



SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY

# APSA Newsletter

A PUBLICATION OF THE SDSU APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Fall 2018

## Meet Our First Year Students!

**Name:** Catherine Huyen

**Hometown:** San Diego

**Attraction to SDSU:**

The amazing I-O program, of course!

**You know you're in graduate school when:** You have dreams about your thesis

**In my free time, I:** Climb, surf, and eat a lot of food.

**An interesting fact about me:** I don't like donuts

**My favorite San Diego grub:** Pokirrito

**In ten years, I see myself:** Being a mom of 5 dogs

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** An otter :)



**Name:** Christian Woodward

**Hometown:** Randolph, NJ

**Attraction to SDSU:** It has a very strong, well rounded program

**You know you're in graduate school when:**

Your humor becomes even more niche & nerdy

**In my free time, I:** Practice photography (@woods\_good on instagram) and go to concerts

**An interesting fact about me:** I am unaffected by caffeine

**My favorite San Diego grub:** Any of the many delicious tacos across the city (I still have so many to try)

**In ten years, I see myself:** Consulting with or working for the military doing research

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** Mantis shrimp



### Inside this issue:

FIRST YEAR INTERVIEWS	1-3
FALL APSA SPEAKERS	4
INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES	5
STUDENT EXCHANGES	6-7
I-O ADVENTURES	8
FACULTY PUBLICATIONS	9
ANNOUNCEMENTS & THESIS DEFENSES	9
PHOTOS	10

### Additional Information:

THE STUDENT EDITOR OF  
THIS ISSUE WAS  
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If you would like additional  
information on the  
Applied Psychology  
Student Association (APSA)  
or anything discussed in  
this newsletter, please e-  
mail

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(Continued on page 2-3)



Find us on  
**Facebook**

You can connect with  
**SDSU's M.S. Program in  
Applied Psychology**  
by liking us on Facebook!

Stay in the loop on recent thesis defenses, recent faculty publications and presentations, alumni announcements, and SIOP event information

### Meet Our First Year Students! (continued from page 1)



**Name:** Elizabeth Stewart  
**Hometown:** Woodinville, WA  
**Attraction to SDSU:** I was particularly interested in Lisa Kath's work and also liked that the program offered paid TA/GA positions  
**You know you're in graduate school when:** Class is technically "canceled" so everyone scrambles to find another place to meet. Also, when you're at a get together with your cohort and voluntarily start discussing class material and ideas

that interest you

**In my free time, I:** Cuddle with my cat; support and partake in activism; and listen to various podcasts!

**An interesting fact about me:** I am the only granddaughter on both sides of my family

**My favorite San Diego grub:** I don't have a favorite place yet!

**In ten years, I see myself:** With another cat and a dog. Hopefully employed in a position that enables me to combine research and applied I-O psychology, and published as well

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** Jellyfish; the way they swim is fascinating



**Name:** Mike Ferguson  
**Hometown:** Chicago  
**Attraction to SDSU:** SDSU is one of the best MS I-O programs in the country, offered unique opportunities for career growth, and it's also in Southern California!

**You know you're in graduate school when:** You use stats and create confidence intervals to estimate how much of your week will be spent doing each week's readings (and to procrastinate, obviously).

**In my free time, I:** Play strategic board games, listen to

podcasts, meditate, and read (especially if it's a Brandon Sanderson novel!)

**An interesting fact about me:** I have a strange obsession with office supplies

**My favorite San Diego grub:** Still discovering the food scene here in SD, but my favorite has been Waypoint Public in North Park. A lot of the good food I've had so far has been in North Park

**In ten years, I see myself:** Somewhere in California, working for a large technology or entertainment company as an internal consultant or starting an external consulting firm

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** I aspire to be an orca, but I'd really be a seal.

**Name:** Julie Ton-Vuong  
**Hometown:** San Diego  
**Attraction to SDSU:** The 50/50 split between research and applied work prepares students well for industry or pursuing a PhD. Also, the faculty are supportive and caring about student development and wellbeing.

**You know you're in graduate school when:** You're grading TA lab homework to avoid burnout between doing 6 hours of stats homework and reading ~100 pages for seminar.

