

ECU MEDFT STUDENT BIO'S

August 2023



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NP= not pictured voluntarily

**Dr. Patrick Meadors**

Dr. Meadors is the Director of the Section of Psycho-Oncology at the Levine Cancer Institute (LCI) within Atrium Health and is responsible for the provision of integrated psychosocial and psychiatric services throughout the LCI hospital network and physician practices. Following graduation, Dr. Meadors joined a radiation oncology practice in Ocala, FL consisting of 5 medical offices in 4 counties and served as adjunct faculty at the University of Florida. Since joining LCI, he has been recognized as a Tier I leader and received the KEAP award for outstanding performance and key contribution to the system. His team has grown from three clinicians in 2012 to 28 clinicians in 2020 and he implemented a standardized screening program that screened 50,000 patients since 2017. He has multiple publications and presentations in the area of compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, and oncology.

**Dr. Janie Jones Taylor**

Dr. Taylor works at CareNet Counseling East, an affiliate of Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Center. She has published and presented nationally on stress, family of origin issues, grief and loss, as well as innovative therapeutic techniques, and opportunities for therapists in medical education. She has done research in the areas of spirituality and parental coping with loss (of an adult child), as well as various aspects of spiritual care provision within medical settings. Her areas of interest include spirituality, wholeness and balance, forgiveness, cultural competence, stress and caregiving (especially among those in ministry).



Dr. Amy Blanchard

Amy Blanchard was a member of the first MedFT cohort. She graduated with the first class in 2008 after completing her internship at NH Dartmouth Family Residency Program. Following graduation she was Assistant Professor and Director of Research at Antioch University New England for 4 years before transitioning to private practice for a few years. She is now an integrated therapist in a health center at a boarding school (St. Paul's School) in Concord, NH. She believes her degree in Medical Family Therapy from ECU prepared her just perfectly for this unique position in which she is not only integrated fully with the nurses and doctor at the health center but also her integrated systems knowledge translated easily to a school environment. She has a variety of personal interests such as traveling and the beach but she gets the most joy out of spending time with her partner and two children



Dr. Ryan Anderson

Dr. Ryan Anderson received his B.S. degree in Marriage, Family, and Human Development and his M.S. degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Brigham Young University. He received his Ph.D. in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University as a part of the first MedFT cohort, and completed his internship at the Duke Comprehensive Cancer Center. He has worked as a family therapist in outpatient practice, in inpatient psychiatric settings, in cancer care, in several other medical settings, as a wilderness therapist and Assistant Clinical Director at Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, and as a therapist at Telos Residential Treatment. Currently, he is a co-founder, director, and therapist at Telos U. His program, Telos U, features a multidisciplinary, highly collaborative biospsychosocial treatment and educational center for young adults.

Its goal is to help people with depression, anxiety, sensory and information processing issues, ADHD, OCD, learning difficulties, autism spectrum disorders, electronics addictions, and general difficulty transitioning into adult roles. Telos U features cutting edge interventions such as neurofitness training, virtual reality-assisted executive function training, personalized repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (prTMS), and the latest in evidence-based treatments for the needs of a neurodiverse population. Telos U serves clients from all over the nation and even internationally.

As a part of this program, Ryan has developed the Telos Discovery Space Center, where he utilizes simulated, futuristic adventures as a form of executive function training, social skills development, psychodrama, group therapy, and experiential family therapy. Ryan has also created a partnership with developers from several major tech companies to create software designed to help people with mental health and neurodivergent struggle reduce stress and function more effectively in school, work, and general social situations. One of the projects they are working on developing together is an AI-assisted prosthesis designed to help people on the spectrum read and understand facial expressions and body language in real time.

His teaching experience includes undergraduate university courses, first year medical students, and community outreach and education programs. He is also a frequent speaker at various conferences and continuing education events. He is the author of "Navigating the Cyberscape: Evaluating and Improving Our Relationship with Smartphones, Social Media, Video Games, and the Internet," "Screen Savvy: Creating Balance in a Digital World," and "The Choice to Leave Abuse," as well as numerous journal articles and textbook chapters. Ryan has a variety of other interests, including martial arts, history, cooking, music, language, physics, astronomy, hiking, and art. Most of all, Ryan enjoys spending time with his wife, Rebecca, and their four children.



Dr. Lisa Tyndall

Dr. Tyndall is a Senior Integration Specialist at the Center of Excellence for Integrated Care, which is a program of Foundation for Health Leadership and Innovation in Cary, NC. In her role at the COE, she provides technical assistance for integrated care program development to a variety of practice settings. Her responsibilities include shadowing and one-on-one consultation, offerings of trainings, webinars, regular phone consultation to name a few. Most recently the COE, in partnership with i2i Center for Integrative Health, was awarded a grant from The Duke Endowment, to focus on pediatric and family well-being. This grant will focus on

equipping behavioral health clinicians across the state to work with children, adolescents, and their families from both a preventive and intervention lens in collaboration with pediatricians. Additionally, the grant will focus on larger systems change through advocacy and policy bolster the provision of services for child and adolescent mental health. The COE continues to work on many different projects, all with a focus on the provision of whole person health.



Dr. April Hames

She works as a Clinical Manager at Envolv People Care. Dr. Hames is responsible for ensuring members of Envolv People Care are receiving evidence based services that are appropriate in scope and intensity. She provides education to providers and utilization managers regarding best practices based on her clinical experience and research based methodologies. She works with individuals ages 13 and older. Her specialties include somatoform disorders, factitious disorders, invisible illnesses, and chronic pain. Dr. Hames maintains a small private practice and focuses her clinical work on individuals, couples, and/or families at the intersection of mental and medical health concerns and European board games.



