

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

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University of Colorado - Anschutz Medical Campus
Department of Psychiatry Monthly Newsletter

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A Message from the Good News team

Please remember to inform us anytime you engage in scholarly or media activities by responding to the survey link below. We would love to feature your work here and on our social media channels!

[Click on this link to be directed to our submission page!](#)

Members of the Good News Team include - Chair: Claudia Iannelli; Designer: Aki Suzuki; Good News Content Writers: Shannon McWilliams, Dora Irvine & Merlin Ariefdjohan; Editors: Kristen Raymond and Aileen Norton; Contributors: Kimberly Slavsky, Shaleeta Flagg, Melissa Sinclair, Brittany Pittman and Nellie Kassebaum



Department of Psychiatry

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



BRAIN HEALTH for all, for life.

The Good News



Content: Dora Irvine | Design: Aki Suzuki

The clinic is located in Greenwood Village, and we see clients throughout the state via telehealth. Since its grand opening in spring of 2018, the Cohen Clinic has provided over 7,000 mental health services, with over 3,500 in the past year. Half of all clients served are Veterans, with female Veterans accounting for 20% of this group. That is nearly double the female Veteran population in the United States. Adult family members of Veterans or service members make up 34% of all clients served, while 14% of clients have been children or adolescents.

the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic

The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus provides targeted, evidence-based outpatient mental health care to post-9/11 Veterans, Active Duty Service Members, and their Families. Veterans are eligible regardless of discharge status and family is defined broadly. The clinic accepts insurance through CU Medicine, and through our partnership with the Cohen Veterans Network, we provide some financial assistance to those without insurance or who cannot otherwise pay for care.

We pride ourselves on understanding the challenges faced and sacrifices made by military families, be it the stress of deployment, the requirement to move every few years, the adjustment to new schools and neighborhoods, and the adjustment to civilian life after discharge. All staff members undergo military cultural competence training, and most staff are Veterans or family members themselves. The Cohen Clinic providers specialize in treating depression, anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and other transitional challenges for patients across the lifespan. We also provide marriage counseling, relationship counseling, and help with children's behavioral issues to support the entire military family.

Kammy Bishop serves as Clinic Director. She is a licensed professional counselor, certified addiction counselor, certified clinical trauma provider, and a United States Marine Corps Veteran. Dr. Lynne Fenton, an Air Force Veteran, serves as Medical Director for the clinic. Dr. Matt Mishkind, an Air Force child and spouse, and former civilian with the Department of Defense, serves as Director of Operations.



The Good News

Content: Shannon McWilliams | Design: Claudia Iannelli

Thank you for your service,
Lieutenant Colonel Chris Thurstone!



We are thrilled to welcome back Dr. Chris Thurstone, who recently returned from his 2nd tour of duty in the Middle East, where he serves as a military psychiatrist for active troops. Chris describes military psychiatry as meaningful through seeing patients improve. He also notes the difficulty of seeing a full caseload of soldiers - some whom have witnessed trauma civilians could not begin to comprehend. Chris was the only psychiatrist for our Middle East troops including Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. He was also not surprisingly, the busiest clinician in his unit.

What is a day like in Kuwait serving in the Army reserves?

His day begins at 5am with PT (or morning workout) followed by breakfast. By 7:30am, Chris moves to the inpatient unit, followed by intensive outpatient treatment in the afternoon. Hopefully done by about 6pm, he has time to eat dinner, call his family, and prepare to repeat the process all over again the next day. Chris mentioned the best thing about treating patients during his tours was not having to worry about copays, preauthorizations, or the number of pre-approved sessions, something many providers would certainly appreciate!

What do you think is the biggest casualty of war?

Chris believes the biggest casualty in wartime is psychiatric wellbeing. While most people perceive the biggest casualty as physical injuries, such as gunshot wounds or loss of limbs, the mental health of soldiers is by far the most impacted. The list of common mental health issues include anxiety and PTSD related to trauma, depression, and homesickness due to long touring lengths and missing out on important life events such as the birth of a child.

One type of treatment Chris mentioned was combat stress control. CSC includes providing brief interventions, keeping the soldier on light duty with his or her jobs and unit to maintain their military identity and retain their built-in social support with meaning and purpose. Generally, people improve quickly which is a clinically helpful and personally gratifying experience for the care provider.

Chris indicated that he treated over 300 patients in his almost 4 month deployment, and would be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, harkening back to his internship days. He worked with a nurse practitioner and mental health specialists and together they provide many kinds of therapy and care to the soldiers.



