Student Ambassadors: 2021-2022

If you are considering a professional career in the world of psychology and human services and you are curious about becoming a member of the William James College community, our ambassadors can help guide you on your journey!

Student and alumni ambassadors are well positioned to share with you their valuable insights on how to achieve a healthy balance between your studies and other family and work obligations that you may experience, as well as offering their first-hand perspective of our campus culture.

Meet our 2021-2022 student ambassadors (organized by program).

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Adrianna Rosadio
Massachusetts
Stonehill College
Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Forensic and Correctional Counseling & Substance Use and Addictions Concentrations
Class of 2022
Adrianna_rosadio@williamjames.edu

Hello prospective students!

My name is Adrianna, and I am a student in the Mental Health Counseling Master’s program at William James College. My concentrations are in Forensic and Correctional Counseling, and Substance Use and Addictions. I have been working at Advocates, a non-profit human services agency, for over four years now, as a Therapeutic Youth Support. I have enjoyed this experience, and I am able to apply what I have learned in the classroom, to this job. I chose William James College because the school demonstrates a commitment to diversity, experiential learning, and clinical experience. The school and the various programs offered allow students to expand their experience in the mental health field, while including a social justice approach. I was informed about the school and it’s programs by a representative from William James College; they encouraged me to attend an
open house, where I was able to speak to current staff and faculty, and current students. I was able to hear about the opportunities and the experiences that the students had, and I was sold.

I graduated from Stonehill College with degrees in Criminology and Mediated Communication. I have always had an interest in the criminal justice system, but I wanted to expand this to include the mental health landscape as well. I was not entirely sure what I was looking for in a graduate program, but I knew I wanted to be able to gain meaningful experiences through my education. After hearing about how William James encourages advocacy, and incorporates social justice into its curriculum, I could not see myself anywhere else. I value that the school provides opportunities to advocate and to educate. The school not only provides a theoretical background to the field, but they also provide opportunities to learn through professional experience. This allows students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to a professional setting.

After graduation, I am looking forward to incorporating my concentrations, education, and advocacy into an outpatient setting, whether it be through a non-profit agency, or a private practice. I have a passion to treat individuals who are struggling with substance use because they are often met with judgment and scrutiny, and I want to change that. I also have a passion to treat individuals who might be at risk of becoming involved with the legal system, because I want to help them realize their potential and to guide them in a different direction. The mental health landscape is something that is prevalent, but it is not something that is always considered, so I want to help increase awareness and treatment. William James College is the exact place I need to be in order to achieve this goal.

The experience I have gotten from William James College is invaluable, and I know I will be able to use my education during the rest of my career. I am currently completing my internship at Family Continuity, as an outpatient counselor for youth and substance use, which is what I would like to do with my career. I would not have had this opportunity if I had not come to William James College, and I cannot recommend the school enough. My advice to incoming students is to take advantage of any opportunities that are given to you, because you never know what you will get from that. Also, make sure to develop relationships with your faculty and staff. I have established some great relationships that I will be able to maintain as professional contacts after graduation. They have encouraged me to take certain opportunities I might not have considered, motivated me to be an advocate for those who do not have one, and they have helped me become a more confident counselor. This is a great opportunity to expand your education, but also to gain self-reflection, so take advantage of it!

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions about the programs, my experience, or anything at all. Best of luck with your journey!
Cecilia Brennan

Massachusetts (originally from New Jersey)
Rowan University
Clinical Mental Health Counseling General Track
Class of 2023

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Hello, prospective students! I am in the master's in clinical mental health counseling program, General Track at William James College, graduating in 2023.

I am originally from New Jersey and moved to Massachusetts a few years ago. I attended Rowan University many years ago where I received a BA in psychology. My 30 + year professional background was in Corporate Human Resources. I made the decision to change careers to Clinical Mental Health Counseling. I chose WJC not only because of its strong mission of promoting inclusion and social justice, but also for how open and welcoming everyone was during the admissions process. I truly felt valued and encouraged. Returning to school after 30 years was quite intimidating, but WJC provides such support and genuine caring about their students. I am impressed with the quality of the curriculum and faculty here. I am experiencing firsthand how the curriculum is practically applied in my field placement.