**In my free time, I:** Find new restaurants to try and hang out with family and friends.

**An interesting fact about me:** I love coffee a little too much and will adamantly insist that people share this love (by offering copious amounts of coffee a little aggressively).

**My favorite San Diego grub:** Chicken wings from Cross Street Chicken and Beer!

**In ten years, I see myself:** Well on my way to developing my career as a consultant in organizational learning and development and starting to build a family.

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** Dude, the turtle from finding Nemo



### Meet Our First Year Students! (continued from page 1)



**Name:** Teodora Vassileva  
**Hometown:** Austin, TX  
**Attraction to SDSU:** I liked that it required both a thesis and internship which sets you up for various opportunities post graduation. Plus it's a strong program in a great location!

**You know you're in graduate school when:** Faculty want you to refer to them by their first names

**In my free time, I:** Read, camp/climb/trail bike, and go to plays and art events

**An interesting fact about me:** I moved to New Zealand for a year on a work-holiday visa and spent the time doing temp jobs, working on farms, and camping out of my car for months trying to hike as many trails as I could

**My favorite San Diego grub:** Awash (Ethiopian) or Salud (Tacos)

**In ten years, I see myself:** Continuing to move around the US and world with my husband while empowering people and organizations to make better decisions

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** Patrick Star; ignorance is bliss.

**Name:** Rebecca Harmata

**Hometown:** Brooklyn, NY

**Attraction to SDSU:** Location and amazing program

**You know you're in graduate school when:**

You start making stats jokes and agree to an I-O Halloween costume

**In my free time, I:** Watch This is Us with my pupper Ketchup

**An interesting fact about me:** I can sing the alphabet backwards. In German.

**My favorite San Diego restaurant:** Menya

**In ten years, I see myself:** With 5 dogs and a PhD or working in the field.

**If you had to be a sea creature for a day, what would you be:** A cuddlefish



### Welcome First Years!





# APSA Newsletter

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## Fall APSA Speakers

### Dylan Lewis

*By Julie Ton*

Dylan Lewis received his undergraduate degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He then went on to pursue his masters in I-O psychology at SDSU and graduated in 1999. Dylan started his career as a Research Director at Education Research And Services (ERAS) and was able to turn the work he did there into his masters thesis. From there, he moved on to take a variety of data analyst positions at Edupoint, Smartdraw, and Visual Sciences. While in his data analyst positions, he was able to gain experience in creating and testing new marketing techniques to influence the customer experience to optimize profits. He is currently working at Intuit, the parent company of TurboTax, Quickbooks, and Mint. Dylan initially started off at a Senior Manager of Web Analytics, and after 13 years, is now the Experimentation Leader. During his time at Intuit, Dylan has led teams to analyze Intuit's consumer's behaviors and how to best enhance the company website. As Experimentation Leader, he conducts projects across all intuit platforms to best drive the consumer experience from development, experimentation, and subsequent analysis. Dylan gave us valuable advice on how to be successful in our I-O careers, regardless of which route we decide to take, and how his education at SDSU provided him with the toolkit to do so.



### Keren Brooks

Keren Brooks is a graduate of SDSU's I-O psychology masters program from 2001. After graduating, she worked as an Institutional Research Analyst for San Diego Community College District. The position involved evaluating the District's educational programs, strategic planning, and maintaining college data. Through that research position, she implemented the training she received in the masters program to obtain and implement of federal education grants that involved program evaluation. Keren then created CoBro Consulting with two fellow colleagues to manage data and evaluation education programs for schools. CoBro Consulting primarily works within the San Diego high school niche, more specifically in projects dealing with the GEAR UP grants from the Department of Education. Keren is currently the Chief Research Analyst at CoBro Consulting. In this position she leads the evaluation team in development of evaluation designs, survey projects, statistical data analyses, and outcomes reporting for 15-20 education programs each year. Keren explained her day to day job as a consultant and discussed the skills that she gained from completing the masters program, how she applied these in her consulting company, and what early career individuals in the field of I-O psychology can do to communicate effectively to clients.



