



# N2NNews

A Publication of New 2 Neuropsychology



2023 | Issue 2



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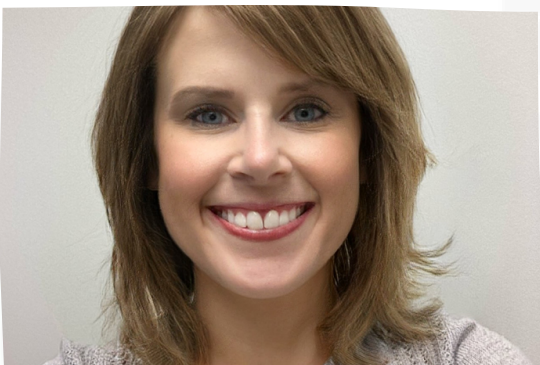
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# From the N2N Guest Editor

The N2N experience by committee member Nathan Ramirez

*Nathan Ramirez, PsyD | N2N Newsletter Content Contributor*

My name is Nathan Ramirez, and I serve on the N2N Resource Development Committee and N2N Newsletter team.



I was given the opportunity to be part of the New2Neuropsychology (N2N) initiative, and am happy to relay many positive experiences with this. I hope that this will encourage you to participate in N2N as well as take full advantage of all the great information and resources that it provides!

For instance, I have become much more familiar with training gaps within the field of neuropsychology. Furthermore, N2N has allowed me to connect with many great minds within the N2N community. I highly recommend anyone interested in neuropsychology to join a committee or another form of professional service - not only does this advance your understanding of this field, but it enhances training experiences and opportunities for others from marginalized backgrounds. The most significant “takeaway” I have from working with this initiative is realizing how effective outreach can be for those who are not traditionally positioned to be exposed to this specialty of clinical psychology 🧠



**Be sure to follow  
N2N on Twitter!**

**@New2Neuropsych**









# N2N Student Liaison Program

Tasha Rhoads: N2N Student Liaison

*Cali Joyce, MA | N2N Newsletter Content Contributor*

The N2N Student Liaison program was launched in 2022 to create connections, facilitate networking, answer questions, and share resources. Our liaisons are current neuropsychology trainees involved in leadership roles across neuropsychology organizations. To date, liaisons have met with over a dozen high school students, undergraduates, post-baccalaureate research assistants, and early graduate students to discuss topics like how to find graduate programs with neuropsychology training, to how to establish a research specialization. During 1 to 2 individual meetings, N2N Liaisons answer questions, provide helpful guidance, and facilitate warm handoffs to neuropsychologists and organizations. The N2N Liaison program's goal is to create a safe space and launch pad for you to explore pathways in neuropsychology!

## Tasha Rhoads



"I initially became interested in the brain and behavior in college where I studied a variety of subjects including neuroscience, linguistics, philosophy, and more. I discovered that the field of cognitive science represented an interesting intersection of these seemingly disparate disciplines, and chose to pursue a major in psychology with minors in cognitive science and neuroscience. After college, I was a research coordinator for NIH-funded clinical drug trials at the University of Chicago, and it was in this lab that I was first exposed to neuropsychology. I began a clinical psychology graduate program at Rosalind Franklin University, specializing in neuropsychology, to develop skills in intervention and cognitive assessment of adults with a wide range of conditions. I am currently on my postdoctoral fellowship at Cleveland Clinic, where my research focuses on health equity by using neighborhood


disadvantage to quantify contextual factors associated with experiences of psychosocial distress (chronic stress, discrimination, mental health) and cognition in older adults.

As I progressed through my program, I noticed that due to the focus and intensity of graduate training, some personal interests and even values had fallen by the wayside. Before moving to Chicago for my research assistantship, I served as an AmeriCorps volunteer with a nonprofit called College Possible that used after school coaching/support to improve college access for high school students coming from underrepresented or under-resourced backgrounds. To reincorporate the values of social justice and service into my academic life, I have served on the Society for Clinical Neuropsychology's Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee, and the National Academy of Neuropsychology's Student/Postdoc Committee (Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee Chair). Being able to serve as a Student Liaison through New2Neuropsychology (N2N) represents a continuation of this alignment of



# N2N Student Liaisons

Tasha Rhoads: N2N Student Liaison

values, service, and action. It's essential to provide students, particularly those from historically underrepresented backgrounds, with the knowledge, support, and resources that will help them succeed. During meetings with students, I have discussed pros and cons of PsyD versus PhD programs, highlighted ways to structure a CV or present their clinical experiences for varying levels of neuropsychology training, and provided encouragement to students who received graduate program rejections. I enjoy mentoring promising and engaged students who are seeking assistance, but I firmly believe that focusing on students at the high school and college level will be most helpful in increasing diverse representation and equity in neuropsychology" 

