

Education

- Michigan State University** *Expected May 2019*
Doctor of Philosophy: *Human Development & Family Studies*
Specialization: *Couple and Family Therapy*
- Purdue University Calumet** 2015
Master of Science: *Child Development & Family Studies*
Specialization: *Marriage and Family Therapy*
- Michigan State University** 2011
Major: *Bachelor of Science in Psychology*
Specialization: *Chicano/Latino Studies*

Languages

Fluent in English and Spanish

Publications

- Hussain, K. *, **Leija, S. G. ***, Lewis, F. *, & Sanchez, B.* (2015). Unveiling Sexual Identity in the Face of Marianismo. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 27(2), 72-92.
*Indicates Equal Authorship

Manuscripts in Progress

- Lofton, H., **Leija, S.G.**, Szczygiel, L., Ingram, J., & Adekoya, A. R. (Submitted). Mental Health Disparities and Personalized Normative Feedback: A brief intervention to increase engagement in mental health services among female ethnic minority college students.
- Szczygiel, L., Ingram, J., Adekoya, A. R. Lofton, H., & **Leija, S.G.** (Submitted). A brief intervention to reduce mental health disparities by increasing engagement in mental health services among female racial/ethnic minority college students.
- Escobar-Chew, A. R., Parra-Cardona, J. R., López-Zerón, G., **Leija, S.G.**, & Nordquist, E. (in progress) "Preservando nuestra cultura" (Preserving our culture): The relevance of cultural components in a culturally adapted parenting intervention for Latinos/as.
- Leija, S.G.**, Edwards, A., Hecker, L., & Bermudez, J. M. (in progress). The impact of acculturation and Latina values on sexual satisfaction and relationship satisfaction.
- Sankar, S., **Leija, S. G.**, & Blow, A. (in progress). Integrating child sexuality into family therapy: Guiding parents towards creating a sex-positive approach to parenting.

Presentations

- Leija, S.G., Bonomi, A.E., & Maas, M.K. (2017, November). *Jane the virgin: A model for reinventing marianismo and Latina sexuality*. Oral presentation submitted at the Annual Meeting for the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, San Juan, PR.

- Lopez-Zeron, G.A., **Leija, S. G.**, Nordquist, E., Escobar-Chew, A.R., & Parra-Cardona, J. R. (September 2016). The Initial Efficacy of a Parenting Intervention for Latinos. Poster presented at the 2016 American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Annual National Conference. Indianapolis, IN.
- Leija, S. G.** (August 2016). Let's talk about sex. Presentation at Annual M.A.G.I.C. Hybrid Program Michigan State University. East Lansing, MI.
- Lopez-Zeron, G.A.; Parra-Cardona, J. R.; **Leija, S. G.**; Bybee, D.; Sullivan, C. (May, 2016). The Initial Efficacy of a Parenting Intervention for Latinos. Poster presented at the Society for Prevention Research 24rd Annual Conference. San Francisco, CA.
- Leija, S. G.** (May 2016). The intersection of depression, substance abuse & sexual control: A three wave study on Latino couples. Presentation at MFP Training Institute. Arlington, VA.
- Leija, S. G.**, Hussain, K., Lewis, F., & Sanchez, B. (2015, November). Unveiling Sexual Identity in the face of marianismo. Poster presented at the annual conference of Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, East Lansing, MI.
- Leija, S. G.**, Hussain, K., Lewis, F., & Sanchez, B. (2015, October). Unveiling Sexual Identity in the face of marianismo. Poster presented at the annual conference of Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, East Lansing, MI.
- Leija, S. G.**, Hussain, K., Lewis, F., & Sanchez, B. (2015, October). Unveiling Sexual Identity in the face of marianismo. Poster presented at the Michigan Association for Marriage and Family Therapy State Conference. East Lansing, MI.
- Adekoya, A. R., **Leija, S. G.**, & Ladson, E.R., & (2015, October). Coming home: A proposed structural model for African American families reintegrating a male co-parent post-incarceration. Poster presented at the Michigan Association for Marriage and Family Therapy State Conference. East Lansing, MI.
- Hussain, K., **Leija, S. G.**, Lewis, F., & Sanchez, B. (2015, March). Unveiling sexual identity in the face of marianismo. Poster presented at the Illinois Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Conference. Naperville, IL.
- Hussain, K., **Leija, S. G.**, Lewis, F., & Sanchez, B. (2014, October). Unveiling sexual identity in the face of marianismo. Poster presented at the Indiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Fall Conference. Indianapolis, IN.
- Adekoya, A. R., Ladson, E.R., & **Leija, S. G.** (2014, March). Coming home: A proposed structural model for African American families reintegrating a male co-parent post-incarceration. Poster presented at the Indiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Spring Conference. Indianapolis, IN.
- Kellen, K., **Leija, S. G.**, Lewis, F., & Yahya, E. (2014, March). Disrupting the intergenerational cycle of abuse: Effectively coping with child sexual abuse in

