

# Distinguished Scholars 2018/19

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Supporting the advancement of elite graduate students on their journeys toward becoming leaders in behavioral science.

## **The Leader:**

Mary Sawyer, PhD, BCBA-D

*Fit Learning Atlanta & Aubrey Daniels Institute*

**The Facilitator:** Amanda P. Laprime, PhD, BCBA-D

*The Center for Children with Special Needs &*

*Assistant to CCBS Executive Director*

## **Mary Sawyer, PhD, BCBA-D**



**The Leader:** Dr. Mary Sawyer, BCBA-D, is Executive Director of the Aubrey Daniels Institute, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing applications of behavior analysis in education through training and dissemination of best practices. Dr. Sawyer and Dr. Daniels are also Co-Founders of Accelerated Learning Lab of Atlanta, LLC, and Co-Owners of Fit Learning Atlanta, where Dr. Sawyer serves as Director. Additionally, Dr. Sawyer is adjunct faculty for the applied behavior analysis (ABA) master's program at Georgia State University. She is passionate about utilizing the science of learning and behavior to rapidly accelerate academic outcomes and to create nurturing environments in which individuals of all ages thrive. Dr. Sawyer blends expertise in coaching educators and parents to problem-solve and engage in evidence-based practice, multi-tiered systems of support such as response to intervention and positive behavior support (PBS), and instructional design. She holds a PhD from The Ohio State University, and an M.A. in Special Education, an M.A. in ABA, a graduate certificate in PBS, and a B.S. in Elementary Education from the University of South Florida. Furthermore, she is certified in teaching Elementary Education, Exceptional Student Education, and English Speakers of Other Languages.

## **Amanda P. Laprime, PhD, BCBA-D**



**The Facilitator:** Dr. Amanda Laprime currently serves as the Assistant to the Executive Director of the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™. She was nominated for this position by the Board of Directors after becoming a member of the first Exceptional Student Group, and then an Advisor to the center. Amanda has completed a variety of projects for the center that have included an overview of the history of CCBS, a history presentation at the 2014 Annual Meeting, and the development of CE's for the CCBS book, Behavioral Science: Tales of Inspiration, Discovery, and Science. Amanda is helping to lead the Exceptional Student Group and organize the students in the participation of a variety of projects which include the development of ancillary materials to support the use of the CCBS book as a text for graduate courses in applied behavior analysis. Amanda completed her master's degree at Northeastern University under the guidance of Dr. Gary Pace, and her doctorate at Simmons College under the guidance of Dr. Ron Allen, Dr. Judah Axe, and Dr. Russell Maguire. Amanda currently works as a Program

Coordinator at the Center for Children with Special Needs in Glastonbury, CT. In addition to her work with the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™, Amanda has published research in peer-reviewed journals, presented at local and national conferences, and currently serves as a part-time lecturer for Northeastern University, an adjunct faculty at the University of Saint Joseph, and an expert consultant and course developer to Post University's departments of Human Services and Education.

## **Ashley Andersen, BA**



Ashley Andersen is a second-year Master's student at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) studying Applied Behavior Analysis under the mentorship of Dr. Debra Berry Malmberg and Dr. Megan Aclan. As a Research Associate at the CSUN Autism Clinic, Ashley works with families with children and adolescents with ASD and conducts research on parent education for pediatric feeding interventions. Ashley received her BA in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she served as a research assistant at the Koegel Autism Center. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and doing a multitude of outdoor activities, like hiking and kayaking. Ashley will soon be leaving sunny southern California to join the Pediatric Feeding Program at the University of Nebraska, Medical Center, Munroe-Meyer Institute.

