VA New York Harbor Healthcare System-Brooklyn Campus
Postdoctoral Residency in Geropsychology
2019-2020

800 Poly Place,
Brooklyn, New York 11209
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Overview

The VA New York Harbor Healthcare System (VANYHHS) provides services at three campuses in New York City, Brooklyn, Manhattan and St. Albans, Queens and has multiple affiliated Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCS). The VANYHHS Brooklyn Campus, a full service medical center, is affiliated with the State University of NY - Downstate Medical Center.

The Psychology Division is part of an integrated Mental Health Service comprising of a Division of Psychology and a Division of Psychiatry, each headed by a Chief. The Chief of Psychology heads the Psychology Division. The Psychology Division serves the entire NY Harbor Healthcare System, providing consultation, mental and behavioral health services, and neuropsychological and psychological assessment. As an inner city Medical Center, there is a patient population of male and female veterans, their spouses and occasionally children who are from a diverse mix of cultural and religious backgrounds and who represent all ages and socio-economic groups. A large percentage of these are geriatric patients.

A training committee coordinates the postdoctoral residency in geropsychology. The committee is composed of the Director of Training for the program and staff supervisory psychologists. Fellows serve in an advisory capacity, meeting at least twice a year with the Training Committee.

Training in Geropsychology

Training in geropsychology has become vital as the general US population ages. The US population age 65 and older is expected to double in size within the next 15 years. By 2030 one in five Americans will be 65 or older with the age group 85+ now the fastest growing segment of the population (US Census Bureau, 2006). Vietnam era veterans accounted for the largest veteran population in 2000 and included nearly one-third of all veterans (8.4 million). World War II veterans made up the next largest group, with 5.7 million people (US Census Bureau, 2000).

There are multiple training sites in the VANYHHS Brooklyn Campus in which older adults receive services including and geriatric primary care medicine, outpatient and inpatient oncology, palliative care, memory disorders clinic, geriatric clinic, neuropsychology clinic, behavioral neuropsychology clinic, and home-based primary care. Due to both the present numbers of older adults seeking services at the VANYHHS and the increased numbers of older adult patients expected as the population ages, these sites offer excellent opportunities for focused and in depth training in geropsychology.

Staff

There are over 26 psychologists on staff at the VANYHHS- Brooklyn Campus and a complement of psychology consultants covering areas including family therapies, diversity issues, case conferences, PTSD, among others.
General Training Opportunities
There are liberal training opportunities for all staff and fellows who regularly access VA conferences, workshops, bi-weekly interdisciplinary behavioral and mental health grand rounds that are chaired by psychology, live video and audio conferences. Specialty training in geriatric issues is varied and includes GRECC conferences, monthly Schwartz rounds developed for in-depth staff self-reflection concerning patient care, and monthly interprofessional seminars. Authorized Absences are granted for attendance at conferences outside the VA.

Facility Support
Fellows share an office space together and also have access to offices at the various sites in which they work. Fellow also have their own computer, phone, and access to statistical packages for research/data analysis. Cars are provided by the VA for travel in the home-based primary care program. There is a full service professional library that offers literature searches and locates difficult to find articles. Extensive computerization offers a full menu of psychological assessment tools that are available to fellows.

Residency Program Description

Program Mission and Philosophy
The VANYHHS – Brooklyn Campus Postdoctoral Residency in Geropsychology program mission is to develop focused and in depth postdoctoral preparation for advanced practice in geropsychology and integrated behavioral healthcare. The program philosophy is based on the Scholar-Practitioner Model and utilizes the Pikes Peak Model for Training in Professional Geropsychology. The program mission is consistent with the VA emphasis on high quality, integrated health care for veterans, their families and caregivers.

Specific Qualifications for Applicants
The postdoctoral residency program seeks applicants with some prior training in geropsychology, health psychology and in medical settings. It is helpful to have some training experience in neuropsychological assessment as this is heavily focused on in all training rotations. Additionally, prior training and interest in shorter-term evidence-based treatments (e.g. cognitive-behavioral) that are useful in the medical setting is required. Most importantly, a strong interest in and commitment to working with older adults across various settings is necessary.

Program Aims
The program aims to:

1. Prepare residents to be ethical and culturally sensitive future leaders in geropsychology with the requisite skills and knowledge to develop, implement and evaluate the provision of geropsychological services in hospitals and other settings, within interprofessional teams.

2. Have residents develop advanced knowledge and skills in the assessment of
dementia and cognitive functioning, informing and providing appropriate interventions for the older adult population.

