



DIRECTOR'S UPDATE



I am delighted to announce that Jennifer Naylor, PhD, is the new Deputy Director for the Mid-Atlantic MIRECC, as of September 27, 2020. Over the past 18 months, Dr. Naylor served as the Co-Director of our Clinical Core, bringing energy and vision to this role. An accomplished experimental and clinical psychologist, Dr. Naylor started with our MIRECC as a junior investigator with her own Career Development Award and held the position of Assistant Director of our Clinical Interventions and Metabolomics Laboratory. She is an accomplished clinician-scientist and her research and clinical interests include the development of novel therapeutic interventions for chronic pain and commonly co-occurring disorders. Welcome, Dr. Naylor, to the Deputy Director role.

I would also like to welcome Wilfredo López-Ojeda, PhD, MS, RT(R), ARRT as the new Assistant Director of Education, as of August 3, 2020. Dr. López received his PhD in clinical anatomy and addictive disorders. He comes to us most recently from Kaiser Permanente Medical School in Pasadena, California. Dr. López-Ojeda is nationally and internationally known for his innovative work in teaching neuroanatomy, gross anatomy, and the implementation of 3-D virtual reality and holographic anatomical teaching tools for medical students. In addition to his teaching expertise, Dr. López-Ojeda has been a founding faculty at three LCME accredited medical schools and has expertise in neuroimaging and management of imaging centers, prior to his PhD. Welcome, Dr. López-Ojeda, to the VISN 6 MIRECC!

We are both sad and proud that Dr. Mira Brancu - our first Deputy Director - was recruited to a new position at VA's National Center for Organizational Development (NCOD). The Mid-Atlantic MIRECC has benefitted immensely from Dr. Brancu's outstanding expertise and experience in organizational leadership and management; her wonderful collaborative spirit and mentoring skill; and her deep knowledge of VA research and administrative policy and operations. Heartfelt thanks to Dr. Brancu for all that she did to develop, grow, and sustain the Mid-Atlantic MIRECC over the past decade. We wish her all the best in her exciting new role with NCOD.

Our 5-year Reverse Site Visit (RSV) with OMHSP leadership and an expert panel of reviewers was held online on August 25, 2020. This was the first RSV virtual meeting for a VA mental health center of excellence, and the result was the successful renewal of core funding for the next five-year cycle, beginning with FY 2021. Many thanks to the MIRECC investigators and staff whose diligent dedication to our mission made this positive outcome possible. We are grateful to have this opportunity to continue our collaborative multisite scientific, educational, and clinical work to meet our mission of service to Veterans.

John A. Fairbank, PhD.
 Director, Mid-Atlantic (VISN 6) MIRECC



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MID-ATLANTIC MIRECC UPDATE

Transitions 



Dr. Jennifer Naylor, PhD has been named the new Deputy Director of the VISN 6 MIRECC. She is actively engaged in clinical research and various service-related activities at the local, regional and national levels. She is currently independently funded by a VA CSRD Merit Review to conduct a randomized clinical trial using a novel neurosteroid intervention for the treatment of PTSD. Dr. Naylor also serves as Co-Chair of the Durham VA Institutional Review Board (IRB) and is member of the RR&D Scientific Review Board and Chair of the Subcommittee on Career Development. Dr. Naylor is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Duke University School of Medicine.

Education Core 



Dr. Wilfredo López-Ojeda has been named the new Assistant Director for Education, Research and Academic Affairs. Dr. López-Ojeda has a robust imaging background from the Orlando Regional Medical Center (ORMC) in Florida, where he acted as Director of the Radiology and Imaging Services Department at Health Central Hospital. He is also a published author of varied articles, textbooks and laboratory manuals that integrate basic and clinical science concepts of anatomy, neuroscience, histology and physiology. Dr. López-Ojeda currently serves as an editor and reviewer of reputable scientific platforms and journals. He is also trained as a master medical educator and scholar and has a long trajectory of teaching and learning scholarship for undergraduate medical education in varied anatomy disciplines.

López-Ojeda holds faculty appointments at Wake Forest School of Medicine (WFSM) and Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM).

Stay Up to Date on Mid-Atlantic MIRECC
 Contact (leonard.deshield@va.gov) to ensure you're on the mailing list to receive copies of our newsletter. 

Next Issue: December 2020

Education and Dissemination

 Grants & Funding



PI: **Dr. Rajendra Morey** (MIRECC Faculty & Neuroimaging Lab Director), Mapping Subject-Specific Structural and Functional Connectivity to Parse the Unique Contributions of Subconcussive Blast, Mild TBI, and PTSD.

