

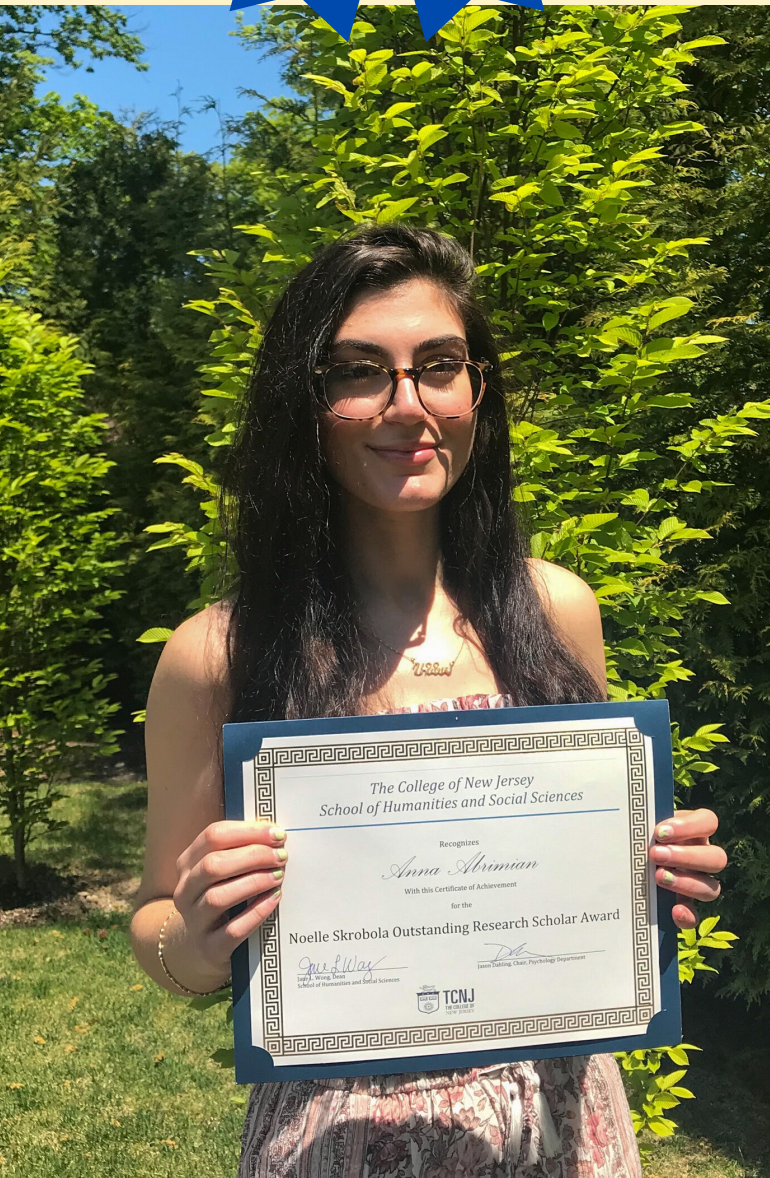


2019 STUDENT AWARD NEWSLETTER PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

FALL AWARD: NOELLE SKROBOLA OUTSTANDING RESEARCH SCHOLAR AWARD

formerly the Outstanding Research Scholar Award

**RECIPIENT:
ANNA
ABRIMIAN**



Anna Abrimian was awarded the psychology department's Noelle Skrobola Outstanding Research Scholar award.

Anna has been involved in the Event-Related Potentials (ERP) lab for six semesters, and was Lab Manager in the ERP lab for three semesters. Additionally, Anna was a participant in the MUSE program, continuing her work in the ERP lab. She conducted her Senior Honors Thesis on recognition memory, specifically examining the effect of meaningless stimuli on decision criterion ERPs. Her work culminated in a co-authored paper in the peer-reviewed journal *Brain and Cognition* titled "Expectations Alter Recognition and Event-Related Potentials (ERPs)." She has also presented this work at the Eastern Psychological Association in 2019. Additionally, Anna has worked in Dr. Guarracino's lab in the Chemistry Department for two semesters identifying novel peptide inhibitors of a protein-protein interaction initiating blood clots.

Among Anna's honors includes a Phi Kappa Phi faculty-mentored research award for her psychology research, Excellence in Chemistry award, induction into Psi Chi and Phi Beta Kappa, as well as successful completion in the Honors Program. Anna is currently applying to MD/PhD programs to continue doing research in neuroscience while also becoming a doctor.

