

May 2015

Special points of interest in this issue:

- FASP and NASP photos!
- 100% internship placement rate AGAIN!
- Get your very own stylish School Psychology tote bag to support SPSA!
- Student-created YouTube clip for School Psychology Awareness Week recognized at NASP!

Inside this issue:

From SPSA President	1
FASP and NASP Highlights	3
Graduation Spring 2015	4
Welcome New Students!	5
Words of Wisdom	6
Alumni News	7
Accomplishments / Announcements	8

From SPSA President

By: Nathaly Ossa

The School Psychology Student Association (SPSA) has had another successful school year! With the help of our 2014-2015 Executive Board: **Nathaly Ossa** (President), **Lindsay Piontkowski** (Vice President), **Diana Arce** (Secretary), **Paulette Martinez** (Treasurer), **Annela Costa** (CSO Representative), and **Yessenia Joyas** (Community Chair), many of SPSA's goals for the year were accomplished.



Fall Social at Chili's

(FASP) Annual Conference in Sarasota, FL. Registration fees were paid for by SPSA. This was a great opportunity for members to learn about current research and innovative practices in School Psychology. SPSA members, **Annela Costa** and **Nathaly Ossa**, presented at the conference. Overall, it was an enlightening experience for those attending for the first time as well as those attending a second or third. Throughout the fall semester, School Psychology students attended soccer games, trainings, and social gatherings together. *(Continue on page 2.)*



Fall Signature Event: Temple Grandin Movie

SPSA planned and participated in numerous events. In Fall 2014, SPSA spread awareness about Autism and raised money for research on Autism in the Broward Walk Now for Autism Speaks event. We also organized a



FIU Baseball Outing

signature event on campus to encourage FIU students to learn more about Autism, showing the movie *Temple Grandin*. In November, many SPSA members were able to attend the Florida Association of School Psychologists

Walk Now for Autism Speaks in Broward



From SPSA President

(Continued from page 1)

In Spring 2015, SPSA collected children's books to promote literacy in families all around Miami-Dade County. SPSA partnered with the *Read to Learn Books for Free Program*. School Psychology students, faculty, staff, and students from other disciplines collaborated with SPSA to fill the book collection bin. Over 100 books were collected!

With funds awarded to SPSA from the Council of Student Organizations (CSO), students were able to attend the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Annual Convention in Orlando, FL. At NASP, students networked with students from other School Psychology programs around the country. **Annela Costa, Evelyn Castillo, Nicole Diaz, Tiffany Griffin, Yesenia Joyas, and Nathaly Ossa** presented workshops, posters, and papers. One of our recent alumna, **Sandra Olson**, presented at the Trainers of School Psychologists poster session in Orlando, too. In April, SPSA



Spring Signature Event: Waiting for "Superman" Movie

hosted a signature event on campus in order to inform students about the public educational system, by showing *Waiting for "Superman"*. Throughout the spring semester, School Psychology students participated by attending baseball games, social events, and monthly meetings. Finally, SPSA celebrated the year's accomplishments at our End-Of-Year Banquet at Divieto Restaurant in Doral. Together faculty, students, and guests congratulated the graduates,



Alex Riviere holding the Patricia Del Valle Award plaque, presented by Dr. Phil Lazarus.

the new interns, and first-year students for their achievements. Dr. Lazarus continued his new tradition as rap artist with two new songs: [I'm ADD Over You](#) and [Intern Call Day Blues](#).

Lastly, **Alexandra Riviere** was named recipient of the Patricia Del Valle Humanitarian Award. She was selected by her fellow peers for this tremendous honor. One student noted, "*Alexandra is the most helpful, positive, kind, respectful and motivational peer I have ever had. She truly epitomizes what the Patty Del Valle award is all about. Ever since day one, she was a sweetheart and the most positive during difficult times.*"

Also, congratulations to the new Executive Committee Chairs for 2015-2016!

President: **Paulette Martinez**

Vice President: **Silvana Newman**

Treasurer: **Alyssa Aguiar**

Secretary: **Alayne Burns**

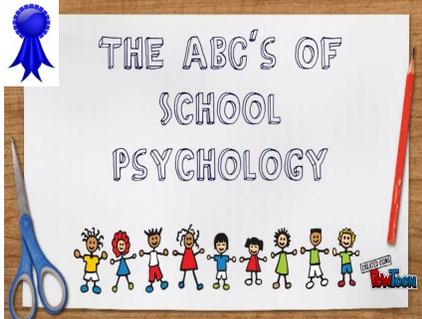
CSO Representative: **Nahomie Saint Pierre**

