

The Watson Institute's APA Accredited Pre-Doctoral Psychology Internship

About the Institute

Located in Sewickley, Pennsylvania (near Pittsburgh) The Watson Institute (TWI) specializes in treating and educating children with special needs and their families. The agency provides neuropsychological and diagnostic services as well as outpatient treatment (individual, group, and family), partial hospitalization, home-based services, and consultative services with professionals who serve such children and families as well as with 40 school systems. Watson is a licensed Mental Health Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic and Approved Private School in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Part of The Watson Institute family of schools and a wholly owned subsidiary of Watson, the Watson Institute Friendship Academy is licensed by the Pennsylvania State Department of Welfare - Western Region office of Mental Health and accredited by the Council of Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc. as a partial psychiatric hospital program. As such, it provides intensive treatment services six hours per day during the school year (September through June) to children and adolescents ages six through twenty-one, who suffer from severe emotional and behavioral problems. Watson was established in 1917 and began its psychology internship training program in 2002. Information regarding Watson and the services provided can be found at the website: www.thewatsoninstitute.org

The Internship Training Program: Program Overview and Goals

The internship is designed to provide pre-doctoral psychology interns with a training experience focusing on the continued development of the professional skills necessary for successful functioning as an entry-level professional psychologist. Interns participate in a range of diagnostic and clinical activities and can elect a concentration in the areas of: Autism, Neuropsychology, and General Child and Adolescent Behavioral/Emotional Disorders.

Specific goals for the training program include the development of:

- Intervention skills for work with children and adolescents with special needs and their families, in ways that are child-centered, family focused, community based, multi-system, culturally competent, and least intrusive.
- Intervention skills for work with children and adolescents and their families that are grounded in the empirical psychological literature and consistent with best practices.
- A broad range of assessment and diagnostic skills with children and adolescents and their families, using a wide variety of methods including diagnostic interviewing, functional assessment, objective and projective techniques, and neuropsychological testing.
- Consultation and training skills for use with other psychologists, other professional disciplines, and in the community.
- Competence in professional conduct and the ability to identify and appropriately respond to ethical and legal issues arising in clinical practice.
- Competence in assessment and intervention skills with underserved populations.
- The ability to assess the significance and implications of developmental differences.

Client Population

TWI serves special needs children and adolescents, their families, and professionals and lay individuals who provide services to such children and adolescents. The client age range is from 18 months to 21 years, and includes individuals with both autism spectrum and emotional/behavioral disorders. Interns can expect to spend approximately 70% of their clinical time in assessment and intervention with these clients, 20% in assessment and intervention with the parents, siblings, and other caregivers, and 10% providing consultative services, unless they seek a special emphasis area as indicated below.

The client population is diverse for this area of Pennsylvania, serving 25% ethnic minority clients (primarily African American) and individuals with other concurrent disabilities. The families also represent diversity in terms of age as well as religious backgrounds. Private insurance clients constitute 50% of the client/family population. The Watson Institute also serves diverse urban (40%) and rural (20%) populations, primarily from the states of Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

In providing consultation, interns will serve similarly diverse groups in terms of rural/urban and religious beliefs. This is an exclusively adult population and includes individual of diverse sexual orientations.

Training and Rotations

Interns engage in a wide variety of service activities that can be applied to many career directions. The intern becomes an important part of our agency and joins our staff of six psychologists and 77 employees as part of our comprehensive services teams. Moreover, the education and training components of the internship are emphasized and highly valued by the psychology staff and trainees. Interns participate in weekly individual supervision (a minimum of two hours), group supervision (two hours), and professional development seminars that focus on training in evidenced based treatment as well as assessment and diagnostic issues (two hours), and hour-long case conferences or journal reading review meetings. As part of their training, interns receive specific exposure in their orientation to the internship and in on-going individual and group supervision to broad ethical concerns in clinical practice as well as to specific risk management issues such as assessment of persons dangerous to self or others, duty to warn, and commitment. While all interns have exposure to the three rotations described below, there are opportunities to select special emphasis areas within the internship, including Autism, Neuropsychology, and General Child and Adolescent Behavioral/Emotional Disorders.