Dr. Kenneth Phelps

Kenneth Phelps is an Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and Adjunct Associate Professor of Clinical Pediatrics in the Neurology Division at the Prisma Health - University of South Carolina Medical Group. Dr. Phelps specializes in the treatment of youth and families living with a variety of neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders, including Tourette Syndrome and Tic Disorders, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Obsessive Compulsive and Related Disorders. He serves as a faculty member for the Tourette Association of America's Behavioral Therapy Institute, educating providers around the country on Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention for Tics (CBIT). Dr. Phelps delivers family-oriented cognitive and behavioral interventions within a multi-disciplinary team of providers. His primary research interests include resilience and growth from an illness experience, relationally oriented cognitive behavioral therapy, and tic disorders.



Dr. Kristen Dreyfus

Dr. Dreyfus is originally from New Jersey where she attended college at Monmouth University. There she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with a minor in Women's Studies. She then continued her education at Boston College, receiving a Master's degree in Educational and Developmental Psychology. In 2014, she earned a PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University where her dissertation research focused on primary care patients with diabetes. During her internship she was part of an inpatient integrated care team where she saw patients who were hospitalized for complications related to diabetes. Dr. Dreyfus has worked for East Carolina University for the last 22 years during which time she was involved with the curricular aspects of the Diabetes Fellowship in the Department of Internal Medicine. Currently, she serves as the Director of Institutional Assessment in the office of Institutional Planning, Assessment and Research. Dr. Dreyfus is a member of the American Association for Marriage and

Family Therapy and the North Carolina Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Clinically, she works with individuals and families with Type 1 or Type 2 Diabetes from a biopsychosocial-spiritual lens at Down East Diabetology.



Dr. Keeley Pratt

Keeley J. Pratt, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in Human Development and Family Science Program and the Couple and Family Therapy Specialization located in the Department of Human Sciences at The Ohio State University, and she has appointments in the Departments of Pediatrics and Surgery at the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center. She is an Independently Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Dr. Pratt graduated with her doctorate in Medical Family Therapy in 2010, and completed a post-doctoral research fellowship from 2010-2012 at Research Triangle Institute International (RTI). Dr. Pratt scholarship focuses on implementing family-based integrated care models and researching family-based interventions in pediatric and adult weight management and bariatric surgery settings. She currently oversees the behavioral health and family therapy services for the Comprehensive

Weight Management Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Center at the OSU Wexner Medical Center and is the coordinator for a graduate interdisciplinary specialization in Obesity Sciences at OSU. She is also an associate editor for three journals, including Families, Systems, and Health, the journal of the Collaborative Family Healthcare Association. She has over 50 publications related to family and weight management, over 200 presentations, and has received funding for her work with families in weight management and bariatric surgery.



Dr. Jackie Williams Reade

Dr. Jackie Williams-Reade is an Associate Professor in the Systems, Families, and Couples PhD program and coordinator of the Medical Family Therapy program at Loma Linda University. She graduated with her Ph.D. in Medical Family Therapy in 2011 and completed a post-doctoral research fellowship in pediatric palliative care from 2010-2012 at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Williams-Reade's scholarship focuses on family systems-informed interventions for patients, family members, and medical team members with special emphasis on palliative care, pediatric illness, and meaning-making. She is an LMFT and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor and was recently elected to the Board of AAMFT.



Dr. Dan Marlowe

Dr. Dan Marlowe is the Assistant Dean of Academic Success and Founding Chair / Associate Professor for the Department of Behavioral Health at Campbell University's Jerry M. Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine located in Lillington, NC. In this role, Dr. Marlowe oversees one of the highest volume medical school behavioral health departments in the nation, as well as the largest behavioral science program for graduate medical education that spans 19 residency programs across 8 different medical specialties and two states. In regards to research, as a theorist, he has published several manuscripts and book chapters on both the underlying epistemology of Medical Family Therapy and its practical application in integrated care settings that includes seminal articles in both areas. Dr. Marlowe has also presented on these topics at both the state level and nationally for behavioral health as well as medical providers. Currently, his main areas of interest are in mind/body practices, internal cultivation as well as the cybernetics of consciousness and their application to resilience

and overall well-being, which he lectures on regularly both within the medical school, surrounding hospital systems and state organizations.



Dr. Matt Martin

Matt Martin, PhD, LMFT, is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Research and Evaluation at the Arizona State University Doctor of Behavioral Health Program. He is a an AAMFT Clinical Member and Approved Supervisor. He has graduate degrees from Brigham Young University and East Carolina University. He completed pre-doctoral training in Concord, New Hampshire and a post-doctoral fellowship in Chicago, Illinois. Matt teaches courses on quality improvement in healthcare, inter-professional consultation, and motivational interviewing. His research interests include measuring integration, population health management, and family-oriented healthcare. Matt has successfully received federal and private funding. He leads the ASU ECHO hub on behavioral health integration and the High Need,

High Cost Patient translational science team.



Dr. Melissa Lewis

Dr. Melissa Lewis is an Assistant Professor of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Missouri School of Medicine. Dr. Lewis partners with Indigenous communities to revitalize traditional lifeways to ameliorate the negative effects of colonization, thereby improving health and well-being. Dr. Lewis works with Cherokee community members to provide language immersion classes for children and traditional food classes in the Cherokee language. Her NHLBI K01 aims to create and launch a program that teaches tribal citizens Cherokee culture, language, and history to reduce CVD health risks. She has also created and is piloting an

Indigenous health toolkit to train healthcare providers to deliver more effective care to Indigenous patients.