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

### Want to help increase representation in neuropsychology?

Apply for one of our open positions in Outreach,  
Resource Development, Student Engagement, or  
Program Evaluation! Applications due Oct. 20th, 2023.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/N2N-Apps-2023](https://bit.ly/N2N-Apps-2023)

## Open N2N positions:

**Resource Development Committee Chair\***

**Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU) Ambassador\***

**Canadian Institutions Ambassador\***

**Resource Development & Student Engagement Committees: Joint Position\*\***

**Program Evaluation Committee Member\*\***

*\*Neuropsychology trainees or neuropsychologists are eligible to apply*

*\*\*Postbaccs, neuropsychology trainees, or neuropsychologists are eligible to apply*





# Upcoming Conferences

## A Listing of Neuropsychology Meetings

2023

From 10/25/23 to 10/28/23, the [National Academy of Neuropsychology \(NAN\)](#) will be hosting their annual meeting in the historic city of Philadelphia!

At the same time during NAN in Philly, the [Hispanic Neuropsychological Society \(HNS\)](#) will also be hosting their annual meeting!

Finally, from 11/11/23 to 11/15/23 the [Society for Neuroscience](#) will host their annual meeting in our nation's capital of Washington, D.C.

2024

From 2/14/24 to 2/17/24, the [International Neuropsychological Society \(INS\)](#) North American meeting will be held in the Big Apple aka New York City.

From 6/5/24 to 6/8/24, the [American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology \(AACN\)](#) will be hosting their annual meeting in sunny Scottsdale, Arizona!

From 8/8/24 to 8/10/21 the [Society for Clinical Neuropsychology \(SCN\)](#) will host their annual meeting in Seattle, Washington!









# Conversations with an Author

## Reassembling reality with Aldrich Chan, PsyD

Nathan Ramirez, PsyD | N2N Newsletter Content Contributor

Aldrich Chan, PsyD, is a neuropsychologist, founder of the Center for Neuropsychology and Consciousness in Miami, Florida, and adjunct professor in the clinical psychology grad programs at Pepperdine University. He received his doctorate from Pepperdine and trained at a number of institutions such as the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Jackson Memorial Hospital's Ryder Trauma Center, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, and the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. You can read more about Dr. Chan online [here](#).



New2Neuropsychology had the honor of conversing with Dr. Chan, a clinical neuropsychologist based in Florida. His book was published in 2021 in The Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology: "Reassembling Models of Reality: Theory and Clinical Practice (Nautilus Award Winner)." His book covers a wide range of topics derived from a wealth of peer-reviewed research. Within the text, he dives into sensation and perception, consciousness, psychotherapy, theoretical models of emotion and cognition, affective neuroscience, philosophy, and more; which ultimately tie into the framework he developed, i.e., Resembling Models of Reality (R-MOR). As he states, "the R-MOR framework is meant to supplement existing approaches, providing the clinician with another way to conceptualize and intervene." A truly essential read for those interested in psychotherapy and assessment! We chose to chat with Dr. Chan given his extensive clinical experience in neuropsychological assessment and dedication to research. Additionally, we thought he could offer some advice to those thinking about applying to graduate school.

### What motivated your award-winning book, *Reassembling Models of Reality: Theory and Clinical Practice*?

There are several answers to this question. Part of the difficulty our society suffers from is the loss of viable meaning systems that drive behavior and play a fundamental role in our sense of well-being. By viable, I mean in congruence with science. I could see this in my patients and knew that I was not an exclusion to the condition. While I journeyed through articles and books that tackled this theme independently, I could not find anything that truly bridged the gap between neuroscience, psychology, and philosophy. I decided to begin by examining the layers that 'veil' experience within a biopsychosocial-existential framework. I offered several theories that may act as viable meaning systems. As a clinician, I was also interested in how this information could be used practically. The result was RMOR. I would say that I took it upon myself to complete this missing piece of the puzzle, but it was more like I was beckoned. To this day, the only book I've found to be comparable is Iain McGilchrist's book *The Matter with Things*, which was published shortly after mine.