I started at WJC in the spring of 2020, and I am a strong proponent of the January start/2.5 year track for completing this degree. Starting in January gave me ample time to find my footing in an academic setting without the additional pressure of a field placement. I also had time to find a field placement that fit my interests and location.

While my first two semesters took place via ZOOM, that did not deter the strong relationships I developed with my fellow students and faculty. The small class sizes whether via ZOOM or in person foster a sense of collaboration and engagement. I also take advantage of the many professional development opportunities that WJC offers.

I am so pleased with my selection of William James for my graduate program. If you have any questions about WJC, my path, or anything at all, please feel free to reach out.
Hi prospective students!

My name is Hayley Doneghey and I am from North Attleboro, Massachusetts. I am a full-time student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, with an emphasis in Forensic and Correctional Counseling. Before coming to WJC, I graduated from Franklin Pierce University with my BA in Psychology and a minor in Forensic Psychology.

When applying to graduate programs, a big thing that stood out to me was the wide range of concentrations and emphases that WJC had to offer. Knowing that I wanted to continue with the path I started during my undergrad, the Forensic and Correctional Counseling emphasis seemed like a perfect fit. Additionally, I learn most effectively when I am out in the field practicing the skills that we learn in the classroom, so the strong focus on practicum and internship experiences was extremely appealing to me as well. As someone who held several leadership positions academically and athletically at Franklin Pierce, I love that I can expand on those skills with the Academic Council Engaging Students (ACES) team here on campus. The close-knit community allowed me to form meaningful connections with several faculty members, as well as make some lifelong friends with other students in the program.

With the amount of stress and emotions that can come up while working in this field, my best piece of advice for first year students is to always have something outside of counseling that you can do when you need an escape from the work. For me, I coach a youth ice hockey team a few nights a week, and it is the perfect way for me to have fun and clear my head for a little while. Lastly, I would encourage you to lean on the faculty and your fellow students throughout your time in the program. Do not be afraid to ask for help. There is no point in trying to work through things on your own when you have the most supportive group of people working right beside you.

Please do not hesitate to reach with any questions, and good luck!!
Khristy Thompson

Massachusetts
Pennsylvania State University
Clinical Mental Health Counseling MA (on-campus)
Health and Behavioral Medicine Area of Emphasis
Class of 2023
khristy_thompson@williamjames.edu

Dear Prospective Students,

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to share my journey to William James College with you. I am a change of career student on the 2.5-year track. Originally from Pennsylvania, I moved to Massachusetts and was an active researcher and biology instructor. During that time, I was diagnosed with cancer and began a path towards finding a career where I could help counsel patients with health issues. A career transition at times felt like an overwhelming decision. William James College was mentioned by several individuals as a wonderful environment for an excellent education in clinical mental health counseling and a supportive atmosphere for change of career students. I have found both to be completely true.

My time at WJC began via Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions. Classes became an amazing space for discussion, and we developed a bond that has resulted in a support system that fosters learning and understanding. I became a member of the First-Generation Student Group through Zoom and discovered yet another group that provided support and academic advice.

My professional career interests are focused on eating disorders and developing programs to facilitate the transition from treatment to healing for cancer survivors. Based on my interests and desire to use the knowledge I gained from my previous career in biology I selected the health and behavior medicine emphasis. The coursework and additional offerings such as the Lunch Time Seminar Series have provided opportunities to develop my career goals and prepared me for my practicum placement.

My advice to new students is to connect with the faculty and students and be an active participate in the learning process. Take advantage of the resources that are available through the Academic Resource Center and attend seminars on topics that are new to you. Share your ideas with your fellow classmates and create spaces for working together.

