

APA2025

Denver | August 7-9



Society of Counseling Psychology Division 17

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

2025 AWARDS PROGRAM

SATURDAY, AUGUST 09, 2025

2025 SOCIETY OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, DIVISION 17, APA Best in Practice and Best in Science Addresses

John M. O'Brien, PhD, ACC, NBC-HWC

2025 Best in Practice

Dr. O'Brien received his Doctorate in Counseling Psychology from Michigan State University in 1996. He works with both adolescents and adults, providing individual and couples therapy. Dr. O'Brien is eclectic in his therapeutic style, drawing on interpersonal and behavioral models of treatment. He specializes in the treatment of substance abuse, grief, Trauma, HIV-related concerns, and gay/lesbian populations. He is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Maine at August, and he is the Past President of the Maine Psychological Association.



Ryan Duffy, Ph.D.

2025 Best in Science

Ryan Duffy, Ph.D., is a Professor of Psychology at Florida State University. Dr. Duffy did his undergraduate work at Boston College and received his doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of Maryland, College Park. His significant scholarly contributions include the Psychology of Working theory (PWT) and the Work as a Calling theory (WCT), which have fundamentally changed our understanding of the psychological process associated with work. His research specializes in the ways personal, structural, and economic barriers impact career choice, along with how positive psychology principles influence career as a calling. Dr. Duffy is currently the Editor in Chief for the Journal of Vocational Behavior and the previous Editor of the Journal of Career Assessment.



2025 SOCIETY OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, DIVISION 17, APA AWARD RECIPIENTS

JD Goates

Barbara A. Kirk Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research

JD is a doctoral candidate in the APA-accredited counseling psychology doctoral program at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Broadly, their research focuses on external, internalized, and liberatory responses to systems of power and oppression by marginalized communities as well as the impact of these systems on professional and psychological well-being. They recently defended their dissertation on the experience of trans and nonbinary faculty in higher education. They will begin their pre-doctoral internship with Aurora Mental Health & Recovery in the Denver Metro area.



John Elmer

Donald E. Super Fellowship for the Support of Dissertation Research on Career Development

John Elmer, M.Ed. (he/him), is a counseling psychology doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He graduated with his M.Ed. in clinical mental health counseling from Auburn University and his B.B.A. in accounting and finance from the University of Georgia. John's research agenda is grounded in understanding how cultural sources and structures of oppression impact mental health and vocational well-being. Informed by his work in community mental health and a VA hospital, his dissertation explores how quality and access to care promote perception of choice and confidence in attaining meaningful work among college students with disabilities. His research aims to inform culturally relevant career counseling implications for students with disabilities and policy change to address systemic inequalities. He is completing his pre-doctoral internship at Kennesaw State University's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).



2025 SOCIETY OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, DIVISION 17, APA

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Shinye Kim, Ph.D.*Dorothy Booz Black Award for Outstanding Contributions in
Counseling Health Psychology Award Recipient*

Dr. Kim is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Licensed Psychologist. Her research focuses on the contextual understanding of chronic pain and opioid use: she examines the intersection of social, cultural, linguistic, and psychological factors on the pain experienced by ethnic and linguistic minorities. The ultimate goal of her research is to analyze better and form policies that will improve not only our understanding, but also improve equity in the delivery of pain health care. She has clinical experience working with patients with severe mental health illnesses, as well as patients in pain management and consultation-liaison psychiatry. She also spent four years in psychoanalytic training at the Wisconsin/Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute. She is on the editorial board of *Health Psychology*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Psychology of Men and Masculinities*, the *Journal of Career Assessment*, and *Frontiers in Psychology: Cultural Psychology Section*.



Robert H McPherson, Ph.D.*John D. Black Award for Outstanding Practice Achievement*

The professional life of Dr. Robert H. McPherson represents a multifaceted practice of counseling psychology involving clinical practice and supervision, academic leadership, and technological entrepreneurship, all informed by a career-long focus on social justice and data-driven solutions for at-risk populations. Over four decades, he has successfully integrated the roles of scientist-practitioner, scholar, administrator, and innovator, demonstrating a consistent application of counseling psychology principles to address systemic challenges in education and mental health.. Dr. McPherson's career is anchored in his foundational experiences as a counselor in a high-poverty, minority-serving Texas school district during the desegregation era of the 1970s.. His career at the University of Houston was marked by a steady ascent through senior administrative roles, including Department Chair, Director of the PhD program he helped create, Dean of the College of Education, and Interim Provost. Complementing his academic and administrative work, Dr. McPherson translated his clinical expertise into the co-founding of the Houston Psychotherapy Institute, a sliding scale clinic and training enterprise. Ultimately, Dr. McPherson's career provides a compelling model of how psychological science can be applied across clinical, academic, policy, and business domains to foster meaningful and sustainable change.