The major training rotation is the Outpatient Services Unit (OSU) where interns receive supervised experience in assessment, diagnosis and intervention with special needs children and adolescents and their families. In the OSU, interns conduct diagnostic interviews with the clients (as able) and their families, perform functional behavioral analysis, and conduct psychological testing, with an emphasis on both neuropsychological issues (including dyslexia, speech and language disorders, learning disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, and visual perceptual disorders) and psychological issues (including depression, anxiety, psychosis, and ADHD). Testing emphasizes neuropsychological/psychological batteries and objective tests, but includes projective techniques as appropriate. Treatment opportunities include a broad range of evidence-based services with children and adolescents including social skills training groups (friendship development, social stories, comic strip conversations, picture exchange communication system), applied behavioral analysis, cognitive behavioral therapy and emotional modulation, cognitive

restructuring, didactic intervention, relaxation for children with special needs, systematic desensitization, play based intervention, and psycho-educational interventions. Interns also participate in individual, couples, or family interventions with the client's families (parents, siblings, and other caregivers or support systems).

Interns may also have opportunities to provide individual, group, and family therapy from primarily cognitive-behavioral and multisystemic perspectives. This is a minor rotation of the internship, and is provided as a training experience as available. Interns on this rotation are supervised by a licensed psychologist. Additional supervision may be provided by licensed mental health providers from other disciplines (e.g., psychiatry, social work) who are present at the location.

As part of the Training and Consultation Services, interns join professionals from a multidisciplinary staff (education, social work, psychology) in developing and presenting a variety of programs tailored for education/school based programs, mental health programs, or as part of home based services. Training is conducted for both professional and lay audiences through in-service training and workshops. Services are tailored to meet the specific needs of the audience, and may include autism intervention, behavior management, inclusion, curriculum adaptation, IEPs, curriculum development, transition planning, school to work transition planning, assessment methods, and social skills facilitation, as well as other requested services.

While not a required part of the internship, opportunities are available to work with the internship faculty on research projects at the Institute.

Concentrations

Special Emphasis/Concentration areas will be arranged for interns depending upon interest. Interns will rotate through all or most services as predetermined but an attempt will be made to assign cases according to interest. These subspecialties include:

Autism Spectrum Disorders Concentration

Interns choosing an Autism Spectrum Disorders Concentration will spend the majority of their internship year gaining experience in the following clinical activities:

- Diagnostic Evaluations* in which a preliminary differential diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder is conducted. These evaluations include obtaining information regarding early developmental history, birth and medical history, family history, and presenting concerns.

- Best Practice Evaluations* consisting of a more in-depth assessment of behavioral, social and communication domains in order to assist in determining specific targets of intervention and in prescribing appropriate Behavioral Health Rehabilitative Services.

- Functional Behavioral Assessments* as a consultant to a treatment team, family, or school district to assist in more effectively treating problem behaviors.

- Behavioral Specialist Consultant* in which the intern serves as the lead clinician in developing and guiding the implementation of behavioral plans within the home, school and community

- Mobile Therapy* in which the intern provides therapy to the child and/or family.

Focuses include helping the family come to terms with the child's diagnosis and coping with the stress of raising a child who has autism. Child/adolescent centered therapy address emotional regulation and the application of cognitive behavioral interventions.

-*Group Therapy* for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders focusing on friendship development, social stories, comic strip conversations, social communication, and emotional regulation. Experience in this area may also include co-leading parent support and psychoeducational groups pertaining to Autism Spectrum Disorders.

-*Psychological Evaluations* including assessment of intellectual, achievement, language, social, emotional and behavioral domains to assist in an accurate diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Diagnoses and potential comorbid conditions. Caseload of psychological evaluations will be determined based upon referral basis and interest of individual intern, although one evaluation per week can be generally expected. Interns will become acquainted with the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule and the Autism Diagnostic Interview.

-Camp *WISP*, the first inclusive, systematic summer camp program for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in the country, operates for eight weeks over the course of the summer. Interns may gain training, supervisory, and consultation experience through participation in the program.