***Don't forget to join the APSA Linkedin Group.  
For more information, contact Dr. Lisa Kath***

# APSA Newsletter

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## Second Year Internship Experiences

By Brandon Himes

*Internships provide our students an opportunity to practice their skills and apply their knowledge within an organization. This year, we had 6 students participate in engaging internships. Oftentimes, these internships build a foundation for our students' careers, building upon knowledge gained throughout the M.S. program, and supporting our success in future career opportunities.*

**Maria Tolstykh:** During the summer I completed the internship at Solar Turbines in San Diego. I was an intern in Human Resources Department and had an opportunity to work on projects across the entire organization. I was able to take a lead on and participate in creating trainings, data analysis and visualization, and process improvement projects. This experience allowed me to put knowledge learned in the program into practice and experience satisfaction from solving problems in the workplace. I greatly appreciated the autonomy that this internship provided and the trust that the management placed into my knowledge and abilities!

**Amy Tran:** I work for the Center for Creative Leadership as a Research Analyst. For my role, I evaluate CCL's leadership programs by analyzing survey results, create data visualization displays for clients and/or teams, conduct literature reviews for evaluation decisions, and execute any other research/evaluation needs. I have received amazing individualized mentoring from experts in the field of research, I-O psychology, and business. CCL provides me with the flexibility suited to my lifestyle: I worked part-time over the summer and continue to work for them one day a week throughout the school year, plus I can work remotely as needed.

**Marissa Morrison:** Over the summer I had an amazing opportunity to work at Solar Turbines at both the Kearny Mesa and Harbor Drive locations. During my time at Solar, I worked alongside several Organizational Development Specialists within the training and development office. Some of the projects I worked on included three manager assimilation processes (MAPs), completing my own personal DISC Style and Strengths Finder assessments, assisting with finalizing presentation material for two internal team-building sessions conducted by a Senior OD Consultant, and observing the session. I also had the opportunity to provide program coordination assistance for the Solar Turbines Formal Mentoring program, and assisted in the development of an interviewing skills training course for internal employees that is already being sent out for use in the current workforce. Lastly, I attended three internal training programs: Situational Leadership, Change Management for Leaders, and Crucial Conversations. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my time as an intern at Solar!

**Lukas Toroslu:** I interned at Steuerberatungsgesellschaft GmbH & Co. KG. (SP&P), an accounting and consulting organization in Ulm, Germany. The types of tasks I performed at SP&P included team building, employee selection (for example, interview delivery and analysis), and employee training (for example, training design and delivery). At SP&P, I gained a lot of experience I have not encountered in an academic environment.

**Brandon Himes:** I have been working at Rady Children's Hospital as a Quality Improvement Intern for their Behavioral Health Department. My role centers around using patient/staff data to ensure that the hospital is offering the best services possible. My projects have included updating job descriptions, implementing structured interviews, introducing new outcome measures into the in-patient unit, and creating surveys to measure employee collaboration and engagement. The experience has been extremely rewarding and has given me exactly what I was looking for in an internship when I decided to attend SDSU.

**Jahnina Moss:** Over the summer I completed my internship hours at Apex Performance Strategies, a management consulting firm located in San Diego. I worked on a variety of projects which included facilitating team building sessions, DISC sessions, and creating surveys for clients. My main focus was working on a competency model project. I was able to work with a local biotechnology company in San Diego to create a competency model. The competency model will now serve as a foundation for recruitment, selection, and performance management. It has been a very rewarding position to get first-hand experience with external consulting.

Bridging  
the Gap  
Between  
Research  
and  
Practice

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## Student Exchange: An Interview with Brandon Himes

By Julie Ton

*Last summer, Brandon participated in an SDSU study abroad program at the University of Osnabrück, Germany. During that time, he completed an Intercultural Competencies course and had the opportunity to explore all over Europe.*

### **What did you need to do in order to prepare to live abroad?**

For me the biggest thing was mentally preparing. I had never traveled solo before and never been out of the country. So I did a lot of research on solo travel abroad, and made sure I had everything I needed to make the experience go smoothly.

