



2017

SCHOLARSHIP NEWSLETTER

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Fall Award:
Outstanding Research
Scholar

Recipient:
Melissa Albert

BELOW: DR. SHAUN WILEY WITH MELISSA ALBERT



Melissa Albert is completing a Psychology major, with a specialization in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and a minor in Human Resources Management. She is a highly independent worker with a stellar academic record and talent for writing.

In addition to her research experiences, Melissa was an Instructional Intern for Dr. Kirnan's Methods and Tools of Psychology course. This experience helped her discover a passion for teaching, which she plans to pursue after graduate school.

During her second semester at TCNJ, Melissa proposed a research topic in Dr. Dahling's Organizational Psychology Lab, which she carried out as an independent study the following year. Joining Dr. Dahling on a research venture in 2016, this work was published in *Personality and Individual Differences* (Albert & Dahling, 2016), a momentous accomplishment. Melissa presented this research at the Eastern Psychological Association Conference in 2017, for which she received a Psi Chi Regional Research Award.

Melissa also participated in Dr. Wiley's Social Change and Collective Identity Lab. She conducted two follow-up studies to her initial work there, which are now being prepared for publication.

Furthering her interest in Industrial/Organization Psychology, Melissa conducted a Senior Honors Thesis titled "There's a Place for Us: Increasing School Identification via Ethnic Group Respect Among First Year College Students of Color." This endeavor helped solidify her graduate school intentions, and Melissa will be pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organization Psychology at Bowling Green State University, where she will research measurement validity as well as selections systems.

Melissa epitomizes an outstanding research scholar. She demonstrates exceptional promise for continued research in psychology after she graduates from TCNJ and pursues Ph.D., and from the entire department, we wish you the best, Melissa!



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Daniel Gallagher is a truly outstanding research scholar. He is currently completing a double major in Psychology and Interactive Multimedia. He has been conducting research for six semesters, starting in the beginning of his sophomore year with Dr. Grimm's Motivation, Individual Differences and Stereotypes in Cognition (MISC) Lab, where he is now concluding his Senior Honors Thesis.

Beyond participating in two research labs—Daniel also studied memory and attention in Dr. Leynes's Event-Related Potentials (ERP) Lab for three semesters—Daniel has worked with two additional faculty members on research-related pursuits.

Last year, Daniel completed an independent study with Dr. Karen Becker. His study focused on assessing the efficacy of narratives versus statistical messages in inspiring altruistic activity, with the goal of encouraging individuals to donate to the Syrian Refugee crisis. He presented the results of his work at the James C. McCroskey and Virginia P. Richmond Undergraduate Scholars Conference in Baltimore.

And, while completing his Senior Honors Thesis with Dr. Grimm in The MISC Lab, Daniel is also a Research Assistant for Dr. Jingyi Duan, a faculty member of the School of Business. His work with Dr. Duan focuses on how posting pictures to social media affects attitudes towards the products

Expanding the current literature on video game training, Daniel's Senior Honors Thesis explores the efficacy of video games as a method of cognitive training as well as its utility in sparking interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

Daniel clearly exemplifies an outstanding research scholar for his continued research pursuits. On behalf of the entire department, we congratulate you, Daniel!

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Recipient:
Daniel Gallagher



ABOVE: DR. LISA GRIMM WITH DANIEL GALLAGHER



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Spring Award:
The Laurie Ann
Mandara '07
Scholarship

Recipient:
Kayla Taylor



ABOVE: KAYLA TAYLOR WITH MEMBERS OF
THE MANDARA FAMILY

Kayla Taylor is a double major in Early Childhood Education and in Psychology, with a specialization in Developmental Psychology. Kayla is an excellent student; she was inducted into Psi Chi on the same day she received this award. She is a leader in TCNJ's International Honor Society in Education, and she has been actively involved in planning numerous events.

Kayla loves her work with infants and toddlers at an early learning center. She has also worked with adults with developmental delays and disabilities.

As a member of Dr. Chung's REACH lab, Kayla became part of a Trenton after-school arts program called Both Hands. It provides support for ninth graders identified as at-risk for dropping out of high school. Working with Both Hands,

Kayla became aware of problems Trenton students frequently must cope outside of school: gang violence, substance abuse, and domestic violence. Kayla aspires, after earning her Master's degree, to develop programs that will combat these problems. Kayla is the first in her immediate family to attend college, and it is imperative to her that she use her education to help others. She is committed to changing education policies within cities, especially Trenton.

Kayla's perseverance, optimism, and her commitment to helping others are reminiscent of these same extraordinary traits of Laurie's. We congratulate you, Kayla, and we wish you all the best!

Laurie Ann Mandara was a Psychology major who died from cancer in September 2006, and she was awarded her BA degree with honors, posthumously, in May 2007. Laurie persevered with her education throughout her illness and treatment, demonstrating extraordinary courage and persistence. Everyone who met her was impressed with her dedication to her studies, her optimism, her resilience, and her generous spirit. Laurie was a loving, generous, selfless person, very close to her family and friends, with a strong religious faith. She loved getting an education and had a passion for life. Her friends remember that Laurie could turn ordinary activities into extraordinary moments, and that she taught them to appreciate every day. Laurie's memory lives on in the hearts of those who knew her and in the Laurie Ann Mandara '07 Scholarship. This scholarship supports student accomplishments similar to Laurie's. In this way, Laurie's memory will live on in the future and in our hearts.



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ABOVE: DR. NANCY BRELAND WITH
GENESIS RUBIO

Spring Award:
The Marshall P.
Smith Scholarship

Recipient:
Genesis Rubio

Genesis Rubio is a double Psychology and Spanish major. Excelling in all of her courses, Genesis will be inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as a junior. Genesis has been deeply engaged in community service and related research. She plans to continue this in her graduate studies and in serving the community.

Dr. Marshall Smith organized a group of professors into the department of Psychology in 1957. He was the first chair of this new department. He inspired students and was influential in the lives of faculty members. After Dr. Smith died suddenly in 1978, his family and friends began a scholarship fund in his memory. In 2008, The Nancy Schacht Breland Family Scholarship Fund began endowing The Smith Scholarship, enabling The Smith Scholarship to continue to make awards to outstanding Psychology students.

Dr. Nancy Schacht Breland was a professor in the Psychology Department for 34 years and chairperson of the department for 6 years. Dr. Smith was one of her early and much loved mentors. Dr. Breland's family depended on scholarships to help pay for their higher educations. She hopes that her gifts in their memories will help outstanding TCNJ student to pay for their educations, and their dreams, for years to come.

As a Bonner Scholar, Genesis has worked in Trenton for more than 750 hours with the El Centro immigration team, a group of ESL teachers and immigrant advocates. She has become passionate about community research. In Dr. Chung's REACH Lab, Genesis is the head researcher for a project examining outcomes from the Trenton Violence Reduction Strategy program, and her Senior

Honors Thesis will help El Centro to assess outcomes for a new peer mentorship program.

Soon after Genesis was born, she immigrated to the United States with her mother from Ecuador. Genesis wrote that she is in awe of her mother's resiliency, and she appreciates the support systems that helped them. At TCNJ, she has discovered ways to contribute to community resources that supports others. Genesis hopes, after graduate studies in clinical and community psychology, to work as a community psychologist for non-profit organizations serving immigrant communities.

On behalf of the entire psychology faculty and staff, we congratulate you, Genesis!