Dr. Christine Borst

Christine Borst has a PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University and master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Purdue University. In early 2020, Dr. Borst took a leap of faith and gave notice that she would be leaving her position as professor to pursue a creative career. A lover of all things bright, cheerful, and whimsical, Dr. Borst's art reflects her colorful nature, and she is so thankful for the opportunity to spread joy with each product she creates.

Christine is a mom of three amazing young kids, a licensed therapist, an adjunct professor at Arizona State University, and married to her best friend Greg (the "other" Dr. Borst); her first children's book, *What is Coronavirus?* was published mid-2020. Her business, Christine Borst Creative, features a variety of products, including paper products (like stationary and journals), baby and kid gear, and household goods (like tea towels, aprons, and totes). Find her on Instagram at @christine_e_bee, and at her website, www.christineborst.com.



Dr. Jennifer Harsh Caspari

Purpose-driven behavioral health professional with experience in academic medicine, healthcare settings, and healthcare consulting and a passion for developing innovative strategies to promote biopsychosocial health. Experience building evidence-based integrated behavioral health clinical programs and educational opportunities for medical and psychosocial trainees. Specialty areas include integrated patient-centered healthcare, system-wide behavioral health strategy, multidisciplinary relationship-building and collaboration, and virtual health integration into clinical and operational components of care.

**Dr. Johnathan Wilson**

Dr. Jonathan Wilson serves as Mental Health Lead at Crossover Health Medical Group in Dallas, TX - a nationwide integrated primary care group outsourcing comprehensive interdisciplinary primary care to various companies across the country. Having previously served as a tenured professor in a university setting, Dr. Wilson now oversees a team of 15 therapists across 3 regions serving in integrated primary care clinics. His dissertation research, a qualitative study examining the screening experiences of healthcare providers for IPV among migrant and seasonal farm working women, has subsequently led to multiple AAMFT conference presentations and publications. When asked about his time at ECU, he responded "ECU prepared me to succeed in many different arenas of behavioral healthcare. Upon graduation, I felt equally equipped to succeed in clinical practice, research, teaching, and policy work."

**Dr. Grace Pratt**

Dr. Grace Pratt (2014) is the full-time Behavioral Science faculty member at the Great Plains Family Medicine Residency Program in Oklahoma City, OK. In her time in that role, she has launched an integrated behavioral health care program at the outpatient clinic, and she has initiated an integrated self-management program for chronic pain patients. She is a 2015-2016 Behavioral Science/Family Systems Educator Early Career Fellow with the Society for Teachers of Family Medicine, and she also teaches in Oklahoma Baptist University's Medical Family Therapy professional certificate program. She states, "Through diverse clinical and supervision settings, skill development in areas such as biofeedback and program evaluation, and rich professional connections, my time at ECU uniquely prepared me to take on my role educating Family Medicine residents. My current position blends teaching, research, clinical work, and supervision to impact not only patients, but also medical and mental health providers."



Dr. Aubry N. Koehler

Aubry N. Koehler graduated from the Medical Family Therapy Program in 2015. She is originally from Massachusetts and completed her doctoral internship at Concord Hospital/Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency Program in Concord, NH. Aubry is currently an Assistant Professor and the Director of Behavioral Science in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Wake Forest School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. As an educator, clinician, and researcher, she sees her role as identifying and addressing health disparities and inspiring medical residents/providers and behavioral health trainees/providers to do the same. Her research has focused on integrated behavioral health care training and outcomes and social determinants of health impact on health behaviors. She is a solo momma to her five-year-old and enjoys staying active, writing, and traveling to her native New England and also abroad when she can.



Dr. Roberta Bellamy

Roberta attended East Carolina University, receiving her B.S. in Family & Community Services, her M.S. in Marriage & Family Therapy, and her Ph.D. in Medical Family Therapy. She began her graduate work with an interest in community-based, grassroots efforts to address health disparities in the Latino and farmworker populations.

In 2017, Roberta incorporated a behavioral health consulting business with a focus on agricultural populations. She contracts with agricultural entities, such as the North Carolina Growers Association and the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute, to provide behavioral health services to North Carolina family farms across the state. She provides support to university counseling programs, as well as farm health outreach programs.

Contracted work can include grant writing, program development, student training, presentations, and "on the ground" support to farms. She works with farm families, farmworkers, and the entities that serve and support the agricultural population, to help farms manage and reduce stress. She has recently joined the Southern Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (S-FRSAN), a federally funded (USDA) program that consists of experts across 13 southern states, including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and charged with the task of providing stress relief to agricultural families.

Roberta's vision for the future is to highlight the role for marriage & family therapists in agricultural programs, and to emphasize a biopsychosocial-spiritual approach in farm stress management.



Dr. Francisco Limon

Dr. Francisco J Limon has his PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University in 2016, his Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Purdue University Calumet in 2013, and his Bachelor's degree in clinical Psychology in 1993. Dr. Limon's research interests include acculturation stress, cultural issues that mediate mental illness in the Latino population in the US, and cultural issues in the behavioral treatment of diabetes and other chronic conditions. Dr. Limon is a licensed marriage and family therapist working primarily with low income minority individuals and families with a special focus on the Latino immigrant population. He has committed his career to empowering the oppressed to overcome systemic oppression and become active participants in defining their own destiny. Dr. Limon carries on this mission in his clinical work, in his advocacy for oppressed populations in the healthcare system, and in his research interests centered around minority health disparities.