The Noelle Skrobola Outstanding Research Scholar Award (formerly the Outstanding Research Scholar Award) is presented each Fall to a student who has excelled in research in the Psychology Department. This award was renamed to honor Noelle Skrobola, who passed away unexpectedly in 2018. Noelle was a Psychology major who received this award in 2015 for her work with Dr. Jessica Barnack-Tavlaris. She was involved in research every semester starting her freshman year, co-authored multiple conference presentations, and received a research grant from Psi Chi for her Senior Honors Thesis. After graduating from TCNJ, Noelle completed the Teach & Learn in Spain Master's Program at Instituto Franklin in Madrid, Spain.

PICTURED ABOVE: ANNA ABRIMIAN HOLDING HER AWARD CERTIFICATE



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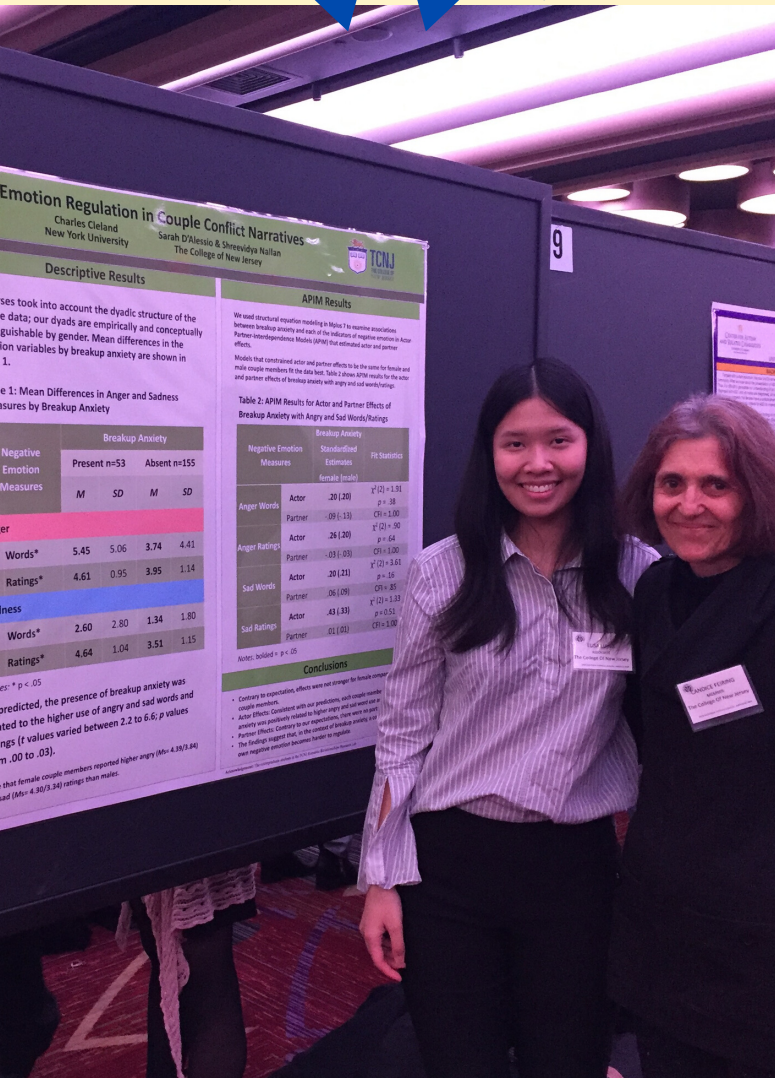
formerly the Outstanding Research Scholar Award

**RECIPIENT:
ELISA
LIANG**

In the Romantic Relationships Research lab, Elisa's thesis focused on couple members narratives (stories) about romantic conflict in order to understand the role of emotion regulation in how partners construe and handle conflicts in constructive and destructive ways. Elisa is working with Dr. Feiring on two journal submissions related to her thesis. Elisa is first author on one and second author on the other. In the Clinical Outcomes and Processes Lab, Elisa is testing whether rumination will help explain associations between minority stressors (that are specific to an Asian-American population) and indices of poor psychological functioning such as depression.

It's also noteworthy that she currently serves as the President of the Psychology honor society Psi Chi, is the President of the Japanese Student Association and is the Co founder of the TCNJ Chinese Martial Arts Performance Group.