adulthood. Poster presented at the Indiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Spring Conference. Indianapolis, IN.

Dralle, D., **Leija, S. G.**, Pilkington, S., & Schoenherr, A. M. (2013, May) Building Your Love Maps. Presentation at Purdue University Calumet's Couples Therapy Workshop. Hammond, IN.

Leija, S. G., & Buchanan, N. T. (2012, March). Body satisfaction and televised advertisements: The impact of model size and sexualization on women's body satisfaction. Paper presented for the Association of Women in Psychology 37th annual conference, Palm Springs, CA.

Leija, S. G., & Buchanan, N. T. (2011, October). Body Satisfaction and Televised Advertisements: The Impact of Model Size and Sexualization on Women's Body Satisfaction. Poster presented at the annual conference of Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, East Lansing, MI.

Leija, S. G., & Buchanan, N. T. (2011, August). Body Satisfaction and Televised Advertisements: The Impact of Model Size and Sexualization on Women's Body Satisfaction. Paper presented at the 2011 McNair Research Symposium, East Lansing, MI.

Leija, S. G., & Buchanan, N. T. (2011, August). Body Satisfaction and Televised Advertisements: The Impact of Model Size and Sexualization on Women's Body Satisfaction. Poster presented at the 2011 McNair Research Symposium, East Lansing, MI.

Research Experience

Research on Cultural Adaptation (ROCA) Lab

August 2015- Present

Research Assistant

NIDA Strengthening Hispanic Families Study

PI: Parra-Cardona; Grant # 1K01DA036747

- Conduct participant phone screenings to determine eligibility for study
- Prepare participant materials for the parenting group
- Deliver cultural adaptation of an evidence-based parenting intervention for Latino/a immigrant parents in Lansing and Detroit
- Strengthening skills delivering community based interventions in Spanish
- Report status of group responses to parenting intervention
- Assist in preparing manuscripts for publication

Minority Fellowship Program

August 2015- Present

SAMHSA Minority Fellow

- Create research proposals to address disparities in mental health that are consistent with SAMHSA Strategic Initiatives
- Used secondary data to conduct quantitative analysis on depression, substance abuse & sexual coercion on Latino couples
- Presented research findings at the annual MFP Training Institute
- Participated in statistical trainings on Moderation, Mediation, and SEM
- Attend professional development webinars
- Enhance research and writing skills using APA guidelines

Quantitative Masters Thesis

August 2013- May 2015

Masters Candidate at Purdue University Calumet

- Generated and conducted a quantitative research study on the impact of acculturation and Latina values on sexual satisfaction and relationship satisfaction
- Strengthened data collection skill set
- Identified suitable techniques for the collection and analysis of data.
- Coded, entered, transcribed, & analyzed research data
- Reported on research findings at annual MFP Training Institute
- Enhanced research and writing skills using APA guidelines

Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program

January 2011- December 2011

McNair Scholar

- Created and conducted a quantitative research study on media influences on body image and body dissatisfaction
- Strengthened understanding of data collection
- Performed statistical data analysis using SPSS
- Strengthened understanding of research methods and writing
- Enhanced research and writing skills in the Social Sciences using APA guidelines
- Created research poster on project findings
- Produced research paper on project findings

