

# Connect(I/O)ns

FROM THE UGA INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY PHD PROGRAM

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## *Fireside Chats*

**This Fall, our newsletter comes to you at a time of change for the UGA I-O program** — a time for both reflection on our past and optimism for our future. Most notably, **at the end of this semester, Dr. Lillian Eby will enter retirement** following almost 30 years of distinguished service to our program, university, and field. Over the years, her mentorship and stewardship have had profound impacts on students and colleagues that will ripple across generations of I-Os. We will miss her and wish her the best as she starts the next chapter of her life. **Further, we have the honor of one of our own, Dr. Malissa Clark, being named the chair of Psychology.** Although this shift alters her daily presence in our program, we expect Malissa to do a wonderful job in her new role. These changes, combined with the challenging and dynamic environment faced by



**Dr. Jeffrey Olenick**  
*Program Chair*

higher education, make this an important time for UGA I-O. Despite these challenges, as the new program chair, I have great optimism for our future. With our wonderful core of faculty, university and industry partners, and the support of our large and impressive alumni base, I have no doubt we will continue to be one of the strongest I-O programs in the country. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming years.



**Hudson Barthes**  
*IOPSA President*

Dear Alumni and Friends of the UGA I-O Psychology Program, We've had a strong start to this school year and are excited to let you in on our latest updates! Our new students (Wei, Ana-Gabriela, and Emma) arrived in Athens, bringing sharp minds, new perspectives, and plenty of laughter. We've been as active as usual in academia — SIOP submissions, research presentations, and advancing many exciting projects (*check out the lab updates!*). Through our Professional Development Series, we've explored topics ranging from *Where I/O Fits in Today's Climate* to *Impactful and Effective Science Communication*. Even with our cluttered schedules, we've found time for fun! Lillian hosted our annual "Back to School Bash", video game nights have become a staple, and lucky winners racked up prizes at our Red and Black game night. Our community feels stronger than ever, and we're grateful to have you with us. Thank you for staying connected and supporting our program!

## ***Signing Off: Honoring Dr. Lillian Eby's Retirement***

**It's hard to believe that after almost 30 years, I will be retiring January 1, 2026.**

When I came to UGA in 1996, there was a completely different I-O faculty and the research stature of the university was nowhere near where it is today. Over the years, the I-O program has excelled, as has the prestige of UGA (*and not all due to our football team!*). When I interviewed (*on Valentine's Day, 1996*), I remember Garnett Stokes (*now President of the University of New Mexico*) picking me up from the itty-bitty Athens airport (*we immediately bonded*) and Karl Kuhnert (*now Professor of Practice in the Goizueta Business School at Emory*) driving me down "sorority row" in his convertible after dinner (followed by a great party at his house with the I-O faculty and students). After this, **I knew UGA was the home for me.** Reflecting on my career, there have been many high points (*and a few low ones*). By far the most gratifying experience has been working with students – both PhD students in the I-O Program (*major professor to 22*) and undergraduates in my lab (*I lost count some time ago, but over 100*). I have also been lucky to be able to reinvent myself multiple times; starting as a "normal" faculty member (*if there is such a thing - LOL*) and then moving on to become a NIH funded researcher/entrepreneur doing interdisciplinary work, Director of the Owens Institute for Behavioral Research, and finally Editor-in-Chief at JAP. Each of these experiences challenged me in different ways and came with lots of high points and some low points (*do you see a theme here?*). Along my career journey I made lot of new friends (*both inside and outside I-O*), developed meaningful collaborations, and (*of course*) worked my tail off. I also went through a lot of personal transitions, including becoming a mother, getting out of an emotionally abusive marriage, and reconnecting with the love of my life, Jeff. Everyone now is asking me, **"what will you do in retirement?"**. I find this interesting from an IO perspective – the notion that it is important to "do something". My typical response is **"live my life and do things I want to do"** rather than lay out a clear set of tasks to focus on or goals to accomplish. But what will I do in retirement? In terms of work, I will finish out a few projects and get my final student graduated. I am not putting pressure on myself in any other way work-wise. In terms of non-work, Jeff and I plan to spend 4 months at our sacred place on a small island in Maine (*we bought a vintage 31-foot Chris-Craft boat last year*), travel the US in our motor home (*a trip to Florida and Michigan already planned*), spend more time with my family and friends, and travel internationally with my sister (*our next destination is New Zealand in October*). True to form, I do have a huge list of other things that I want to pursue in retirement, including glassblowing, soap and candle making, pleasure reading, gardening, and DIY projects. I will most certainly miss UGA but I am so excited for this new chapter in my life. Please stay in touch ([leby@uga.edu](mailto:leby@uga.edu)) and visit me if you are in the Athens area.