Program Competencies
We embrace a competence-based training model that incorporates attainment of advanced competencies in both core postdoctoral level competencies and geropsychology specific competencies. The following competencies are assessed at mid-year and end-of-year:

- Integration of Science and Practice
- Professional conduct, ethics and law, and other standards for providers of psychological services
- Individual and cultural diversity issues, especially as they apply to working with older adults
- Assessment (personality, health and behavior, cognition, mental and behavioral health)
- Evidence-based interventions for older adults
- Professional values, attitudes, and behaviors
- Supervision and teaching
- Advocacy
- Business of geropsychology practice

Geropsychology specific knowledge, skills and abilities:
Geropsychology residents complete the aspirational Pikes Peak Geropsychology Knowledge and Skills Assessment Tool, version 1.4 (2013) to assess their level of competency in geropsychology practice at the beginning of the year in order to develop an individualized training plan with the training committee. The program also utilizes training philosophy from the following documents: The American Psychological Association Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults (2014), the American Psychological Association Guidelines for the Evaluation of Dementia and Age-related Cognitive Change (2011) and the APA Blueprint for Change: Achieving Integrated Health Care For An Aging Population (2008). In preparing fellows for advanced practice in geropsychology we offer a broad range of experiences with older adults. The core postdoctoral and geropsychology competencies are developed in a variety of settings including primary care geriatric clinic, memory disorders clinic, medical oncology, palliative care and home-based primary care. Our program also has a strong emphasis on neuropsychological assessment of older adults as we believe that the assessment of an older adult’s cognitive status is necessary when assessing an older adult and providing interventions. There is an emphasis on scholarly and evidence-based practice and value-added, outcome-based contributions to the field.

Training in Evidenced-Based Treatments
Evidenced-based treatments are taught to fellows whenever available. Postdoctoral fellows will develop competencies in the following evidenced-based treatments for older adults and their families including treatment for geriatric depression, late life anxiety, dementia, caregiver support and insomnia. Evidenced-based care, best practices and other
common late-life interventions will be taught in a didactic seminar on geriatrics by psychologists and medical staff in geriatric specialty areas (hematology/oncology, palliative care, geriatric psychiatry), and in individual and group supervisions by psychology staff. Short-term evidence-based psychotherapies and interventions that are appropriate for primary-care mental health integration will also be taught.

Residency Rotations and Clinic Assignments
Fellows are provided with a full year in one of the following rotations:

1) Oncology/Palliative Care- Fellows provide triage, assessment and mental and behavioral health interventions in oncology and palliative care with acute inpatients, outpatient oncology, and chemotherapy and radiation therapy clinics. Psychology fellows will participate in an interprofessional team with attending physicians, medical residents and fellows, nurses, social workers, chaplains and chaplain fellows, dietary staff and patient volunteers.

Fellows participate in and learn all aspects of health care in oncology including:
- medical rounds with the attending staff and residents on the oncology and palliative care teams;
- support of medical treatment and provide information, assistance and when needed;
- brief neuropsychological assessment and succinct, timely feedback to the team;
- capacity evaluation;
- interprofessional collaboration;
- brief health and behavior interventions, cancer support group, pain management group, end-of-life care; bereavement;
- program development and outcome evaluation.

2) Primary Care Geriatric Clinic- Fellows will be involved in a comprehensive Geriatric Primary Care Clinic that attends to the medical, psychological and social needs of geriatric patients with complex medical and psychosocial needs. The postdoctoral trainee will work in a truly integrated manner in the clinic and with the interprofessional team, including attending physician, medical students, social work, pharmacy, dietary, psychiatry and other support services. Fellows work in a truly integrated manner using the model put forth in American Psychological Association’s Blueprint for Change: Achieving Integrated Healthcare for an Aging Population (2008). The clinic staff and trainees from various disciplines meet weekly for a journal club during which each discipline picks and leads a discussion on a timely topic. In addition, there is a weekly interdisciplinary case conference during which complex cases are presented for in-depth discussion.

Fellows learn about and participate in providing the following services:
- same-day cognitive and emotional screening, quick consultation
- individual and group health and behavior interventions
• neuropsychological assessment, interventions and feedback including assessments for questions related to dementia, capacity, non-compliance, high-utilization of services
• health and wellness groups, cognitive remediation groups, caregiver support
• short-term evidence-based psychotherapy
• psychology follow-up of geriatric primary care clinic patients who are hospitalized for continuity and coordination of care
• program development and outcome evaluation

Each major rotation is supplemented by the following:
• Geriatric Mental Hygiene Clinic - Fellows develop an EBP outpatient caseload of older adults and their family members in need of mental health services via direct observation and demonstration by staff and audio tape supervision.
• Research - Fellows are encouraged to develop and participate in research, quality improvement projects, professional papers and presentations.