Dr. Limon is currently the Chief Officer of Integrated Care Services at Greene County Healthcare in Snow Hill, NC. GCHC is a Federally Qualified Community Healthcare Center where he oversees patient support programs designed to increase access to affordable, high quality healthcare. One priority in GCHC's health plan is to ensure that the more 10k farmworkers in Eastern North Carolina receive timely and effective healthcare services during their stay as contracted laborers in ENC. Limon also leads a team of medical family therapists in the provision of integrated behavioral health and traditional psychotherapy in addition to his own clinical work.



Dr. Irina Kolobova

Dr. Irina Kolobova has a master's degree in Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy from Lewis & Clark College and a PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University. Dr. Kolobova is the Associate Director of Outcomes Research at Merck & Co., Inc. Previous roles include being the Behavioral Science Director at Penn State Health St. Joseph Family and Community Medicine Residency Program, an Integrated Care Consultant with the Center of Excellence for Integrated Care, a Medical Family Therapist with Greene County Health Care, a Research Coordinator in the Department of Endocrinology at Oregon Health & Science University, and other research positions related to psychosocial health. Dr. Kolobova's

research interests include access to care for patients living with or at risk of HIV, health disparities, social drivers of health, and program evaluation. To find balance, Irina enjoys traveling (preferably without an itinerary), stand up paddle boarding, and outdoor adventures.



Dr. Meghan Lacks

Dr. Lacks received both her master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University. She completed a pre-doctoral internship with AAMFT serving as a research and policy analyst for military initiatives. Previously, she served as the Director of Integrated Care for a federally-qualified health center in eastern North Carolina. Currently, Dr. Lacks is a full-time clinical assistant professor in the division of Behavioral Medicine in the Department of Family Medicine at East Carolina University. Dr. Lacks is responsible for providing education, training, and supervision to students from various mental health disciplines working as behavioral health consultants in primary care settings and for the training and education of Family Medicine residents on the psychosocial components of illness and health.



Dr. Amelia Muse

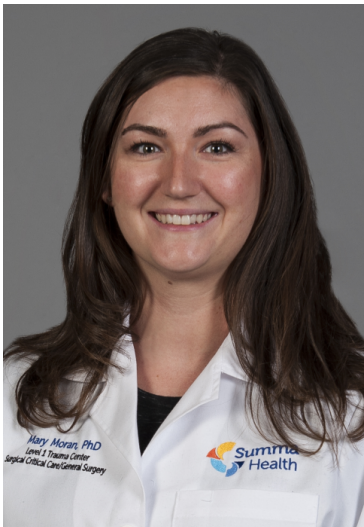
Dr. Muse directs the Center of Excellence for Integrated Care (COE) at the Foundation for Health Leadership and Innovation. In her role, she helps systems of all sizes and configurations make the clinical and operational changes necessary to deliver whole person care, as well as provides leadership and support for the technical assistance, training, research, and practice assessment activities of her team. She has been with COE since February 2016, as an Integration Consultant and subsequently as the Director of Operations. She is a licensed marriage and family therapist in the state of North Carolina, and is active in state and national workgroups, committees, and professional organizations to advance integrated behavioral health care. Prior to joining COE, Dr. Muse worked as a behavioral health clinician in a variety of

medical settings serving underserved populations in eastern North Carolina. Her area of research is focused on the implementation and evaluation of integrated behavioral health care programs. Dr. Muse received her doctorate degree in Medical Family Therapy and her master's in Marriage and Family Therapy from East Carolina University. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Dr. Dan Blocker

Dan Blocker received his MS in Marriage and Family Therapy from Brigham Young University and his PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University. He joined the Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center Family Medicine Residency in 2017 following a fellowship in Advanced Specialization in Medical Family Therapy at St. Mary's Family Medicine Residency in Grand Junction, CO. He recently completed a Family Medicine Faculty Development fellowship through the UC-San Francisco. His areas of interest include the development of integrated behavioral healthcare, social determinants of health, and resident well-being. His clinical and teaching work includes direct patient care, integrated care interventions, teaching PGY1-PGY3 family medicine residents behavioral and addiction medicine, and running the intern and senior resident support groups. He currently serves as the director of behavioral medicine for the residency and the associate program director for the residency



Dr. Mary Moran

Dr. Mary Moran graduated from ECU in spring 2018 and completed her master's in Marriage and Family Therapy from the University of Akron. She also received a certificate in Health Care Administration while completing her Ph.D. in Medical Family Therapy at ECU. Dr. Moran works as the Research Program Director for Trauma and is responsible for coordinating and conducting research at the Level I trauma center to ensure accreditation requirements from the American College of Surgeons at Summa Health in Akron, Ohio are met. Dr. Moran is also responsible for research collaboration between Trauma and other departments across the health care system and has the flexibility to conduct her own research agenda. She has expanded her knowledge and skill set regarding operational and financial impact on health care systems. Additionally, she is working on her Lean Six Sigma Black Belt certification, which includes teaching, mentorship, and completion of Lean Six Sigma projects across the health care system. Dr. Moran is currently pursuing this certificate to better conduct operational and financial research for the trauma center.

**Dr. Erin Cobb**

Dr. Cobb is a Research Scientist with the Suicide Care, Prevention, and Research (CPR) Initiative at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine. Her current work is centered on advancing the science and clinical practice of suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention for military service members and their families.