# Conversations with an Author

## Reassembling reality with Aldrich Chan, PsyD

### What challenges to cultural neuropsychology do you foresee as a neuropsychologist working with diverse populations?

There are many challenges that neuropsychological research has been working to improve. We have test designs that are not culturally sensitive, as well as a lack of robust normative data for many groups. Part of the issue is the amount of financial and temporal investment required to create validated measures, especially neuropsychological measures (whose studies are often accompanied by neuroimaging) and need to put together large amounts of data on independent cultural groups (also controlling for sex, age, handedness, etc.). It is very important for modern-day neuropsychologists to be acutely aware of cultural differences, and undergo multicultural training in the context of clinical neuropsychology. Clinical acumen has to balance out areas of growth in our objective data.

### What do you focus on in your practice as a neuropsychologist? (e.g., psychotherapy, assessment, consultation, research?)

In terms of my clinical work related to neuropsychological assessment, I work with patients who have traumatic brain injury, memory disorders, learning disabilities, ADHD, and mental health disorders. I see some legal cases as well. For psychotherapy, I focus on persons with mental health disorders like depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and psychological issues like grief, adjustment to medical diagnoses, and existential dread. I host two programs, one being a meditation program and the other a program for young adults aimed towards improving self-regulation, awareness, goal-attainment, and emotional intelligence (SAGE).

Outside of these, I do some consultation work on the side - mostly with companies that require some form of research design to assist with their goals. I am quite engaged in research myself, often reviewing publications, novel ideas, and chapters. My team also helped out with research for my book (and my next one, coming out soon). As mentioned in the introduction above, I teach doctoral- and master's-level classes at Pepperdine University. I also have a public education platform on [Instagram](#) (@draldrichan).

### What advice would you give to your younger self applying to college with the aim of becoming a clinical neuropsychologist?

Assessment and research are the main components that separate a psychologist from a master's-level therapist. The neuroscience of psychotherapy is also quite different from neuropsychology. Clinical neuropsychology focuses on assessment, whereas the neuroscience of psychotherapy relates to how psychotherapy influences the brain, and how understanding the brain may improve psychotherapeutic outcomes. Shadow a neuropsychologist, and if assessment is not something you are interested in, it may not be necessary for you to continue for the doctorate.

# **REASSEMBLING MODELS OF REALITY**

**THEORY AND CLINICAL PRACTICE**

**ALDRICH CHAN**

FOREWORD BY LOUIS COZOLINO

AFTERWORD BY DANIEL J. SIEGEL







# Conversations with an Author

## Reassembling reality with Aldrich Chan, PsyD

If you apply for a doctoral (PhD or PsyD) program, make sure that it is accredited through the American Psychological Association. There are programs that do not have a neuropsychology specialization track, and this is OK so long as the school is connected to high-quality hospitals and institutes that provide training by neuropsychologists.

**What did you do to make yourself a competitive candidate for graduate school to set yourself up for neuropsychology?**

I made sure that my recommendations came from professors who teach courses relevant to neuropsychology. I made sure to apply to the top hospitals vouched by others to have amazing training. I also speak multiple languages. If you live somewhere with a high density of foreign speakers, it will always be beneficial for you to learn the language.

**Any final thoughts or advice to our readers?**

Be patient, there is a lot of training in neuropsychology. Moreover, it is a very competitive field. Make sure to apply to several programs and you can begin by researching professors that are conducting research that you may be interested in. Be proactive, and find articles that you are intrigued by and reach out to the authors to see if there might be any volunteer positions in which you could try to participate 🧠







# Grad School Preparation

## How do I decide where to apply?

*Erin Kaseda, MS | N2N Resource Development Committee Chair*

We're in the middle of graduate school application season, which means that many undergraduate seniors and post-baccalaureates are looking into programs to find their perfect fit. But how do you find programs and research labs that are taking students, especially if you want a focus on neuropsychology in your graduate training? Check out some tips below!

**Check out the online Neuropsychology Training Program Directory sponsored by the Society for Clinical Neuropsychology (SCN)**



SCN has an online directory of doctoral training programs with neuropsychology training (Ph.D. and Psy.D.) located in the United States and Canada. This is a great way to start making a list of programs that self-identify as having training specific to clinical neuropsychology. In the directory, you can find information on each program such as specific classes or clinical experiences the program offers that align with neuropsychology. Keep in mind that there are great programs not included on this list, so you can use resources like the online directory of APA-accredited programs and mentors to identify other programs as well.

**Think about your fit for specific faculty mentors, not just for the program itself**

Most Ph.D. programs and some Psy.D. programs use what is called a “mentor model” for admissions. This means that when you apply, you’ll identify 1-3 specific faculty members that you want to work with, and you’ll ultimately be accepted to work in a specific faculty’s research lab. This is different from undergraduate applications, where you’re accepted to the school or a major program first, and then find specific mentors and advisors once you’ve already started the program.