The Good News

Content: Shannon McWilliams | Design: Claudia Iannelli

Lieutenant Colonel Thurstone, continued

Why join the Army Reserves?

Chris found his calling to join the Army during the surge in 2008, when there was a lot of news about PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and suicide in the Army. The Army at the time was accepting physicians with an age waiver, so Chris obtained his waiver and signed up. He is hoping to serve for another 10 years before retiring from the Army Reserve.

DEI in the Military

Chris commented the military is the most diverse employer he has ever worked for. In addition to working with people of all ethnic backgrounds, approximately 6% of service members are foreign born. Politically, there are people of opposite political affiliations working effectively together because they have a common goal and mission.



How Military Service Impacts the Entire Family

When asked how his two deployments have impacted his family, Chris shared that during his first deployment his daughter fell behind in math, as he is her primary math tutor. For this most recent deployment, his son broke his tibia and fibula during a soccer match the day he left for his deployment. Fortunately, he had a chaplain for his roommate, who offered great support and comfort. Chris also shared that they say the most important person in the Army family is the military spouse who holds everything together. His wife and children are proud of him and their contribution, and we couldn't agree more.

Lieutenant Colonel Thurstone, we thank you for your service and the important work you do, not only during deployment but back at home, as well. We are lucky to have you as a care provider for our community and a member of the DOPsych team!

Diversity. Equity. Inclusion.

Design: Aki Suzuki



ANNOUNCEMENT

APPOINTMENT OF DR. RON-LI LIAW AS DIRECTOR OF THE
DIVISION OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH,
VICE CHAIR OF DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION,
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY, AND INAUGURAL MENTAL
HEALTH IN-CHIEF FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL COLORADO

Dear colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to announce the official appointment of Dr. Ron-Li Liaw as Director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Vice Chair of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and the Inaugural Mental Health In-Chief for Children's Hospital Colorado. Dr. Liaw received her bachelor's degree in anthropology from Rice University and her medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine with Alpha Omega Honors. She completed her adult psychiatry training at Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital and McLean Hospital, where she served as chief resident. She also completed a research fellowship at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Mind/Body Institute as well as a clinical fellowship in psychodynamic psychotherapy at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute. Dr. Liaw trained in child and adolescent psychiatry at NYU Langone Medical Center.

Dr. Liaw joins the CU Department of Psychiatry from NYU where she has been the Director of the Sala Institute Child-Family Services and Resilience Programs, Chief of Service for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Co-Director of the Pediatric Psychiatry Consultation-Liaison Service at Hassenfeld Children's Hospital at NYU Langone. Dr. Liaw is a clinical associate professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the NYU School of Medicine and Pediatric Integration and Quality Leader for the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Her areas of expertise include children's and families' responses to acute and chronic stress, trauma and resilience, co-occurring medical and mental health issues, patient and family-centered care, integrated care and systems redesign, clinician and family wellbeing, quality improvement, equity and diversity.

Over the past decade, Dr. Liaw has led the co-design, implementation, spread, and sustained growth of foundational and cutting-edge children's hospital programs, including integrated behavioral health programs across the pediatric care continuum at NYU Langone Health and Bellevue Hospital Center. She led the development and expansion of the Pediatric Psychiatry Consultation Liaison, Psychiatric Emergency, and Early Childhood Services as well as Integrated Behavioral Health Programs within specialty ambulatory care. As Founder/Director of the Sala Institute Center for Child and Family Resilience and in partnership with cross-departmental leaders, youth and family advisors, Dr. Liaw led the development of and sustained interdisciplinary collaboration across Pediatric Palliative Care, Pain Management, Integrative Medicine, Social Work, Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy, and Spiritual Care. As the Director of Pediatric Integration and Quality, Dr. Liaw managed a diverse portfolio of mental health integration, family engagement, safety and quality education, virtual health and digital innovation, resiliency and wellbeing, and equity initiatives across the NYU Langone Health System. Within the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Dr. Liaw co-led the Anti-Racism Task Force's strategic pillars for facilitated learning and recruitment and retention of under-represented minority faculty and staff.

Nationally, Dr. Liaw served as a family engagement and improvement science team leader for the American Board of Pediatrics Foundation's Resilience Roadmap Pilot Collaborative, an inaugural member of the Center to Advance Palliative Care's National Pediatric Palliative Care Planning Committee, a member of the Greater New York Hospital Association Clinician Wellbeing Advisory Group, and is actively engaged with the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's Physically Ill Child Committee and Children's Hospital Association's Behavioral Health Leadership Roundtable.

