OCTOBER
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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER



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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR!

Dr. Julia Boehm

Professor & Chair
Department of Psychology



Dear students, faculty, and staff of the Psychology Department,

Welcome to the fall 2026 edition of the Psychology Department newsletter! Hopefully you have settled into the swing of the new school year. I for one am glad the intense summer heat is past us and have been enjoying the slight chill in the air in the evenings and mornings. My name is Dr. Julia Boehm and I am the new Chair of the Psychology Department. When I am not doing administrative tasks for the department, I conduct research about health and well-being and teach PSY 203: Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences.

We are excited to have you with us this academic year! Whether you are brand new to Chapman or wrapping up your journey with us, we hope that you engage in one of the many events we have planned for this semester. We have not just one but two FaculTea hours with our stellar professors so you can enjoy a cup of tea and connect in a casual environment. You also won't want to miss out on the department's fall social at the end of October, which was the most popular event last year.

As we approach the middle of the fall semester, I also want to wish you all the best as you complete midterm exams. If you find yourself struggling or need some extra support during this time, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or your instructors. Chapman also has a variety of resources that you may find useful including the Student Health Center, Student Psychological Counseling Services, and peer tutors at the Tutoring Center.

If you have read this far, nice work! Somewhere in this newsletter are three 🐈‍⬛. If you spot them, email psychology@chapman.edu with their locations. The first person to do so wins a very special prize. Good luck!

Warmly,

Dr. Julia Boehm

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 14TH



FACUL-TEA HOUR

Join us for Facul-Tea Hour, where you can enjoy some refreshments while you get the tea on your favorite Psychology faculty!

CREAN HALL 132A
@ 3PM

With Dr. Desiree Crevecoeur-McPhail and Dr. Naomi Kline

OCTOBER 5TH
AF 201 @ 11AM



DR. BRIAN FINCH

Pathways Between a Polygenic Score for Education and Years of Completed Schooling: Social Mediation of Genetic Effects

MORE UPCOMING EVENTS!

- **OCT. 19TH @ 4PM**
  Dr. Darby Saxbe (BK 404)
- **OCT 28TH @ 4PM**
  Fall Social (AF 201)
- **NOV 9TH @ 11AM**
  Dr. Sam McClure (AF 209C)
- **NOV 16TH @ 1PM**
  Clinical Workshop (AF 201)

UPCOMING ACADEMIC DEADLINES

Friday, October 30

Last day to change grading option (P/NP or Letter Grade)

Last day to withdraw from courses

Last day to change the number of credits in courses with variable credits

Mon. - Sat., Nov. 23 - 28

Thanksgiving Recess (Mon.-Wed., students only, University closed Thurs. and Fri.)

Saturday, December 5

Last day of instruction

Mon. - Sat., Dec. 7 - 12

Final examinations

Monday, December 21

All grades are due

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

FACULTY PROFILE

Dr. Aaron Schurger

Ph.D. in Psychology and Neuroscience



What initially drew you to the field of child psychology, and how has your perspective evolved over time?

As a kid I always liked science, so from that perspective the career that I chose might not be too surprising. Most of my friends wanted to be doctors or lawyers, while I was reading books about astronomy and physics. In high school I started to learn computer programming, so when I went off to university, I ended up studying computer science. After graduation, I worked as a software developer for a consulting firm and that's when I got interested in "intelligent systems" (what people called AI at the time). This was before the big breakthroughs behind modern AI, and none of these "intelligent" systems were really very intelligent at all. That was when I got interested in the brain, because, I thought, there is already an intelligent system inside of our skulls and I wanted to learn how that one works. So, I quit my job at the consulting firm and eventually got a job as a research assistant in a neuroscience lab. In my second year there I started to apply to grad schools, and I got into the PhD program in Psychology and Neuroscience at Princeton. I wasn't sure initially what area of research I wanted to get into, but then, on a whim, I attended a conference in Tucson, AZ about the scientific study of consciousness. There was a lot of weird pseudo-science going on at that conference, but I also attended lectures by neuroscientist Christof Koch, philosopher David Chalmers, and theorist Nicholas Humphrey that really inspired me to get into consciousness research.

Can you share a recent accomplishment, whether it be academic or personal?

I co-authored a book that was more than three years in the making, and it was just published over the summer ("Scientific Theories of Consciousness", Cambridge University Press). And a video interview that I did with Curt Jaimungal in October 2025 just hit more than 50k views on YouTube. On a personal level, I recently went on a diet and lost 20 pounds, which I am quite happy about. Like anyone who goes on a diet – I hope that I don't gain it back!

What has been your most memorable experience at Chapman?

Hearing from former students who go on to achieve their goals after graduating from Chapman, whether that is getting into med school or getting a great job, or getting into grad school. That is probably the most memorable and rewarding part of being a university professor. For example, I had one Chapman student who I advised should apply to the University College London for the master's program in cognitive neuroscience (among the two or three top places in the world in that field). I don't think she knew about that possibility, but she applied and she got in!



