well-researched, evidence-based therapies developed to address PTSD. The seminar provides an overview of the CPT protocol, including its foundations in cognitive theory.

Day-Long Continuing Education Workshops

Several times per year, workshops are offered at LAACC and other, local VA facilities. Recent past programs/ workshops have covered the following topics: Legal and Ethical Issues, Supervision, Violence Risk Assessment, Motivational Interviewing (MI), Working with Gender and Sexual Minority Veterans, Psychopharmacology, Sexual Health, and Substance Use Disorders, among others.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)

The Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) Seminar is a one-time, 6-hour (offered in two ½-day seminars early in the training year) introduction to one of the most well-researched, evidence-based therapies for Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). This seminar will provide an overview of the treatment components of a fully adherent model, in addition to discuss ways it is currently implemented in the GLA system. Following the seminar there is opportunity to gain experience through the DBT elective and participate on the DBT team.

Diversity

The goal of the monthly Psychology Diversity Seminar is to increase trainees' cultural competence. At the core of the training is examining various dimensions of our cultural selves as we intersect with the dimensions of culture embodied by the diverse population with whom we work. We use this understanding to inform our clinical interpretations, treatment goals and relationships with our clients. To achieve these objectives, the seminar uses case discussions, didactic presentations, and experiential practice. Members of the Psychology Training

Committee (as well as guest lecturers) are invited to lead discussions on topics of relevance to our clinical population, or other areas of interest as identified by the trainees. Participants will provide culturally formulated case presentations.

Team Training Meeting

Interns attend a monthly psychology team training meeting, which is attended by psychology staff and other mental health professionals. Training staff and invited speakers cover a range of subjects including psychotherapy, assessment, professional development issues, and ethics. Each intern also provides a research presentation on a topic of interest at this meeting twice during the training year.

Legal/Ethical Issues

Interns attend a weekly brown bag lunch in which legal and ethical issues are discussed in relation to California Law, the APA Ethics Code, and situations that arise in the course of clinical care.

Prolonged Exposure (PE)

The Prolonged Exposure (PE) Therapy Seminar is a two, ½ -day didactic series designed to introduce postdoctoral residents, psychology interns, and practicum students to this evidence-based treatment for PTSD. The seminar covers various topics, including diagnosis and assessment of PTSD, an overview of PE Therapy, presenting the rationale for in vivo exposure and imaginal exposure, use of Subjective Units of Distress (SUDs), construction of in vivo hierarchy, procedures for in vivo exposure and imaginal exposure, assigning of homework, as well as dealing with avoidance and resistance.

Supervision Seminar

A monthly seminar on supervision is provided to students that contains both didactic and experiential components. It will cover APA's competencies for supervision including : supervisor competence, diversity, supervisory relationship, professionalism, assessment/evaluation/feedback, professional competence problems, and ethical/legal/regulatory considerations. The seminar will foster an awareness of the important parts and potential challenges in each of these domains. There will be opportunities for group discussion and the roleplaying of complex supervision vignettes.

Requirements for Completion of Internship

Hours Requirement

The internship is a full-time, year-long program involving 2080 hours. Approximately 85-100% of the training hours can be spent in required programs and activities, with no more than 15% coming from elective activities.

Interns must complete the full year of training and spend at least 10% of their time in supervision and 25% of their time in direct patient care. In addition, the intern must complete all program requirements unless given permission to be excused from a particular requirement.

Minimum Levels of Achievement

In order to remain in good standing at the 3- and 6-month evaluations, interns need to perform at the "satisfactory performance/meet expectations" level of performance, number "3" on a scale of 1-5 (see below), on the majority of items (at least 50%) in any category of our nine profession-wide competency areas. If this does not occur, the intern will be placed on a remediation plan with the intent to improve the intern's skills so that he or she can attain this level. If the intern's performance still does not meet required competency levels after remediation, additional steps may be taken following the Due Process and Grievance Procedures policy (please see this described later in this brochure for details).