Dr. Liaw is an incredible addition to the Department of Psychiatry in general and to our partnership with Children's Hospital Colorado in specific. As the inaugural Mental Health In-Chief, Dr. Liaw will join hospital leadership to create and implement strategies in the child health space to address the mental health crisis for youth in Colorado and beyond. I'm also pleased that Dr. Liaw is skilled and passionate in the areas of inclusivity and diversity among faculty, staff and trainees in academic and hospital environments. After a period of transition, Dr. Liaw will succeed Dr. Robert Davies as the permanent Vice Chair for Diversity Equity and Inclusion for the Department of Psychiatry. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Liaw to our Department family!

Neill Epperson, .

C. Neill Epperson, M.D.
Robert Freedman Endowed Chair and Professor
Department of Psychiatry | CU School of Medicine

PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH INNOVATIONS

ADVANCING RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

Content: Merlin Ariefdjohan | Design: Claudia Iannelli



¡tu preguntaste, escuchamos y entregamos!

(You asked, we listened and delivered!)

New Spanish Language Services - Get to know Perla Rodriguez!

Due to an increasing need for Spanish translation and research administration services, the PRI is proud to announce the formation of our new Spanish Language Services in the Research Operations Core!

Perla Rodriguez, BA, BS first joined the DOPsych as a patient service representative for several clinics at the SOM and joined the PRI as a PRA in September 2021. She has a double bachelor's degree in Biology and Psychology with a minor in Criminal Justice, and is currently working on a Master's degree in Forensic Psychology. As a certified medical interpreter, Perla is bringing her English/Spanish language proficiency and her research skills to staff the new PRI research service line. We are excited to have her on board and support the inclusion of Spanish-speaking populations in our research studies!



Please reach out to Merlin.Ariefdjohan@cuanschutz.edu if you need assistance with any of the following (but not limited to) to include Spanish-speaking participants in your study:

- Translating study documents
- Recruiting and consenting participants
- Translating interviews during study visits between participants and study coordinator/PI
- Conducting research visits
- Reimbursing participants and managing gift card program

"Opening this new research line will advance research and promote diversity by including Spanish-speaking study populations. We're thrilled to be offering this new opportunity for the Department!"

-PRI Director, Merlin Ariefdjohan, PhD, MPH

Team Spotlight:



Stella Benami

Content: Stella Benami (via Kristen Raymond) | **Design:** Claudia Iannelli

When did you start working for the DoPsych and what is your role here?

I've been a CU Anschutz employee for just over a year and a half, and I've officially worked for DOP for about 9 months. I'm a clinical psychologist and work as a clinician at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic.

What do you like best about working here?

It's a tie between my clients and my team. I'm a big supporter of our military; these individuals risk their lives to protect and serve our country, and deserve the very best care. I love having the opportunity to support and work with our active duty service members, veterans, and their families every day. I also love being a part of the Cohen team – we have an amazing group of people who are dedicated, intelligent, and passionate, and it's truly a pleasure to work with them every day.

What is your professional area of interest?

One of my biggest areas of interest is police and first responder psychology. Prior to starting my career in mental health, I worked as a 911 dispatcher for about 7 years, which created a fascination with this particular area and fueled my dissertation research on secondary trauma in 911 dispatchers. After I graduated, I worked at a private practice specializing in police psychology where we provided services to various local agencies in the Metro area. Though my career has taken me into the realm of military psychology, I will always have a soft spot for first responders and luckily still get opportunities to work with this group through our clinic.

What's your favorite book or movie and why?

Viktor Frankl's "Man's Search for Meaning" is, hands down, one of my favorite books. In fact, I would go so far as to say it's one of the most important books written in the 20th century. It's a short text, one that's easily read in an afternoon, but filled with priceless lessons about life, hope, survival, meaning, purpose, and the strength of the human spirit.

What's your dream vacation spot or trip?

Bora Bora

Do you have any hidden talents?

I'm a fluent (and native) Russian speaker.

What's your favorite quote?

It's so hard to choose just one – I've heard and read a lot of words of wisdom over the years. Since I mentioned Viktor Frankl, I'll go with this: "Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."



Design: Claudia Iannelli



Shout out to the following faculty who were selected as Top Docs of 2021 by 5280 Magazine! Join us in congratulating Christian Thurstone, Austin Butterfield, Beau Carubia, Kristie M. Ladegard, Karina Drake and Elizabeth L. Lowdermilk!



