



International Society
for Traumatic Stress Studies

**41st
Annual Meeting**

AWARDS

Frontiers in Traumatic Stress:
Global Perspectives and Creative Solutions
September 17 - 20, 2025

Baltimore Marriott Waterfront
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Lifetime Achievement Award



Marylene Cloitre, Ph.D.

Dr. Marylene Cloitre is a Senior Research Scientist and Research Professor of the NYU Silver School of Social Work. Her long-standing research and clinical interests have concerned the long-term effects of psychological trauma on the social and emotional functioning of children, youth and adults. She played a central role in the organization of the mental health response to the 9/11 attacks in New York City and is a member of the advisory board for the 9/11 Memorial Museum. She was a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) ICD-11 working group on trauma-spectrum disorders and helped guide the development of the Complex PTSD diagnosis implemented by the WHO. Her current research is dedicated to the development of effective, patient-tailored, flexibly delivered mental health programs for PTSD, Complex PTSD and other trauma-related problems.

Allwood Award for Excellence in Trauma Services for the Underserved



Prof. Eugene Rutembesa

Dr. Eugene Rutembesa is a Full Professor of Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology at the University of Rwanda's College of Medicine and Health Sciences. A leading expert in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPS) in Rwanda and Great Lacs Region, his work has focused on trauma and resilience among survivors of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and other mass violence events. He also explores the psychological and epigenetic pathways of PTSD transmission in conflict-affected communities across the East and Central Africa. Dr. Rutembesa plays a key role in crisis interventions specifically in Rwanda and DRC and currently oversees mental health programs in six Rwandan refugee camps, in collaboration with international organizations.

Robert S. Laufer, PhD, Memorial Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievement



Shira Maguen, Ph.D.

Shira Maguen, Ph.D. is Mental Health Director of the Post-9/11 Integrated Care Clinic and Staff Psychologist on the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team (PCT) at the San Francisco VA Health Care System (SFVAHCS), and Interim Vice Chair of SFVAHCS and Professor in the Dept. of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, UCSF School of Medicine. Dr. Maguen is also the San Francisco site co-lead for the VA Women's Practice Based Research Network (PBRN) and Director of the SFVAHCS PTSD MIRECC Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. Her research interests fall under the umbrella of PTSD, moral injury, and suicide, and include risk and resilience factors in veterans, with a particular focus on female veterans. Dr. Maguen was the recipient of a VA Health Services Research and Development Grant that examined the impact of killing in veterans of war and moral injury and recently completed a multi-site trial examining a novel treatment for veterans who have killed in war. Dr. Maguen is the author of over 200 peer-reviewed publications, most of which focus on veteran mental health. She also works in a clinical capacity within the Post-9/11 Integrated Care Clinic and treating veterans with evidence-based treatments for PTSD. She supervises research health fellows and other trainees in evidence-based treatments for PTSD, and provides mentorship for trauma-focused research fellows.

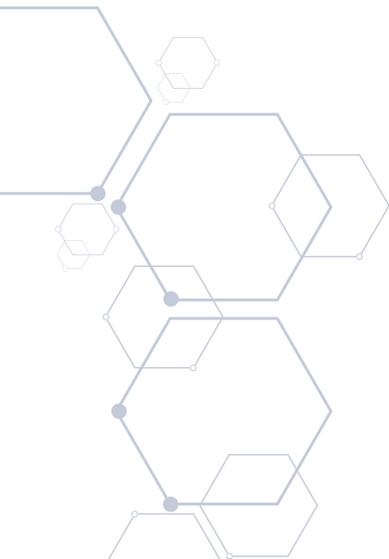


ISTSS Outstanding Service Award



Harold S. Kudler, M.D.