Michigan State University Twin Registry

May 2010-May 2011

Research Assistant

- Prepared participant materials for the study
- Articulated expectations of the study to participants
- Administered questionnaires for current participants
- Collected DNA & salivary samples of participants
- Translated survey documents from English to Spanish
- Compiled and enter study's data into SPSS

Michigan State University Mothers & Babies Study

January 2009-January 2010

Research Assistant

- Conducted clinical interviews with mothers and one year old babies
- Administered surveys
- Screened and scheduled protocols
- Administered psychological measures, laboratory paradigms, and collected endocrine (salivary cortisol) samples
- Responsible for recruiting participants for study

Clinical Experience**Michigan State University Couple & Family Therapy Clinic**

August 2015-Present

Bilingual Family Therapist

- Conduct weekly individual, couple, and family therapy
- Integrate systemic theoretical approaches into therapy sessions
- Provide bilingual therapy services to individuals, couples, and families with a focus on attachment, child development, and systems theory

- Create individualized treatment plans for clients
- Formulate and maintain case notes for all clients to ensure proper documentation of session content and therapeutic [SEP] interventions
- Maintain a case load of approximately 10-12 weekly clients
- Develop treatment plans and diagnostic summaries

Parent Management Training-Oregon Model (PMTO)

August 2015-Present

Bilingual Group Facilitator

- Co-facilitate the teachings of PMTO five core parenting skills in Spanish
- Maintain a supportive and safe environment for participants
- Promote and reinforce positive attitudes associated with effective parenting
- Psychoeducate on importance of emotional regulation for effective parenting
- Working towards PMTO Certification

Forward, P.C.

January 2014-May 2015

Bilingual Family Therapist

- Conducted trauma based therapy with low-income families referred cases by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in the city of Chicago
- Provided in-home bilingual therapy services to individuals, couples, and families with a focus on attachment, child development, and systems theory
- Worked with low-income families involved with DCFS
- Generated Mental Health Assessments for clients
- Created individualized treatment plans for clients
- Formulated and maintain case notes for all clients to ensure proper documentation of session content and therapeutic [SEP] interventions
- Collaborated with case managers, individual therapists, family therapists, school officials, guardians, attorneys, and others legally associated with a clients' case
- Attended court as a professional witness
- Formulated client progress reports for court submission
- Provided clients with referrals to appropriate community resources

Partner Abuse Intervention Program (PAIP)

May 2014-May 2015

Bilingual Group Facilitator

- Co-facilitated partner abuse intervention program group in Spanish
- Educated participants about the various causes and forms of domestic violence
- Provided participants with skills for handling conflict
- Provided participants with coping mechanisms for stress management and anxiety
- Maintained a supportive and safe environment for participants
- Challenged participants' cognitions associated with abusive behavior
- Promoted and reinforce positive attitudes associated with non-abusive behavior

Purdue Couple and Family Therapy Center

January 2013-December 2014

Bilingual Family Therapist Intern

- Structured weekly individual, couple, and family therapy session
- Integrated systemic theoretical approaches into therapy sessions with children, adolescents and adults

- Provided play therapy to clients aged 14 years and younger using a variety of approaches including, but not limited to, Parent Child Interaction Therapy, Filial Play Therapy, Sand Tray, Play Genogram, etc.
- Maintained a case load of approximately 10-12 weekly clients
- Developed treatment plans and diagnostic summaries
- Assigned diagnoses and prepared for case management
- Conducted substance abuse treatment
- Communicated with probation officers and completed paperwork for clients to satisfy court requirements
- Conducted phone intakes and referred clients to appropriate resources based on individual needs
- Created and maintained progress notes for all clients to ensure proper documentation of session content of therapeutic [SEP] interventions

Healing Circles

January 2013-August 2013

Group Facilitator

- Co-facilitated suicide survivors support group
- Provided psycho-education and coping mechanisms for grieving process
- Maintained a supportive environment for individuals undergoing bereavement
- Offered emotional support to members who became distraught during the group process