Best wishes on your applications to graduate school! Please feel free to reach out with any questions.
Hello!

My name is Leslie Dolinar, and I am studying to be a Licensed Mental Health Counselor at William James College. I am a California native, who absolutely loves to travel, move around, and experience new cultures and people. After taking some time living and volunteering in orphanages in both Spain and Romania, as well as working locally in residential homes with incarcerated youth, I found my heart being pulled towards furthering my education in the mental health field. My experiences both locally and abroad have allowed me to see the good, the bad, and the beautiful and offered me a newfound sense of self-sufficiency and purpose.

When searching for graduate programs that could fulfill my unique desire to work both with youth involved in the criminal justice system and with international organizations, William James College was the perfect match. I was able to enroll in the forensic and correctional track, while simultaneously enrolling in the global mental health school wide concentration. Both areas of study have prompted me to receive clinical experience at placements that continue to enhance my skills and prepare me for my professional career.

To any prospective and or new students enrolling at William James College, my advice is to take advantage of the different emphases and concentrations offered. Each program has courses that are unique to each area of study, as well as faculty who are extremely passionate about offering students the most out of their education. My time at William James College has allowed me to develop a sincere rapport with both my professors and advisors, who I can confidently turn to for literally anything. The sense of community and support that comes with being a part of the WJC community are what make all the hard work of being a graduate student worth it!
Hello and welcome, prospective students!

I am a full-time student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, with an emphasis in forensic and correctional counseling, graduating in May 2022. I am originally from Massachusetts, living roughly an hour outside of Boston. As an undergraduate student in rural Ohio, I studied Psychology with a Philosophy minor and a Legal Studies concentration, and then I made my way back to New England. I spent two years working as a DBT Clinical Educator with adolescents in a residential program before starting my next chapter in higher education.

My graduate applications were guided by my long-term passion for correctional rehabilitation. I applied and received admittance to several programs with my desired emphasis, but William James College was the clear winner. I valued its focus on social responsibility, experiential education, and personal growth. The faculty were all welcoming and supportive, and the program seemed like a place where developing professionals could thrive.

The fieldwork training has been very rewarding. I worked as an In-Home Therapy intern with families and children at Y.O.U., Inc. and then as a Personal Care Counselor intern with prisoners at the MCI-Concord and NECC facilities. Both placements taught me lessons about my character and made me a better clinician.

It was unexpected to navigate graduate school during the Covid-19 pandemic, but I am grateful for William James College’s departmental leadership and faculty for responding swiftly and effectively to meet the diverse needs of students. Faculty show an abundance of care and concern for their students, which in turn teaches us to become nurturing counselors to our clients and ourselves.

This, too, would be my advice for incoming students: know your limits and boundaries, practice giving compassion and care to yourself (including through your own therapy), and dive deep into the resources, social support, learning opportunities, and professional network awaiting you at William James College.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions. I spoke with multiple student ambassadors before deciding on a graduate program, so I am grateful to pay it forward.
Thank you for your interest in the Clinical PsyD program at William James College! My name is Tin Huang. I was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. I am a first-generation college student and a daughter of Chinese immigrants. I obtained my Bachelor of Arts in Applied Psychology and Human Development, Sociology, and Special Education at Boston College. I have broad experience with underserved populations, ranging from children with severe special needs, homeless individuals, incarcerated students, adults and older adults with major mental illnesses and developmental disabilities, etc.

After graduating from Boston College in 2019, I took a year off before beginning my journey at William James College. I am a HRSA Specialized Training and Academic Retention (STAR) Fellow and in the Asian Mental Health Concentration. I am involved in the Academic Councils Engaging Students Committee (ACES), the Asian Student Group, the Geropsychology Volunteer Corps, the Climate Change Initiative, and the First-Generation Student Group at William James College. I currently work as a Behavior Technician at an organization that provides in-home and community Applied Behavior Analysis therapy to children with autism. My professional interests consist of becoming a culturally competent clinician to work with marginalized populations in the future and help break the stigma of mental illness in Asian communities.