Minor rotations include:
• Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) – Fellows learn assessment, mental and behavioral treatment for older adults and their families/caregivers by going to the patient's home to provide services. Consultation to the interprofessional home-based primary care team occurs in team meetings and informal communication.
• Palliative Care Unit – St. Albans CLC- Fellows will work on state-of-the-art palliative care unit in CLC, providing assessment and intervention with patients and families around serious illness and end of life issues. Fellows will participate weekly in interdisciplinary team meetings.
• Neuropsychological Assessment and/or Inpatient Interventions in St. Alban’s CLC – Fellows can choose to gain additional neuropsychology training in the CLC or to do assessment and interventions/psychotherapy with residents of the CLC. Supervision will be provided by Dr. Shane Bush on location.

Workload
Fellows have a graduated patient workload that follows their initial adjustment, past experiences and comfort level with the area of specialty in their rotation. Workload may also be adjusted throughout the year based on other demands and interests that the fellow may express. Generally, Fellows start the year with an expected workload of approximately 1-2 hours a day of direct patient care, then 2-3, 3-4 and by the end of the year having worked toward 20 hours of direct patient care spread throughout the week.

Supervision
At least one supervisor is always on site and most often multiple supervisors will be on site and available for any immediate crises or issues that arise with patients. Fellows are provided with a minimum of two hours of individual supervision with psychology staff specializing in treatment of older adults. Psychology supervisory staff will co-lead, role-model and demonstrate intervention, assessment and consultation techniques with older adult patients in all assigned areas of service delivery. In addition, psychology staff maintains an open door policy and fellows can request additional
supervision/consultation and/or brief clinical discussions at any time. Interprofessional huddles occur often in order to coordinate treatment and discuss developments with patients in clinical work areas.

Seminars
Weekly seminars:
**Geropsychology Postdoctoral Seminar** – This seminar covers general topics applicable to postdoctoral competencies (supervision, ethics, diversity/multicultural issues, etc.) as well as topics specific to geropsychology training. This seminar is conducted over tele-videoconference with the participation of postdoctoral fellows across multiple VA geropsychology training sites. Presenters are geropsychology experts in the topics presented.

**Evidence-based psychotherapy (EBP)** – This seminar covers EBP (ACT-D, CBT-I, CBT-D, MI, CBT-CP, and MCP) didactic and training, as well as case presentation and supervision. Shorter-term evidence based psychotherapies adapted for use in primary-care mental health models will also be covered.

Biweekly seminars:
**Interprofessional collaboration with chaplaincy** – This seminar focuses on a VA grant aimed at having psychology fellows learn more about religion/spirituality in health care and having chaplain fellows learn more about mental health. Case discussion is included to highlight interprofessional collaboration.

Monthly seminars:
**Multicultural and Diversity Issues** – This seminar is didactic and has an interactive component including case material to address multicultural and diversity issues specifically related to working with older adults.

**Interdisciplinary geriatric team journal club** - Fellows participate in a weekly journal club with the geriatric primary care team. Participants include medical students, residents and fellows, attending physician, psychiatrist, pharmacist, social worker, psychology residents and supervisors. Medical students present journal articles on topics related to medical issues in geriatric populations and psychology fellows present once a month on topics related to neuropsychological and psychological aspects of working with older adults in a medical setting. The journal club has been enthusiastically attended by all and has fostered an increasing interest in psychology/neuropsychology by medical students, residents and fellows.

**Interprofessional seminar in primary care** – This seminar includes staff and trainees from medicine, nursing, psychology, social work, mental health chaplaincy and neuropsychology. The focus is on interactive discussion about health care systems delivery, medical illnesses and collaborative care. Seminar topics are led by 2 disciplines and rotate each meeting.

**Schwartz rounds** – This seminar is open to all staff and trainees in health care and is a case presentation of a patient/family that evoked strong reactions or ethical dilemmas
amongst the treating team. The main focus is on the staff and trainees processing their reactions and emotional experiences related to the case.

