

MSU Organizational Psychology Alumni Newsletter

Fall Semester 2019

MSU-Shanghai Consortium

Turn to Page 2 to hear about the newly formed Consortium on Career and Work Psychology, in partnership with Shanghai Normal University.

Meet the First Years!

See pages 3 & 4 for profiles of the new first year OP graduate students!

Summer Internships

Check out pages 5 & 6 to hear about student summer internship experiences.

Alumni Interviews

Catch up with alumni Aaron Schmidt (pg. 7), Marina Pearce (pg. 8), Goran Kuljanin (pg. 9), and Ruchi Sinha (pg. 10).

Connect with Us!

Feel free to reach out to us at
msuorgpsychcolloquia@gmail.com

Follow us on Instagram at [MsuOrgPsy!](#)

Join the Michigan State Organizational Psychology group on LinkedIn! Click the LinkedIn icon below for a link to the group.



Applied Skills Course

Turn to page 11 to hear about the applied skills course being taught by Kevin and Ann Marie, where students can learn more about applied work and develop their professional skills.

Updates and Accomplishments

Turn to page 12 for News and Accomplishments for some of our recent student and alumni accomplishments!

MSU – Shanghai Consortium

This April, the Shanghai-MSU Research Consortium on Career and Work Psychology was created. This consortium is a culmination of the efforts between Dr. Fred Leong and Dr. Fan Weiqiao at Shanghai Normal University over the course of the last 5 years. Together, they have been working to address the growing need for work and organizational psychology in China. In the 21st century, the massive economic growth of China meant that job seekers are fundamentally searching for career satisfaction and quality of life in their career more than before. Dr. Fred Leong frames the issue using Maslow's theory, "When humans are in survival mode, they don't worry much about life satisfaction and quality of life. Once the basic needs are met, career satisfaction becomes a priority." Many people in China are currently moving to a higher phase of Maslow's theory: they have achieved their standard needs and are seeking a happier and more satisfying life. The purpose of the Research Consortium is to increase research on career and work-related issues that teenagers, as well as adults, are currently facing in China and to promote the theoretical innovation and practical analysis of the growth and happiness of individuals, and the groups working in the changing and diversified workplace environment.



The goals of the consortium are to foster synergistic research collaborations between MSU and universities in Shanghai and to help disseminate relevant research to both academic and practice audiences. These efforts are accomplished through two primary components: an annual symposium and a new journal, the *Chinese Journal of Career and Work Psychology*. The journal is still under development but is scheduled to launch early May 2020. The first symposium was held this year in June at Shanghai and is scheduled to alternate locations between Shanghai and East Lansing every year. The hopes are that this arrangement allows professors and graduate students to facilitate cross-national research collaboration and help individuals network with scholars across nations. The theme of the first symposium was "the fourth industrial revolution," which is characterized by automation, machine learning, and artificial intelligence within the workplace. Ann-Marie Ryan, Daisy Chang, Chris Nye, and Fred Leong all attended the symposium in Shanghai and presented their work relating to these topics. The second annual symposium — to be held at the Kellogg Center at MSU — is already being planned for May of 2020. Its theme will be the Future of Work : Implications for career and work psychology. Alumni who do international work, and are interested in the Consortium activities should contact Fred Leong (email: fleong@msu.edu).

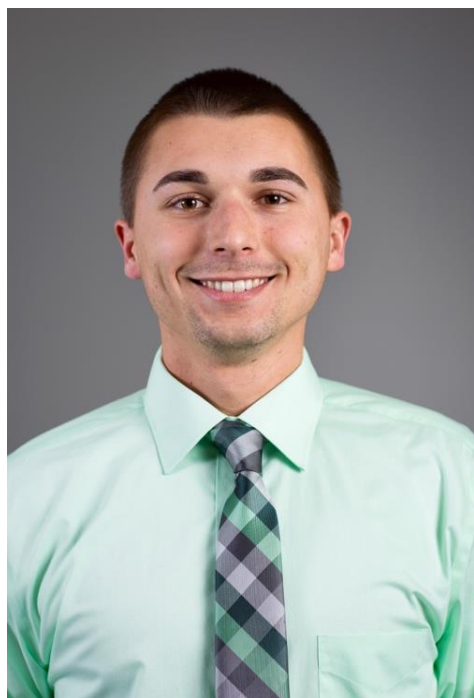
Our New First Year Graduate Students!