My advice for new students would be to not be afraid to ask questions or reach out for support. I know it might be scary to reach out because you are worried about being viewed as incompetent by your professors or peers. However, people are not here to compete or judge, everyone here knows how demanding graduate school is and wants each other to succeed. Graduate school is going to be difficult but being able to advocate for yourself, utilizing the school resources, and reaching out to your cohort and professors will help greatly. Don’t be afraid to consult with your peers, schedule a meeting, ask for an extension or academic support! Transitioning into graduate school as a first-year student during the pandemic was challenging for me, but the year flew by so quickly because of the wonderful support that I had! The support is there, but you are going to have to ask for it. Please reach out to me if you have any questions about the Clinical PsyD program, scholarships, or Boston. You got this!
Welcome prospective William James students!

My name is Yohana Beraki and I am a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program here at William James. I grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana and attended Purdue University for my undergraduate degree where I studied Psychology and Business Management. I decided to escape the Midwest and move to the East Coast to pursue a master’s degree in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Counseling at Boston University and have stayed here ever since!

I chose William James for many reasons and one of them was the faculty. The faculty in this program are some of the most kind, considerate, supportive, encouraging, and knowledgeable people I have ever met. They are mentors, colleagues, cheerleaders, teachers, advocates and are in large part why William James College shined amongst the rest when I was selecting graduate programs. What also stood out was the ample amount of opportunities to get involved, get active and grow as a leader. At William James, I am involved in the Clinical Supervision research lab, the mentorship program in the bachelor’s program, the first-generation student group, the work study program, and I am an advanced standing student. I am also a Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH) fellow which allows me to connect to even more training and volunteer opportunities outside of William James.

My post-grad goals include becoming a licensed psychologist and serving children and families using evidence-based treatments. I am also interested in opening my own private practice, becoming a clinical supervisor (one day training director), teaching, and developing evidence-based programs in underserved communities.

The process of selecting and applying to graduate programs can be a rollercoaster and my best advice is to talk to folks. Talk to students who are currently in the programs you are considering (feel free to reach out!), connect with people who have the job that you want and learn how they got there, talk with psychologists and/or faculty to get a sense of whether this path feels right for you – just talk it out. And once you begin this journey, keep talking it out. It is so important to ask for support, build a network of peers and mentors, and seek opportunities to expand your knowledge and understanding in graduate school and beyond.

Please feel free to reach out if you want to chat about the program or have any questions. I am more than happy to geek out about the wild ride that is graduate school and share my experience if it feels relevant for you. Sending you the best of luck on this journey!
Hello prospective William James College students!

My name is Molly Church, and I am a student in the Clinical Psychology PsyD program. I am from a small town near Rochester, New York. I received my bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's degree from Tufts University. Prior to coming to William James, I worked in the field at an eating disorders clinic. My previous experience highlighted the importance of hands-on clinical work and training for my development as a psychologist. William James College stood out from other doctoral programs because of the focus on experiential training and beginning clinical work in the first year. The clinical training opportunities that the William James College field education department has available in the greater Boston area provide excellent training and clinical experiences. My practicum experiences while at William James have included sites at McLean Hospital and have received excellent training from those practicums. During my doctoral training at William James, I have had a generalist focus while in my coursework and overtime developed a specific focus on CBT theories and clinical interventions, particularly for anxiety disorders. I appreciated the coursework William James offers in a variety of theoretical orientations to have the opportunity to learn different frameworks and become a well-rounded psychologist. I have been involved with several research opportunities at William James College, including research with the Critical Thinking Quality Scale lab and the Death Anxiety Research Team. My professional career interests include specializing in anxiety, specifically the comorbidity between OCD and eating disorders. This interest developed from my practicum experiences and doctoral project during my time at William James College.