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AWARD RECIPIENTS

Melissa M. Ertl, PhD*Fritz & Linn Kuder Early Career Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award Recipients*

Melissa Ertl, Ph.D., is a counseling psychologist and Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota. She graduated with her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology and Certificate in Health Disparities in Public Health in May 2021 from the University at Albany, State University of New York. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Behavioral Sciences Training in HIV Infection at Columbia University and New York State Psychiatric Institute in 2023. Her research focuses broadly on health risk behaviors and health disparities among marginalized populations, primarily immigrants, women, young adults, and individuals with disabilities. She is especially passionate about understanding how mental health is connected to sexual health and substance use. Melissa is licensed in New York and Minnesota, where she maintains a small private practice. She teaches an Interviewing and Intervention pre-practicum course to first-year counseling psychology doctoral students at the University of Minnesota. She continues to serve on the HIV Planning Group of New York City and is involved in comprehensive sexual education advocacy initiatives.



Nicole Lozano, Ph.D.*Early Career Award For Distinguished Professional Contributions To Counseling Psychology Award*

Dr. Nicole Lozano is an associate professor of psychology at Angelo State University, with primary teaching responsibilities in the Counseling Psychology Master's and PsyD programs. Nicole graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and completed her pre-doctoral internship and post-doctoral fellowship at Creighton University in Student Counseling Services. At ASU, Nicole is the Gender Studies program director and leads the Collaborative Approaches to Research and Education (CARE) Lab. She utilizes feminist and intersectional methods in both her research and teaching, working to create and maintain meaningful connections with students. Her research is primarily community-based, and she works closely with agencies in Texas and abroad through participatory research methods to help answer their questions. Because we are more than our work, Nicole spends a lot of time creating pottery, loving on her kiddo, and spending time with her partner to make San Angelo a better community. Her stack of books to read is more than she can ever get through, yet she'll never stop buying them.



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AWARD RECIPIENTS

Nadya Fouad, Ph.D.

Jo-Ida Hansen Lifetime Achievement in Mentoring Award

From Nomination Lee

"Nadya has made significant and profound contributions to the field of counseling psychology, many of which have been related to her excellent, holistic, and career-long mentoring.

In my opinion, her greatest contribution to our field is her commitment to mentoring and training students as well as fellow counseling psychologists. She has mentored 56 students, all of whom graduated, and countless numbers of other early and mid-career professionals. For the past 40 years, Nadya has steadfastly worked to train and mentor psychologists who are culturally-sensitive in providing services to broad groups of individuals, conducted research that has real world applicability, and advocated for systematic change to create better structures for individuals who are under-represented"



AWARD RECIPIENTS

Meag-gan O' Reilly, PhD

Dr. Janet E. Helms Racial Justice Award & Social Justice Award

Dr. Meag-gan O'Reilly (she/her) is a licensed psychologist, DEI consultant, speaker, and CEO of Inherent Value Psychology INC, a California-based consultancy rooted in the reclamation of worth and mattering for marginalized communities. Her career began in the therapy room but expanded as she recognized that distress is often more about positionality than pathology. For Dr. Meag-gan, healing must be structural—not just individual. Her work spans academia, corporate consulting, clinical education, and community organizing.

Dr. Meag-gan completed her postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford University, where she later served for six years as a staff psychologist and Coordinator of Outreach, Equity, and Inclusion. Among her pioneering contributions: she founded Stanford's first satellite mental health clinic for Black students across the African Diaspora, co-created the Outreach and Social Justice Seminar to train culturally conscious clinicians, and developed courses on sustainable productivity and disentangling self-worth from achievement. She continues as a Wellness Lecturer at the Stanford School of Medicine and co-teaches Wellness 141: Thriving While BIPOC, an independently funded course for Black, Indigenous, and students of color.