Funded by: **VA, Office of Research and Development Merit Award.**

Invited Lectures

Dr. Robin Hurley (MIRECC Associate Director of Education) was invited to present on the **"Relationships between Substance Abuse and TBI: the perspective of a neuropsychiatrist."** The meeting was held virtually during the Richmond 2020 Outpatient Polytrauma Conference - From War to Home: Outpatient Polytrauma (Sept).

Video Lectures

Dr. Wilfredo López-Ojeda (MIRECC Asst. Director of Education) presented a video lecture on **"Context Matter to Promote Adult Learning in Medical Education."** Our latest addition to the Series of Lectures for preceptors, residents and students.

Webinars

Dr. Sarah Martindale (MIRECC Research Scientist) and **Dr. Jared Rowland** (MIRECC Research Psychologist) presented their findings of TBI that occurs during deployment at the VA, HSR&D CyberSeminar Series held in September. The webinar was entitled **"Sequelae of Deployment TBI in Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans."** To watch the video [click here](#)




For more information about Post-Deployment Mental Health and Wellness, [click here](#) to visit our website.

To develop, disseminate and apply scientific knowledge and best practices to enhance post-deployment mental health and wellness for our Nation's Veterans and their families.

PROGRAM UPDATE



In the News



Vanderbilt Divinity and VA Partner on Doctor of Ministry for Chaplains

A new partnership between Vanderbilt Divinity School and Mental Health and Chaplaincy, a national program of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Veterans Health Administration, relaunched a doctor of ministry program at Vanderbilt. The program aims to equip chaplains with best practices for providing high-quality, evidence-based care for persons with diverse psychosocial-spiritual needs. ([Read more](#)).

For more information about MH&C, [click here](#)



VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Invited Presentations:

Nieuwsma, JA (June 2020). *Research and Evidence-based Care in Healthcare Chaplaincy*. Webinar delivered to Baylor Scott & White Clinical Pastoral Education Program, Temple, TX **(virtual)**.

Nieuwsma, JA & Sullivan, S. (July 2020). *Mental Health and Chaplaincy: Equipping for collaboration and Building Communities of Care*. Delivered on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives webinar series, Washington, DC. **(virtual)**.

Smigelsky, M, Sullivan, S, & Wortmann, J (August 2020). *Collaborating in Care: Ministry and mental health*. Half-day seminar presented as part of the Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies annual gathering. **(virtual)**.

Research Presentation:

Khan, A, Klassen, B, Smigelsky, M. & Wilkins, A. (2020). *Moral injury in Military and Veterans: Considerations for clinical supervision and consultation*. American Psychological Association Annual Conference. **(virtual)**.

Poster Presentations:

King, HA, Ferguson, S, Choate, A, White, BS, Smigelsky, MA, Morris, IJ, Hastings, SN, Jackson, GL (2020). *Development of a Rapid Response Review: An innovative model to meet demand, deepen skills, and broaden the scientific base through partnerships*. Academy Health Annual Research Meeting. **(virtual)**.

King, HA, Parry, KJ, Alkon, A, Ferguson, S, Fernandez, P, Hicken, BL, Jackson, GL, McKnight, L, Meador, KG, Olsen, MK, Perry, KR, Woolson, SL, Wortmann, JH, Nieuwsma, JA. (June 2020). *Establishing a Unique Partnership to Conduct Innovative Mixed Methods Mental Health Research and Maximize Impact: Moral injury in rural Veterans project*. AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting Conference. **(virtual)**.

PUBLICATIONS

Currier, JM, Drescher, KD, and Nieuwsma, JA. (2020). *Introduction to moral injury*. In JM Currier, KD, Drescher, and JA Nieuwsma (Eds.). *Addressing Moral Injury in clinical practice*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ([Read more](#)).

Currier, JM, Drescher, KD, and Nieuwsma, JA. (2020). *Future directions for addressing moral injury in clinical practice: Concluding comments*. In J.M. Currier, K.D. Drescher, and J.A. Nieuwsma (Eds.), *Addressing moral injury in clinical practice*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ([Read more](#)).

George, BA, Bountress, KE, Brown, RC, Hawn, SE, Brown, EA, McDonald SD, Pickett, T., Danielson, CK, Sheerin, CM, & Amstadter AB. (2020). *Does prior trauma moderate the relationship between combat trauma and post-deployment mental health symptoms?* *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. (in press). ([Read more](#)).

Morland, LA, Wells, SY, Glassman, LH, Greene, CJ, Hoffman, JE, & Rosen, CS. (2020). *Advances in PTSD treatment delivery: Review of findings and clinical considerations for use of telehealth interventions for PTSD*. *Current Treatment Options in Psychiatry*. ([Read more](#)).