-Camp *STAT* serves adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Interns have the opportunity to co-lead therapeutic groups for teens during the course of the four-week program.

-Research. Interns are encouraged to participate in a number of research projects relating to autism. Current Interests of staff include measuring social skills, assessing progress, and assessing depression in adolescents with autism.

Pediatric Neuropsychology Concentration

Interns choosing a pediatric neuropsychology concentration will spend the majority of their clinical year engaged in the following clinical activities:

-*Diagnostic Interviews* in which a comprehensive symptom assessment, medical history, developmental history and family history are obtained. These assessments lead to the determination regarding the medical necessity of a neuropsychological evaluation, as well as the differential diagnosis that serves as the basis for the neuropsychological evaluation. Interns selecting this concentration can expect to complete at least two diagnostic evaluations per week.

-*Insurance Preauthorizations* in which the intern will learn the process, under supervision, of preparing and submitting insurance preapprovals. This process includes appropriate test selection to target the differential diagnosis and documentation of medical necessity criteria.

-*Neuropsychological Evaluations* in which the intern administers, scores and interprets neuropsychological measures across the following domains: Attention/Concentration, Learning and Memory, Language, Sensory and Motor Skills, Visual Perceptual and Visual Motor Skills, Executive Functioning, Developmental Scales, Adaptive Functioning and others based upon the presenting concerns. Interns selecting this concentration can expect to complete two full neuropsychological batteries per week. Recent referrals for neuropsychological evaluations have included diagnoses of:

- 👉 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 👉 Cranial Stenosis
- 👉 PKU and other metabolic disorders
- 👉 Genetic Disorders (Turner Syndrome, Fragile X)
- 👉 Autism Spectrum Disorders
- 👉 Seizure Disorders
- 👉 Hypoglycemia
- 👉 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- 👉 Dyslexia
- 👉 Cerebral Palsy
- 👉 Anxiety and Mood Disorders

-*Feedback Sessions* in which the intern and their supervisor present findings from the neuropsychological evaluation to the client and family while offering specific, individual recommendations for continued treatment.

- *Behavioral Specialist Consultant and Mobile Therapy* roles for children with a variety of neurological impairments receiving services through Behavioral Health and Rehabilitative Services. Treatment would emphasize the understanding and treatment of behavioral sequelae from a neuropsychological perspective.

Services at the Watson Institute

Diagnostic Evaluations

The Child Assessment Program at The Watson Institute provides comprehensive evaluations of children when the family or primary care physician has questions regarding the child's developmental progress. The results and conclusions of the evaluation are reviewed with the family during the child's visit. A detailed written report is provided within one week of the initial visit.

Pediatric Neuropsychology

The pediatric neuropsychology program is designed to perform a systematic evaluation of cognitive abilities such as *intelligence, memory, language, attention, problem-solving ability, visual-motor skills, sensorimotor abilities, personality/emotional functioning, and academic skills*. Neuropsychological tests can be helpful in forming a diagnosis, identifying a child's strengths and weaknesses, guiding treatment for psychological, educational or vocational needs, making recommendations to medical personnel or educators, and documenting change over time, such as the successfulness of treatment.

Wraparound Services

Wraparound services are designed to provide intensive service to children with autism and autism spectrum disorders, and most recently, to children with medical and neurological illnesses. These services are provided in the child's home or designated location in the community. The Watson Institute's approach to wraparound services is unique to each child and family. The approach and recommendations are based on each child's strengths and weaknesses. Watson professionals use the latest intervention tools and techniques that have been proven effective in helping children.

Outpatient Therapy

The therapy program at The Watson Institute, also called SCAFFOLD—Services for Children with Autism and Families; Facilitating Outpatient Learning and Development— is an outpatient clinic for children and adolescents with autism or a related disorder, including those with

Asperger's and Pervasive Development Disorders. The Watson Institute has assembled a professional staff with specific expertise in the field of autism and related disorders. The interventions and methods used at Watson are specifically designed for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders and their families.