Nationally, Dr. Meag-gan supports the wellbeing of Black students through her ongoing partnership with the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) STEM Scholars Program. Her program For Us Forums created virtual healing spaces and conversations with community leaders for students during COVID-19. Similarly, her wellness curriculum with Stanford Racial Equity to Advance Community Health (R.E.A.C.H.) will be piloted across several HBCUs. She currently serves as the DEI Consultant for The Knight-Hennessy Scholars Program, Stanford's flagship graduate leadership fellowship focused on integrating inclusion into global leadership.



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AWARD RECIPIENTS

Patricia Frazier, Ph.D.

Jo-Ida Hansen Lifetime Achievement in Mentoring Award.

From Nomination Letter:

"Extraordinary about Dr. Frazier's research is her enormous dedication to involving students deeply in her work. Demonstrating Dr. Frazier's truly phenomenal commitment to mentorship and training in counseling psychology research, more than 70% (i.e., over 127!) of her publications have an undergraduate or graduate student co-author. Throughout her career, she has combined remarkably high productivity with student-centered mentoring, providing ample opportunities for her students to learn the research process and emerge with newfound skills and experiences. As one of the most prolific and successful doctoral advisors in our department, having over 46 doctoral advisees in 35 years and serving on more than 200 student committees, Dr. Frazier has had a truly titanic impact in shaping the next generation of counseling psychologists who have been trained at University of Minnesota"



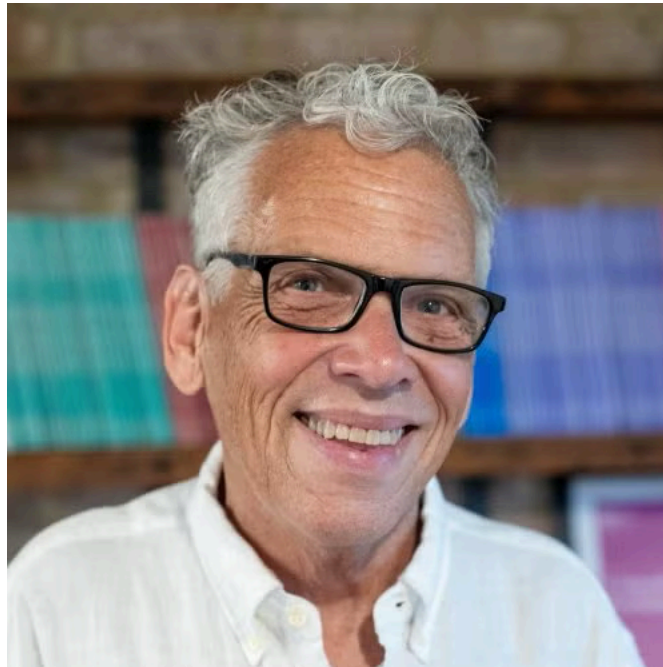
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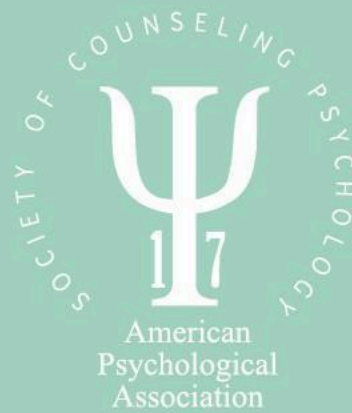
AWARD RECIPIENTS

Dennis M. Kivlighan, Jr., Ph.D.

Leona Tyler Award For Lifetime Achievement in Counseling Psychology

In sum, Dr. Kivlighan is most deserving of the Leona Tyler Award...Indeed, Dr. Kivlighan has a 40-year career of nurturing junior scholars and helping them accomplish things they never could have imagined when they entered college and graduate school. His colleagues at Missouri and Maryland will tell you that he is a fundamentally kind and supportive coworker who always has the collective's best interest in mind. I am absolutely honored to submit this letter of nomination. But I am far prouder to have had a life and career touched by Dr. Kivlighan's brilliance and generosity, without which I am not sure I would have found a home in counseling psychology. Dr. Kivlighan has worked selflessly as a shepherd of our field because he believes so deeply in the transformational power of counseling psychology: to change lives in the therapy room and classroom, and to usher novel understanding through the scientific process. As any student of Dr. Kivlighan's will tell you, there is nothing like learning from him—it changes you. Because of his tireless commitment to counseling psychology, we have *all* been changed by him.





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