In order to successfully complete the program, interns need to perform at the "satisfactory performance/meet expectations" level of performance, number "3" on a scale of 1-5 (see below), on ALL items in each required area. These are the minimum levels of achievement required to graduate from internship. If a student does not meet this requirement, the program will follow the due process policy outlined below to address the intern's deficiencies.

Evaluation Rating Scale

- 1 = Seriously deficient
- 2 = Below expected level
- 3 = Satisfactory performance/meets expectations
- 4 = Above average/exceeds expectations
- 5 = Area of particular strength or aptitude

Facility and Training Resources

Centrally located in the heart of downtown, LAACC has occupied an important place in the LA community for the past sixty years. Relocated to a newly constructed, state-of-the-art building in 1993, LAACC has been a downtown fixture providing comprehensive medical and mental services to its Veteran population. The clinic is bright and sunny, encourages social interaction, and is easily accessed by our disabled patients and staff. Our department has group rooms with one-way mirrors, videotape equipment, and digital recorders for recording patient sessions. We have excellent psychological testing resources with software to score and interpret most major tests including the MMPI-2, MCMI-IV, and the Rorschach. Interns have their own private offices

with telephones, voicemail, and computers. We provide Microsoft Office software, internet access, and electronic charting through CPRS. Interns have full use of all clinic resources including LCD projectors for presentations, and electronic research databases through the Medical Library. There is free parking in an off-site lot close to the building. Ms. Leona Payton-Franklin, our departmental administrative assistant, is available to the interns for non-patient related clerical support, and our Medical Support Assistants provide patient-related clerical support.

Administrative Policies and Procedures

AUTHORIZED LEAVE POLICY

Psychology interns accrue 13 days of Annual Leave (AL) and 13 days of Sick Leave (SL) over the course of the year at a rate of 4 hours per pay period. Interns also receive 10 paid federal holidays.

VA LAACC provides a maximum of five additional days of educational leave to psychology interns that can be used for off-site educational purposes. The following professional activities qualify: defending one's dissertation, postdoctoral residency or job interviews, conferences and workshops, presentations at professional meetings, and graduation. Requests for educational leave must be made in advance and approved by the Primary Supervisor and the Training Director.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The internship program allows for parental leave as well as for leave in the event of serious illness. Family and Medical Leave are granted for the birth of a child and care of a newborn, or placement of a child with oneself for adoption or foster care; a serious health condition of a spouse, son or daughter, or parent; or one's own serious health condition. Interns are required to complete the full 2080-hour requirement; any leave time will result in an extension of the training contract. Interns are encouraged to address any requests for leave with the Director of Training as early as possible.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

VA LAACC highly values cultural and individual diversity. We are an equal opportunity employer, and prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or status as a parent. We avoid any actions that would restrict program completion on grounds that are not relevant to success in training. In addition, we aim to foster a training environment that supports trainees in gaining greater competence in issues of diversity as they relate to patient care.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the policy of VA to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). VA

LAACC is committed to providing access for all people with disabilities and will provide accommodations, if needed.

LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR TRAINEES

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

PRIVACY POLICY

We will collect no personal information about you when you visit our website.

SELF-DISCLOSURE

Our program sets no requirement for self-disclosure unless the information is necessary to evaluate or obtain assistance for interns whose personal problems could reasonably be judged to be preventing them from performing their training-related activities in a competent manner or if posing a threat to others.

DUE PROCESS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

All trainees are afforded the right to due process in matters of problematic behavior and grievances. A copy of our due process policy is available on request, and is provided to all interns at the beginning of the training year.

Training Staff

The Psychology Training Committee currently consists of eleven full-time psychologists and four part-time psychologists. Training staff come from diverse academic backgrounds and represent a variety of theoretical orientations, including cognitive-behavioral, interpersonal, family systems, and psychodynamic. Our staff members hold appointments at local academic institutions including Fuller Graduate School of Psychology and University of Southern California. All staff psychologists at LAACC participate in the training program and all training supervisors are involved in direct patient care. Many of our staff members have worked at this facility for over 10 years, and staff retention is excellent as the staff at LAACC enjoy their jobs as well as the opportunities to work with psychology trainees. The recruitment of staff is quite effective, and jobs fill quickly and easily with well-qualified psychologists. In fact, we expect at least two new psychologists to join the team in the coming year, both of whom will be available supervisors for the psychology internship program by the 2020-2021 traini.