Dr. Kudler received his M.D. from Downstate Medical Center, trained in Psychiatry at Yale and is Medical Associate Professor at Duke and Adjunct Professor at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. From 2000 through 2005, he co-chaired the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA's) Special Committee on PTSD which reports directly to Congress. He has served on the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Board of Directors, co-led development of joint VA/Department of Defense Guidelines for the Management of Posttraumatic Stress and advised Sesame Street's Talk Listen Connect series for military families. From 2004 to 2014, he was Associate Director of VA's Mid-Atlantic Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) on Deployment Mental Health. From 2006 to 2014, he co-led the North Carolina Governor's Focus on Returning Military Members and their Families. In July 2014, he joined VA Central Office in Washington DC as Chief Consultant for Mental Health Services. Starting in May 2017, he served as Acting Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Patient Care Services until his retirement from VA in June 2018. A Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, Dr. Kudler plays a leadership role in a number of mental health organizations including the International Center for Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Dr. Kudler is the immediate Past President of the Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas and chairs the Service Members and Veterans Initiative of the American Psychoanalytic Association and the Military and Veterans Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry.



Mid-Career Innovation Award



Arash Javanbakht, M.D.

Arash Javanbakht, M.D., is a psychiatrist and founding director of the Stress, Trauma, and Anxiety Research Clinic (STARC) at Wayne State University School of Medicine. He is nationally known for his clinical and research work on anxiety, trauma, and PTSD. He is heavily involved in treatment of civilians, refugees, and first responders with PTSD. Dr Javanbakht researches the epigenetic, autonomic, psychological, and environmental factors of risk and resilience among refugee children and adults, funded by an NICHD R01. STARC also pioneers art and body based interventions for refugee families. Dr Javanbakht work in treatment and research of trauma among first responders is funded by the State of Michigan. He is a national leader in utilization of patented artificial intelligence enhanced augmented reality technologies for treatment for anxiety disorders and PTSD, specifically among first responders. This work is funded by the State of Michigan, and the DoD. Dr Javanbakht is recipient of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America Distinguished Member Award, The Society for Biological Psychiatry Humanitarian Award, and International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Distinguished Member Award. Dr Javanbakht's work has been featured on the CNN, NPR, Scientific American, Washington Post, Smithsonian, PBS, Science, Lancet, and tens of other media outlets. He is the author of the book "Afraid: Understanding the Purpose of Fear, and Harnessing the Power of Anxiety"

Chaim and Bela Danieli Award



NICOLE RACINE, PH.D., C.PSYCH.

Dr. Racine is a clinical psychologist, associate professor, and Director of the Early Lab at the University of Ottawa, Canada. She holds the Research Chair in Child and Youth Mental Health at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario where she collaborates with clinicians and community partners to conduct research on child trauma. Her research examines the impact of early adversity in early childhood and identifies prevention and intervention approaches that promote resilience.

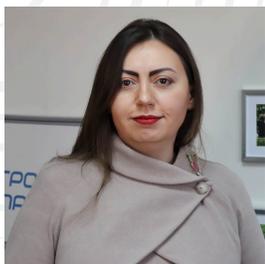
Sarah Haley Memorial Award for Clinical Excellence



Kristine Burkman, Ph.D.

Dr. Kristine Burkman is a clinical psychologist who spent over 15 years as a front-line clinician and researcher at the San Francisco VA Healthcare System, specializing in traumatic stress, substance use, and moral injury. As an Associate Clinical Professor at UCSF, she trained dozens of interdisciplinary residents in providing psychotherapy for combat veterans and co-authored the textbook *Group Approaches to Treating Traumatic Stress*. Last year, Dr. Burkman shifted her focus to advancing therapeutic strategies for first responders, nonprofit leaders, and healthcare providers. She now maintains a private practice dedicated to this population and consults with governmental, academic, nonprofit, and healthcare organizations supporting personnel regularly exposed to trauma, human suffering, and life-threatening conditions.

Global Travel Award



Marta Pyvovarenko

Marta Pyvovarenko, a psychologist with experience in psychotherapy, training, and supervision, is the PI in Ukraine on the long-term international project "Vitality Donbas". Pyvovarenko is part of the Swiss-Ukrainian project to create a Unified Standard of Rehabilitation for Ukraine. She is also working on the project *Mental Health and Psychological Support for Children and Caregivers in Adversity* in collaboration with the Boston Children's Hospital Margaret C. Ryan Global Health Program. She serves as national trainer and supervisor of the WHO mhGAP-HIG program for bridging the gaps in the field of mental health.