## *Alumni Spotlights*



**Dr. Adam Meade** graduated from UGA's I-O Ph.D. program in 2001. He is now working as a Professor of the Department of Psychology at North Carolina State University.

### **How did your career path lead you to your current role?**

I never planned to be an academic in graduate school. After working in applied research jobs running the same analyses repeatedly, I missed the academic environment and wanted to do more advanced research. Chuck Lance encouraged me to pursue an academic career as I finished my degree.

### **How has your time at UGA shaped your professional journey?**

When I was at UGA I focused on Psychometrics (the program was "applied psychology" back then). I took quantitative courses with Chuck Lance, Gary Lautenschlager, and faculty in Education. This quantitative training was much better than most other programs and it allowed me to research quantitative topics.

### **What have been one or two of your biggest professional achievements since graduation?**

I was really happy to get Fellow status at SIOP and found PerSight Assessments (which uses the rapid response measurement approach I developed).

### **What is one piece of advice you would give to a recent graduate starting their careers?**

Keep learning. I see a lot of colleagues that still use software and research they picked up in graduate school decades ago. Most people are far too reluctant to learn new things.



**Dr. Alison Mallard** graduated from UGA's I-O Ph.D. program in 1995. She is now working as the Founding Partner and President of HRCatalyst, Inc.

### **How has UGA shaped your professional journey?**

The UGA I-O program shaped my career from the beginning, as upon graduation, a classmate invited me to interview at an Atlanta consulting firm. It was a great fit. I was there 8 years, and the experience helped prepare me to start HRCatalyst in 2003. The I-O program also shaped my journey by training and teaching me how to be a science and data-backed consultant; incredibly impactful and rewarding. My career has also been

shaped by working with many UGA I-O students/alums – as colleagues and clients.

### **What have been one or two of your biggest professional achievements since graduation?**

Growing a business over the past 20+ years, learning and working with incredible people, and having fun most days.

### **What is one piece of advice you would give to a recent graduate starting their careers?**

Do what you love and work really hard at it – but have a life outside of work. And if you are thinking about going into consulting, do it with eyes wide open.

## ***Impact of Donations***

Donations to the IO Psychology Program make a huge difference! We are fortunate to have the *Dan Mack Graduate Support Fund*, *William A. Owens Distinguished Graduate Fellows Fund*, and the *Industrial-Organizational Psychology Alumni Fund*. These generous donations help us support our graduate students through research grants, conference travel, and student visitation day. They also enhance our program offerings by supporting our Professional Development Speaker series. Here are a few highlights of how these donations have supported the program recently!

### **2025 Dan Mack Memorial Award Recipient: Kristen Egger**

- The Dan Mack Memorial Award honors a current graduate student in the I-O Psychology Program whose research interests extend the work of Dan Mack. Dan's research interests included selection, with an emphasis on individual differences, affirmative action, jury decisions, racial and ethnic identity, and the role of diversity in organizations. Dan was primarily interested in research that centered around understanding the dynamics and impact of diversity in organizations.
- Kristen Egger is a 5th year student in the PhD program and a member of Dr. Olenick's lab. Her work focuses on equity and inclusion topics, highlighted by an on-going systematic review of the allyship literature and several studies, originally funded by the Dan Mack endowment, on applicant reactions to diversity statements in job advertisements. Kristen also takes an active role in program and field leadership regarding DEI topics, serving on several committees and driving DEI initiatives.

### **2025 Dan Mack Memorial Lecture: Dr. Mary Alice Crowe-Taylor, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, "Mack & MAC-T's Story: Tragic Loss, Altruism & Healing"**

- Dr. Crowe-Taylor visited us to give a touching tribute to her friend Dan. The event was attended by both current graduate students and faculty, and many alumni who came in for the day. Dr. Crowe-Taylor's talk provided a chance for healing, support, and connection for the entire UGA I-O community.

### **2025 SIOP in Denver**

- Your donations helped 19 of our PhD students attend SIOP in Denver this year where they participated in 30 different sessions!



## ***Speakers and Professional Development***



### **Dr. Lisa Sperling**

Dr. Lisa Sperling, Senior Director of the Office of Student Success & Well-Being, delivered a session titled “Working Through Burnout” focusing on the widespread issue of burnout among graduate students. She shared practical self-care strategies and highlighted a range of campus resources designed to support student well-being, encouraging students to build sustainable habits for maintaining mental and emotional health throughout their academic and professional journeys.