This year we are thrilled to have four new graduate students join our program. See below for a little about each of them!



Jo Alanis is from Katy, TX, and completed her undergraduate degree in psychology at the University of Houston. Her interests include diversity & inclusion, work-family balance, and occupational health. Outside of school, Jo's hobbies include running, baking, and scrapbooking. Her favorite thing about the OP program is the abundance of support from faculty and other students (and getting to see other seasons besides summer!).

Connor Eichenauer is from North Manchester, IN, and studied psychology at Manchester University. His research interests include selection/assessment, individual differences, and leadership. Connor's favorite things about MSU so far include the opportunities to learn from renowned faculty and the camaraderie among students. His hobbies include playing tennis and golf, biking, and cheering on MSU football and basketball.

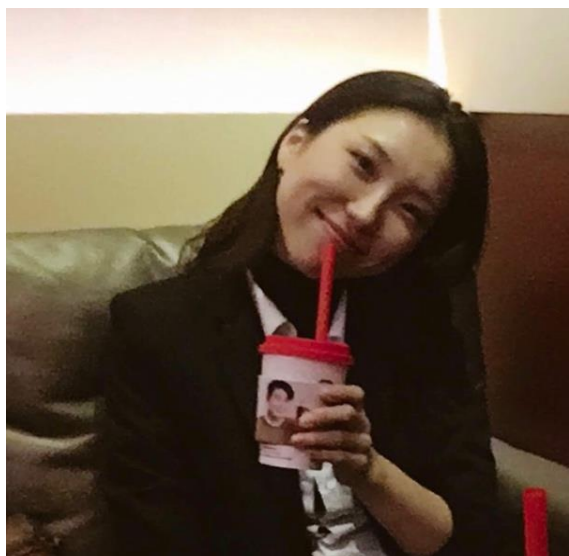


Our New First Year Graduate Students! (cont.)

Will Hornsby is from Bowling Green, KY, and got his degree in psychology from Western Kentucky University. He is primarily interested in studying quantitative methods and diversity in the workplace. Outside of school, Will enjoys reading, Wikipedia binges, going for walks, and playing video games. His favorite things so far about grad school are feeling more independent and having his own place to live.



Hyeyoung Yoon is from Busan, Korea, and got her undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of South Florida. Her research interests include teams, leadership, emergence, learning, virtual work, and temporal aspects of teams and learning. Her favorite things about the OP program include working on innovative research with faculty and students, and experiencing everyone's disdain for the University of Michigan. Outside of school, Hyeyoung enjoys IPAs, going to Horrocks, and driving Zipcars.



Student Summer Internships

Our students were quite active this summer with research, applied projects, and internships. Five of our students did internships at external companies in various positions, earning a diverse set of knowledge and experiences. If you have an internship opportunity that may be right for one of our students, feel free to reach out!



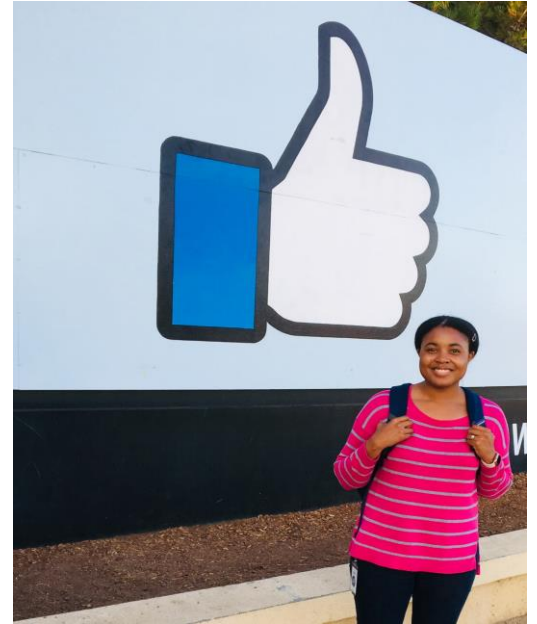
Jacob Bradburn worked at Johnson and Johnson in New Brunswick, NJ as a Talent Development and Assessment Intern. He worked on interesting projects such as the validation of employment assessments, assessment development, and selection strategy design.