## **The Distinguished Scholars:**

Ashley Andersen, BA, *California State University, Northridge*

Tyler G. Erath, MA, *University of Kansas*

Elizabeth Hughes Fong, MA, BCBA, LBS, *Saint Joseph's University*

Brett Gelino, BS, *University of Kansas*

Ashley Gibbs, MS, BCBA, *Georgia State University*

Kaitlynn Gokey, MS, BCBA, *Florida Institute of Technology*

Michael P. Kranak, MA, BCBA *Western Michigan University*

Jessica Mias, MS, BCBA, *Simmons College*

Andressa Sleiman, MS, BCBA, *University of Florida*

Valeria Squatrito, MA, *Kore University, Enna (Italy)*

Catherine Stephens, BS, *West Virginia University*

Kaitlyn Terry, BA, *California State University, Fresno*

Ashley Williams, MS, BCBA, *Simmons College*

### **Tyler G. Erath, MA**



Tyler Erath, MA, is a second-year doctoral student in the department of applied behavioral science at the University of Kansas working under the supervision of Dr. Florence DiGennaro Reed in the Performance Management Laboratory. He obtained his bachelor's degree in psychology and his master's degree in experimental psychology from Appalachian State University, working with Dr. Cynthia Anderson. Tyler's research interests include staff training, performance management, and behavioral consultation. Currently, he is pursuing a thematic line of research that seeks to enhance the implementation integrity of evidence-based training practices within a human service setting. Tyler has served as a guest reviewer for peer-reviewed journals, a practicum supervisor for undergraduate students interested in OBM, and the instructor of record for an introductory course on child development. In his free time, he enjoys cooking, exploring the outdoors, and chatting about craft beer.

### **Elizabeth Hughes Fong, MA, BCBA, LBS**



Ms. Hughes Fong has over a decade of experience in the fields of behavioral health, education and management. Her educational background is in clinical and counseling psychology and applied behavior analysis. She is currently a PhD student studying Clinical Psychology with a concentration in Forensic Psychology, as well as a founder of Multicultural Alliance of Behavior Analysts (MultiABA) which is a special interest group of ABAI. Ms. Hughes Fong is the founder of "Diversity in Behavior Analysis" a section in Behavior Analysis Research and Practice. This section focuses on the diverse application of behavior analysis. In addition, Ms. Hughes Fong is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and licensed as a Behavior Specialist in Pennsylvania, a trainer in the Pennsylvania Bureau of Autism's Functional Behavior Analysis training, and has received training certificates in the area of Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy Childhood Traumatic

Grief. In addition, she received her level one certification in Pivotal Response Training and Gottman Couples Therapy. She currently is full time faculty Saint Joseph's University. Her primary areas of interest are in the application of ABA to multicultural populations, telehealth, and examining child custody and parental competency when a child has developmental disabilities.

### **Brett Gelino, BS**



Brett Gelino, BS, is a doctoral student and member of the Applied Behavioral Economics Laboratory at the University of Kansas. He earned his bachelor's degree in psychology from Eastern Connecticut State University, where he first developed an interest for behavioral science and its applications. As a researcher, he aims to target chronic conditions deleteriously impacting the general population. His current interests are broadly focused in sustainability, addiction and risky health choices, and decision making in various contexts. Brett is currently involved in a variety of projects focused in the domains of alcohol consumption, diet regulation and control, and impulsive sexual decision-making. For his upcoming thesis, Brett hopes to implement a wide-range intervention to understand and promote better reaction timing for persons in at-risk locations for natural disasters.

### **Ashley Gibbs, MS, BCBA**



Ashley Gibbs graduated with a Master of Health Science in Occupational Therapy from the Medical College of Georgia in 2013. While working as a registered and licensed pediatric occupational therapist, Ashley returned to school and graduated with a Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis from Georgia State University in 2017, earning the designation of Board Certified Behavior Analyst in 2018. Since 2017, Ashley has contributed to ongoing research studies, and has recently had her first project accepted for publication in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. Ashley's research interests include the evaluation and treatment of automatically maintained behaviors, generative learning, and the effective use of the science of behavior in pediatric populations who have experienced trauma.

### **Kaitlynn Gokey, MS, BCBA**



Kaitlynn Gokey received her Masters of Science at Florida Institute of Technology in 2012 and received her BCBA the same year. She is currently a PhD candidate in Behavior Analysis at Florida Tech, and a 2018 recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Student Award. Kaitlynn has experience with a variety of populations, including autism, traumatic brain injury, dementia, ADHD, and Down Syndrome. She has also published in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, and has a number of presentations. Her primary research interests are self-control and impulsivity, cat behavior, science literacy, and dissemination. For her dissertation, Kaitlynn will be piloting a self-control and delay tolerance training package with neurotypical school-age children.

### Michael P. Kranak, MA, BCBA



Michael is a doctoral student in Dr. Stephanie Peterson's lab at Western Michigan University. He received his BA in psychology from West Virginia University under the advisement of Dr. Claire St. Peter, and his MA in special education and applied behavior analysis from The Ohio State University under Dr. Sheila Alber-Morgan. He has served in several behavior consultant roles in both school settings and interdisciplinary clinics, as well as taught undergraduate and graduate level classes.

His main research interests include resurgence and concurrent schedules of reinforcement, the assessment and treatment of severe challenging behavior, and extending the use of behavior analysis in the health and fitness industry.