Underrepresented Scholars Membership Award



John Bosco Chika Chukwuorji, Ph.D.

John Bosco Chika Chukwuorji, PhD, an alumnus of the prestigious US-government sponsored Fulbright program at Cleveland State University Cleveland, Ohio USA (2019-2020), holds a senior lecturer position in psychology at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He is a postdoctoral scholar in implementation science at the

CS Mott Department of Public Health, College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University. His membership of the ISTSS in 2019 led to increased awareness about ISTSS in Nigeria and many scholars in the country became corresponding members. Dr Chukwuorji contributed to the development of the Nigeria Implementation Science Alliance Model Innovation and Research Centers (NISA-MIRCs), a locally driven infrastructure for multicenter research and trials in Nigeria. He also led the development of the HealthySunrise Wellness Lab, a digital mental healthcare service outfit that provides telemental health care to those in need, including populations who have experienced psychological trauma.

In addition to being guest editor of a special issue on Aging in sub-Saharan Africa for *Innovation in Aging* and Editor of the *Nigerian Journal of Psychological Research*, Dr Chukwuorji holds editorial positions in the *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*; *Adversity and Resilience Science: Journal of Research and Practice*; *Discover Psychology*; *Journal of Psychology in Africa*; and *Fulbright Chronicles*. Although he is an early career scholar who received his PhD in 2021, he has authored (or co-authored) over 135 research publications focusing on how individual-level and social-level cultural processes and pathways influence mental health outcomes across the life course.

In 2020, he was a social media volunteer for the 36th Annual Meeting of the ISTSS and has reviewed abstract for previous ISTSS conference. As the Volunteer Translators Coordinator for the ISTSS since 2022, he has played a leading role in ensuring that important information and resources from the ISTSS reaches a wider audience. He sees his receiving this award as not only a great privilege but also a strong encouragement to continue striving for excellence in his research and services to the field of traumatic stress globally.

Underrepresented Scholars Membership Award



Victor Cruz, MD

Victor O. Cruz is a professor of psychiatry and epidemiology at the Peruvian University Cayetano Heredia and the University of San Martin de Porres, respectively, in Lima, Peru. He has conducted various research projects in collaboration with several USA universities, such as the Epidemiology of Coca

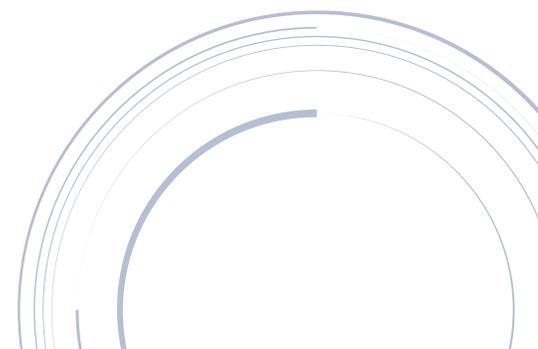
Leaf Chewing in the 21st Century in Peru with Michigan State University, Effectiveness of the Young Parenthood Program in the Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence and Child Maltreatment among Pregnant Adolescents and their Couples with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, and the first Peruvian National Survey of Mental Health and Service Use with Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. His current research includes the Pilot of the Genetic Architecture of Schizophrenia among Peruvians, conducted with the Broad Institute of Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Henri M. Garrison-Desany, Ph.D

Henri M. Garrison-Desany is a genetic epidemiologist and global health researcher whose work explores how trauma, substance use, and epigenetics intersect. They earned their Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins and are currently a

Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Their research combines cutting-edge methods and a deep commitment to health equity through large-scale, multidisciplinary studies.