When thinking about where you want to apply, you want to identify specific faculty mentors you’ll be applying to work with. These faculty mentors don’t need to be neuropsychologists, but they should do work in areas that are aligned with your long term goals. Most faculty have webpages or whole lab websites dedicated to their work where you can read about their lab and primary research goals, find recent publications, see a list of current students and staff, and find out whether they are accepting a new doctoral student to start in Fall 2024. Not all research mentors take students every year, so be sure to find out whether that specific faculty has a spot for you! Usually this information will be included on the psychology department’s website or the faculty’s research lab webpage.



# Grad School Preparation

## How do I decide where to apply?

Read the bios and CVs of current neuropsychologists and advanced trainees to see where they did their graduate school training

Another great way to find programs and research mentors is to find out where current neuropsychologists did their training, and who they worked with in graduate school. This can be especially helpful if you have the goal of working with a specific patient population (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, schizophrenia, Lewy body dementia) or a specific research methodology (e.g., fMRI, genetic sequencing). Find someone in the field who does what you want to do, and work backwards through their training to figure out where they went to school and how they got those experiences.

Not sure how to find current neuropsychologists or advanced trainees to get this information from? Reach out to the N2N Student Liaisons, who are all well-connected current trainees and recent doctoral graduates who can connect you to their networks and help you narrow down your list of programs to find the right fit for you. We've also included highlights of four specific graduate programs in this issue - keep reading to learn more 🧠







# Grad School Preparation

## Am I ready for a Clinical Psychology PhD program?

### Am I Ready for a Clinical Psychology PhD Program?

#### 1. Research experience is crucial for PhD programs.

##### Do you have research experience?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A. What is research?  | D. Yes! I have worked in a research lab and have participated in one or more posters or publications. I have a sense of the research process, have some research skills, and an idea of what I want to study. |
| B. Some, I have worked as an undergraduate in a research lab.   |   |
| C. Yes, I worked in a research lab on a project and have an idea of what type of research topics I like to think about. |   |

#### 2. Clinical experience is not necessary to apply, but can be helpful! Do you have clinical experience?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| A. I'm not sure I know what clinical experience entails?   | D. Definitely! I have experience working with clinical populations and have a good idea of what populations I want to work with and the type of clinical training I want from graduate school. |
| B. Some, I have been exposed to certain populations or patients, but I am not sure where my interests are.                             |  |
| C. Yes, I have interacted with or observed others working with patients and have an idea of the type of populations I'm interested in. |  |

#### 3. Finding a good program and mentor fit is important! Do you know who you'd like to work with?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| A. No, I don't yet know what research area I'm interested in.  | D. Yes! I know what I am interested in studying and know who I would reach out to see if they are accepting students. |
| B. I have lots of interests so I am not sure what general area I want to research and am still figuring it or patient interests out. |   |
| C. Maybe, I have a general sense of what I'm interested in researching and could identify faculty based on keywords!                 |   |

**7 to 9 points:** Halt! You may want to take some more time to fill in your gaps whether it's gaining more research experience or figuring out what you want to study. A graduate program will be the next 4-6 (or more) years of your life, so you not only want to increase your chances in a competitive pool, but also know what you're getting yourself into and be sure that you will enjoy what you're studying!

**4 to 6 points:** Caution! It sounds like you have some good experience but may need to take some more time to either figure out your specific research interests OR know what you want to study! Remember – taking the time to look for relevant research or clinical experience will better position you as a graduate student! Also, do not underestimate the importance of finding a good mentor fit – they are very important for your grad school experience!

**0 to 3 points:** Woohoo! You have some solid research experience, know what to expect and what you're looking for from your graduate training! Make sure you have time to put together application materials including recommendation letters, personal statements, transcripts, and so on. Don't be afraid to reach out to current students or mentors for advice and support! Take the leap: it'll be a learning experience regardless of the outcome!

**SCORING KEY:** #1, a=3, b=2, c=1, d=0; #2, a=3, b=2, c=1, d=0; #3, a=3, b=2, c=1, d=0





# Grad School Preparation

## How important is it to have publications?

Nathan Ramirez, PsyD | N2N Newsletter Content Contributor

**TLDR: Publications are not necessary, to apply to a doctoral program, but they sure don't hurt!**



Great news: you've decided to apply to graduate school. How important is it to have research publications? Typically, the admissions committee wants to see that you have the potential to become an excellent researcher (not all, but especially if you are applying to a program that emphasizes research). Some programs that promote a strong research curriculum and experiences may require more hands-on research experience within the context of a research lab, but these requirements vary between programs, as others may not put as much weight into prior research experience.