There are a variety of services available through The SCAFFOLD Program at The Watson Institute, including:

- individual and group therapies
- social skill groups
- diagnostic evaluations
- wraparound evaluations

In addition, outpatient services are offered to adolescents dealing with issues such as:

- understanding his /her diagnosis
- depression
- anxiety
- social conflicts

Medication Management

The Watson Institute offers medication management services for children with an autism spectrum diagnosis.

Summer Camp Programs

The Watson Institute offers four summer programs for children and teens diagnosed on the autism spectrum: Camps WISP, STAT, SCALE and ACCLAIM. Camp WISP is offered in many locations throughout the Pittsburgh area, providing children with autism spectrum disorders an opportunity to enjoy the camp setting with their typically-developing peers. Camp STAT is offered at The Watson Institute's Sewickley, Sharpsburg and South Hills locations for teens with Asperger's or High-Functioning Autism. Two sessions are offered throughout the summer. Camp SCALE is offered at our Sewickley location for adolescents on the autism spectrum with significant challenges in communication and adaptive skills. ACCLAIM is a four week program held on college campuses and aims to acclimate college bound students diagnosed with ASD to college life.

Support Groups

Parents with Autistic and Autistic Like Children (PAALS)

PAALS is a support group offering support and education to those in the community who have an interest in or have a child with autism. The group holds its regular meetings one Friday per month throughout the school year, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at The Watson Institute.

Evening Parent Support Group and Parents Together

The Evening Parent Support Group and Parents Together allow parents of children with disabilities to exchange concerns, feelings and ideas, as well as opportunities for education, support and friendship with others who are dealing with similar joys and challenges of parenting children with special needs. Special resources are provided to deal with common issues such as finances, stress and behavioral issues, parenting children with special needs. The Evening Parent Support Group will meet on Nov. 10, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., while Parents Together meets one Friday morning per month during the school year, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Program Administration and Faculty

The internship program is under the supervision of an Internship Director who is responsible for all aspects of the internship activities including the coordinating the selection of interns, determining rotations and assigning primary supervisors, organizing the group supervision, ensuring that the seminar series is scheduled and conducted, leading the psychology staff in developing and evaluating the training program's activities, and maintaining the intern's training records.

The following are the internship training staff, all of whom are licensed for independent practice as a psychologist in Pennsylvania

Joseph M. McAllister, PhD, Director of Psychological Services
Lori Zychowski, PsyD, Internship Training Director
Jennifer Walkowiak, PhD, Neuropsychologist
Gail Marie Valdez Mangan, PhD
Josh Acocella-Stollerman, PsyD
Ann Shaw, PhD

Additional psychology staff includes post-doctoral resident:

Kristie Zoller, PsyD

Interns may receive additional experience working with professions from other disciplines:

Lisa Jamnback, MD, Psychiatrist, Medical Director
Joel Shaul, LCSW
Carleen Carney, LCSW

Internship Expectations and Evaluation

The internship is a year long, full-time, 2000-hour training experience. Interns are expected to accumulate their hours based on a 40-hour week for a minimum of 50 weeks. Overtime and/or compensation time will not be grounds for leaving an internship in less than 50 weeks. Interns will provide a minimum of 750 to 1000 hours of direct client contact or approximately 40-50% of their time. The rest of the time should be spent with training experiences, supervision, report writing, case conferences, meetings, research, etc. The internship year begins on August 24, 2010 and ends on August 22, 2011. No provision will be made for interns to begin their training year prior to or extending beyond this timeframe.

TWI has a strong commitment to developing clinical practitioners who demonstrate high levels of professionalism and clinical skills. It is a fundamental requirement of the internship that all interns meet the standards of the profession of psychology. As an expression of these standards, TWI requires adherence to the principles of the American Psychological Association (APA) Code of Ethics. Not only are interns required to complete academic and clinical requirements, they are expected to demonstrate professional attitudes and behavior during their internship training. Interns' development of these competencies, skills, behaviors, and attitudes are monitored and evaluated regularly throughout their internship training and will be discussed further in following sections.

Cultural Diversity Statement

Culture determines our worldview and provides a general design for living and patterns for interpreting reality that are reflected in our behavior. Therefore, services that are culturally competent are provided by individuals who have the skills to recognize and respect the behavior, ideas, attitudes, values, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies and practices characteristic of a particular group of people.