**Dr. David Haralson**

David Haralson is a Clinical Supervisor and Lead Clinician at Feller Behavioral Health in Farmington, Utah. In this capacity, he is developing a Spanish-speaking and play therapy program to better serve the residents in Davis County. He also supervises students and post-graduate therapists seeking licensure and provides therapy to individuals, couples, and families. He specializes in grief and loss work, parenting, childhood behavioral problems, trauma, body image issues, and issues related to gender and sexuality. He is also trained in Lifespan Integration (LI), and uses this treatment modality to help people heal from trauma. He uses a variety of therapeutic approaches, including narrative, solution-focused, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and emotionally-focused therapy. Dr. Haralson is a Clinical Member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and an AAMFT Approved Supervisor.



Dr. Glenda Mutinda

Glenda Mutinda, PhD, serves as the Director of Interprofessional Well-being at JPS. Dr. Mutinda received two Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of Iowa in Psychology and African American Studies in 2011, a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy in 2014 from the University of Houston, and she holds a doctoral degree in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University. She completed advanced fellowship training in behavioral health immersed in medical residency training programs. Her current position at JPS allows her direct access to the residents, oversight of all well-being initiatives, and she holds an integral position in the organization's overarching Caring for the Caregiver task force. Her research interests include well-being of learners, diversity and health equity, and integration of behavioral medicine in healthcare.



Dr. Florence Lewis

Dr. Lewis completed her doctorate in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University in 2019, her Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Purdue University Northwest in 2015, and his Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Oakwood University (a historically Black University) in 2012. For her doctoral dissertation, she explored the behavioral health needs of displaced families in primary health care settings and is currently living in Northern Italy. As a two-time recipient of the SAMSHA Minority Fellowship, Dr. Lewis' professional projects include unpacking African American cultural values to improve health outcomes, supporting immigrant families through the U.S. naturalization process, training recommendations for international family therapists, and exploring the mental health outcomes of foreign-born U.S. military service members.

Currently, Dr. Lewis works on an overseas military installation supporting the special needs population.



Dr. Jessica Goodman

Dr. Jessica Goodman received her PhD in MedFT at ECU in May 2019. She completed a MedFT predoctoral internship and postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Rochester with the Institute for the Family and departments of psychiatry and medicine. As a clinician, researcher and educator Dr. Goodman applies interdisciplinary theories and methods from across health fields including family science, public health, health informatics, nursing, and medicine while collaborating across professions and with community stakeholders to improve the biopsychosocial (BPS), relational, systemic health of individuals, families, and communities. She has received several awards for her research, including the Steadman Family Prize for Interdisciplinary Research. She is also currently the Chair of the CFHA Families and Health special interest group.



Dr. Eunicia “Niecie” Jones

Dr. Eunicia “Niecie” Jones, PhD, LMFT is the owner and CEO of her healing solutions practice, Visionary Liberation, LLC. She provides therapy, coaching, and consulting primarily for and on behalf of Black Americans. Her therapeutic and coaching approaches include narrative, experiential, and dialectical behavioral therapy interventions. Creativity and meaning-making are also at the center of her approach in order to help clients live more expansively and authentically.

Dr. Jones is passionate about group work and provides consulting for small and large groups, including well-known global companies. She provides trainings and interventions on topics such as psychological safety and creating inclusive environments within organizations, many of which are based off the research methods she learned in her master’s and doctoral studies. Dr. Jones is also a member of the Utah Center for Connection, a group of businesses ran by Black, Indigenous, and People

of Color (BIPOC) practitioners that serves primarily BIPOC clients in the Utah area.

Dr. Jones received a bachelor’s degree in Family Studies from Brigham Young University. She continued her studies by receiving a master’s degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Utah State University and a PhD at East Carolina University. When Dr. Jones is not building her practice, she enjoys diving into new topics, reading, and sketching.



Dr. Braden Brown

Dr. Braden J. Brown, PhD, LMFTA, is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Family Medicine at the Indiana University-Methodist Family Medicine Residency where he serves as a Behavioral Science faculty member. Dr. Brown also holds a position as the head Athletic Counselor for IUPUI Athletics, where he provides clinical mental health services and mental skills training to student-athletes and coaches from 16 Division I varsity sports teams.

Dr. Brown is an active member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Collaborative Family Healthcare Association, Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, and Association for Applied Sport Psychology. His research and clinical interests include: biopsychosocial-spiritual wellness of NCAA student-athletes, medical family therapy, motivational interviewing and long-term behavior change, and integrated behavioral healthcare outcomes in primary care settings.

Dr. Brown received a BS in Exercise and Wellness from Brigham Young University, where he was a four-year varsity letterman on the football team. Following a brief stint in the NFL with the St. Louis Rams, Dr. Brown received a MA in Marriage and Family Therapy from Utah State University and earned a PhD in Medical Family Therapy from East Carolina University. In his spare time, Dr. Brown enjoys weightlifting, playing sports (especially golf, basketball, and pickleball), cooking, and creating memories with his wife, Rachel, and twins, Hudson and Hadley.

Why I Chose MedFT at ECU: I chose the MedFT doctoral program at ECU because I am a firm believer in the biopsychosocial-spiritual and systems theory framework to understanding and treating individuals, couples, families, and larger systems. Secondly, I chose ECU because of the faculty's investment in helping me further develop my skills as a researcher, clinician, teacher, supervisor, grant writer, administrator, and policy maker. Most importantly, I chose ECU because of its family-based culture and the continual love and support I have felt not only from every faculty member, but also from current and former students. I feel very privileged and honored to be a part of such a prestigious program where I am surrounded by a team of incredible leaders, mentors, colleagues, and friends. develop my skills as a researcher, clinician, teacher, supervisor, grant writer, administrator, and policy maker. Most importantly, I chose ECU because of its family-based culture and the continual love and support I have felt not only from every faculty member, but also from current and former students. I feel very privileged and honored to be a part of such a prestigious program where I am surrounded by a team of incredible leaders, mentors, colleagues, and friends.