Publications can be an indication of a successful student, especially for PhD programs. In a [2012 research study](#), Pashak and colleagues surveyed 59 clinical psychology doctoral programs and had them rank factors for admission, including research publications, and then compared between two program types (PhD and PsyD). From a list of 15 factors, PhD programs ranked research publications at an average of  $8.27 \pm 3.57$  (range: 2 - 15), which was significantly higher than PsyD programs (average of  $11.86 \pm 2.27$ , range: 7 - 13). That said, publications are not the *only* way to show that you have strong research skills. Presenting at conferences, volunteering in a lab, winning research awards (admittedly, easier said than done), or doing an industry internship can also show your research aptitude.

Additionally, your letters of recommendation can speak to your potential for research excellence. If you are involved in research as a high school, undergraduate, or Master's student that leads to a publication, think of it as a nice bonus rather than a necessity. Having a publication on your CV can certainly help your application stand out when applying to a competitive program or make up for a weakness elsewhere in your application. You may notice that some current students in the program are published during undergrad, but again, this doesn't make it an application requirement, nor does everyone get the opportunity to do so. However, prior research experience under one's belt will certainly help you become a more competitive candidate.

Rather than worry about publications, focus instead on gaining solid research experience. Find a job as a research assistant. Ask to volunteer in a lab. Present at a scientific conference (which is also an excellent way to network, market yourself, and build connections). These are equally valuable ways to build up the kind of research experience that makes you a promising applicant. **Bottom line:** you don't need any publications to get into a good PsyD/PhD program. Publications are often slow, and it's an unexpected bonus for an undergraduate to have publications, not a necessity 🧠



# Grad School Preparation

## What about grad school finances?

*Cali Joyce, MA | N2N Newsletter Content Contributor*

Pursuing a graduate-level education in psychology can be an expensive endeavor and is often associated with financial costs that are important to consider before applying. While understanding graduate expenses can feel like a complicated process, it may be helpful to consider these 4 main financial components to prepare yourself before the application process:



### The cost of applying to grad school

Many programs require a non-refundable application fee, which ranges from \$60- \$90 per school. Some programs may offer an application fee waiver for students with financial needs. Specific instructions and criteria for application waivers are typically listed on the program's website.

Some psychology graduate programs require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Registration for the GRE generally costs \$220, excluding other associated costs, such as travel fees and books/materials. The GRE will send your exam scores to 4 schools free of charge, though if you want to distribute your results to additional programs, that will require additional out-of-pocket charges. However, not all programs require the GRE. These programs instead rely more heavily on other aspects of the candidate's application (i.e., letters of recommendation, personal statements, prior research experience, and undergraduate GPA). It is important to consider whether your programs of interest require the GRE when considering application costs.

Although applications can be expensive, scholarship opportunities can offer support. N2N partnered with the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology to offer \$500 scholarships for historically underrepresented minoritized students with financial needs in 2022 and 2023. N2N will share scholarship opportunities on our Twitter and email list, as well as our [N2N website](#).

### Consider all the costs associated with attending grad school

Attending graduate school includes a range of direct and indirect expenses, beyond just tuition fees. There are some important factors to consider when creating your financial plan (see figure on next page). It is also important to note that graduate programs can range from fully funded to unfunded, while Ph.D. programs typically provide more university-based financial support than Psy.D. programs. When a graduate student is fully funded this means that the student receives full tuition reimbursement. There are several additional ways to seek financial support during graduate school, including: stipends, scholarships, research



# Grad School Preparation

## What about grad school finances?

### Indirect costs:

- Cost of living (depends on the program region/city)
- Potential moving costs (take into account not only graduate school but also internship and postdoctoral fellowship)
- Transportation
- Conference attendance

### Direct costs:

- Tuition
- Insurance
- Administrative Fees
- Books and other supplies




grants, and travel awards. For a more in-depth explanation on each of these funding categories, check out [N2N's financial resources page](#).

### Weigh financial aid against potential debt

Although some programs offer financial support, they may not cover all educational and living expenses. In these cases, graduate students may need to supplement spending through other means, such as loans and savings. It is important to thoughtfully weigh the impact of student loan debt when considering affording and repaying for graduate school.