Courtney Bryant interned under MSU OP Alumna Marina Pearce on the Talent Analytics Team at Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, MI. Courtney had a diverse set of projects engaging with different work teams such as the Culture Team, the Diversity and Inclusion Team and the Learning and Development team.



Student Summer Internships (cont.)

Lauren Collier-Spruel interned as a User Experience Researcher at Facebook this summer in Menlo Park, CA where she engaged in research on how users interacted with various areas of the Facebook app. She learned a great deal about how to apply research principles to making product decisions and translating results for multiple levels of the organization.



Also at Facebook, **Ross Walker** was a contractor on the People Analytics team which also includes MSU OP alumni Stanton Mak and Josh Sacco. Over the summer, Ross analyzed quantitative and textual data to provide insight on Facebook employees.



Anthony Misco worked with our long-standing partners at Jackson National Life in Lansing, MI as an intern this summer. He worked with job analysis data, generating structured and technical interview guides, reviewing assessment vendor options based on job analysis results, implementing a company-wide employee engagement survey, and preparing materials to help Jackson interpret the engagement survey results and engage in action planning.

Alumni Interview – Aaron Schmidt (2003)

Aaron is currently an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN.

What are some of your best memories at MSU?

A group of us that every year got season tickets to the hockey games. Back in those days, you had to physically show up to get your tickets at the start of the season. We would line up at 10 at night and work shifts so that when the ticket booth opened at 6 in the morning, we would be far enough to the front that we would get good seats.

What is one life update, either professional or personal, that you want to share with the MSU network?

We (*Aaron and his wife, Christine, another graduate of our program*) were out in Italy for a couple weeks. It was the first time for both of us. I was presenting at EWOP in Turin, Italy. Florence was our favorite stop of the whole trip. We winged it. We went to so many great museums and galleries all over Italy, but especially in Florence. We bought a pass to see all the galleries, the Uffizi, which is a big renaissance museum. While that style isn't either of our favorites, it was amazing to see everything they had there. I haven't done as much international travel as I should. I wish I would have done more earlier in my career. It's one of the really nice perks of an academic job.

What is one piece of advice you have for students?

Take good advantage of opportunities to present, even if you're not all that excited about getting in front of people and public speaking—maybe especially if that's the case. It's such great training whether you go into an academic or applied career—whether it's a job talk or whatever. It's incredibly valuable.

What advice do you have for recent MSU alumni that you wish you had known earlier in your career?

Perfection is the enemy of progress kind of an idea. It's easy to get bogged down in trying to make something perfect instead of just getting it out there. I can have a JAP or bust kind of mentality. In some ways it's useful, but in some ways it's better to get things out there and disseminate your ideas.



Alumni Interview – Marina Pearce (2015)

Marina is currently Head of Talent Analytics at Ford Motor Company headquarters in Dearborn, MI.



What are one or two of your favorite memories at MSU?

(1) Pulling an all-nighter at my cohort-mate's apartment so we could deliver an applied project on-time. We lost our minds briefly sometime in the early AM hours, but worked through the trauma and delivered what we needed to deliver. That was a lesson in resilience and love. (2) My advisor reviewing job offers with me – being patient with my stress, indecision, and naiveté – and reminding me I could choose whichever route seemed the most fun (seemingly obvious – yet very impactful – advice!).

What research (academic or applied) are you recently working on or interested in?

There are so many things I could mention. Here at Ford, we've just completed a global organization redesign – and I'm extremely interested in potential longstanding effects on employee trust, loyalty, engagement, and performance. The other area that pops to mind immediately is nudging – we're currently setting up pilots to test nudge-based methods for communicating and presenting behavioral feedback to employees. We're looking for quantifiable advantages versus traditional action planning.