Dr. Özlem Köse

Sex and Relationship Researcher and Clinician (self-employed)

Why I chose MedFT at ECU: I chose ECU because of the program's strong emphasis on research and evidence-based clinical work. All of the faculty in the program provide excellent resources as well as unconditional support and acceptance for the students. Every single day, I am truly inspired and motivated by their enthusiasm, dedication, and passion in the field of Medical Family Therapy. better to professional for the population that I care so much about, which is racial and ethnic minorities in the US.



Dr. Erin Sesemann

Erin Sesemann, PhD, LMFT, CBIS owns and operates a private practice, New River Counseling and Wellness PLLC, based out of Boone, NC. She is also employed as a marriage and family therapist for Vidant Medical Center's Inpatient Rehabilitation Center. In this position, she is also the supervisor of the pre-doctoral and master's level Medical Family Therapy internships. Her research interests include investigating ways to promote adaptive biopsychosocial-spiritual coping and adjustment for families with physical injuries (e.g., SCI, TBI, stroke) as well as healthcare employees' health, well-being, and burnout. Why I Chose MedFT at ECU: I was really looking for a program that would help me prepare for not only my future career but also my future lifestyle. I was drawn to ECU's program because of their

emphasis on the balancing the biopsychosocial-spiritual components of health in research, clinical work, and also in its students and faculty. It truly seems like a program that provides opportunities to professionally and personally



Dr. Rachel Williams

Dr. Rachel Williams currently holds a position as a behavioral health care manager for the Collaborative Care program in the OBGYN department at MAHEC in Asheville, NC. In this role, Dr. Williams primarily provides brief therapy sessions to pregnant and post-partum patients. In the care manager role, Dr. Williams also regularly meets with a group of psychiatry residents to consult on patient medication needs and with primary care providers so that care remains patient-centered and in order to coordinate treatment plans. At MAHEC Dr. Williams also regularly works in the role of a behavioral health clinician in the OBGYN department and in the Post-Acute COVID Clinic in the Internal Medicine Department in order to provide additional opportunities for integrated care. In addition to working full-time

with MAHEC, Dr. Williams is currently employed part-time with North Central University as a part-time faculty member. In this role, Dr. Williams is responsible for teaching a variety of online classes in the Marriage and Family Therapy program to include classes on diagnosing with the DSM, conducting individual, couple, and family assessments, research methods, and psychopathology.



Dr. Natalie Richardson

Research Interests: Moral Injury within Military and Other High-Stress Populations, Physician/Resident Wellbeing, Ambiguous Loss and Complicated Grief Processes, Impact of Traumatic Stress on BPSS Health, Biopsychosocial-Spiritual Health Implications of Life-Altering Physical and Neurological Injuries, Healthcare Needs of Native and Indigenous Populations

Why I Chose MedFT at ECU: When searching for potential PhD programs, it was important for Natalie to find a program that emphasized the value of both clinical development and research for students. ECU provided a unique opportunity to extend her clinical training as a master's level clinician to include practical experience in variety of integrated behavioral health care settings. Natalie appreciated the program and faculty

emphasis on and compassion for enhancing systemic and biopsychosocial-spiritual healing. Additionally, she appreciated the program's emphasis on expanding students' clinical and research experiences by highlighting the importance of cultural humility. While she was originally drawn to the esteemed reputation of the program as a successful institute for producing competitive scholars contributing to the field of medical family therapy, it was Natalie's personal connections formed early on with faculty, mentors, and current students that really solidified her decision. Since the moment she arrived in Greenville, Natalie felt supported in her personal goals, valued as a professional and clinician, and validated in my adjustment as a developing scholar.



Dr. Rebecca Levy

Medical Family Therapist, Director of Behavioral Medicine at Cone Health Family Medicine

Dr. Levy completed a Bachelor's degree at the University of Georgia in 2015 with majors in Psychology and Spanish. She graduated with a master's degree in Couples and Family Therapy from Drexel University in 2017. Dr. Levy completed her fellowship specializing in how behavioral medicine fits at a family medicine residency at Wake Forest Family Medicine Residency. Shortly after, Dr. Levy completed a PhD in Medical Family Therapy at East Carolina University. She holds her associate's licensure in Couples and Family Therapy (LMFT-A). Dr. Levy is currently a fellow in the Behavioral Science/Family System Educator Fellowship.

Dr. Levy's areas of interest are suicide assessment, integrated care, cultural humility and resident wellness. She sees her role in clinical practice, research and education to advocate for underserved populations and health equality. When not at work, she enjoys being outdoors running, playing tennis or spending time with her fiancé, AJ and her dog, Gerard.



Dr. Afarin Rajaei

Dr. Rajaei has a Ph.D. in medical family therapy from East Carolina University. She is licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist in CA, NC, and is an AAMFT Clinical Fellow, and Approved Supervisor. She is an assistant professor in CFT program at Alliant International University in California. She is specifically trained in couples therapy and has vast experience in working with couples nationally and internationally. Dr. Rajaei has studied couples dealing with cancer and works with them clinically. She also designs MedFT courses and certificate programs. **Professional**

Interests include: Biopsychosocial-spiritual (BPSS) stressors in conflicted intimate relationships, Romantic

relationship quality, Family therapy, diversity, and social injustice issues, Equity in healthcare systems, Medical Family Therapy, and Preferred Research Methodologies: Qualitative and Quantitative.