In his spare time, Michael enjoys cooking, reading, and exercising.

### Jessica Mias, MS, BCBA



Jessica Mias is a doctoral student at Simmons College, pursuing a PhD in Applied Behavior Analysis under the advisement of Dr. Gretchen A. Dittrich. She earned her Master's degree in Early Childhood Education at Eastern Connecticut State University and was a teacher prior to becoming a BCBA. Her research interests are varied and include increasing activity for healthy, underactive adults, instructional and curriculum design for individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as the establishment of stimulus control for auditory-visual conditional discrimination tasks. Jessica currently serves as District BCBA for a public school district. In addition, Jessica is a part-time lecturer at Northeastern University, and has been an adjunct instructor at Simmons College.

### Andressa Sleiman, MS, BCBA



Andressa Sleiman, MS, BCBA, earned her Masters of Science degree in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Organizational Behavior Management (OBM) from Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) in 2017. She is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Florida under the supervision and guidance of Nicole Gravina, PhD. Andressa has been in the field of ABA since 2011 and has worked with individuals with developmental disabilities, typically developing children and adults, and as an internal OBM consultant. Andressa's general research interests include OBM, process improvement, behavioral economics, determinants of reinforcement, training, dissemination of ABA and OBM, and science literacy.

### Valeria Squatrito, MA



Valeria Squatrito is a PhD student in the doctorate program in "Social Inclusion in Multicultural Contexts" at Kore University of Enna (Italy). She was born and raised in Sicily and in 2011 she entered the BA program in Psychology and she immediately started to get interested in research, on the recognition of emotions as a first start. To get her MA degree Valeria presented a thesis on IRAP and religious prejudice. For this research she was honored with the ACBS Junior Investigator Poster Award at ACBS World Conference 15 in 2017 in Seville (Spain). She is interested in Clinical Psychology, Social Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, Web Communication and Social Media and Facial Action Coding System (FACS). She has attended in several conferences, such as ACBS World Conference 15 in 2017 and 8th EABA conference in 2016, presenting symposia and posters.

### Catherine Stephens, BS



Catherine Stephens is a graduate student in the Behavior Analysis PhD program at West Virginia University. She received her B.S. in psychology from Georgia Tech, where she worked with Dr. Jack Marr and developed an interest in using behavior analysis to improve education. Currently, she is conducting research with Dr. Claire St. Peter to investigate interventions to improve post-secondary education. Her research interests include the use of both basic and applied research studying contingencies related to education. Catherine would like to develop practical ways of modifying college classes that increase student and teacher performance. She also hopes to learn about policy making to facilitate system-level changes that incorporate behavior-analytic strategies into widespread educational practices.

### **Kaitlyn Terry, BA**



I grew up in a small town in the San Francisco bay area where I spent the first two decades of my life. After high school, I started my college career at a junior college in the area before transferring to Sacramento State as a psychology major. My first class in Sacramento was at 8am and I had every intention of dropping it as soon as I could register for another. To my surprise, however, I fell in love with the class. It was a lecture course titled Exceptional Children and served as an introduction to behavior analysis. I was hooked! Within months I became a research assistant for Dr. Megan Heinicke and got a job in an early intervention center. I have since graduated with my BA in psychology with an option in Applied Behavior Analysis. Currently, I am finishing my coursework in ABA and preparing to run my master's thesis on functional analyses. I am particularly interested in applying behavior analysis to criminal or delinquent behaviors in adolescents and plan to pursue a doctoral degree in clinical psychology and work with at-risk adolescents.

### **Ashley Williams, MS, BCBA**



Ashley Williams, MS, BCBA, is a doctoral student in her third year at Simmons College, currently working on her dissertation under Dr. Gretchen Dittrich. She has been working in the field of ABA since 2007, earning her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Loyola University Maryland while working as a Clinical Assistant at Kennedy Krieger Institute. She then moved to Boston to attend Simmons College, where she received her Master's degree in Behavior Analysis. In addition to her role as a doctoral student, Ashley currently serves as the Program Director at ABACS, in Woburn, MA, where she supervises clinical services and operations for the agency's home- and clinic-based services. Ashley also works as a part-time lecturer at Northeastern University, teaching Behavior Therapies, Assessment, and a Senior Seminar in ABA. Ashley has provided several presentations at local and national conferences in applied research using functional analyses and complex treatment packages to reduce severe problem behavior. Ashley was nominated for the Student Group by Dr. Judah Axe, Associate Professor at Simmons College.