What is one life update, either professional or personal, that you want to share with the MSU network?

My son (Avery) turns 3 on Halloween!

What is one piece of advice you have for students or those just out of graduate school?

Practice pitching your specialty – especially any solid points-of-view you've accumulated and feel excited about. People are drawn to the combination of expertise and charisma.

Alumni Interview – Goran Kuljanin (2011)

Goran is currently an Assistant Professor of Industrial & Organizational Psychology at DePaul University in Chicago, IL.

What are one or two of your favorite memories at MSU?

I remember there was a strong camaraderie between the students themselves, and also, between students and faculty. It was a fantastic work (and life!) environment where you could focus on developing as a scientist, do cutting-edge research, and have lots of fun along the way!



What research (academic or applied) are you recently working on or interested in?

I am currently doing research on basketball teams. I love this research for many personal and scientific reasons. Teams are fundamental to the nature of human beings – practically everything big we do is a function of teamwork! By studying teams, you get at the essence of human beings and speak to eternal scientific topics such as dynamics, complexity, and emergence. Endless fun!

What is one life update, either professional or personal, that you want to share with the MSU network?

I am making plans to collaborate with the College of Organizational Sciences at the University of Belgrade in Serbia to teach people analytics in the summers. I welcome the MSU network to visit Serbia and the Yugoslav lands in general! Feel free to reach out!

What is one piece of advice you have for students or those just out of graduate school?

Knowledge of scientific methods is critical for developing your ability to ask and answer questions. Greater knowledge of scientific methods means more questions you can ask and more ways you can answer those questions!

Alumni Interview – Ruchi Sinha (2010)

Alum Ruchi Sinha, now a Senior Lecturer in the School of Management at the University of South Australia, recently visited MSU! We were lucky enough to hear her thoughts about her trip, and even some photos as well:

What did you do in your visit at MSU? What parts did you enjoy the most from your trip?

I loved walking through the corridors and visiting the old-time favorite places on campus:

Espresso Royale, Peanut Barrel

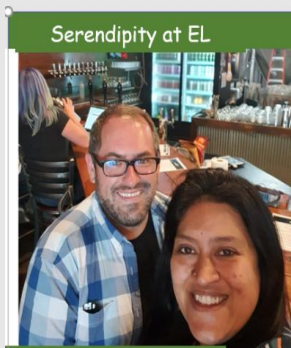
and Jimmy's Johns. The picture with Kevin and Ann Marie was at Peanut Barrel, and the kind lady who served was also there when I first ate a meal in 2005. I met Dan Ilgen and Barb and Don Conlon and Karen at their beautiful home, which was lovely. I met Neal and Kara when I was in Boston just before visiting MSU. Rick and I had breakfast one day, and the other breakfast was with Daisy and Russ. I also happened to accidentally bump into Paul Curran (my cohort mate from 2005-2010), which was fantastic. He took me to an awesome beer garden. I met Chip and Jennifer too, and got to see them in the offices that I remember them in from 2007. I got to sit and work in the new common area and see all the lovely posters around the corridors. It was fantastic to see the 100 years of JAP and MSU folks featured in it. And the lovely poster of the ancestry and network tree for Dan Ilgen and Neal Schmitt made me feel proud of my academic ancestry. It was also lovely having one on one meetings with Steve Kozlowski, Debby Kashy, Brent Donnellan and Fred Leong; they all gave me interesting updates and we reminisced the old times. In short, coming back to MSU felt like coming back home! A home where I spent a majority of my intellectual life during 2005-2010. I could feel the warmth from all the people I met and left feeling more connected :)

What aspects of MSU have changed since when you were in the program?

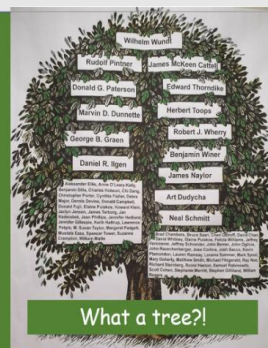
Some of the faculty members I remember as being the junior folks are now head of departments ;) Paul Curran's name was on one of the office doors as he was going to start his teaching gig at MSU. The new lounge room was interesting! What was most different for me was not seeing Neal, Dan and Rick in the corridors, where I fondly remember interacting with them during my time!