Congratulations to Michelle West on the receipt of her R34 award from the National Institute of Mental Health! Her project is titled *INVEST: Individualized Vocational and Educational Support and Training for Clinical High Risk for Psychosis (CHR-P)*.



Congratulations to J. Megan Ross on the receipt of her K23 award entitled *Changes in cognition and psychiatric disorder symptoms during cannabis abstinence using a novel discordant twin design* from the National Institute on Drug Abuse!



Congratulations to Verenea Serrano on being interviewed on the *Pediatras En Linea* podcast!

[**CLICK HERE TO LISTEN**](#)



Congratulations to Lydia Garey, Nursing Supervisor at ARTS, for being the recipient of the 2021 University of Colorado Staff Council Staff Excellence Award! Lydia received a \$250 cash award and a plaque at an awards ceremony Friday, October 1, 2021.



The Cohen Center's Dr. Daren Norris joined 9News for a segment on the potential negative mental health impacts for military families due to the ongoing violence in Afghanistan.

[**CLICK HERE TO WATCH**](#)



Congratulations to Evan Winiger, DPG Postdoctoral Fellow working with Drs. Hopfer and Ellingson, for winning the Behavioral Genetics Association Rowe Award for best poster presentation for his work on sleep, titled: "Genetic Identification of Sleep Vulnerabilities Inherited with Substance Use."

FUN & GAMES

Design: Aki Suzuki

thankful
thoughts
=
Happy
thoughts

#DYK that expressing gratitude can improve your mood and lower rates of stress and depression?

It's that time of year again, we want to hear your attitude of gratitude! Please use the Submission Link to submit thoughts about what you're most thankful for this year.

**CLICK HERE TO
ACCESS THE LINK**



HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

Movie Poster Madness

Are you a Halloween movie buff? Let's test your knowledge! Name the movies that correspond to each of the numbers in the movie poster below. See the next page for the answer key.

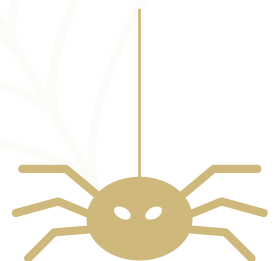


FUN & GAMES

Movie Poster Madness

Answer Key

1. The Rocky Horror Picture Show (Lips)
2. Halloween (The Pumpkin)
3. The Mummy (Bandages)
4. Scream (Black Ghost with White mask)
5. The Shining (Tricycle)
6. Beetle Juice (Black White Striped suit)
7. The Nightmare on Elm Street (Striped Tshirt with Hat mannequin)
8. Shaun of the Dead (Bat and Shovel)
9. Gremlins (Paws in the box)
10. The Sixth Sense (Red Knob of door)
11. The Purge (Peeking Masked man)
12. Poltergeist (Girl with hands on TV)
13. Ghostbusters (Bagpack below lamp post)
14. The Evil Dead (Girl coming out of ground)
15. The Exorcist (Silhouette under lamp post)
16. Alien (Egg Flower shaped object)
17. The Ring (The girl coming out of well)
18. Christine (The Car)
19. Blair Witch Project (Stick symbol above the car)
20. The Amityville Horror (House above behind car)
21. Arachnophobia (Spider on tree)
22. Dracula (The Castle)
23. Fog (Mist behind Castle)
24. Frankenstein (Angry mob on hill)
25. Wicker Man (Burning mummy statue)
26. IT (Red Balloon)
27. Silence of the Lambs (Insect on the lamp)
28. Wolf Creek (Wolf yellow road Sign)
29. An American Werewolf in London (Slaughtered lamb sign)
30. Psycho (Bates Motel)
31. Annabelle (Doll rocking on chair) - Also Conjuring
32. Little Shop of Horrors (Mushnik's Shop)
33. Hellraiser (Box in Window)
34. The Lost Boys (Green Frog Comics)
35. Saw (Mask with red cheeks)
36. Friday the 13th (White Mask in window)
37. Chucky (Doll in attic window)
38. The Addams Family (Thing - hand)
39. 28 Days Later (biohazard sign on Chimney)
40. Sleepy Hollow (Headless man in front of moon)



FUN & GAMES

DCPsych is Now on Social Media!



@CU_Psychiatry

We will be sharing helpful and insightful facts about mental health, links to media and news articles featuring our faculty, and other important departmental information. You can follow, retweet, and engage with our content at [cu_psychiatry](#) on both platforms.

