



ISTSS  
42nd Annual Meeting  
International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies

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# AWARDS

**Traumatic Stress in a Troubled World:**  
*Collaboration on Evidence and Action*  
**September 23-26, 2026**

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SAN ANTONIO MARRIOTT RIVERCENTER  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, USA

# Lifetime Achievement Award



## Prof. Dr. Miranda Olff

Prof. Dr. Miranda Olff Amsterdam UMC, Dept of Psychiatry, Amsterdam Neuroscience & Amsterdam Public Health, University of Amsterdam, & ARQ National Psychotrauma Centre, Diemen, The Netherlands. Chair: 'Neurobiological mechanisms of prevention and treatment in trauma and PTSD' Prof. Dr. Miranda Olff, is professor in the field of psychotrauma. Her research focuses on transdiagnostic responses to traumatic events, and the prevention and treatment of adverse consequences, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), around the world. Miranda Olff is leading the Centre for Psychological Trauma at the department of Psychiatry at the Amsterdam UMC (AMC) of the University of Amsterdam and is Director of Research at the ARQ National Psychotrauma Centre (ARQ). Miranda Olff is chair of the Global Collaboration on Traumatic Stress, a collaborative of traumatic stress societies who joined forces to tackle traumatic stress topics of global importance. Miranda Olff is founding Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal of Psychotraumatology (EJPT), an Open Access journal owned by the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ESTSS), launched when she was president of ESTSS. Miranda is a past president of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS). She has been trained in Corporate Governance and has several committee/advisory board positions (e.g. MH17 disaster foundation). ESTSS awarded her with the Wolter the Loos Life time achievement award. In 2025 she received an Honorary Doctorate from Mid Sweden University.

# Allwood Award for Excellence in Trauma Services for the Underserved



## Sierra E. Carter, PhD

Dr. Carter is an Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology and the Director of the Center for Community and Family Research at the University of Georgia. A clinical psychologist and nationally recognized scholar, her work centers on Black mental health, racial trauma, and addressing health disparities across the lifespan. Her interdisciplinary research program that is supported by NIH R01 and other grants integrates psychology, biology, public health, and developmental science providing evidence that: (1) racial trauma is a multi-level influence that undermines health across the lifespan and over multiple generations; (2) the existence of racial trauma requires development of culturally-informed, prevention-oriented interventions among underserved populations, capable of responding to the unique challenges confronting them, and (3) the deeply entrenched nature of racial trauma requires dissemination of finding to affected populations, policymakers, as well as to fellow scholars. Her research aims to aid in improved identification of mechanisms that can be targeted in prevention and treatment efforts to reduce racial health inequities.

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



## **Robert H. Pietrzak, PhD, MPH**

Dr. Robert Pietrzak is Director of the Translational Psychiatric Epidemiology Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD and Professor of Psychiatry and Public Health at Yale School of Medicine and School of Public Health. His research focuses on psychiatric epidemiology, with particular emphasis on trauma-related disorders, resilience, and mental health in military veterans and other high-risk populations. He has authored more than 700 peer-reviewed publications, cited over 47,000 times, and has served as principal investigator or co-investigator on more than \$50 million in extramural research funding. Dr. Pietrzak is widely recognized for his leadership of large-scale, nationally representative longitudinal studies — including the National Health and Resilience in Veterans Study — and for advancing the integration of psychosocial, genetic, and neuroimaging approaches to the study of traumatic stress and resilience across the lifespan.



# Mid-Career Innovation Award



## Nicole H. Weiss

Dr. Weiss is Professor and Director of the STRESS Lab in the Department of Psychology at the University of Rhode Island as well as serves as Director of the COBRE on Opioids and Overdose Community Engaged Research Core at Rhode Island Hospital. Her research program focuses on the co-occurrence of posttraumatic stress disorder and substance use disorder. Her basic research leverages intensive longitudinal methods—including ecological momentary assessment and wearable biosensors—to evaluate dynamic and idiographic processes underlying PTSD and substance use over time. Her treatment research develops, implements, and evaluates culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches for SUD. Dr. Weiss currently serves as Principal Investigator on more than \$12 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health, and her scholarship includes more than 230 peer-reviewed publications.

# Bela and Chaim Danieli Early Career Professional Award



## Ziv Ben-Zion, PhD

Dr. Ziv Ben-Zion is an Assistant Professor (Senior Lecturer) at the School of Public Health, University of Haifa, Israel. He directs the Ben-Zion Resilience & Recovery Lab, where his research focuses on the neurocognitive mechanisms of stress, trauma, and resilience. With a multidisciplinary background in biology, psychology, and neuroscience, his work integrates longitudinal population studies with behavioral, cognitive, physiological, and neuroimaging measures, alongside advanced statistical and computational methods, to identify predictors and subtypes of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and related conditions. His research aims to inform novel approaches to understanding and treating stress- and anxiety-related disorders.