My advice to future William James College students is to reach out to and build relationships with professors. The professors at William James College are not only incredibly knowledgeable but also accessible and eager to help students further their development and training as psychologists. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me via email.
Leah Arisman
Illinois
Illinois State University
Clinical Psychology PsyD
Forensic Psychology Concentration
Class of 2026
Leah@arisman@williamjames.edu

Hello! My name is Leah Arisman, and I am a first-year student in the Clinical Psychology PsyD program. I am from Springfield, Illinois, so I moved quite a distance for this program.

I chose to come to William James College because of its reputation as a school that creates great psychologists. Also, I loved the fact that WJC has first-years start at practicum right away. It also helped that it is on the east coast, where I have always wanted to live! I am not involved in campus initiatives yet, but I am planning to become more and more involved. I am currently in a work study position at the Brenner Center scanning medical records.

I plan on concentrating on Forensics as my career goals are in that area; I would like to work in prisons doing therapy, being an expert witness in court, and doing assessments for ability to stand trial. Incoming first years, remember that you are here to learn first and foremost; the grades will follow! Feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have.
Nicole Poulter
Connecticut
Berklee College of Music
Clinical Psychology PsyD
Class of 2024
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Originally from Connecticut, I moved to Boston in 2009 to attend Berklee College of Music to study Music Therapy and Vocal Performance. I worked as a full-time musician, music therapist and teacher prior to pursuing my doctorate in psychology. As much as I loved music and continue to incorporate music therapy into my clinical work, I wanted to fill the holes in my education to better help my clients and students. I chose William James College because of their emphasis on both theory and practice, field education experiences and the exceptional professors.

I have been involved with ACES (Leadership) since my first year. I started as an active member and became the LEAD representative during my 3rd year. My role includes advocating for students' needs and developing initiatives that will help improve the student experience. Additionally, I founded and co-lead the Music and Psychology club, which provides students with a space to connect over music and how to incorporate it into our practice in meaningful ways.

My goal is to work in an outpatient setting with children, adolescents, young adults, as well as families and couples. I hope to work with individuals struggling with anxiety, depression, trauma and eating disorders. Additionally, during my time at William James, I have developed a passion for assessment. I plan to incorporate assessment in my future training and career, with an emphasis on diagnostic questions relating to learning disorder, ADHD, Autism, and personality disorders.

My advice to prospective or incoming students is to find people and resources that will help you grow. Utilize every resource WJC has to offer you, and that includes the knowledge and support of professors. Don’t be afraid to ask questions or advocate for what you need. Have an idea of what you want to work towards but accept any opportunities to uncover new interests. Most importantly, a doctoral program is not always easy, but you must take care of yourself, both physically and mentally health. Always make time for yourself and the other important people in your life.

Good luck with the application process, and hope you'll reach out with any questions!
Colleen Rooney

Massachusetts
Boston University
Clinical Psychology PsyD

Class of 2024

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Welcome prospective students! My name is Colleen Rooney, and I am a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology PsyD program. I’m originally from Grafton Massachusetts, and I graduated from Boston University my psychology degree in 2018.

After graduating, I was unsure of what my next step would be, so I met with a representative on the William James admissions team to learn about the school and the possibilities that it offered. Although I had debated taking some time to work in the field or in research, I knew upon visiting the school, speaking with students and faculty, and shadowing a class that William James was the right place for me.

A few things that drew me to William James were the passionate professors, the ability to explore numerous aspects of psychology throughout my time here, and its commitment to serving the underserved. I liked the close-knit community that it fostered and felt invigorated to be surrounded by people who were passionate about helping others. It was important to me to get hands-on clinical experience in my first year, and WJC offered that. I also appreciated that unlike some programs, I could try new things throughout my time and would not be committed to a specific clinical or research area. This has given me the space to explore and to find what really excites me—right now, that is my research on weight stigma and disordered eating.