Nieuwsma, JA, Brancu, M, Wortmann, J, Smigelsky, MA, King, HA, VISN 6 MIRECC Workgroup, & Meador, KG. (2020). *Screening for Moral Injury and Comparatively Evaluating Moral Injury Measures in Relation to Mental Illness Symptomatology, Course, and Diagnosis*. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*. ([Read more](#)).

Nieuwsma, JA, Smigelsky, MA, Wortmann, JH, Haynes, K, and Meador, KG. (2020). *Collaborating with Chaplaincy and Ministry Professionals in Addressing Moral Injury*. In J.M. Currier, K.D. Drescher, and J.A. Nieuwsma (Eds.). *Addressing moral injury in clinical practice*. American Psychological Association. ([Read more](#)).

Pierce, BS, Perrin, PB, & McDonald, SD. (2020). *Pre-COVID-19 deterrents to practicing with Videoconferencing Telepsychology among Psychologists who didn't*. *Psychological Services*. (in press).

Pierce, BS, Perrin, PB, Tyler, CM, McKee, GB, & Watson, JD. (2020). *The COVID-19 Telepsychology Revolution: A National Study of Pandemic-Based Changes in U.S. Mental Health Care Delivery*. *American Psychologist*. ([Read more](#)).

Shura, RD, Epstein, EL, Ord, AS., Martindale, SL, Rowland, JA, Brearly, TW, & Taber, KH. (2020). *Relationship Between Intelligence and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Veterans*. *Intelligence*, 82. ([Read more](#)).

Smigelsky, MA, Nieuwsma, J.A., Meador, K., Vega, RJ, Henderson, B, & Jackson, GL. (2020). *Dynamic Diffusion Network: Advancing Moral Injury Care and Suicide Prevention Using an Innovative Model*. *Healthcare*. ([Read more](#)).

Wells, SY, Morland, LA, Wilhite, ER, Grubbs, KM, Rauch, SAM, Acierno, R, & McLean, CP (2020). *Delivering prolonged exposure therapy via video conferencing during the COVID-19 pandemic: An Overview of the research and special considerations for providers*. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. ([Read more](#)).

Wells, SY, Wilhite, ER, Morland, LA, & McLean, CP (2020). *Implementing PE during the COVID-19 pandemic: Tips and adaptations*. *ISTSS Trauma Blog*. ([Read more](#)).

RESOURCES FOR VETERANS & FAMILIES



For more resources, visit our website by clicking [here](#).

Self-help materials can provide valuable education and support for Veterans who may be facing mental health challenges, their friends, and family members. There are a wide variety of self-help materials available and it can sometimes be difficult to select the most useful. VA has assembled a list of reviewer-recommended materials that may be helpful in finding the right option for you.

For help in finding these materials, please click the "How to Use" tab.

Resource Topics:

General Mental Health, Depression & Anxiety, PTSD and Substance Abuse.

ONLINE LIFE TRAINING SKILLS FOR VETERANS

There are several free and anonymous on-line education and life coaching programs that use interactive exercises and video demonstrations to teach skills for overcoming life challenges.

For more information, click [here](#).



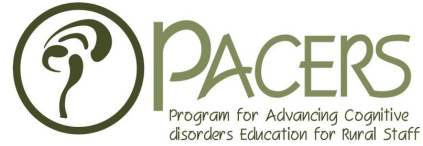
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS



The DMVA Resource Guide is produced and published by the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to assist and educate veterans in learning about state and federal veteran benefits.

The 2020 edition is now available. View or Download by clicking [here](#).

PROVIDER EDUCATION



PACERS is an education program for health care staff who care for Veterans with cognitive disorders and their caregivers. While this program targets rural health care staff, providers working in any setting can benefit from this information.

The PACERS online training curriculum includes six e-learning courses; each course is accredited for 1 hour of continuing education. There are also 5 videos that cover important topics related to cognitive impairment, including driving, self-neglect, challenging behaviors, Alzheimer's disease, and end-of-life.



VA Providers: Take courses using TMS links
Non-VA Providers: Use TRAIN links

- Course 1:** Driving and Demential-Hanging up the Keys.
- Course 2:** How to Deliver the Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease.
- Course 3:** How to Have an End of Life Discussion.
- Course 4:** How to Identify Self-Neglect.
- Course 5:** Addressing Decision Making and Safety in Dementia.

VISIT [PACERS](#) for links to each course



UPCOMING WEBINARS

Nov. 18 & 19:
Ethics of using VVC for Veterans with Mobility and Sensory Impairments (9am-10am EST).

Dec. 9 & 10:
Pain Management (9-10am EST).

VISIT [PACERS](#) for direct links to webinars.

Check the website for previous webinars in this series available for credit in TMS.



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