Dr. Julian Crespo

Dr. Julian Crespo, PhD, LMFT, is an Assistant Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio and La Feria, Texas.

Dr. Crespo is an active member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Collaborative Family Healthcare Association, the Texas Association for Marriage and Family therapy, and the North Carolina Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Some of his research interests include sexual violence against Latino women, intersections between religious narratives and mental health, the role of beliefs in coping with sexual trauma, and integrated behavioral health for Latino populations in the US.

Before becoming an MFT and MedFT, he worked with Catholic religious communities for more than 10 years with marginalized populations in Central and Eastern North Carolina. Julian's theoretical orientation is grounded in Narrative Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, with a strong component of social justice.



Dr. Melissa Welch

Melissa Welch, PhD, LMFT, is a medical family therapist, medical/resident educator, and researcher. Dr. Welch is passionate about improving the healthcare system through enhancing the delivery of mental and behavioral health services in traditional medical settings, increasing access to mental health care, improving health equity for underserved populations, and equipping family physicians to deliver biopsychosocially attuned patient- and family-centered care. She is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Health and Family Medicine at the University of Florida College of Medicine where she serves as the Behavioral Medicine Faculty Member and Director of Research for the new Family Medicine Residency Program at Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital Emerald Coast in

Destin, FL. She received her BS at Texas A&M University, her MA at Sam Houston State University, her PhD from East Carolina University, and completed a pre-doctoral fellowship at Vidant Health Inpatient Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Center in Greenville, NC. Dr. Welch's research is focused on family-centered care, integrated behavioral health, and family engagement practices in primary care settings.



Dr. Corin "Cori" Davis

Research Interests: I am interested include physician education, specifically in training residents and medical students, treating trauma in integrated care, and incorporating Self-of-the-Therapist into training programs. Additionally I am interested in promoting BPS-S health and wellbeing for LGBTQ individuals.

Why I Chose MedFT at ECU: I was really looking for a program that was not only invested in me as a student and researcher, but a person as well, and I feel that ECU provides that for me. I was also drawn to the amount of unique opportunities in clinical work, research, and course work to further my experience in healthcare and prepare me to work in a medical setting.



Dr. Adam Johnson

Research Interests: Patient Empowerment, Consumer Health Informatics, Biopsychosocial-spiritual Life-Course Health Development, Prevention Science, Program Evaluation.

Why I chose MedFT at ECU: Adam believes the model of Patient-Centered Medical Homes is the best way to provide the population with holistic BPSS care. Integrated healthcare makes it easier for patients to have all their needs met across all areas of their life and wellbeing, and the collaboration with all members of their healthcare team makes providing that care easier for providers. He wanted to jump on the Medical Family Therapy wagon early so he can enjoy a long career in integrated care settings, and what better place to get started on that track than here at ECU.



Dr. Evie Davy Romano

Research Interests: I am interested in post-traumatic stress symptoms in caregivers of those suffering from an eating disorder, role of spirituality in recovery from an eating disorder, prevention and intervention effectiveness in integrated treatment to address eating disorders, and EFFT (Emotion-Focused Family Therapy) interventions with caregivers of those suffering from an eating disorder or chronic illness. I am also interested in promoting BPS-S wellbeing for families experiencing loss, illness, and/disability.

Why I Chose MedFT at ECU: I was intrigued with the notion of “Medical Family Therapy” when I first heard about ECU’s program in 2012. My therapeutic philosophy is to treat the whole person, which is the crux of the BPSS model. Since I am interested in helping advance the field of eating disorder treatment, I knew that a program that emphasized the medical piece along with family systems therapy would be essential in my professional development.



Dr. Emily Tucker

Research Interests: I am interested in working with individuals with intellectual disability. More specifically I am interested understanding and developing effective education around working with individuals with intellectual disability for mental health professionals and primary care providers.

Why I chose MedFT at ECU: I wanted to learn MedFT to better understand the medical field, integrated care, and how education for primary care providers can improve patient experiences. I chose ECU because I wanted to learn from the best. I also wanted to be at a program that was well established that I knew could offer the support I needed, as I began merging my clinical experience with my research interests



Frandrea Lee

Research Interest: I am interested in the impact of provider bias on health disparities for marginalized individuals and groups, transgenerational impact of medical trauma on patient and families health decisions and behaviors, and intimate partner violence (IPV). More specifically regarding IPV research I am interested in the unique experiences of male survivors. Clinically I am passionate about working with clients who have experienced trauma and working within integrated healthcare systems in rural communities.

I initially chose ECU because of its location which provides access to higher learning within the rural community setting of Eastern North Carolina. However, it was my experience as an undergraduate where I experienced faculty that challenged and mentored my development as a student, researcher, and person that won my heart as a Pirate for life. I chose to return to ECU for the masters in MFT and doctoral MedFT programs because I not only wanted to learn but I wanted to learn in an environment and from faculty committed to cultural humility, equity, and inclusion. Besides, one of the most charming aspects of ECU is its ability to provide students with academic opportunities that rival larger educational institutions within a lively and fun environment.



Taylor Young

Research Interests: I am interested in working with providers in their approach to patient care. A significant portion of this is provider burnout and how to combat that. I intend to further my previous research of burnout in the non-profit sector and connect it with provider settings. I also am interested in strengthening the curriculum behind the spiritual aspect of the biopsychosocial-spiritual model for medical residents training programs. I believe that the spiritual aspect of creating meaning and finding purpose can create significant healing.