# Sarah Haley Memorial Award for Clinical Excellence



## Peter Ventevogel, MD, PhD

Dr. Peter Ventevogel trained as psychiatrist at the University of Amsterdam, where he also earned a PhD in medical anthropology with the thesis ‘Borderlands of mental health: Explorations in medical anthropology, psychiatric epidemiology and health systems research in Afghanistan and Burundi’. He has 24 years of experience in developing and implementing programming for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for populations affected by violence and displacement. Since 2013, Peter has been working with the Public Health Section of UNHCR as their Senior Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Specialist. In this role he oversees and provides technical support to UNHCR operations worldwide, including through field support missions to over 35 countries. He has played a pivotal role in fostering interagency consensus and guidance on humanitarian mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies, including through the IASC Reference Group for MHPSS and Sphere Standards. Additionally, he has significantly contributed to clinical tools in global mental health, such as the mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide (Who & UNHCR 2015) and the IASC Minimum Services package for MHPSS. From 2009 to 2013, he served as Editor-in-Chief of Intervention, the Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Areas. Peter has been involved in operational research on mental health among refugees and conflict-affected populations, participating in several research consortia focussed on scalable psychological interventions. He has (co)authored over 150 academic publications.



# Global Travel Award



## Reza Rostami

UNSW Sydney Research Associate and mental health professional Reza Rostami has led major research examining the impact of Australia's migration policies, physical activity, and mental health among Iranian and Afghan asylum seekers arriving by boat. He holds a Bachelor of Clinical Psychology from the University of Tehran and completed Master's and PhD research training in Psychiatry at UNSW's School of Psychiatry. His work focuses on psychiatric epidemiology, refugee wellbeing, and cultural diversity. Reza was recognised in the 2021 NSW Humanitarian Awards as Refugee Community Worker, nominated for UNHCR recognition in 2022, and serves as an Ambassador for Equally Well Australia supporting cultural diversity and refugee communities.



# Underrepresented Scholars Award



## Dr. Aldo M. Barrita

Dr. Aldo Barrita (he/his) is a queer Latinx Mexican immigrant, a social and quantitative psychologist, and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Michigan State University. He received his Ph.D. in Psychological and Brain Sciences from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), with an emphasis on social, quantitative, and community psychology. His research focus includes how intersectional forms of everyday oppression psychologically impact individuals from marginalized communities, such as LGBTQ+ BIPOC and immigrant individuals. Additionally, Dr. Barrita also explores the psychological impact of immigration status microaggressions, a term he coined, when people of color are racialized and criminalized based on racial biases and stereotypes. As part of his work, Dr. Barrita has explored coping strategies and health behaviors involved in experiencing everyday oppression and has developed quantitative measures of these experiences. Dr. Barrita, as an early-career professional, has established a prolific research program with over 46 journal publications and 10 book chapters, published in journals such as *American Psychologist*. His research has been supported by the Mellon Foundation and the Blue Shield Foundation.

# Underrepresented Scholars Award



## Chaela Nutor, PhD

Chaela Nutor is a postdoctoral fellow at Emory University School of Medicine. Chaela completed her doctorate in clinical psychology from Emory University. Her research interests include maternal mental health, intergenerational transmission of risk and resilience, child development, and decreasing health disparities for minoritized individuals.



## Nicolas Murgueitio

Dr. Nicolas Murgueitio is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Emory University School of Medicine. He earned his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research examines the neurobiological, emotional, and learning processes through which childhood adversity influences risk for psychopathology across development and across the lifespan.

# Underrepresented Scholars Award



## Alejandra Gonzalez Lopez, PhD

Dr. Alejandra Gonzalez is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Roosevelt University and a licensed psychologist whose work focuses on traumatic stress, interpersonal violence, and culturally responsive mental health research and practice. She earned her PhD in Counseling Psychology in 2022 and has developed a research program centered on understanding trauma and recovery among historically marginalized communities, particularly Latinas, women experiencing homelessness, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Her scholarship examines posttraumatic stress, empowerment, resilience, cultural values, and protective factors among trauma-exposed populations, with an emphasis on strengths-based and community-informed approaches. In addition to her research, Dr. Gonzalez is deeply committed to culturally responsive clinical practice, community-engaged collaboration, and mentoring future trauma scholars and clinicians. Her work integrates research, teaching, advocacy, and service to advance equity and inclusion within the traumatic stress field. Through interdisciplinary and community partnerships, she seeks to strengthen trauma science in ways that are empirically rigorous and responsive to the lived experiences of marginalized communities.

# Underrepresented Scholars Award



## Marta Pyvovarenko

Marta Pyvovarenko is a Ukrainian trauma scientist, psychologist, and Principal Investigator in Ukraine for the 'Vitality Project Donbas'—a Wesleyan University and UNDP initiative recognized by the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2024 as one of 12 exemplary peacebuilding projects globally. With 20 years of experience in training and national coordination, she collaborates closely with the WHO, UN, NATO, and Ukraine's Ministry of Veterans Affairs in implementing and adapting evidence-based treatment and psychological recovery methods, while leading international research at the War Psychology, Support and Rehabilitation Institute (WISPR).