### **What did you do while you were at the university?**

I took a German language course, cultural psychology seminars, traveled on field trips, and learned a lot from different cultures. Oh, and I also got to enjoy a lot of great food and beer!

### **What did you do in your free time?**

I got to know a lot of the other people in the program very well. We spent a lot of time hanging out and exploring the city with each other.

### **What were some of the best parts of the study abroad experience?**

This trip was by far one of the biggest growth experiences I've had in my life. I traveled solo before and after the program and really got pushed out of my comfort zone. Getting to know so many people from different cultural backgrounds was my favorite part of the trip by far.

### **In 15 words or less, sum up your study abroad experience.**

An unforgettable 2 months of laughter, friendship, and enlightenment.



**Would you recommend other I-O students take advantage of the student exchange program?**

**YES!**



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## Student Exchange: An Interview with Lena Schmeiduch

By Julie Ton

### What is your home institution?

My home institution is the University of Osnabrück in Germany where I'm currently enrolled in a master's program in inter-cultural psychology. However, I also did my undergrad in Israel and grew up in Kenya.

### What were you looking forward to most about coming here to SDSU to study?

I wanted to experience what it was like to attend an American university. I've heard, and now seen, that American universities are much more spirited compared to German ones. Everyone wears the school gear here! It is also interesting to experience the differences between an I-O department at another university compared to my own.

### What has been surprising or most shocking to you since being here?

The roads cannot handle the rain in San Diego. It's been raining for a couple days, atypical of San Diego weather, and I have to jump across little puddles in the street! I only have to do that when it's raining a lot in Germany.

### What do you like most about San Diego?

San Diego has a lot of different things to offer. There are so many different neighborhoods, each with a different vibe and different aspects that are unique to each. So, naturally with such a variety of distinct neighborhoods, there are so many different things to do in just one city.

### What were the favorite places you have visited in the US?

My favourite places so far are the national parks, such as The Grand Canyon or Bryce Canyon. I also, of course, love San Diego. I was here for one day a couple years ago, and really wanted to come back!

### What do you like to do in your free time?

I love to explore new restaurants and meet new people!

### What is some advice you would give to people studying abroad here for the program?

San Diego is way bigger and more beautiful than what I thought would be! As it is such a gorgeous city, the rent is much higher than in Germany. I would suggest to start looking for places to rent well ahead of time. Also, take advantage of the International Student Center (ISC) and the Global Aztec Alliance. The ISC hosts a coffee hour every week, and students from different countries present their country and bring in their traditional food for everyone to try. Try to go to as many events from those two organizations as you can! It will help you meet other international students and you can all tour San Diego together!

### What has been your favorite thing to do during your exchange?

The master's field trip to Google, LinkedIn, and Facebook! When I was in Germany, I heard of Silicon Valley. Everyone knows about it and that it's there, but it's a little abstract, because it's so far away and not a lot of German people have been there. It was awesome to visit the companies and see them in person! They had a lot of cool offices and I got to see how what I am studying can be applied in the field. It was also a lot of fun to hang out with the other masters students! Overall, it was a unique opportunity to tour the companies and talk to the employees, especially coming from Germany.

### What's the strangest thing about American culture?

It's not really strange, just different. Strangers will have conversations with me. For example, someone offered me a compliment on my backpack at the mall! Also, people ask each other how they're doing even if they don't really want to know. It seems like it's more of a casual greeting. I think it's because people are more friendly and open to meeting others anywhere in America.





# APSA Newsletter

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## I-O Adventures: Our Trip to Facebook, Google, and LinkedIn

*By Julie Ton*

In January of 2019, the MS students, Dr. Lisa Kath, and Dr. Lacie Barber embarked on a two day trip to some of the largest tech companies: Facebook, Google, and LinkedIn. At each location, we met with alumni and their colleagues to discuss how I-O psychology is used in their respective companies. While in the area, we also attended the first networking event among I-O masters students at SFSU, SJSU, SDSU.