Why I chose ECU: What drew me to ECU was the wholistic approach that medical family therapy creates. I have always desired to combine my therapy training with a medical setting and ECU allows me the chance to do just that. This approach along with the welcoming attitude of the faculty are what caused me to choose ECU.



Betül Küçükardalı

Research Interest: Implementation of trauma-informed integrated healthcare, medical trauma, physician education, the self of the therapist, minority health disparities, role of spirituality in recovery, role of family members' emotional regulation in recovery

Why I choose to attend ECU: I have been following the professors in the doctoral program for a long time with admiration from the articles and books they have already written. However, I chose ECU because after meeting them, I was impressed by their humanity as much as their professionalism. I wanted to study and gain experience with such sincere, supportive teachers who create opportunities and prioritize students' personal development and career goals. In addition, the location of ECU, the natural beauties of Greenville, the local community are among the essential factors that make it easier for me to decide.



Adrian Knauss

Adrian received her M.S. in Child Development and Family Studies at Purdue University Northwest. Her research interests include access to healthcare in rural communities, use of preventive healthcare services, public policy, and dissemination and implementation.

I chose East Carolina University because of the access to rural populations which I am interested in serving and the commitment to providing integrated care to these populations. Additionally, I believe ECU provides unique opportunities to develop professionally as a researcher and clinician in healthcare settings. I am excited to use my mental health background and clinical skills to promote the overall health of my community.



Tolulope Sofeso

I am interested in understanding the experiences of ethnic minority/immigrant medical students and residents, and assessing effective ways that MedFTs can support medical/resident students using the BPSS model. Furthermore, I am interested in understanding couple-satisfaction and effective interventions for couples where one partner has a chronic illness diagnosis. I am also interested in promoting awareness, reducing stigmatization of seeking mental health services in immigrant populations.

Why I chose ECU: I chose ECU because of the unique opportunity it presents to be trained as a BPSS researcher and clinician. I have always been interested in whole person care and the collaboration that can happen between medical and mental health practitioners in integrated care settings. This program at ECU equips me with knowledge and skill needed to work in various healthcare settings.



Rylan Hellstern

Rylan earned his M.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy at Utah State University. His research interests include access to mental healthcare for rural and marginalized communities, relationship education, the promotion of BPSS health for LatinX individuals, and enhancing the physician-therapist relationship in collaborative care settings.

Rylan chose ECU because of its holistic BPSS perspective and high-quality Medical Family Therapy training. In addition, he was drawn to ECU because of the faculty members and their commitment to supporting their students' interests and BPSS research. Knowing that the unique training from ECU's MedFT program would allow for diverse career opportunities post-graduation made ECU an obvious choice.



Alexis Bruhn

Research Interests: I am interested in researching how medical and behavioral health providers are utilizing social media to disseminate information, as well as possibilities for medical family therapists to engage in healthcare integration through social media. I am also interested in patient perspectives of online, health-related support systems.

Why I chose ECU: I chose ECU because it felt like the best fit for me out of all the places I

interviewed at. The faculty and existing students were genuine and welcoming, and the program itself felt ripe with opportunities to develop into the professional I always wanted to be. Having the opportunity to learn how to provide integrated, holistic, and inclusive care in an environment as supportive and enriching as ECU was an easy decision for me.



Samuel Heath

Research Interests: Samuel (Sam) aspires to be a beacon of hope and empowerment at the intersection of spirituality and mental health. Samuel hopes to partner in the transformation of Black, Brown, and LGBTQIA+ people and communities by creating innovative and accessible measures through culturally attuned clinical tools and research. Samuel wants to zero in on transformative justice efforts, healing of complex trauma, integrative care and expanding the “Four-World View” approach, investigating the impact of harm poor research has contributed to marginalized communities, and substance abuse factors that impact the experience and

wellness of people of color. He hopes to conduct a mixed method approach to exploring how trauma impacts the lived experience of African American people, specifically same-gender-loving men through the lens of the Biopsychosocial-Spiritual (BPSS) model.

Why I Chose ECU: The reputation of the MedFT’s program proceeds itself. Samuel was excited to work alongside pioneers in the field. The program emphasis on the BPSS approach to wellness and care was also a factor for Samuel. He is fascinated with the idea and latitude of integrated care afforded by the MedFT degree. Samuel is looking forward to sharing in future spaces as a consultant, academician, researcher, and clinician.



Josh Bolle

Research Interests: I am interested in understanding how obese medical providers make sense of their identity within the medical system. I am also interested in understanding the intersections of faith/spirituality as it relates to LGBTQ BIPOC patients’ diagnoses of chronic and acute illness. Clinically, I lean towards intergenerational models as well as attachment-based models.

Why I chose ECU: I choose the Medical Family Therapy program at Eastern Carolina University due to the whole-person approach informed by the bio-psycho-social-spiritual (BPSS) model. Thinking about health from this holistic perspective makes sense to me intuitively, so I wanted to strengthen my understanding of the ways in which people’s health are impacted by BPSS as well as systemic factors

impacting people’s lives and health. I also appreciated the multiple opportunities to work collaboratively in integrated healthcare within the community. After meeting faculty and current student/alumni and seeing the care for each other, this solidified my decision to attend ECU.

**Alex Hernandez**

Alex earned his M.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy at East Carolina University. His research interests include the relationship between physical activity, mental health, and chronic illness for Latino populations, as well as the role of spirituality in mental health and moral injury.

I chose the East Carolina University MedFT program because of their history in fostering future professionals and leaders as well as their commitment in providing integrated behavioral health services to underserved populations. The MedFT program also affords me the opportunity to advance my research interests as I continue to provide services in the community.