

PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PSYCH DEPARTMENT

SUMMER 2024

PROFESSOR GETS MAJOR GRANT FROM DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Dr. Kim McClure received a \$747,198 grant from the Department of Justice to provide de-escalation training to police officers. Participants will receive virtual reality scenario-based training through Dr. McClure's partnership with REAL Training Systems, a company providing online simulations. The training will focus on developing soft skills such as building rapport with community members. The goal is to help law enforcement better serve the needs of people in rural, suburban, and urban areas in the Midwest. For more information see <https://www.wiu.edu/cas/psychology/detal.php>



Psychology and Law Interns, Jayla Carle, Delma Cobb, Professor Kim McClure, DeTal Center graduate assistant Olajumoke Aderonmu, Julia Herrera, and Kit Denzler

THANK YOU DONORS!

Thanks to all who donated this year! Because of the generosity of donors, we were able to support 8 student trips to professional conferences, and award 9 James Joyce and 2 Donald Poindexter scholarships. When the Foundation contacts you in the Fall, consider giving to Psych and supporting the next generation of Leathernecks.

HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE

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www.wiu.edu/cas/psychology

AUTISM CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE GOING STRONG

The WIU Autism Center for Excellence, now in its second year, is a collaboration between Psychology professor Dr. Leigh Ann Fiser and the Speech Pathology & Audiology department. This past year the Center received funding from the Fellheimer Trust and the Galesburg Community Foundation. These grants allowed the purchase of testing materials so that area children may be assessed, and also funded graduate assistantships so students could get hands-on experience in the Clinic while also receiving financial support. It is currently the only clinic in the region providing free autism assessment services. For more information see <https://www.wiu.edu/autismclinic/>

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The Tracy Family Foundation awarded Drs. Tracy Cruise and Kim McClure \$15,000 to provide increased psychotherapy services for elementary school children in Macomb. "Reducing mental health concerns at an early age not only benefits the child and their family, but ultimately reduces societal costs related to healthcare and the justice systems. When children are healthy, a community is healthy," Cruise said.

For the first time since 2019, students and faculty met for Woodsie. This long-standing tradition of a cookout was on hiatus, first due to COVID and then because of faculty member Dr. Eugene Mathes retiring. With the blessing of Dr. Mathes, Woodsie returned this Spring, now hosted by Drs. Jonathan Hammersley and Kristy Keefe.

THE RETURN OF WOODSIE!



PEER SUPPORT COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Peer Counseling program, a collaboration between the Psychology Department and University Counseling Center, began in February. Five undergraduates served as peer counselors, available to meet in-person with students to listen, support, and provide resources. This was an offshoot of the long-running Hotline crisis call line in the Department. For more information see https://www.wiu.edu/peer_support/

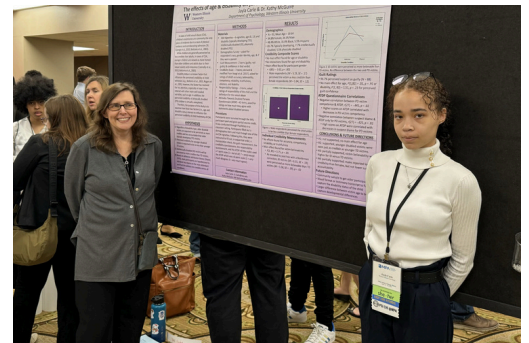
STUDENTS ACTIVE IN RESEARCH

Undergraduate and graduate students attended a variety of conferences, both local and national, to present their research:

- 10 students presented at WIU's Undergraduate Research Day (URD) in April
- 7 students presented at the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA) annual meeting in Chicago in April
- 6 students presented at the inaugural WIU Clinical and School Professional Conference in April
- 8 students presented at the WIU Graduate Research Conference in March
- 2 students presented at the National Association of School Psychologists annual meeting in New Orleans in February



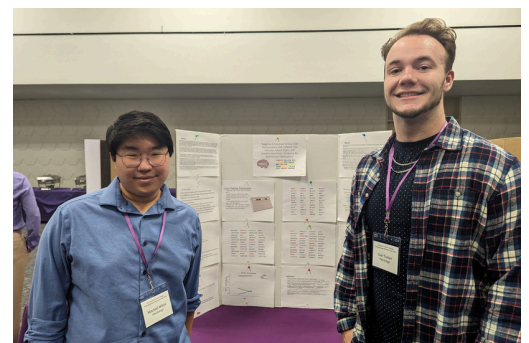
Haley McKinsey at MPA



Dr. McGuire and Jayla Carle at MPA



Juan Ramirez at Graduate Research Conference



Mitchell White and Cole Turner at URD 3

2024 Fulkerson Alumni Award Winner: Ryan Perez



Perez and family, with Drs. Laurent and Mathes

The recipient of the 2024 Frank E. Fulkerson Outstanding Alumni Award is Ryanzo Perez. Ryan's path to the Department of Psychology at WIU had several stops along the way. He served in the US Army and Illinois National Guard for over a decade. After leaving the military, Ryan earned his A.A. in Psychology from Lincoln Land Community College where he was a student in classes taught by WIU alumna Rebecca Miller (B.S., M.S.).

Ryan transferred to Western for the Fall 2013 semester to pursue his B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Management. He graduated magna cum laude in 2015. While in the Department, Ryan was awarded a James Joyce Scholarship, Donald J. Poindexter Research Award, Eric Ward Statistics Tutoring award, Norman and Carmelita Teeter Undergraduate Research Award, and was recognized as the Department Scholar upon graduation.

After graduation from WIU, Ryan entered the Master's program in Industrial-Organizational Psychology at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. He earned his M.A. in 2017. Novus International, Inc. hired Ryan as a Training and Development Specialist. He then was appointed to Internal Auditor, Risk, and Contract Management Specialist. Ryan's current position with Novus is as Senior Internal Auditor and Risk Management Specialist.

Outside of work, Ryan enjoys photography. Some of his photos have accompanied articles from news outlets such as The Washington Post. He also enjoys spending time with his wife, Brittany, supporting their children, Autumn (11) and Lucas (9), during their various activities.