Other didactics:
VA webinars and in-person conferences and learning opportunities relevant to current fellow cases or training needs are assigned on a regular basis. Examples include watching a webinar on VA education and research on topics in clinical geropsychology or being assigned a training module in an EBP to enhance learning in of the same in supervision and seminars.
Postdoctoral Residency Program Admissions, Support and Initial Placement Data

Date Program Tables are updated: October 24, 2018

Postdoctoral Program Admissions

Briefly describe in narrative form important information to assist potential applicants in assessing their likely fit with your program. This description must be consistent with the program’s policies on resident selection and practicum and academic preparation requirements:

The postdoctoral residency program seeks applicants with some prior training in geropsychology, health psychology and in medical settings with interprofessional teams. It is helpful to have some training experience in neuropsychological assessment as this is heavily focused on in all training rotations. Additionally, prior training and interest in shorter-term evidence-based treatments (e.g. cognitive-behavioral) that are useful in the medical setting is required. Most importantly, a strong interest in and commitment to working with older adults across various settings is necessary.

Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants: None

Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Full-time Residents</th>
<th>Half-time Residents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Stipend/Salary</td>
<td>$52,799</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program provides access to medical insurance for resident?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee contribution to cost required?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of family member(s) available?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of legally married partner available?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of domestic partner available?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation)</td>
<td>13 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave</td>
<td>13 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to interns/residents in excess of personal time off and sick leave?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Benefits (please describe): Authorized Absence for prof dev/conf</td>
<td>5 days</td>
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*Note. Programs are not required by the Commission on Accreditation to provide all benefits listed in this table
### Initial Post-Residency Positions

(Provide an Aggregated Tally for the Preceding 3 Cohorts)

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<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
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<th>EP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community mental health center</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federally qualified health center</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent primary care facility/clinic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University counseling center</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Affairs medical center</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military health center</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic health center</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other medical center or hospital</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric hospital</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic university/department</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college or other teaching setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent research institution</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctional facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>School district/system</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent practice setting</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not currently employed</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed to another field</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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| Total # of residents who were in the 3 cohorts | 6   |
| Total # of residents who remain in training in the residency program | 0   |

Note: “PD” = Post-doctoral residency position; “EP” = Employed Position. Each individual represented in this table should be counted only one time. For former trainees working in more than one setting, select the setting that represents their primary position.
Faculty and Consultants

Section Chief of Psychology – Brooklyn Campus
Director of Training- Postdoctoral Residency in Geropsychology
Valerie Abel, Psy.D., ABPP
Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology, 1997
Clinical Psychologist and Neuropsychologist
PostDoctoral Certification, Fielding Institute, Neuropsychology
Board Certified in Geropsychology
Board Member, New York State Association of Neuropsychology
Board Member, Council of Professional Geropsychology Training Programs
Clinical activities: Neuropsychological assessment; geropsychology; psycho-oncology; health psychology; evidence-based psychotherapy with older adults; LEAN technology; telehealth
Research and writing interests: Health care delivery systems; integrated health care; new models in geropsychology services

Psychology Supervisors
Shane S. Bush, Ph.D., ABPP
California School of Professional Psychology-Alameda, 1995
Clinical Psychologist and Neuropsychologist, St. Albans Extended Care
Board Certified in Rehabilitation Psychology, Clinical Neuropsychology, Clinical Psychology, and Geropsychology
Fellow, American Psychological Association and National Academy of Neuropsychology
President, American Board of Geropsychology
Chair-Elect, Council of Professional Geropsychology Training Programs (CoPGTP)
Past President (2010), National Academy of Neuropsychology
Activities: Psychological and neuropsychological assessment and treatment, cognitive-behavioral therapy
Research/Scholarly Interests: Ethical and professional issues, symptom and performance validity

Susana Castellanos, Ph.D.
California School of Professional Psychology, AIU-Fresno 2005
Member, California Psychology Association
Clinical Activities: Geropsychology, home-based care, care-giver support, multidisciplinary collaboration, evidenced based therapy, general mental health; mindfulness based cognitive therapies and online therapy
Research Interests: Complex PTSD, military psychology, forensic psychology and veteran suicidality

Jessica Jean Baptiste, Ph.D.
Seton Hall University, 2015
Clinical Activities: palliative care psychologist at Brooklyn and St. Albans campuses, Psychological assessment, treatment of veteran patients & their families on inpatient Palliative Care and Hospice unit. Work with Home-Base Primary Care team to provide
cognitive assessment, psychological intervention and treatment planning for homebound veterans.
Research Interests: integrated health care, improving adherence oncological treatments, health literacy in vulnerable populations

Laura Scudellari, Psy.D.
Long Island University, Post campus, 2016
Clinical Activities: providing individual and group psychotherapeutic treatment to veterans residing at the Community Living Center of the St. Albans campus, geropsychology, caregiver support, palliative/hospice care, multidisciplinary collaboration, cognitive behavioral therapy, behavioral management.
Research Interests: the experience of caregivers of individuals with dementia, caregiver support, patients’ readiness to engage in psychotherapy