Underrepresented Scholars Membership Award

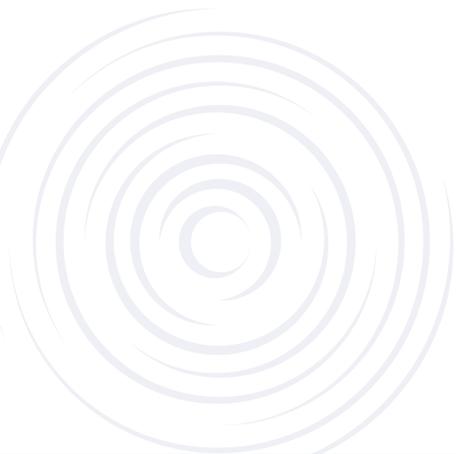


Berhanie Getnet Gebresilus Ph.D

Dr. Berhanie Getnet Gebresilus has earned three degrees from Addis Ababa University: Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in 1997, M.A degree in Counseling Psychology in 2006, and PhD in Mental health Epidemiology in 2019.

Since 2000, Dr. Berhanie has been engaged in professional duties of teaching, research and counseling in three Universities of Ethiopia: University of Gondar, Jimma University and Unity University from 2001 to present. As part of his PhD field research work, Dr. Berhanie Getnet has been engaged in assessment, diagnosis, and research on mental health of Eritrean refugees living in Mai Aini camp for close to three years under the supervision of his PhD dissertation advisor, professor Atalay Alem (based in Addis Ababa University) and mentored by Dr. Teshome Shibre Kelkilie, a senior licensed consultant psychiatrist (currently based in Canada) from 2013 to 2018.

Besides his duties of engagement in the development of PhD curriculum and research advisement to graduate students, Dr. Berhanie is currently an assistant professor of Mental health epidemiology at the department of psychiatry in college of medicine and health sciences in the university of Gondar, Ethiopia. Simultaneously , Dr. Berhanie is also working as senior consultant of psychotherapy in the University of Gondar Specialized Hospital and provide varieties of psychotherapeutic and psychosocial intervention services to the needy patients suffering from mental health problems.



Underrepresented Scholars Membership Award



Miss Buhle S. Songo

Buhle Songo is an MSc Neuroscience Candidate in the Department of Psychiatry at Stellenbosch University (SU). Her research focuses on establishing Africa-specific neuroethics guidelines of emerging neurotechnologies used in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). She holds an undergraduate degree in Human Anatomy and Physiology, as well as a BSc Honours degree in Medical Science with a specialization in Anatomy. She is an active member of the Africa Neuroethics Research Group, a member of the Africa Global Mental Health Institute (AGMHI), the International Neuroethics Society (INS) and the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS). She has contributed to scholarly outputs and community engagement initiatives on mental health and neuroethics in South Africa. She is a second author of a book chapter in *Developments in Neuroethics and Bioethics, Volume 8: Indigenous and Cross-cultural Perspectives on Brain and Mind* that is based on a neuroethics community engagement with people with a lived experience of trauma in South Africa. She has presented her research on PTSD and ethics at several national and international platforms, including the 2024 NIH BRAIN Initiative Conference, the 2024 AGMHI Conference, and the 2024 South African Biological Psychiatry Congress. Her work emphasizes the importance of integrating African cultural perspectives into neuroethical considerations, ensuring that advancements in neuroscience and neurotechnology are ethically and culturally appropriate.



Outstanding Student Advocacy and Service Award



Maja Bruhn

Maja Bruhn is a medical doctor and PhD candidate at the Competence Centre for Transcultural Psychiatry in Denmark. Her work focuses on improving mental health care for trauma-affected refugees through research, clinical practice, and advocacy. She is leading a randomized controlled trial investigating

integrated care for unemployed refugees with PTSD, while also working in clinical practice. Her work is driven by a strong belief in a holistic approach to mental health services, grounded in interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration to better support this underserved population. In addition, she initiated and developed a teaching module on Diversity Competencies for the medical curriculum at the University of Copenhagen, helping to equip future healthcare professionals with the tools to deliver inclusive care.

