Congratulations to our Graduates!

Congratulations to this year's graduates! We had a great time celebrating everyone at the program graduation reception on May 17th, and thank you to everyone who joined us. We know there are great things ahead for all of you. We’ll miss you all and we look forward to hearing about your future successes!

We’d also like to congratulate Mary McHattie and Sarah Queller, the recipients of the Academic Excellence in Forensic Psychology Award. The award recognizes students with outstanding academic achievement in their degree coursework and on the comprehensive exam.

Get to Know Professor Matt Bruce!

As the new academic year starts, we thought we’d help everyone get to know each other. Below is an interview with Dr. Matt Bruce, who has been a full-time professor with our program since 2016. Dr. Bruce will be teaching Consultation and Testimony, Research and Statistics, and Forensic Psychological Assessment this fall semester.

What was your first job?

My first job was at an ice cream factory and I specialized in ice cream sundaes. I rose to the top of the conveyor belt and was in charge of making sure all ingredients were present and placed in the correct order.

Why did you decide to enter your field?

When I was doing my doctoral training, I had to do rotations in different clinical specialties. When I got to the forensic specialty, I found it by far the most fascinating and exciting. I have always found the dark side of human nature infinitely interesting and rewarding to work with.

What's something that has surprised you about your chosen career path?

I guess what surprised me was learning that the most violent members of our society are actually the most vulnerable and fearful. That discovery really helped my ability to work and engage with violent offenders in a far more meaningful and rewarding way.

What job would you be terrible at?

Probably accounting or bookkeeping because I wouldn’t be able to concentrate on abstract numbers for any long period of time. Even that answer is boring, isn’t it? To be honest, I was also terrible at working in the ice cream factory.

What’s a topic you wish you knew more about?

Horse whispering or hypnosis.

What is your favorite thing to do when you’re not working?

Probably exercising. Or spending time with the people I love. No. Probably exercising.

What would the students be surprised to find out about you?

I run the only dog show in DC and my goal is to make it an entrepreneurial triumph! It takes place on Saturday, September 29, in downtown DC and it’s called Best in Shaw. Another interesting fact is that I don’t mind dogs, but I’m totally a cat person.

If you could instantly become an expert in something, what would it be?

Horse whispering, obviously.

If you could host a talk show, who would be your first guest?

Cher. I’m very impressed with her face.

What’s the greatest bit of advice a parent or mentor has given you?

That failure is the greatest learning tool.

Class Notes

Current Students

Sami Badini was a featured speaker at Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International’s 20th anniversary conference at the American University College of Law on June 22nd. Sami spoke about the Trauma Informed Care model along with three other co-panelists.

Class of 2017

Christine Scott is currently in federal law enforcement training for a position with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

Jennifer Selchert was recently hired as a forensic interviewer for the Loudoun County Adult Detention Center.

Class of 2016

Ashley Blair is working at the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) and recently co-authored a NTAC report entitled Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide to Preventing Targeted School Violence. It is an operational guide for creating threat assessment teams in schools and it can be accessed here.

Mimi Yorks is in her last year of the GWU PsyD program and currently interning at the Martinsburg Veteran Affairs Medical Center in West Virginia. She will graduate in May 2019 with a Doctor of Psychology degree in Clinical Psychology from GWU.