It used to be that you could ruin your career in neuroscience by professing an interest in consciousness, but at the time it was just starting to become an accepted field of study, so I went ahead with it. My perspective has definitely evolved over time, as I have come to see it as more of an epistemological problem rather than a metaphysical one. But it is still a fascinating phenomenon to try to study scientifically!

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Department of Psychology
Ambassadors Program

The Psychology Ambassador Program is a student-led initiative of some of our most passionate psychology majors here at Chapman University. These ambassadors play a vital role in helping build community, promote opportunities, and enhance the student experience.

As representatives of the Psychology Department, our ambassadors engage in student outreach, department events, social media, newsletters, and more. They bring new ideas and valuable student perspectives that help us improve how we support and connect with our students. Whether they're planning student events, welcoming prospective students, or sharing what makes psychology exciting and meaningful to them, their enthusiasm and engagement make all the difference.

We're excited to introduce you to this Fall 2026 team of ambassadors! Applications will go out soon for new ambassadors to join us in the Spring—stay tuned!

Lizzie Connors



Minor
LGBTQ Studies

Academic Standing
Senior

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in?
I'm really interested in cognitive psychology because memory has always been really interesting to me!

What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?
I'm a Muay Thai fighter.

"You'll probably find me..."
In a study room or in Crean.



Demetra Foondos

Minor

Women's and Gender Studies

Academic Standing

Senior

Hobbies

I love cooking, being outdoors, and hanging out with my friends and family

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?

I'm especially interested in child psychology because I love working with children and appreciate how impressionable and optimistic they can be. Working as a Behavior Technician with children with ASD helped me realize how much I enjoy supporting children and their families and helping them determine what works best for them.

"You'll probably find me..."

You'll probably find me at one of the coffee shops in the Circle, most likely Blk Dot, Play Coffee, Philz, or Contra.

What are you most looking forward to this semester as an ambassador?

As a Psychology Ambassador, I'm really looking forward to connecting with other psychology students who share similar interests and helping create a supportive and welcoming environment for incoming students. I'm also excited to get to know the faculty and learn from their experiences and advice about future career paths. Most of all, I hope to support students who may still be figuring out what they want to do with their psychology major or minor and help them explore the many possibilities.

Lily Hoff



Minor

Communiry Education Studies

Academic Standing

Senior

Hobbies

I love spending time at the beach, reading, and traveling!

- **What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?**
  I am interested in child psychology and am planning to work in a school postgrad. The most interesting class I have taken at Chapman was social psychology!

- **What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?**
  A fun fact about me is that I ran my first half marathon last May!

- **"You'll probably find me..."**
  At the beach, hanging out with my friends, or getting coffee.

- **What are you most looking forward to this semester as an ambassador?**
  I am looking forward to getting to know the new ambassadors and meeting new people!



Emmie Khul

Double-Major

Spanish

Academic Standing

Sophmore

Hobbies

I love playing guitar, listening to music, and crocheting!

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?

I am most interested in the mental health aspect of psychology and am looking at going down the therapy route. I have always loved the idea of being a therapist, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to continue working towards that dream!

What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?

I have done over 100 escape rooms!

"You'll probably find me..."

At the beach!

What are you most looking forward to this semester as an ambassador?

I am looking forward to planning fun events and meeting more people in the psychology community at Chapman!

Natalie Paradiso



Minor
Neuroscience +
Honors Program

Academic Standing
Junior

Hobbies
I love to run, hike, go to the gym, and hang out with my friends

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?
I really like organization and decision-making psychology, alongside economic psychology of why and how we make choices. I love learning more about how we pick certain items from a bunch and what leads to the final decision.

What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?
I met Katie Ledecky last summer. I am also the PSI CHI executive ambassador and the treasurer of the Undergraduate Neuroscience club!

"You'll probably find me..."
On a hike in Newport or a post for brunch after. On campus, you'd find me at the water fountain by Hashinger.



Sera Shimakura

Double-Major

Intergrated Educational Studies

Academic Standing

Junior

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?
I'm most interested in developmental and social psychology. I've also been growing more interested in research methods, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand patterns.

What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?
I'm from Japan, but I've never tried raw fish (including sushi).

"You'll probably find me..."
Speedwalking on campus.

What are you most looking forward to this semester as an ambassador?
I'm looking forward to meeting and connecting with other psychology majors while also strengthening relationships with faculty in the department.

Nava Stahl



Double Major

Bussiness Administration

Academic Standing

Sophmore

Hobbies

Photography, reading, listening to music, and going on walks

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?

I'm very interesting in social psychology, complex trauma, and how mental health relates to physical disease development. These are subjects that have had a large impact on my life, so I hope to become an expert in these areas to get a better understanding of the world I interact with.

What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?

I took a gap year and it completely changed my life!

"You'll probably find me..."

At a coffee shop enjoying the company of a friend.

What are you most looking forward to this semester as an ambassador?

To create connections within the psych community!



Nicholas Teitell

Minor

English

Academic Standing

Senior

Hobbies

I love to read, write, and get outdoors, which I got to do much of while walking the Camino de Santiago in Spain this summer!