I am involved on campus as a tutor for the Academic Resource Center (ARC), as a teaching assistant for classes on research and the treatment of substance use disorders, as a student mentor, and previously as a member of the Veterans’ Experiential Learning Group. I found that having open and honest conversations with veteran students about their experiences helped me to be more thoughtful and culturally competent in my work with veterans at VA Boston.

My career interests vary from providing psychotherapy, administering psychological assessments, and teaching—all three experiences that I have been fortunate to have in my training thus far. I have taken a generalist approach to my training, which has allowed me to work with individuals across the lifespan with various diagnoses in community mental health, VA hospital, and private practice settings. This generalist training has helped me to find the things that excite me while also preparing me to be a well-roundedclinician.

My advice is to take advantage of everything William James has to offer. Whether that be joining a new club, building relationships with professors and classmates, or attending guest lectures, there are many ways to immerse yourself in the community and to find your niche.
Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions about the school or my experience here. I am so pleased with my decision to attend William James and am very grateful for the experiences that it has afforded me. I wish you the best of luck in making your decision!

Kevin Narine

New York University of Pennsylvania Clinical Psychology PsyD Class of 2025

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I am a clinical psychology doctoral student at WJC, where I am a Serving the Mental Health Needs of the Underserved Scholarship Recipient and a Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH) Fellow. I am emphasizing in Asian Mental Health. I received my bachelor’s degree in psychology with a minor in Gender, Sexuality & Women’s Studies from the University of Pennsylvania in 2018. Prior to graduate school, I was trained as a research assistant at the Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety at the University of Pennsylvania under Dr. Edna Foa. My research and clinical interests include developing and implementing affirmative, evidence-based treatments for anxiety-related disorders and trauma-related disorders in culturally diverse communities, including marginalized subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities). In addition, I am interested in the traumatic sequelae of racism and ways in which systemic oppression relate to the development and maintenance of anxiety and trauma-related conditions.

At WJC, I am a student research assistant at CMGMH and McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School’s Cognition and Affect Research and Education (CARE) lab. I assist in projects related to cultural factors impacting disparities (e.g., suicide risk) and treatment response. I am also a teaching assistant for several courses in the clinical psychology department.

For new students, I recommend that you connect with mentors in WJC’s faculty listing who share similar interests and discuss potential goals in the program (e.g., getting training in evidence-based treatments, involvement in research, etc.). Additionally, I recommend finding friends who care about and support you throughout your training.
My name is Amanda Derby, and I am Doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology PsyD program. I grew up right here in Newton, Massachusetts. I attended Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA for undergrad and Harvard’s Graduate School of Education in Cambridge, MA for my masters. While in my master’s program and immediately following, I worked for Jewish Family & Children’s Services educating teenagers about dating violence and at the Beginnings Child Development Center as a Research Coordinator. Next, I spent two and a half years working as an in-home behavior therapist utilizing Applied Behavioral Analysis with children and adolescents diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is where I found my passion (and ultimate career goals) of working with children with ASD and anxiety.

I am currently enrolled in the Children and Families for Adversity and Resilience (CFAR) concentration offered at William James, This year, my practicum placement is at Mclean’s Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Institute and last year I was at Solomon Schechter Day School. I chose to attend William James College because of the immediate practical experience offered. Having worked full-time with children, I was eager to continue developing my skills with a clinical focus. I loved that WJC assisted us prior to matriculation so that we could begin our training as soon as school began.

My advice to new students would be this: open yourself to ALL experiences. While my passion is working with children, specifically those with anxiety and ASD, working with adults at the residential hospital level is teaching me so much more in ways I could never have imagined. I have truly loved my experience this year. By remaining open and taking advantage of all that WJC has to offer, I have explored different clinical paths I might not have otherwise pursued.