Many former interns voice a preference to work at this facility after their training year, and are often hired when appropriate positions become available. Six current staff members were interns here at LAACC, and additional staff members were interns at other local VA facilities.

Psychology Training Supervisors include the following full-time psychologists:

Nanci Argueta, Ph.D.

Site Lead, Trauma and Recovery Services

Doctoral Program: The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

Doctoral Internship: VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2015-Present

Clinical Interests: Anxiety Disorders, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Emotion Regulation, Multiculturalism and Diversity, Substance Abuse, Mental Health Treatment in Homeless Populations

Jesse D. Barglow, Ph.D.

Director, LAACC Addictive Behaviors Clinic (ABC)

Doctoral Program: Fordham University, Clinical Psychology, 2015

Doctoral Internship: VA West Los Angeles, General Track

Postdoctoral Fellowship: VA West Los Angeles, Interprofessional Integrative Health Track

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2016-Present

Clinical Interests: Substance use, trauma, psychosis, group psychotherapy, program development, interdisciplinary collaboration

Elizabeth Chereji, Ph.D.

Staff Psychologist, Primary Care-Mental Health Integration Program

Doctoral Program: University of Southern California, 2014

Doctoral Internship: West Los Angeles VA Medical Center

Postdoctoral Residency: Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center—VA Long Beach Healthcare System

Clinical Interests: Psychosocial adjustment to medical concerns, coping with chronic illness, substance abuse (e.g., motivational interviewing, abstinence- and harm reduction-based approaches)

Carolyn Feigel, Ph.D.,

Coordinator, PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) at ELA Clinic

Doctoral Program: University of Southern California, 2003

Doctoral Internship: VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2004-Present

Clinical Interests: PTSD assessment and EBTs for trauma (e.g., CPT, PE, EMDR); HIV treatment and medication adherence; health psychology, end of life issues; psychology and spirituality, ethnic minority mental health

Carole Goguen, Psy.D.

Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic and Filipino Veteran's Program

Doctoral Program: Pepperdine University, 1998

Doctoral Internship: Patton State Hospital, Patton, CA

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2001-Present

Clinical Interests: Psychotherapy and research of PTSD and sexual trauma; forensic psychology; community violence; disaster mental health; existential psychology

Kathryn Harrell, Ph.D.

Neuropsychologist, Clinical Director, Veterans' Cognitive Management and Assessment Program

Doctoral Program: Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, 2011

Doctoral Internship: VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2013- Present

Clinical Interests: Geriatric Neuropsychology, Teleneuropsychology, Dementia Care Management

Christine Holland, Ph.D., BCB

Program Lead, LAACC Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI)

Doctoral Program: University of Illinois at Chicago, 2011

Doctoral Internship: VA Long Beach Health Care System

Postdoctoral Fellowship: VA Loma Linda Healthcare System

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2013- Present

Clinical Interests: HIV, Chronic Illness, Health Behavior Change, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Interaction of Health and Trauma, PTSD, SMI, MST, LGBTQ issues

Michael Karakashian, Ph.D.

Section Chief, VA GLAHCS Primary Care–Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI)

Facility Training Lead, VA GLA Primary Care Mental Health Integration

Doctoral Program: University of Memphis, Ph.D. Counseling Psychology, 2011

Doctoral Internship: VA-Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: Harbor-UCLA Medical Center; Behavioral Medicine/HIV Mental Health

Licensure: Psychologist: California, 2017-present; Illinois, 2012-present

Clinical Interests: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Clinical Application of Mindfulness and Compassion, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Emotion-Focused Therapy, HIV Mental Health Care, PTSD, Substance Misuse, Motivational Interviewing, Primary Care-Mental Health Integration

Anna Leshner, Psy.D.

Director of Training, Psychology Pre-doctoral Internship Program

Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)

Doctoral Program: Pepperdine University, 2011

Doctoral Internship: VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: West Los Angeles VA Medical Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2012-Present

Clinical Interests: Severe Mental Illness; Acceptance-based Behavioral Approaches; Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Mindfulness; Individual and Cultural Diversity; Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Paul Lo, Ph.D.