First, contact the financial aid office of your prospective programs may help you better understand their financial aid options and your eligibility. Program specific Information related to financial aid is usually outlined on their admission websites. Some examples of federal and program-level aid programs and options include federal loans, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Federal Work-Study, payment plans, and private/commercial loans.

International students can sometimes find themselves in special circumstances. Here, federal and private loans are less likely to be available to international students, and you may have to incur additional expenses. If you are an international student interested in applying to graduate school, check out the [N2N website](#) to access more information regarding potential barriers to consider, resources for navigating the admissions process, and information on funding opportunities 

*Disclaimer: The ideas shared on N2N's financial resources pages should never be used without first assessing your own personal and financial situation, or without consulting a financial professional.*





# Grad Program Highlights

## Meet four accomplished future neuropsychologists

Nathan Ramirez, PsyD | N2N Newsletter Content Contributor

This month, the N2N Newsletter team talked to four students in doctoral psychology programs around the United States. These accomplished individuals are excellent budding neuropsychologists, and wanted to share a little more about themselves, how they came to be interested in neuropsychology, and about how their program is structured.

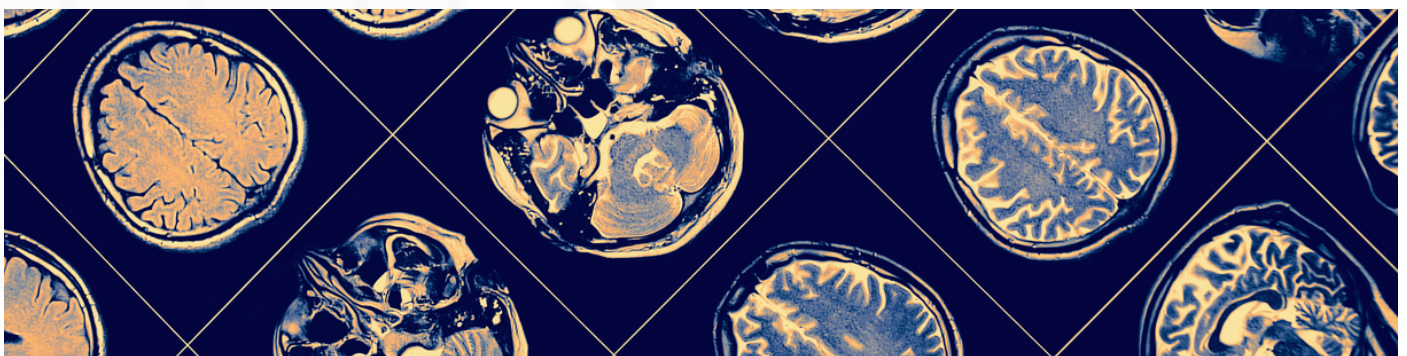
### Anthony Robinson, Louisiana State University



"I am a fifth-year doctoral candidate at Louisiana State University (LSU) with a neuropsychology emphasis. When deciding between programs, the rich clinical (internal and external practica) and neuropsychology research experiences offered at LSU were very appealing to me. As a queer Black trans man, I was initially concerned about the overall climate. However, being from Texas, I knew if I was in a supportive environment that I'd be okay.

Ultimately, the prospect of being in a lab that valued diversity and having a mentor (neuropsychologist Dr. Matthew Calamia) that deliberately engages in actions to foster an inclusive and equitable environment was the deciding factor for me.

As a student at LSU, I have benefited greatly from the support available through organizations within and outside the psychology department. For example, Dr. Calamia, with the support of the department, nominated me for a fellowship through the graduate college that specifically supports students from underrepresented backgrounds. The fellowship allowed me to dedicate approximately half of my time to research and the other half to clinical training and course work. Additional programs and organizations that I have been supported by include the Committee on Diversity and Outreach in Psychology, Black Graduate and Professional Student Association, and the Queer Graduate Student Alliance - to name but a few."





# Grad Program Highlights

## Meet four accomplished future neuropsychologists

### Libby DesRuisseaux, University of Utah



"I am a rising fourth-year student at the University of Utah, which is a clinical psychology Ph.D. program. I work under Dr. Yana Suchy and am in the neuropsychology track. Luckily, I found a perfect match in program emphasis, faculty advisor, and location at the University of Utah. The University of Utah is located in Salt Lake City, and I could not imagine a more perfect city to live in while attending graduate school. Salt Lake City is quite literally surrounded by mountains, and it only takes me about 10-30 minutes to get from my doorstep to get to amazing hikes or to the many local ski mountains. Grad school is stressful, and getting out into nature is one of my favorite ways to decompress and forget all about school. Outside of nature, there's a great community here with fun breweries, bars coffee shops, and restaurants— although there are not as many options as in major cities.