Elisa wants to pursue a PhD in clinical psychology and a career focused on developing interventions for first and second generation Asian Americans who are traditionally an under-served population in the mental health field. We have no doubt that she will go above and beyond in her graduate career and as a professional to-- develop her research skills-- to seek out challenging experiences that advance her knowledge and to design and implement interventions for Asian Americans and other groups dealing with minority stressors.



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PICTURED ABOVE: ELISA LIANG AND DR. FEIRING PRESENTING THEIR WORK AT THE EASTERN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE.



2019

STUDENT AWARD NEWSLETTER

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

SPRING AWARD:

The Laurie Ann Mandara '07 Scholarship

RECIPIENT:
**SHAUN
MEYERS**

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.

Shaun has overcome substantial obstacles, but you would not know it from his community involvement and academic record. In high school, Shaun had a benign tumor in his leg that caused a severe and sudden fracture of his femur. He was unable to go to school and was in a wheelchair for a prolonged period of time, and was unable to walk for almost a year.

Shaun persisted through these challenges, and is now a stellar student here at TCNJ. Shaun is truly dedicated to community service. He is the Service Vice President of Alpha Phi Omega, which is a community service fraternity. He has volunteered at soup kitchens, food banks, and animal shelters, and has tutored underprivileged children. He is currently organizing Kids Day Out, which is a field event for families at or below the poverty line.

Shaun is also a volunteer for Special Olympics – he holds weekly soccer and basketball practices with our Career and Community Studies students to teach them athletic skills. Shaun is also the Community Engagement Intern for the office of Anti-Violence Initiatives. In this position, he recruits and manages peer educators, volunteers, and interns, and meets with them weekly to educate them on anti-violence initiatives and power-based violence. And last but not least, Shaun is a trained volunteer for CONTACT, a local suicide hotline. Shaun's perseverance and commitment to helping others are reminders of Laurie.



PICTURED ON THE LEFT: SHAUN MEYERS WITH THE MANDARA FAMILY AT THE 2019 PSI CHI INDUCTION / AWARDS CEREMONY.



2019

STUDENT AWARD NEWSLETTER

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

SPRING AWARD:

The Marshall P. Smith Scholarship

RECIPIENT:

**JAMI
LEVINSON**



Jami has a perfect GPA. She has shown a strong commitment to the Psychology major through her activities. Jami has worked in Dr. Kim-Prieto's Emotion Lab, and she recently presented her research on the effects of microaggressions on members of the LGBTQ community at the Eastern Psychological Association. She also currently works in Dr. Ruddy's Infant and Child Studies Lab, where she looks at the role of gender norms in children's books. She is also the Secretary for the Psychology Club, is a member of the Psychology Advisory Board and Psi Chi, and has volunteered at Lion's Day, representing the Psychology major for prospective TCNJ students and their parents. As if that all wasn't enough, Jami is also a mentor for Career and Community Studies students, is a campus peer mediator, and is active in campus Jewish organizations. Jami hopes to be a therapist after graduating from TCNJ.

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.

PICTURED ABOVE: JAMI LEVINSON AND DR. NANCY BRELAND AT THE 2019 PSI CHI INDUCTION / AWARD CEREMONY.



2019

STUDENT AWARD NEWSLETTER

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

SPRING AWARD:

The Marshall P. Smith Scholarship

**RECIPIENT:
RACHEL
OTTOMAN**



Rachel is a stellar student who has excelled in her courses, and she is a member of Psi Chi. Rachel also worked in Dr. Kim-Prieto's Emotion Lab and presented her work recently at the Eastern Psychological Association conference. In addition, Rachel is doing an internship with the Princeton Medical Institute, where she conducts medical screenings and assists in clinical trials. As part of the Honors Program, she is enhancing this internship by creating a pamphlet and educational coloring book for families with children who have depression, and is coordinating outreach to families in the community. Rachel has also arranged her own summer internships at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where she worked closely with a geneticist to create an educational coloring book for children with Beckwith-Wiedemann Syndrome, which is now used at consultation appointments for children who are diagnosed with this syndrome. Rachel herself has Beckwith-Wiedemann Syndrome, and she has shared her experiences at a conference focusing on this disorder. Rachel's experiences will undoubtedly prepare her for her goal of getting her doctorate in clinical health psychology, with a focus in pediatrics.

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PICTURED ABOVE: RACHEL OTTMAN AND DR. NANCY BRELAND AT THE 2019 PSI CHI INDUCTION / AWARD CEREMONY.