# Student Travel Award



## Molly C. Delzio

Molly C. Delzio is a second-year PhD student in Social Psychology at the University of Arizona, working within the Center for Human-Animal Wellness Research. Her research examines how animal-assisted interventions, particularly psychiatric service dogs, can complement evidence-based treatments for PTSD. Before beginning her doctoral training, Molly worked as a clinical research coordinator at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), where she gained experience implementing and evaluating trauma-informed interventions for veterans. She aspires to pursue a research career within the VA focused on improving engagement in PTSD treatment and advancing outcomes for veterans through complementary animal-assisted approaches.

# Student Travel Award



## Kaede Murakami

Kaede Murakami is a third-year undergraduate student in the Department of Life Science, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Kindai University, Japan. Her academic interests focus on the neurobiological mechanisms of Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (cPTSD), particularly how early childhood trauma affects brain development and contributes to symptoms such as dissociation, as well as the developmental trajectories and potential reversibility of these neural alterations. Given the limited opportunities to study trauma from a neurobiological perspective in her current environment, she decided to study life sciences in preparation for a future research career in trauma-related neurobiology, with a particular interest in cPTSD. She has actively pursued her interest in trauma research through interdisciplinary and international academic experiences, including an exchange program at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poland. Although she is still in the pre-laboratory stage of her undergraduate studies, she has independently pursued trauma-related research interests and submitted a systematic review abstract to the ISTSS Annual Meeting examining the adolescent emergence of trauma-related symptoms from neurobiological and psychosocial perspectives. She plans to pursue graduate studies abroad and develop a research career aimed at advancing the scientific understanding of trauma and recovery, particularly through the neurobiological study of cPTSD.



# Frank W. Putnam Trauma Research Scholars Award



## Jaime R. G. Quiles

Jaime is a fourth-year Clinical Psychology PhD student at Florida State University with research interests in PTSD, trauma-related sequelae, and the cognitive and emotional mechanisms that shape recovery following interpersonal trauma. His work focuses on trauma-related beliefs, emotional processes, and threat-related cognitive biases that contribute to posttraumatic distress and anxiety-related psychopathology, with a particular interest in how these processes emerge following interpersonal violence and discrimination-related stress among racial and ethnic minority populations. In the future, he hopes to continue developing as a clinical scientist and contribute to more precise, evidence-based approaches for understanding and treating PTSD and related disorders.

# Frank W. Putnam Trauma Research Scholars Award



## Nathaniel R. Choukas, M.A.

Nate is a fourth-year clinical psychology graduate student at the University of Arizona working with Dr. Zachary Cohen. His research integrates psychotherapy process and mechanism research with measurement science and formal theories of psychopathology, with the goal of informing personalized treatments. His work leverages multimodal intensive longitudinal data, including ecological momentary assessment, passive sensing, and engagement data collected via digital therapy to study how change unfolds during treatment. Drawing on complex systems and network approaches, he is also working on formal theories of PTSD and panic to inform the development and evaluation of scalable, personalized digital mental health interventions.

# Outstanding Student Achievement Award



## Reina Kiefer, PhD

Dr. Reina Kiefer earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with a focus in Research Methodology from the University of Rhode Island in 2026, following completion of her Clinical Internship at the Perelman School of Medicine/University of Pennsylvania. She is currently a NIMH T32 Postdoctoral Fellow in Basic and Translational Research on Traumatic Stress Across the Lifespan at the Medical University of South Carolina. Her research focuses on understanding contextual and individual factors that confer risk for sexual violence, with the goal of informing real-world prevention and intervention strategies. In 2023, she was awarded an F31 Ruth L. Kirschstein Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award to investigate the effects of acute alcohol intoxication and positive and negative emotion states on sexual assault risk perception. She also received a 2024 American Psychological Foundation COGDOP Graduate Research Scholarship Award to further support her work. Dr. Kiefer has contributed to over 35 peer-reviewed publications and 60 national and international conference presentations. Her research and clinical work are rooted in her commitment to advancing trauma-focused clinical science and improving care for survivors and underserved populations.

# Distinguished Mentorship Award



**Tami P. Sullivan, PhD**

Dr. Sullivan is Professor of Psychiatry and Public Health, Director of the Division of Prevention and Community Research in the Department of Psychiatry, and Director of a NIDA-funded postdoctoral research training program in substance use prevention research. Dr. Sullivan's program of research focuses on both individual and system-level factors that influence the well-being of women who experience intimate partner violence (IPV). Her naturalistic studies employ micro-longitudinal designs to explore how daily experiences and behaviors unfold in natural environments. This research advances understanding of factors that foster resilience, such as self-efficacy, empowerment, and hope, as well as factors that heighten the risk for negative outcomes, including posttraumatic stress, substance use, and sexual risk behaviors. Dr. Sullivan's interventional studies promote relationship health, resilience and recovery from trauma and substance use. For example, her development of community-based and service-system interventions includes a peer-led support group, a single-session intervention to promote hope, and a stepped-care behavioral health intervention aimed at reducing trauma symptoms to enhance retention in opioid use disorder care. Community-partnered research, which centers women who have experienced IPV and the practitioners who support them, is foundational to her work. Dr. Sullivan is a licensed psychologist who has extensive clinical experience with victims and offenders of IPV, providing services in a range of settings from community programs, inpatient and outpatient programs, and substance use treatment, to domestic violence shelters and transitional living programs.