Chief, Mental Health Services Section (LAACC, ELA, Gardena)

Doctoral Program: Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2001

Doctoral Internship: VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2003-Present

Clinical Interests: Military Psychology; Prolonged Exposure Therapy and Treatment of PTSD; Anxiety Disorders Treatment; Spirituality and Mental Health; Crisis Negotiation; Substance Abuse Treatment

Kimberly Newsom, Ph.D.

Mental Health Clinic, Behavioral Medicine Program

Assistant Director of Training, Psychology Internship Program

Doctoral Program: University of Kentucky, 2004

Doctoral Internship: Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, TX

Licensure: Psychologist, Delaware, 2008-Present

Clinical Interests: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy; Military Psychology; PTSD/trauma; Women's Issues; Behavioral Medicine/Health Psychology; Children and Adolescents

Part-time Psychology Training Supervisors include:

Sharon Jablon, Ph.D.

Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic

Doctoral Program: California School of Professional Psychology, 1989

Doctoral Internship: VA Medical Center, Sepulveda, CA; UCI Medical Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 1990-Present

Clinical Interests: Depression, interpersonal issues, stress management, legal and ethical issues, psychodynamic psychotherapy, group therapy

C. Amanda Schweizer, Ph.D., MPH

Staff Psychologist, HPACT (Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team)

Doctoral Program: San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology, 2015

Doctoral Internship: VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2017-Present

Clinical Interests: Emotion Regulation, Trauma-related Disorders, Dual Diagnosis, PE, CPT, DBT, ACT, Behavioral Medicine/Health Psychology, Culturally-informed Treatment, Women's Health

Debra Sobol, Ph.D.

Coordinator, Behavioral Medicine/Health Psychology Program

Doctoral Program: University of Southern California, 2000

Doctoral Internship: VA Ambulatory Care Center, Los Angeles

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 2003-Present

Clinical Interests: Behavioral medicine; pain management; primary care/health psychology; hypnosis; conflict resolution; parenting education; multicultural issues

Susan Steinberg, Ph.D.

Lead Psychologist, Women's Mental Health

Doctoral Program: Clark University, 1989

Doctoral Internship: Palo Alto VA Medical Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship: Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Licensure: Psychologist, California, 1991-Present

Clinical Interests: Rorschach assessment; Brief Psychodynamic Therapy; Supervision; Psychology of Women; Couple's Therapy; Mindfulness

Our departmental Administrative Assistant is Mrs. Leona Payton-Franklin, who oversees many of the administrative employee issues for the psychology interns.

Interns also frequently interact with a variety of agency personnel from other disciplines (e.g. psychiatry, social work, nursing, primary care, etc.).

Local Information

LAACC is located in downtown Los Angeles, in the middle of the cultural, financial, and political hub of metropolitan Los Angeles, an area that extends west to Santa Monica, south to the Port of Los Angeles, north to the San Gabriel Mountains, and east to Whittier. Our clinic is adjacent to Olvera Street, Little Tokyo, and Chinatown, and is very close to the Arts District. Our location is in the midst of a physical and socio-cultural renaissance. Businesses, shopping, restaurants, recreation, and cultural centers now dominate the area around the clinic. The Geffen Contemporary Art Museum, the Japanese American Museum, the Music Center (Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Ahmanson Theatre, and Mark Taper Forum), the Disney Performing Hall (home to the LA Philharmonic), the financial and garment districts, and the jewelry center are all within walking distance of the clinic.

Our interns take advantage of all that Los Angeles has to offer. They have resided in many different areas of LA through the years, including Pasadena, Santa Monica, Hollywood, downtown Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley. Union Station, the main train station servicing the Metropolitan Los Angeles area, is also walking distance from our clinic thereby facilitating staff and interns to use public transportation and "go green." In some ways, our location couldn't be better since the VA subsidizes public transportation expenses.

If you are interested in further information regarding downtown Los Angeles, please visit:

www.lacity.org