Consultants Involved in Training
Tara DeWitt, PhD, Ferkauf Graduate School/Yeshiva University, 2007
Clinical Health Psychologist
VA National MI/MET Consultant
Clinical Activities: Health psychology, motivational interviewing
Research Interests: Chronic disease management, health behavior change

Michelle Kehn, Ph.D., Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus, 2009
Clinical Psychologist, Home-based Primary Care - VA NY Campus Clinical activities: Providing neuropsychological and psychological assessment, treatment, and short-term psychotherapy to home-bound veterans; providing psychotherapy in the Geriatric Primary Care Clinic, group psychotherapy to older veterans, and consultation to palliative care
Research interests: Couples Therapy with Older Adults, Evidence-Based Treatment in the Home

Florine Thompson, MDIV, New York Theological Seminary
LMSW, Fordham University
Associate Supervisor, Association for Clinical Pastoral Education
Board Certification, Association of Professional Chaplains
Clinical Activities: religious and spiritual assessments; Geriatrics, Pediatric ICU, Crisis and bereavement
Application Information

VA New York Harbor Health Care System
Brooklyn Campus
Postdoctoral Residency in Geropsychology
2019-2020

We are recruiting 2 fellows for our one year Postdoctoral Residency in Geropsychology. Geropsychology Residents will have experiences in neuropsychological assessment, geriatric primary care and memory disorders clinic, geriatric cognitive rehabilitation, palliative care, psycho-oncology, and home-based primary care. Research opportunities are available as well.

The VA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applicants from diverse backgrounds regarding ethnic, racial, gender and personal backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Deadline for submission of application materials: January 4, 2019
Start Date: September 3, 2019
Stipend: $52,799
Benefits: 13 days annual leave, up to 13 days sick leave, health insurance

The Postdoctoral Residency Program in Geropsychology is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association.

General Qualifications
Eligible candidates must:
- be a U.S. citizen.
- be a student in good standing in an APA-accredited Clinical or Counseling psychology doctoral program, AND
- have completed a doctoral degree, including dissertation defense, from an APA or CPA-accredited Clinical or Counseling, or Combined Psychology or PCSAS accredited Clinical Science program prior to the start date of the fellowship. Note: Persons with a Ph.D. in another area of psychology who meet the APA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical or Counseling Psychology are also eligible to apply.
- successfully complete an APA or CPA-accredited psychology internship or completed a VA-sponsored internship. Exceptions: new VHA psychology internship programs that are in the process of applying for APA accreditation are acceptable in fulfillment of the internship requirement, provided that such programs were sanctioned by the VHA Central Office Program Director for Psychology and the VHA Central Office of Academic Affiliations at the time that the individual was an intern.
Policies
The VA New York Harbor postdoctoral fellowship program complies with all guidelines set forth by the Association of Psychology, Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). These policies can be accessed at the APPIC website www.appic.org.

The fellowship program also abides by all American Psychological Association guidelines and requirements. Questions related to the program’s accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC, 20002
(202) 336-5979
E-mail: apaaccred@apa.org
Web: www.apa.org/ed/accreditation

Application, Selection and Interview Process
We participate in the APPIC Psychology Postdoctoral Application Centralized Application Service (APPA-CAS). Please submit all the following application materials to the APPIC portal (https://appicpostdoc.liaisoncas.com).

They must be received by January 4, 2019.
- Statement of Interest
- Three letters of recommendation from clinical supervisors
- A letter of support from current Internship Training Director indicating that you are in good standing to successfully complete your predoctoral internship, including completion date. If already completed, mail a copy of your predoctoral internship certificate.
- If you have not completed your doctoral degree, include a letter from your dissertation chairperson describing your dissertation status and timeline.
- Current CV
- Graduate transcript

All completed applications are reviewed by the Training Committee. Based on a systematic review of all applications, some candidates are invited to interview. Interviews are normally held on the VANYHHS Brooklyn Campus, but telephone or video interviews can be arranged. We aim to notify all applicants regarding their interview status by January 25, 2019.

Please note: We will make offers on February 25, 2019. An applicant receiving an offer will be allowed to hold the offer for 24 hrs. Prior to February 25, we will consider
making a reciprocal offer if a top applicant receives a bona fide offer from another postdoctoral training program.

Please direct questions to: Dr. Valerie Abel
Director of Training
Postdoctoral Residency – Geropsychology
VA NY Harbor Healthcare System
Brooklyn Campus
800 Poly Place
Brooklyn, NY 11209
718-836-6600 X4795
Valerie.abel@va.gov