Student Travel Award



Olivia J. Baryluk

As of September 2025, Olivia Baryluk, is a first year Clinical Psychology PhD student at Hofstra University in Long Island, New York. Prior to beginning her PhD at Hofstra, she served as the Senior Research Coordinator at the Weill Cornell Medicine-Program for Anxiety and Traumatic Stress Studies in Manhattan, NY,

working under Dr. JoAnn Difede since the summer of 2021. During her time at Weill Cornell Medicine, Olivia worked as a project coordinator for the NewYork-Presbyterian-Military Family Wellness Center, and served as the primary research coordinator for a DoD-funded non-inferiority randomized controlled clinical trial comparing two forms of therapy for military sexual trauma-related PTSD. Olivia recently took on the position of being a co-student chair for the ISTSS Military Special Interest group in January 2025 and will be for the next 2 years. Olivia is passionate about contributing to the field of traumatic stress and her evolving research interests include investigating risk, protective, and transdiagnostic factors that impact and maintain anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms.

Frank W. Putnam Trauma Research Scholars Award



Gabby M. Gauthier

Gabby Gauthier is a doctoral candidate in Clinical Psychology at the University of Washington, where she conducts research at the Center for Anxiety and Traumatic Stress under the mentorship of Dr. Lori Zoellner. She received her bachelor's degree with honors in psychology from Williams College. Gabby's research investigates how memory retrieval processes contribute to the development and maintenance of PTSD, with a focus on intrusive memories and survivors of climate change-related disasters.



Kewen Wang, MSW

Kewen is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Social Work and Social Administration, University of Hong Kong. Her research focuses on child maltreatment, family violence, and system trauma, with a particular interest in child sexual abuse (CSA) through a complex trauma framework. Kewen's frontline experience working with child survivors of sexual abuse in China—who often endure multi-layered trauma and structural adversity—fuels her commitment to bridging research, policy, and practice. Deeply aware of her privilege as an internationally-trained MSW and academic researcher, she channels this responsibility into advancing knowledge about CSA and developing more effective, trauma-informed, and culturally grounded responses.

Outstanding Student Achievement Award



Alexa Marie Raudales

Alexa Raudales has made outstanding contributions to the field of traumatic stress. She has excelled academically, published top-notch research in high impact peer-reviewed journals, and presented at numerous international and national professional conferences. Alexa already has amassed 39 peer-reviewed publications in the field of traumatic stress, 12 of which she is first-author.

She was awarded a prestigious Diversity F31 NRSA award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, in which she applied cutting-edge intensive longitudinal data methods and analyses alongside a community based participatory research approach to study the intersections among traumatic stress, opioid use, and suicide risk. Alexa is also a talented culturally responsive therapist, passionate mentor, and has led service and advocacy that has meaningfully influenced her communities and those of other systemically marginalized backgrounds.

Distinguished Mentorship Award



Sharon Dekel, PhD

Dr. Sharon Dekel is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Harvard Medical School and founding Director of the Postpartum Traumatic Stress Disorders Program at Massachusetts General Hospital. She is internationally recognized for pioneering research on childbirth-related posttraumatic stress disorder (CB-PTSD), leading large-scale clinical and translational studies that integrate

psychology, neuroscience, psychophysiology, and computational methods to advance early identification and treatment for women at risk following traumatic childbirth. Continuously funded by the NIH, her work has illuminated the psychological and biological signatures of CB-PTSD and maternal-infant bonding impairment, and she also directs global investigations in Africa and the Middle East. Dr. Dekel has received numerous honors, including the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation Young Investigator Award, Mass General's Claflin Distinguished Scholar Award, Harvard's Shirley Driscoll Dean's Leadership Award for the Enhancement of Women's Careers, and the Postpartum Support International Award for Innovation in Perinatal Psychiatry Research. She currently serves as Chair of the Postpartum Trauma SIG of ISTSS and as a Board member of the International Marcé Society for Perinatal Mental Health.