Additionally, the cost of living is significantly lower here than on the coasts or in major cities, which makes life a little easier.

When interviewing for programs, I did not have a strong preference for the specific training model but rather was more interested in having an equal emphasis on research and clinical training, as I plan to work in an academic medical center setting. Although the U is a clinical science program, I have found that my time is evenly split between all aspects of my training (courses, clinical work, research, and teaching). We are always involved in research, but the extent depends on whether we are funded through a research assistantship (RA) or a teaching assistantship (TA). An RA is technically 20 hours of work per week, but most students usually spend closer to 15 hours per week. When on a TA, the amount of research you do depends on your other demands and the needs of your lab. I typically always focus on research whenever I have time outside of clinic and coursework, which usually ends up being about 5-8 hours a week. Our clinical work is capped at 16 hours per week per departmental requirements, but you can petition to do more clinical work if you have sufficient justification. I typically work about 50-55 hours per week during the academic year, and the rest of my time is spent either on coursework, teaching, or in my various (optional) service positions."

As for our clinical training, we start out doing all of our clinical work within the Psychology Department, either in our departmental community clinic or the University Counseling Center. I really appreciated this, as I felt that I had more resources, support, and oversight during my first clinical experiences. In your third year and beyond, you can work in either university hospitals, local hospitals, or community clinics. I have only worked in university hospitals, as they align best with my training goals. However, I appreciate the wide range of



# Grad Program Highlights

## Meet four accomplished future neuropsychologists

experiences offered to us for our practicum placements. As for choosing our placements, we rank our top 3 choices each year and we are matched according to those preferences in conjunction with other factors (year in the program, gaps in our training, etc.). The final decision is made by the practicum director in conjunction with our advisors. We typically get a primary site, where the majority of our work takes place, and an add-on site, where we work a few additional hours per week. Thus far, both of my primary sites have been neuropsychology placements, and my add-ons have been intervention sites (i.e., therapy)."

### Grace Goodwin, University of Nevada - Las Vegas



"I am in the clinical psychology PhD program at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). I have loved my experience at UNLV so far! Our program typically has 6-8 students per cohort; there are 8 total students in mine. Our cohort has become very close, and their support has been an important part of my graduate school experience. I'm originally from the west coast, so I was happy to be in Las Vegas. There is so much to do here! I have really enjoyed desert hiking, mountain biking, and rock climbing. I have also had incredible food and have seen amazing shows. Campus is nestled in the middle of the city (right behind the famous Las Vegas strip), but there is enough separation from the chaos of the downtown area. It's a mix between a classic college campus feel and a vibrant, urban campus feel.

I chose to attend UNLV for the research and neuropsychology training. Nevada also currently ranks 42nd in the US for access to mental healthcare, meaning there is a dire need for clinicians in this area. As a result, I have had incredible clinical experience and have served a wide range of patients with various needs.

I chose to apply to mostly science-practitioner programs because I wanted to engage in both research and clinical work throughout my training. However, students have some flexibility with how they choose to spend their time. I have tailored my experience so that I spend about half of my time doing research and about half of my time doing clinical work (with coursework, GA responsibilities, and committee work mixed in there). Other students in the program have split their time differently. This depends on each student's interests, goals, and faculty advisors.

UNLV clinical students typically complete their first practicum rotation during their second year at the interdisciplinary, department-run, community clinic. We see individual and group therapy clients and conduct full assessment batteries. After our second year, students are placed in community-based practica. Our department hosts a practicum fair each year so



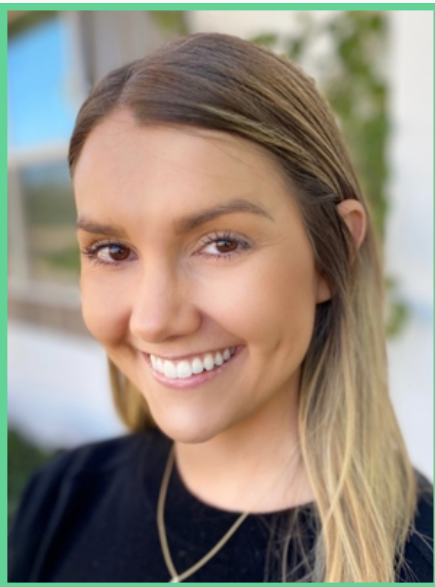


# Grad Program Highlights

## Meet four accomplished future neuropsychologists

that students can interview at various community practices. We then rank our preferred sites (students typically get their first or second choice). Our program has many established practicum placements in the community. That said, there are very few (3) established neuropsychology practica in the community, which has been difficult for our students. The DCTs have been working to identify more training for us. We also have the option to do a half practicum at our department clinic if we need more hours. In addition to my neuropsych practicum in the community, I have been able to continue therapy at the department clinic.”