I would love to talk to you further on my experience at William James and hear about your interests and career aspirations! Please feel free to reach out to me at amanda_derby@williamjames.edu
Applied Behavior Analysis

Shayna Rahwan

Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, BA Psychology
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) MA

Class of 2022

shayna_rahwan@williamjames.edu

My name is Shayna Rahwan and I am currently enrolled in the Applied Behavior Analysis MA program here at William James College. I received my bachelor’s degree at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth with a major in Psychology. Before and throughout my time here at WJC, I have worked at The League School of Greater Boston.

What attracted me to William James College was how it emphasizes many different areas of Psychology. The Applied Behavior Analysis program at WJC gives me the opportunity to sit for the BCBA exam and the opportunity to a Licensed Behavior Analyst. So far, the professors in the ABA program have been extremely effective and have drastically extended my knowledge in the field, making me more successful at my current workplace. While my primary goal is to become a BCBA/LABA, I would eventually like to conduct research studies. While I am not at work or studying, I am spending time with my friends and my dog!

My advice to first-year students attending WJC is to stay confident and remember why you entered the program you’re in. Graduate school can be very intimidating, but WJC makes it very easy to learn and gain experience needed to be successful in your field. I also recommend reaching out to your professors, utilizing the Academic Resource Center (ARC) and your classmates as needed. Remember, your classmates are in the same boat you are in! Do not be afraid to reach out and have discussions!
I started my career in the retail and food service industries while completing my Bachelor of Arts degree in Chicago, Illinois. After a few years working with customers and leading hourly employees as a store manager, I was able to make the transition onto a small corporate team as the training and development leader for a young, growing company. In that role, I designed and implemented new hire onboarding and developmental training programs, leadership workshops, performance development initiatives, employee engagement events, and so much more. I learned a lot on my own, but I felt like I was missing important key skills and competencies that would have benefitted me and my work in that role.

Once I knew for certain that people development was where I truly wanted to focus my work, I looked into organizational development degree programs and found William James College. I went to the virtual open house and reached out to the program director to learn more. Everyone that I encountered at William James was not only timely in their responses but incredibly authentic and supportive in their communications with me. Right away, I knew I belonged here.

The MAOP program has been a fantastic fit. The instructors are genuine, supportive and give great feedback. The cohort model really works to build a support network of peers and future colleagues that you can learn from and lean on with questions about the coursework. I encourage anyone interested in a degree in organizational development, organizational psychology, or talent management to consider the MAOP program at William James.

The application process can be intimidating but I have found that if you take time to reach out and talk to people who work or study at William James, your confidence will greatly improve, and your nerves will be calmed. If you have any questions about my experience here, please do not hesitate to reach out!
Hi all! My name is Maddie and I am from East Greenwich, RI. I am currently a student in the School Psychology MA/CAGS program. I received my bachelor's degree from Union College where I studied English and Psychology. Prior to joining William James College, I worked as a Kindergarten Montessori teacher in Rhode Island. I have always been passionate about working with children, and I found school psychology to be the perfect role to combine that passion with my interests in psychology and mental health. My professional interests in school psychology include counseling, consultation, and social & emotional learning. In my free time, I love to bake, spend time with friends, and take my dog to the beach or for a hike!

I chose William James College for a number of reasons. Most importantly, when I visited the school on interview day, I immediately felt at home. The faculty and other school psychology students cared about getting to know me and all other prospective students just as much as we cared about getting to know them. The small program sizes at WJC really support an environment where each individual is appreciated for their unique backgrounds and strengths. Another reason why William James College stands out to me is because of their incredibly knowledgeable instructors who each express a true passion for school psychology. I find myself learning so much in just one class, and my confidence in my abilities grows each day under the support of my instructors here at WJC. As school psychology professionals that are trained in supporting the wellbeing of students, the instructors are incredibly supportive of graduate students in the program and offer flexibility and support during stressful times.

Having the opportunity to engage in field work at a practicum site your first year in the program is also something unique to WJC. Getting to work in the field while taking classes truly advances your career path and allows you to understand class material in a deeper way.