Does anything stand out as being the same?

The warmth of the people, and their offices—I could navigate the corridors and the space as if nothing had changed! Seeing students stressing about comps was also the same!



A lovely trip back to MSU



Applied Skills Course

This fall semester, Ann Marie and Kevin are co-teaching the Developing Applied Skills seminar. This course is designed to focus on skills and knowledge needed to effectively practice organizational psychology as an internal or external consultant. Kevin and Ann Marie noted that combining research and practical experience was very important to their experiences as graduate students themselves.

Kevin: “We have learned much about how organizations work by actually working with organizations. While the domains require similar skill sets to be effective, it is also clear that applied work involves some distinctive skills in the areas of technical skills, interpersonal skills, team skills, and organizational skills.”

Ann Marie: “Our hope is that this class will provide students with hands-on skills that will be valuable whether one decides to become an academic actively engaged with organizations or become a practitioner in an internal consultant or an external consultant role.”

Caitlin Briggs: “As a current student in the Developing Applied Skill seminar I have immensely enjoyed my time in the course thus far. It is unlike any of the courses I have taken at MSU. While there are relevant readings (ranging from journal articles to TED talks), there are also a number of class assignments and activities that are directly related to what one might be doing on the job as an internal or external consultant. For example, recently we visited Great Lakes Industry Inc., a manufacturing plant in Jackson, MI that has worked with Kevin for many years (see picture). We went on a full tour of the plant and met with the leaders of the company to understand how their organization works and what they would like to do better. The whole experience was aimed at becoming better observers of organizations. Moreover, each of us is involved with an applied project through Ford Motor Company. We will be able to present our project results and recommendations to the company later in the semester (Thank you to our alums at Ford!). We have also had one-on-one phone conversations with alums who volunteered to discuss their positions as external or internal consultants and impart their advice – thank you to everyone who took the time to talk with us! These are just a few of the activities Kevin and Ann Marie have thoughtfully built into this course. I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to take this class as it is not offered every year. Several students, including myself, feel that this course will be incredibly impactful on our future careers.”



Pictured Left to Right: Caitlin Q. Briggs, Sergio Marquez, Lauren Collier-Spruel, Anthony Misisco, Nathan Brucher, Jeff Olenick

News and Announcements

Over the past year members of the program as well as alumni have enjoyed some notable achievements. To celebrate everyone's successes, these announcements are listed below.

Program Achievements

- Along with collaborators across disciplines, Daisy Chang and Kevin Ford were awarded a major grant from the National Science Foundation. Title: *Preparing the Future Workforce for the Era of Automated Vehicles (WEAVE)*. They will be recruiting participants from driving industries as part of their project. If you are affiliated with an organization related to the driving workforce that may be interested in participating in research, please contact Daisy Chang. Click [here](#) for more information on this project.
- Danielle Gardner received the Charles P. and Linda A. Thompson Social Science Grant.
- Daniel Griffin and Ajay Somaraju are one of 10 teams invited to submit a proposal for SIOF's Visionary Circle Grant.

Alumni Achievements

- Danielle King, along with two other researchers, was awarded a large-scale grant from the National Science Foundation, Science of Organizations. Title: *Collaborative Research: Uncovering and Utilizing the Dynamic Interplay between Work Recovery and Resilience*.
- Brent Lyons was appointed as the York Research Chair in Stigmatization and Social Identity at the Schulich School of Business.

Congratulations to all!

Tell us what is new with you for our next issue!

Part of the goal of this newsletter is for alumni to share news with one another. So give us the scoop! Send us a few sentences on your current projects, life and family updates, and personal or professional accomplishments. Additionally, if you have any feedback or future ideas for the newsletter, let us know!

You can reach us at: msuorgpsychcolloquia@gmail.com