### Amanda Wisinger, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology



“I recently graduated from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology and am now a neuropsychology postdoctoral fellow in the department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at TIRR Memorial Hermann/UTHealth Houston. My degree is a PsyD (which is a Doctor of Psychology, as opposed to Doctor of Philosophy [PhD]), and my program was a general Clinical Psychology program with no neuropsychology track. PsyD degrees tend to be more clinically focused, and thus I did not apply to a specific lab or to work with a specific research mentor but rather applied to the department of Clinical Psychology more broadly.

My journey into neuropsychology was a bit of a nontraditional one.

While formal research experience was not expected as a part of my degree, I knew that this experience would make me more competitive for neuropsychology practicum, internship, and fellowship. Thus, I decided to seek out these opportunities myself, which involved lots of Google searches and cold emails. This process was difficult but in retrospect it taught me the valuable skills of networking, communicating effectively, and putting myself out there and making connections in my community. Notably, as this research experience was not part of my program requirements, all the time I spent in the lab I was employed by was on my own time, on top of course work and practicum requirements. This additional time commitment improved my time management skills immensely and prepared me for the intensity of my predoctoral internship year.

While my program was generalist and did not have a specialized neuropsychology track, I was able to seek specialized training in through the neuropsychology research lab I worked in, in addition to neuropsychology practica that I completed throughout my training. Each of these practica had their own neuropsychology didactics, and I often asked my supervisors for additional recommended readings/webinars to further advance my knowledge. During internship and fellowship interviews, I enjoyed sharing how I made these training opportunities happen for myself, and also how I felt that my general clinical psychology background made me a stronger neuropsychologist” 



# Interview with a Psychometrist

## Meet Tiffany Grezmak from the Cleveland Clinic

Erin Kaseda, MS | N2N Resource Development Committee Chair

This month, the N2N Newsletter team talked with Tiffany Grezmak, MA (she/her/hers), a full-time psychometrist at the Cleveland Clinic. Tiffany shared her experience applying to full-time jobs and how her role as a psychometrist has helped prepare her for graduate school applications and a future career as a neuropsychologist.



### How did you look for (and find) any post-baccalaureate job opportunities?

My mentors through my university helped me locate relevant job opportunities. My goal was to be able to work in a clinical setting like the Cleveland Clinic and to increase my exposure to different patient groups and other opportunities to learn. For example, getting involved in research and observational experiences in a multidisciplinary clinical setting has allowed me to learn about the treatment process of patient care. I have found both of these experiences to be extremely helpful in understanding more about the role of neuropsychology. Understanding my future goals helped my mentors advise me to apply for potential jobs.

### What has been the most interesting thing you've learned by being a psychometrist?

The most interesting thing I learned was seeing how a patient's presentation can mask their true cognitive functioning. However, neuropsychological testing can bring out a more accurate picture of their daily functioning. Additionally, patients and caregivers self-report can be off, or neuroimaging cannot capture how a patient is able to engage and function in daily life. Our results can be helpful in determining the next steps for patients and how they can manage and cope with their cognitive symptoms. This is why I find neuropsychology both fascinating and rewarding.

### How has working as a psychometrist helped prepare you for future graduate training?

I am exposed to a wide variety of patients undergoing neuropsychological testing for many reasons. I have built a solid foundation of knowledge in diverse types of neurological and psychiatric disease. In addition to valuable clinical skills, I have been fortunate to be involved in research with various faculty. I have built strong skills in multitasking, organization, time management, communicating with doctors/professionals, and the ability to think on my toes. Taking gap years also allowed me to discover my personal interests and develop long term goals, which I think will be immensely helpful entering a doctoral program.





# Interview with a Psychometrist

Meet Tiffany Grezmak from the Cleveland Clinic

What advice do you have for current students or recent graduates trying to find jobs to help them prepare for graduate school?

My advice would be to stay open-minded and make the most of each opportunity. Look for places that fulfill your current interests and have opportunities to learn new things. Seek out mentorship and build good connections along the way. Asking others for advice is what helped guide me to where I am today. You never know what resources or connections someone may have, or what might turn into a long-term interest or passion 🧠