If you are a new student to William James College, I would encourage you to take advantage of all of the experienced and brilliant professionals around you for help and support. Ask many questions and utilize the supports around you whether it be through instructors, professionals at the Academic Resource Center (ARC), or your classmates.

If you have any questions about William James College or school psychology in general, please feel free to reach out to me!
Hello, my name is Emily Seiple, and I am currently enrolled in the School Psychology MA/CAGS program here at William James College. I received my bachelor’s degree from Colgate University in Hamilton, NY with a major in Educational Studies and a minor in Sociology. Prior to attending William James College, I completed a year of service with City Year Boston.

One of the reasons I chose the School Psychology MA/CAGS program at William James College was because of the welcoming and collaborative environment. During my undergraduate time, I benefited greatly from the strong connections I formed with my peers in my major and the professors. It helped me grow both intellectually and professionally. William James College provides that same environment. There is a strong sense of community at William James College. The faculty truly want you to succeed and will support you in the ways you need. They push you to explore your interests and to grow professionally.

In addition to the environment, I also chose William James College because of the training experience it provides. Unlike many programs, William James College has students start their fieldwork in their first year, rather than the second. This allows students to have three years of hands-on experience, working in different school settings with different aged students, truly preparing them for their work ahead.

One piece of advice I have for new students is to take advantage of opportunities faculty provide. Over this past year, I had the opportunity to work with one professor and a small group of fellow students to create and analyze a survey to aid a nearby school district on how to improve their therapeutic program. I also worked with another professor and student to submit a proposal to present at the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Annual Convention on conducting a remote Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA). These are two unique opportunities that have allowed me to gain more experience outside of classes and fieldwork.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have about William James College or the School Psychology MA/CAGS program. I am happy to answer!
Elisa Huerta
New York & Spain
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Hi, my name is Elisa Huerta. I grew up splitting my time between Queens, NYC and Spain. I moved to New England in the spring of 2020. I am a MA/CAGS student in the School Psychology Program at William James College. I graduated from Union College in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience. After graduation, I spent a year teaching English in La Mancha, Spain. I decided to move back to New York and became a high school biology teacher for four years. While I loved being a teacher, I saw that my students had very specific needs that I was not able to address or support. I did some research and found School Psychology was the perfect combination of working in a school with students, while also being an educational and mental health professional.

I knew my husband and I wanted to move to the Boston area, so I researched all the schools in the area. As soon as I stepped into William James College for Open House, I knew it was the best place for me. The faculty are all warm and welcoming, and the school community places an enormous emphasis on social justice and instilling cultural awareness into the students. I also loved knowing that William James put students into schools immediately, because I learn best when applying theories to real world situations.

In addition to being a part of the school psychology program, I am completing an emphasis in the Latino Mental Health program, I am an interpreter for the Brenner Center, and I am the School Psychology Department ACE (Academic Councils Engaging Students) for my cohort. As the ACE, I work as the link between my cohort and faculty members to address questions and ensure our success within the school. Thanks to these experiences, I have been able to meet students and faculty from different programs and expand my knowledge. Everyone within the community is welcoming and ready to collaborate.

My professional interests include serving underrepresented communities, particularly immigrant students and English language learners. I am incredibly interested in providing mental health supports to students who may not have access to resources outside of school. My first language is Spanish, and I speak it both at home and in my practicum site.

My best advice for new students is to come to William James College with unbridled curiosity. Ask questions often and whenever you are unsure. Understand that you will make mistakes – we’re all learning and absorbing new information. The goal is to continue to improve throughout your time at school, not to be perfect on day one. Additionally, immerse yourself in your school from the beginning. Build relationships with not only your supervisor, but teachers, staff members, and all your students. Finally, make sure to work on your self-care. It’s easy in
graduate school to become hyper focused on everything you need to do and read, but that will lead to burn out and exhaustion quickly. Find things that work for you – reading a book, watching a show, playing an instrument- and make time for them during the week.

Feel free to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or curiosities you may have about William James College or School Psychology specifically.

Welcome!