The first stop was Facebook. It was there that we met with Pega Davoudzadeh and her colleagues. She graduated from SDSU's master's program in 2010 and went on to pursue her PhD in quantitative psychology at UC Davis. She is currently working as a People Research Scientist. Pega hosted a panel with three of her colleagues, all of which were on the People Analytics team of Facebook. Each person discussed their career path, the kind of projects that I-O psychologists would do at a company like Facebook, and then opened the floor up to a Q&A session. Throughout our meeting, the skills most emphasized as useful and desired at Facebook were: effective communication, the ability to work with data (preferably through R), and having a problem driven perspective (i.e. what is the problem and how can we tackle it).

At the end of day 1, we met up with the masters students from SFSU and SJSU to network. It was interesting to see the different emphases of each University's programs and hear about the internship experience the other program's student's had. It was the first time that an event like this took place for our schools and we hope that we can have events in the future similar to this!

On the second day, we first headed to Google. We met Renee Payne, an SDSU masters program alumni from 2012, and her colleagues, Jeff Nabity, and Kate LaMons. Renee holds the position of People Operations at Google. We toured the amazing Google campus and were introduced to the amazing perks of being an employee, such as a rock climbing wall, a gym, a game room, and free freshly made food from the cafeteria and food trucks! After having lunch at Google, Renee and her colleagues held a panel about how they scored a job at google, their day to day tasks, and insight on how to be successful in the field. Again, one of the most important skills is to be able to communicate and collaborate with others who are not I-O psychologists.

Finally, we traveled to the LinkedIn campus and to be led by alumni Zach Girgis and his colleague, David White. Zach is currently a Senior HR Business Partner. Both speakers offered valuable insight on how to best improve as a graduate student and how to best set oneself up for future career success. One of the highlights is to identify how well you fit with a company's environment and work culture, as this is of crucial importance in terms of hiring and job satisfaction. Another is the importance of pitching our ability to understanding and conveying data, thus appealing to a company's HR leaders data driven perspective.

Many thanks to our gracious hosts at each company. We greatly appreciate the time you spent with us and the advice you've imparted!

### Join SDOPP

SDOPP is a new local I-O group in San Diego. We haven't started meeting yet, but we hope for meetings to be interactive and variable - from hosting speakers to hosting social game nights. We are trying to create a hub in San Diego with the most passionate I-O professionals in the area who want to make an impact and connect with each other.

Join our LinkedIn group to connect with the San Diego Organizational Psychology Professionals as we grow into the premier local organization for practicing I-O psychologists. <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13593982>

You can also join our mailing list by emailing [SDOPPgroup@gmail.com](mailto:SDOPPgroup@gmail.com)!



# APSA Newsletter

## Faculty Publications

- Conte, J. M., & Landy, F. J. (2019). Work in the 21st Century: An Introduction to Industrial and Organizational Psychology (6th Edition). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

## Announcements

- **Elizabeth Davies** got a new position at Loma Linda University Health Care as a Senior Training & Development Specialist.
- **Quirin Seitenberger** got a new job as Head of Internal Audit with STAEDTLER Mars GmbH & Co. KG in Nürnberg, Germany.

## Admissions Summary (Across Last 3 Years)

**Average number of applicants: 108**  
**Average number of admission offers: 12**  
**Average number of students enrolled: 7**  
**Average GRE Verbal for enrolled students: 157**  
**Average GRE Quantitative for enrolled students: 155**



SOCIETY for  
INDUSTRIAL and  
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SCIENCE FOR A SMARTER WORKPLACE

It's never too early to start  
planning for  
**SIOP 2019!**

April 4 –6, 2019  
**Fort Washington, Maryland**



## FALL 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

*We had another fun annual APSA Fall BBQ this year! The event was held at Lisa Kath's beautiful home where we enjoyed a delicious taco spread, cold drinks, and too many desserts. Students and faculty had a great time laughing, taking pictures, and trying their best not to talk about work.*



**Above:** Our wonderful faculty:  
Dr. Lacie Barber (left), Dr. Lisa Kath, Dr. Jeff Conte,  
and Dr. Jon Helm

**Below:** Second years stepping into  
their last year with style



**Above:** Students and faculty showing their best angles



**Above:** Catching rays and enjoying  
the hilltop view!