### **Dr. Glen Nowak**

Dr. Glen Nowak, Professor and Associate Dean at the University of Georgia's Grady College, led a workshop on strategic science communication and highlighted the importance of framing information as a relatable story, using clear language and strong sound bites to cut through a crowded media landscape. The session provided practical tools for developing communication strategies, crafting messages, and engaging effectively with the media.



### **Elizabeth White**

Elizabeth White, UGA's Humanities and Social Sciences Research Librarian, delivered a session focusing on advanced literature search strategies and contemporary tools for staying current with academic research. During her presentation, Elizabeth covered the effective use of major databases and introduced newer platforms. She also shared practical tips for refining search queries to enhance the depth and relevance of research.

## ***Speakers and Professional Development***

### **Dr. Becky Winkler**

Dr. Becky Winkler, an industrial/organizational psychologist, business consultant, and founder of Department 732c, provided valuable insights into entrepreneurship and how I/O experiences fit in organizational growth and leadership development. She highlighted her work with diverse organizations, as well as her collaborations with leading academic institutions, offering practical strategies for building resilient leadership teams and sustaining executive performance.



With your help, we hope to continue this work. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the program to continue to support student success and help us meet our long-term program goals. Through your support, we can continue to be one of the best programs in the nation and grow into the future.

**Scan the QR Code to Support the  
Future of I-O Psychology**

Every tax-deductible donation given has a  
direct impact upon our students and faculty.



## Lab Updates

### COFFEE Lab

#### Dr. Jeffrey Olenick

The COFFEE lab has kept busy the last few months! We started data collection on several projects including qualitative data to understand the experience of faculty who are deaf and hard of hearing, experimental studies exploring job applicant reactions to diversity statements in recruitment materials, and a game-based exploration of AI in teams in partnership with the CACHE lab. The lab continues to grow - we accepted four new undergrads to the team to help with the ongoing projects and Emma has transitioned from an undergrad to a graduate student. For major milestones, Javon has proposed his thesis on non-inclusive language and Kristen has proposed her dissertation on job applicant reactions to diversity signals. The lab worked together on an IOP commentary addressing ways to improve diversity training. Dr. Olenick also had a publication accepted to Organizational Psychology Review with Dr. Outland on using AI to advance theory-building, and presented some of our research at the AOM meeting in Copenhagen.



### Relationships and Work Lab

#### Dr. Melissa Robertson

Our team is doing exciting work related to mentoring, inclusion, remote work, and AI. Dr. Robertson and Thamengie developed two AI agents to improve the manuscript review process, described in their commentary accepted to Industrial and Organizational Psychology Perspectives. Dr. Robertson and Dr. Hoffman received Franklin RIP funding to study how leaders can better support autistic employees. Thamengie received the Beth E. Buchanan Memorial Fund award for her research on immigrant work-family experiences, and Carsynn received a Franklin Forward Seed Grant for her work on autism and leadership. Our research also reached a global audience—Marta and Carsynn presented in Prague at EAWOP—and Dr. Robertson, Marta, and alum Fanyi Zhang received the John C. Flanagan Award at SIOP for our work on mentor support. We're thrilled to welcome new student Ana-Gabriela Osorio to the lab as we continue developing impactful and innovative projects aimed at improving employee development, inclusion, success, and well-being.



### ECHO Lab

#### Dr. Lillian Eby

With my retirement right around the corner, the ECHO lab is gearing down and focusing on wrapping up (and speeding up) our projects. We have finally finished data collection on an ambitious quasi-experimental study that examined how to best match mentors and mentees and which matching approach leads to more positive outcomes over time. We also submitted our survey of scientific opinion on open science practices in I/O psychology and OB/HR to a journal, with some intriguing results. I am also working with two alumni on an interdisciplinary review of how chronic pain impacts work, integrating research to outline future directions for this understudied area. Finally, our work-life balance intervention work using AI avatars and delivered asynchronously is getting ready to be piloted, and we have secured partnerships with several large organizations for the full test. I am also proud that David Facticeau and Josie Anker will graduate with their PhDs by the end of the fall semester. I will continue to serve as Katherine Facticeau's major professor as she pursues her dissertation on the experience of grief at work, a topic near and dear to both of us.



Enhancing Connections & Health in Organizations



**LEADERSHIP**  
AND PERFORMANCE DYNAMICS LAB

### Leadership & Performance Dynamics Lab

#### Dr. Brian Hoffman

The LPD Lab has been buzzing with activity, making progress on ongoing projects and launching exciting new ones! On the research front, we submitted a meta-analysis for publication and are in the screening stages for a cross-temporal meta-analysis exploring employee psychological well-being (led by Carsynn). We've also submitted several posters, symposia, and panel discussions for the upcoming SIOP 2026 conference and are eagerly awaiting acceptance decisions. Over the summer, several students had internships where they gained practical experience applying their learning to the workplace. Talia proposed her thesis, "Leadership and follower behavior: A meta-analysis", and Cassidy successfully completed comprehensive exams and is now working on her dissertation. Exciting work and opportunities lie ahead!