Social Chair: **Jessica Rothman**

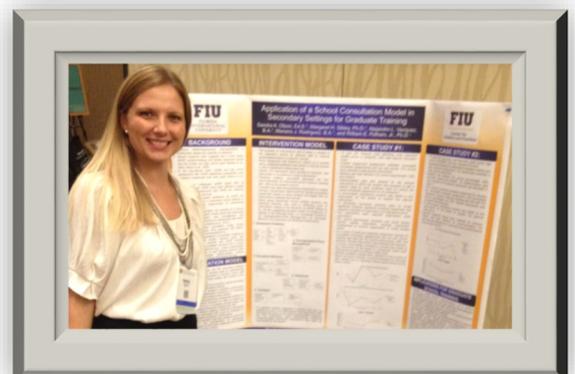
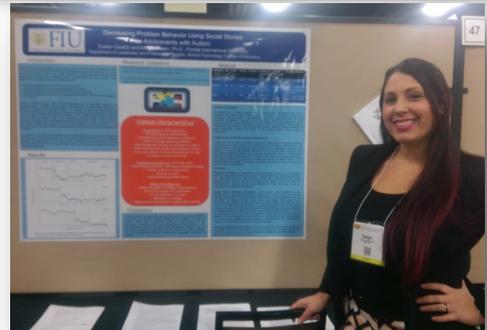
Annual Luncheon Banquet Selfie



FASP and NASP Conference Highlights



Congratulations to **Annela Costa** whose animated YouTube clip entitled "*The ABC's of School Psychology*" won the NASP video contest! She created this clip last November for School Psychology Awareness Week. Click on the picture above for the clip!!



Graduation Spring 2015

Congratulations to our graduates!



Tara Barron Ed.S.

Evelyn Castillo, Ed.S.

Nicole Diaz, Ed.S.

Tiffany Griffin, Ed.S.

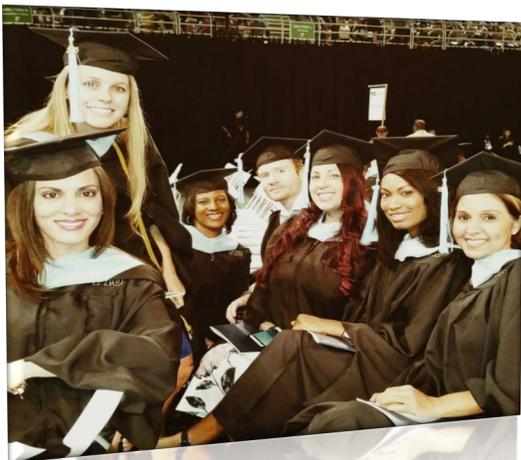
Sheree Hazle, Ed.S.

Sean Pascale, Ed.S.

Ingrid Pujol, Ed.S.

Glanel Reyes, Ed.S.

Alexandra Riviere, Ed.S.



Welcome New Students!

We are pleased to welcome our new students joining us in 2015!



Krystella Wyant

I graduated from the University of North Florida with a Bachelors degree in psychology with a concentration in child psychology. For the summer I will be working again with city of Deerfield for their Drama camp. I'll be the music teacher. A fun fact about me is I use to be a figure skater.

My name is **Denisse Acosta** and I am an FIU alumna. I graduated in Fall 2011 as a Psychology major. I hope to meet you all, learn from each other and share good memories during our journey of becoming a School Psychologist. Interesting facts about myself: I love biking, skating and photography. I also enjoy traveling and meeting new cultures.



My name is **Stephanie Yanes** and I am 22 years old and graduated from FIU May 2015 with a bachelors in psychology. I am excited to be a part of the school psychology program and hope to one day become a school psychologist and open my own practice. I am currently working as a Research Assistant at the Center for Children and Families. This summer I will be going on a cruise to Jamaica and the Grand Cayman. I love to read, travel, go to the beach/pool, and spend time with my friends and family.

My name is **Sandra Ferret**, and I started the school psychology program in Spring 2015. I received a bachelors in psychology from FIU in 2013. Afterwards, I took a year off school to gain some work experience. During that year I worked with a company as a behavior technician administering behavioral therapy to children with Autism. Then I started working as a paraprofessional at an elementary charter school mainly helping in the kindergarten/1st grade classroom. I will be starting a teacher position in August when school starts again. I am very grateful I am working in a school setting and getting some valuable experience that will hopefully help me become a better school psychologist in the future.



Fun Fact: I LOVE Beyoncé and the TV show Friends!

Not pictured: **Daniela Alonso, Beatriz Balladares, Alexa Borotto, and Melonie Mendez**

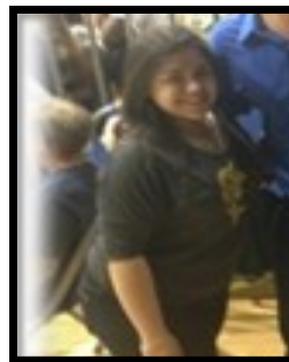
Words of Wisdom

Recent graduates have imparted advice for the new School Psychology interns. Here are a few:



“As an intern, do the most difficult cases you can, step outside your comfort zone, while you have the support of a supervisor. Find a few assessments you can do with your eyes closed but also experiment and use as many different types of assessments as appropriate. This is the time to explore the different assessments and learn how they can and cant be useful. Lastly, Advocate, Advocate, Advocate. Don't be afraid to ask for experiences or cases. This is your time to develop your skill set and get your prepared for the cases you will encounter during your career. Speak up for yourself, professionally, and request what you feel you need or want. Oh and be nice to EVERY-ONE!!! You never know who someone is or who they talk to. Word travels fast, even in large districts.” -**Tiffany G.**

“My advice would be to take every opportunity given to you, no matter how anxious you feel about it. There aren't going to be many chances for you to have someone guiding you on a daily basis, so every opportunity is actually more of a learning experience than anything else. And write everything down!” -**Nicole D.**



“Be proactive and don't think ‘it's someone else's job’. A lot of things in the school system will seem set in stone or out of your control. How to effectively run meetings, how to monitor progress, which forms to use, how RtI should be run, what your exact role is in the school. The truth is, all of those things are up to you to figure out how to best handle. At the very least, all of those things CAN be up to you if you so choose.” -**Sean P.**

Alumni News

Martha Carias Ed.S. ('14), School Psychologist Palm Beach School District, FL

I'm about to conclude my first year as a school psychologist with the School District of Palm Beach County. I work as part of the Multicultural Team, which in Palm Beach County consists of 12 bilingual school psychologists (8 Spanish speaking and 4 Creole speaking). We specialize in bilingual psycho-educational evaluations throughout the county. Unlike most school based psychologists who may have 2 or 3 schools assigned to them, I have 20! While I don't receive



referrals from all 20 schools (thankfully!) I love that no two days ever look the same for me. The majority of my time is spent evaluating and report writing, but I also spend time consulting with school staff on the implications of second language acquisition and making recommendations accordingly. I love that I am able to use my Spanish speaking skills and all that we learned about diversity, assessing students from different backgrounds, and the effect that may have on students' education. Growing up in Miami, attending school in Miami, and interning with Miami-Dade County perhaps made me oblivious to the benefit of speaking a second language in our field. It's extremely rewarding to work with students and families from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and serve as a resource not only to them, but the schools they attend. My proudest days are those that I get to advocate for the needs of a child who otherwise might not have been heard. My advice for students and recent grads is: Don't minimize any of your skills or take them for granted. They might be just the perfect fit not only for a future job, but for that one child who needs you to have them!

Where Are They Now?



Congratulations to **Sandra Olson, Ed.S.** ('12, on left) and **Maria Rivas, Ed.S.** ('14, on right) on their new positions as full-time School Psychologists!

Sandra was a clinician at the FIU Center for Children and Families for three years before accepting a position at Hillsborough County Public Schools in 2015. She also completed her internship at Broward County Public Schools.

Maria completed her internship at Miami-Dade County Public Schools during the 2013-2014 school year, and was offered a position at the same school district in 2015.

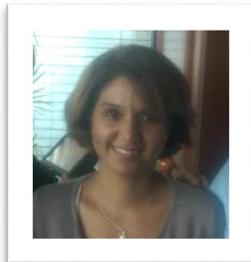
Best wishes on your new careers!

Accomplishments and Announcements

Publications!

Alex Riviere and Dr. Andy Pham recently published a peer-reviewed article in *Current Psychiatry Reports*! Click below for the article!

[Pham, A. V., & Riviere, A. \(2015\). Specific learning disorders and ADHD: Current issues in diagnosis across clinical and educational settings. *Current Psychiatry Reports*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1007/s11920-015-0584-y](#)



**BUY FIU SCHOOL
PSYCHOLOGY TOTES!
Only \$12 each!**

Please notify **Paulie Martinez** at pwurt001@fiu.edu on how to get your very own stylish tote!



(On back of tote: School Psychology Student Association, Florida International University)

Internships and Jobs!

Congratulations to everyone who received an internship or job starting in Fall of 2015!

Off to Internship!

- Diana Arce – Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Annela Costa – Broward County Public Schools
- Rodna Francois – Broward County Public Schools
- Rose Gourdet—Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Lindsay Piontkowski - Broward County Public Schools
- Nathaly Ossa – Broward County Public Schools
- Vanessa Sitterberg – Palm Beach School District

Got a Job!

- Tiffany Griffin - Broward County Public Schools



Call for Proposals!

The NASP 2016 Annual Convention Call for Presentation Proposals is Open!

The Deadline for Proposal Submission is Wednesday, June 17, 2015!

If you are interested in submitting a proposal, more information can be found here:

<http://www.nasponline.org/conventions/2016/call-for-presentations.aspx>



FASP Summer Institute!

Save the Date: July 15-17, 2015 at Naples Grande Beach Resort

Dr. Phil Lazarus is presenting on Wednesday, July 15 (1:00pm-5:00pm) on *“Delivering Cutting Edge Mental Health Interventions in the Schools: What Every Practitioner Needs to Know”*

http://fasp.org/Events/Summer_Institute.html