The Watson Institute recognizes that Cultural Diversity is an integral part of a person and thus directly impacts on his/her self value and self worth. Cultural Diversity is defined by a person's relationship to his/her values, meanings, traditions, customs, ethnic tradition, religious or spiritual beliefs, lifestyle and cultural or spiritual life experiences. We believe that people and institutions grow by acknowledging that there is strength and learning in the presence of diversity. We are aware that individual needs usually fit well into the greater common good. In order to provide services successfully in a holistic manner, we must strive to respect and accommodate cultural diversity in the provision of care.

It is the responsibility of every Watson employee to learn about Cultural Diversity and to respect the right of every patient and employee to express diversity so long as it does not interfere with the therapeutic responsibilities or operation of the facility. The Watson Institute will provide periodic training to staff in issues relating to providing culturally competent services.

The Watson Institute will actively strive to obtain input from community representatives who can increase our awareness of cultural factors in our efforts to provide exemplary services for all populations in our community.

Non-discrimination Policy

The Watson Institute's policy regarding employment is to treat all current and potential employees fairly without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual preference, economic status, or any other factors prohibited by law. In

addition, every effort will be made to recruit and hire staff members reflective of the cultural and ethnic mix of the clients we serve. This applies to all Watson Institute subsidiaries, personnel actions, and company-related activities.

The Watson Institute strives to promote a positive work environment free from discrimination and harassment that could adversely affect employee performance or create an intimidating, unfriendly, or offensive environment. Such discrimination or harassment can be based on race (racially derogatory language or conduct), gender (unwelcome sexual advances, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is made a condition of employment or the basis for job-related decisions), or any other factors prohibited by law.

Intern Evaluation

Interns receive regular and on-going feedback during the internship year through individual and group supervision. Performance is formally evaluated through a written review four times per year by the intern's site supervisor. Interns are evaluated in the according to the specific goals of the training program described previously (see page 1).

Stipend and Benefits

This 2000 hour, one-year clinical internship carries a stipend of \$20,000. TWI also provides very generous fringe benefits including 9 paid holidays, 12 sick days, and two weeks of paid vacation; medical, dental, vision, and life insurance.

Liability Insurance

TWI asks that interns carry their own professional liability insurance coverage. This can be either through coverage provided through their academic institutions or personally, such as that available for student members of the American Psychological Association. A valid liability certificate may be required at the beginning of the internship.

Application

Qualifications of Applicants

Applicants must be enrolled and in good standing in a clinical, counseling, or school psychology doctoral program, and have completed all of the program coursework and examination requirements prior to beginning the internship. Successful applicants will have completed a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised practicum and have experiences commensurate with the training offered. Desire to gain experience with children and adolescents with autistic spectrum disorders is required. Experience with children and families or in neuropsychology is highly recommended.

Application Deadline and Procedures

The following completed application materials must be received by November 20, 2009:

1. Cover letter indicating interest and experience commensurate with the training provided through The Watson Institute Doctoral Internship Program in areas of Autism, Neuropsychology, Child and Adolescent Behavioral/Emotional Disorders, and Consultation and Training.

2. Completion of all sections of the APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (APPI) available on the APPIC website: www.appic.org.
3. Three Letters of Recommendation from supervisors and faculty familiar with the applicant's clinical and professional work and who are willing to discuss the applicant's qualities with regard to internship readiness.
4. Official Transcript of all Graduate Work.
5. Curriculum Vita

Candidates who are being considered for acceptance will be invited for interviews to be held in January. In-person interviews are highly recommended.

The internship participates in the Association of Psychology Post-Doctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) Match and as such will abide by all of the policies related to the Match. These policies are available at the APPIC website: www.appic.org. The Watson Institute is proud to announce that the site has received APA Accreditation.

Address application materials and inquiries to:

Lori A. Zychowski, PsyD
Internship Training Director
The Watson Institute
301 Camp Meeting Road
Sewickley, PA 15143-8773
(412) 749-6439
loriz@thewatsoninstitute.org