What area(s) of psychology are you most interested in, and why?

I'm primarily drawn to personality psychology and applied behavioral psychology. Understanding the mechanisms by which people make decisions and establish identities is fascinating to me! I'm currently conducting research at the intersection of coping strategies and coping flexibility.

What's a fun fact about yourself that might surprise people?

My pupils are different sizes! That's often a sign of brain damage of some sort, but in my case, my brain is largely undamaged.

"You'll probably find me..."

At Contra Coffee, reading and writing.

What are you most looking forward to this semester as an ambassador?

I'm looking forward to meeting more people in the department and fostering a sense of community in a major that can often feel insular.

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recently Published Manuscripts

- V. **Berardi**, B.N. Collins, L.M. Glynn, E. Silfanus, D. Lyons, S. Lepore. Using In-Home Air Quality Monitoring to Reduce Children's Secondhand Exposure to Cannabis Smoke: A Pilot. Journal of Medical Internet Research Formative Research.
- B.N. Collins, V. **Berardi**, K. Wilson, R. Goodwin, M.L. Bayisha. Association between children's secondhand co-exposure to tobacco and cannabis smoke and urinary cotinine levels: a cross-sectional analysis. BMJ Public Health. (In Press).
- Boylan, J. M., Cintron, D. W., & **Boehm**, J. K. (2026). "Be good to others and treat people as you would like to be treated yourself." A mixed methods investigation of positive social relationships and cardiovascular health in the MIDUS Study. Biopsychosocial Science and Medicine.
- Cintron, D. W., Golden, M. N., Hines, E. M., Boylan, J. M., **Boehm**, J. K., & Moore, J. L. (2026). Life sustaining well-being practices and physiological health among black men. Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities.
- Cachia, J. Y., Zhao, X., **Hunter**, J., Wu, D., Lin, E., & De Freitas, J. (2026). AI for Proactive Mental Health: A Multi-Institutional, Longitudinal Randomized Controlled Trial. NEJM AI, AIoa2501293.
- Dryburgh, N. S. J., Cho, B., **Kline**, N. G., & Juvonen, J. (2026). Do interracial friendships increase the odds of having an interracial romantic relationship later in adolescence? Journal of Research on Adolescence, 36, e70186.
- Jeay-Bizot L, Chishti R, **Maoz** U, **Schurger** A (2026) No evidence for modulation of the readiness potential by respiratory phase during natural breathing. PLoS Biology.
- Jeay-Bizot L, Basbug M, Schapire R, **Maoz** U, **Schurger** A (2026) The time course of neural activity predictive of self-initiated movement. eLife.
- **Redding**, R.E., & Silander, N.A. (2026). Principles of sociopolitical competency in psychological practice, research, and teaching. Perspectives on Psychological Science.
- **Redding**, R.E., & Frisby, C. (2026). Racism in the science and profession of psychotherapy. Current Opinion in Psychology, 71: 102334.
- **Redding**, R.E., Maranto, R., & Honeycutt, N. (2026). Is the victimology worldview of many young therapists ill-suited for cognitive behavior therapy? Current Opinion in Psychology, 70: 102313.
- Moran, T. O., Kushner, A. M., Robles, T. F., & **Robinette**, J. W. (in press). Gender differences in the association between marriage and epigenetic age. Frontiers in Genetics.
- Griffin N, **Schurger** A, Garagnani M (accepted) Spontaneous emergence of slow ramping prior to decision states in a brain-constrained model of fronto-temporal areas. Nat Sci Rep.
- Jeay-Bizot L, **Schurger** A, **Maoz** U (accepted) An investigation of the cortical sources of self-initiated actions using brain stimulation. Nature Communications (registered report).
- O'Reilly-Shah V, Selvitella AM, **Schurger** A (2026) A caveat regarding the unfolding argument: implications of plasticity. Neuroscience of Consciousness, 2026(1):niag027.
- Triggiani AI, Whitmarsh A, **Schurger** A, **Maoz** U, & Hallett M (2026). Factors that influence the amplitude of the bereitschaftspotential. Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews, 187, 106738.

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Award Received

Dr. John Hunter - $1,000 Excellence in Leadership Award was given to Crean College by an anyonmymous donor "in recognition of the tremendous support, care, and resources you have provided to students"



Grant Received

Dr. Vincent Berardi - $3,149,617 NIH R27 Grant was received for the research “Tracking Residential Air Quality to Quit Smoking”

STUDENT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

The Psychology Department offers psychology majors who are conducting research several funding mechanisms:

- Student Research Grants are due on Friday, October 2
- Student Travel Awards are due on a rolling basis

The Center for Undergraduate Excellence (CUE) also has several research opportunities coming up:

- Creative and Scholarly Grants are due on Friday, October 30
- Student Scholar Symposium abstracts are due on Sunday November 1, presentations will occur Wednesday and Thursday, December 2-3





CONTACT US:

psychology@chapman.edu

Did you notice the cats?

If you did, congratulations—you've just participated in an extremely unofficial demonstration of selective attention!

Send us the location of the cats to receive a special prize!