## Lab Updates



### Healthy Work Lab

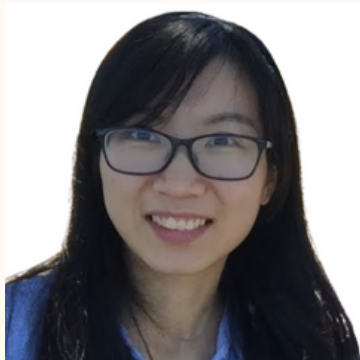
#### ***Dr. Malissa Clark***

The Healthy Work Lab is currently working on a variety of projects across a range of methodologies. We have finished coding for an updated meta-analysis on workaholism and are starting analyses. We are about to conduct a second round of data collection for a project examining profiles of heavy workers, and we are also writing a book chapter reviewing research on the division of household labor and mental load. Malissa is co-editing a research handbook on workaholism for Edward Elgar Publishing with UGA alumna Rachel Williamson. The lab has also been active in submitting to conferences, including SIOP and the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology's 2026 conference in Helsinki, Finland. Our undergraduate RAs have been running in-person sessions for Laurel's thesis and working on professional development. In other exciting news, Skylar defended her master's thesis this semester. Congrats on this milestone, Skylar!

### H2O Lab

#### ***Dr. Yimin He***

The H2O Lab has been making exciting progress across a variety of research areas, from occupational health and safety to organizational climate and social networks! Graduate students are actively collaborating on multiple projects, including a second-order meta-analysis on well-being and innovative studies exploring gossip networks. We're excited to share some of the lab's recent accomplishments: Graduate students Bailey, Yaxuan, and Wei submitted four posters to SIOP, and Yinbo has two papers currently under review, one in its second round of revisions and the other in its third. In addition, Dr. He, Bailey, and colleagues had a scale development paper on respectful climate accepted for publication in the Journal of Business and Psychology, with two more climate papers in preparation for submission. On the academic milestones front, Bailey successfully passed her written and oral comprehensive exams. Congratulations! The H2O Lab continues to build momentum, producing meaningful research and celebrating each step forward together!



### MODEL Lab

#### ***Dr. Neal Outland***

MODEL Lab students have been busy making progress! Last Spring, Riley successfully defended her dissertation "A Comparison of Modern Machine Learning Methods for Applied Attrition Modeling," graduated with her PhD (the same week she also got married!), and is now running her business, Genuine Gem Co., full-time out of Atlanta. Nina also successfully defended her thesis in the Spring ("Taking AIM at What it Means to be Asian: Development of the Asian Identity Measure"). Over the summer, Brandon completed a summer internship at T-Mobile and both Brandon ("Development & Validation of the Willingness to Work with AI Teammate Scale ") and Sierra ("Examining Perceptions of Leadership for AI Agents") successfully proposed their theses and are slated to defend in late fall. MODEL Lab has also been busy collaborating on various projects: MODEL Lab is working with the COFFEE lab on multiple agent-based models simulating organizational turnover patterns over time. Nina also had a chance to collaborate with Dr. Arturia Melson-Silimon, a MODEL Lab alumnus, on a mixed-methods study looking at antecedents of code-switching, which was invited for full submission in an upcoming Special Issue in Industrial and Organizational Psychology.





## Social Events



Spin, Win, & Grin!

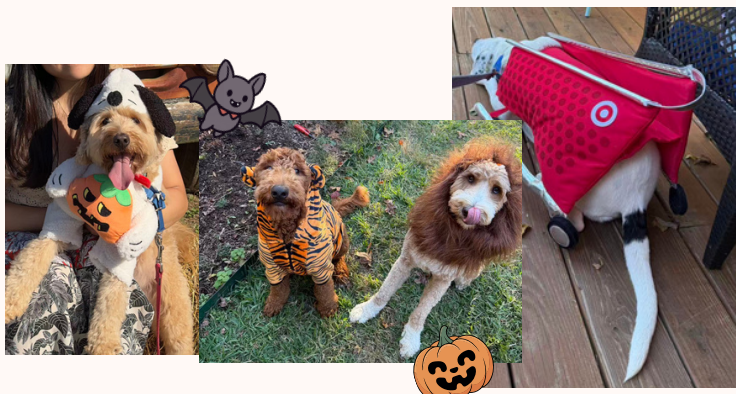


Cheers to passing comps!



Starting the semester with good food and great company!

No tricks, just treats for our furry friends!





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