Teaching Experience

Michigan State University

August 2015- Present

Teaching Assistant

- **Courses:** *Human Sexuality, Program Evaluation*
- Collaborate with professors to successfully follow set curriculum and to provide feedback to students
- Create rubric for course assignments
- Manage grade books for course of 100+ students
- Design group activities that allow students to respond to and interact with the material beyond reading the text
- Promote a safe academic environment for class discussions

Guest Lecturer

- **Course:** HDFS 472 Program Evaluation
Topic: *How to Write a Literature Review*; March 16, 2016
- **Course:** HDFS 445 Human Sexuality
Topic: *Gender Issues*; August 2, 2016
Topic: *Female Orgasms and Pharmaceutical Companies*; October 21, 2016,
Topic: *Gender Issues*; October 26, 2016

Purdue University Calumet

August 2012- May 2015

Instructor of Record

- **Courses:** *Human Sexuality, Elementary Psychology*
- Instructed classes of 30+ students materials from Introductory Psychology and Human Sexuality undergraduate courses
- Created and implement course syllabus
- Created and administer course exams

- Designed group activities that allow students to respond to and interact with the material beyond reading the text
- Promoted a safe academic environment for class discussions of sensitive topics such as abortion, non-consensual sex, and sexual orientation

Michigan State University

September 2011- December 2011

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant

- Teaching assistant for both freshman and sophomore seminar classes
- Collaborated with colleagues and professors to successfully follow set curriculum and to provide feedback to students
- Participated in weekly meetings with professors and other teaching assistants to discuss past lectures, review pending syllabus and prepare for following classes
- Assisted instructors with grading of homework, class projects, & papers

Chicano/Latino Studies Program

September 2011-December 2011

Intern

- Recruited undergraduate students for the Scholars & Specialization Program
- Informed students of requirement to fulfill their Chicano/Latino Specialization
- Served as a mentor for 1st & 2nd year students in the Scholars Program
- Composed research report on educational deficit in Latino ESL students in urban public schools
- Designed poster for academic presentation

Teach Spanish for Kids Program

February 2010-May 2010

Bilingual Tutor

- Served as a teacher's assistant & tutor
- Engaged with children ages 5-12
- Taught children basics on how to speak Spanish

Charles Drew Science Scholars Program

September 2008-May 2009

Math Tutor- Wainwright Elementary School

- Helped elementary school children with weekly homework assignments
- Assisted students in strengthening math skills
- Assisted students in strengthening test taking and problem solving skills
- Administered practice MEAP exams

Professional Development

Structural Equation Modeling

AAMFT National Conference Minority Fellowship Program Workshop

September 2016

- Statistical analysis training on Structural Equation Modeling

Parent Management Training-Oregon Model (PMTO)

Online Training Certification Program

August 2015-May 2016

- PMTO certification training

Moderation Vs Mediation

MFP Training Institute

May 2016

- Statistical training on moderation and mediation

Responsible Conduct of Research Series

Michigan State University's Graduate Student Workshop Series

September 2015

- Scientific Communications, Rights to Data, and Authorship Workshop

Responsible Conduct of Research Series

Michigan State University's Graduate Student Workshop Series

September 2015

- Training tutorial on human subject research protection

National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Department of Veteran Affairs

Online Training Modules

July 2014

- PTSD 101: Resilience to Trauma and PTSD
- PTSD 101: Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapies for PTSD
- PTSD 101: 2010 VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline for PTSD: Prolonged Exposure (PE)
- PTSD 101: Pharmacological Treatment of PTSD and Comorbid Disorders
- PTSD 101: Recommendations for Acute Stress Management and Prevention of PTSD
- PTSD 101: Cognitive Processing Therapy
- PTSD 101: Cross cultural issues - African Americans and treatment impact for PTSD

Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

Medical University of South Carolina Web-Based Modules

July 2013

- Psychoeducation & Stress Management
- Affect Expression and Modulation
- Cognitive Coping & Cognitive Processing
- Creating the Trauma Narratives
- Behavior Management Training
- Parent-Child Sessions & Evaluation

Service & Leadership

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity in MFT Research

Invited panelist, AAMFT National Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

September 2016

Sexual Violence Advisory Committee (SVAC)

Focus group moderator, Michigan State University

February 2016

Michigan State University Campus Climate Study

Bilingual focus group facilitator

Spring 2016

Mujer a Mujer's Greek & Graduate Student Life Panel

Invited panelist, Michigan State University

September 2015

Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science

Executive Board Secretary

September 2015-Present

- Coordinate office management activities to aid executives
- Record and maintain minutes of general body meeting and executive board meetings
- Compose letters, proposals, and other executive correspondence
- Produce reports and charts
- Prepare meeting agendas and collect related material
- Review and proofread documents for executives' signatures
- Oversee office budget and recommendations on office expenditure

Eta Chapter of Delta Tau Lambda Sorority, Inc.

August 2015-August 2016

Chapter Consultant for Marygrove College Collegiate Chapter

- Function as a liaison between the national board members and undergraduate member
- Assist chapter in managing organization with campus Greek Life guidelines
- Attend chapter and/or executive board meetings monthly
- Hold professional development sessions for chapter
- Stay abreast of chapter events, fundraising, and academics of active members

General Member

December 2009-Present

- Complete a minimum of 50 hour of community service annually
- Part take in professional development training sessions
- Raise awareness on Brest Cancer, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS and Mental Health, through programming

Vice President

May 2010-Aug. 2011

- Created, communicated, implemented & evaluated the success of the organization's vision, mission, and overall direction through programming as well as volunteer work
- Guided, assisted and evaluated the work of other executive board members
- Formulated and implemented strategic plans that guided the direction the sorority
- Organized fundraisers for the organization's annual scholarship

Technology to Home

September 2011- December 2011

Assistant Project Coordinator

Technology to home is a non-profit pilot program that works with middle school students, high school students, and the parents of students. The goal of this program is to bridge the technology gap between Spanish speaking parents and students so that parents can be more involved with their child's schoolwork.

- Served as an instructor for parents and students in computer course
- Served as a translator for parents and helped explain course lessons
- Assisted parents with learning and strengthening computer skills

Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions

August 2009-May 2011

Intercultural Aide

- Served as a mentor and resource for students in the residence halls
- Catered primarily, but not limited to Freshman, transfer students, international students, and students of color
- Ensured students were transitioning well into college, helping them cope with the academic, cultural and social aspects of university life
- Facilitated programs that promoted cultural awareness and that catered to the needs or interests of students on campus

Culturas de las Razas Unidas (C.R.U.)

May 2009-September 2009

Intercultural Aide Liaison

- Provided cultural programming while promoting Chicano/Latino unity and celebrating diversity at Michigan State University
- Provided written/verbal information of events, issues, and concerns that may interest the students and the general public
- Served as a liaison between the Intercultural Aides and C.R.U. E-Board

Awards & Achievements

- AAMFT Thesis Award Recipient 2016
- Poster accepted at *AAMFT's Cutting Edge Research* category (September 2016)
- AAMFT Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) Recipient 2016
- AAMFT Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) Recipient 2015
- Outstanding Graduate Award Recipient awarded by Delta Tau Lambda Sorority, Inc. (October 2015)
- First Place Poster Presentation Recipient at the Indiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Fall Conference (October 2014)
- First Place Poster Presentation Recipient at the Indiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Spring Conference (March 2014)
- Ronald E. McNair Scholar (January 2011- December 2011)
- Charles Drew Science Scholar (September 2008- December 2011)
- Chicano/Latino Scholar (December 2010- December 2011)
- Todos Organizados para Cuidar Estudiantes (TOCE) Scholarship Recipient 2010

Professional Memberships

- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) - Student Member
- Michigan Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (MAMFT) - Student Member
- Society of Prevention Research-Student Member