



**South Florida State Hospital**

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June 5, 2009

Thank you for your interest in our pre-doctoral internship program. Enclosed is a copy of the Psychology Internship Program at GEO Care/South Florida State Hospital booklet. I hope this booklet will answer any questions that you may have regarding our internship program.

Our program is accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) and the accreditation status of this program can be obtained from the APA Office of Program Consultation & Accreditation, 750 First Street NE, Washington, DC, 20002-4242, (202) 336-5979, and at its website [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation).

We are also a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). We abide by APA and APPIC policies as well as participate in the APPIC Internship Matching Program. Applications and the Applicant Agreement can be obtained from the APPIC Web site at [www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org). Our program code is 1211. We have three funded Internship positions.

#### **Applicant Documentation Required**

1. APPIC Application (located at <http://www.appic.org>)
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. One Sample of a Written Report from a practicum site
4. Three Letters of Recommendation (at least two from clinical supervisors)
5. Official Transcripts (Graduate)

Submit the electronic APPIC application to:

[sschmitt@geocareinc.com](mailto:sschmitt@geocareinc.com)

I have included a description of our program. If there are any further questions please call me at (954) 392-3120 or E-mail [sschmitt@geocareinc.com](mailto:sschmitt@geocareinc.com).

Sincerely,

Sheila Santiago Schmitt, Psy.D.  
Psychology Training Director

#### **Psychology Internship Program**

GEO Care/South Florida State Hospital provides an array of therapeutic services to the severely and persistently mentally ill. GEO Care is the first private company to provide therapeutic services to individuals committed to South Florida State Hospital and one of the first privately run state facilities in the nation. This Internship Training Program provides a unique opportunity for clinical training for the pre-doctoral intern. The facility provides

treatment using a multidisciplinary psychiatric rehabilitation model based on a philosophy of “Role Recovery”. The intern functions broadly as a clinical practitioner, however, experience with specialized behavior plans, cognitive assessment, and forensic assessment and treatment is also provided.

## Clinical Training

The internship adheres to the Scholar-Practitioner model of training. It is the goal of the program to have interns become competent and knowledgeable psychologists working with a severe and persistently mentally ill inpatient population. The persons served in the hospital are diagnosed with a variety of psychopathology. Although the majority of individuals carry diagnoses of schizophrenia or some other psychotic disorder, individuals with diagnoses of substance-related, mood, anxiety, somatoform and/or personality disorders are also well represented.

The clinical training provides each intern with a unique opportunity to gain practical experience in assessment and intervention with a diverse patient population. Goals of the program include increasing awareness of and sensitivity to the cultural, social and psychological needs of special populations while learning to adapt traditional approaches to meet these needs. Interns will be afforded the opportunity to participate in a variety of treatment modalities while receiving direct supervision and formal didactic training. Interns will have a minimum of two hours individual supervision with licensed psychologists as well as group supervision, a weekly case conference meeting, a weekly didactic seminar and a weekly DBT consultation meeting. In addition to the more generalist training experiences interns will participate in each of the three following rotations: (1) Forensic (2) Cognitive Assessment and (3) Individualized Behavior Planning. All interns will be able to co-lead a Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) group, as well as participate in the weekly DBT consultation meeting. Interns will also participate in multidisciplinary treatment team meetings across the eight varying hospital units.

Clinical supervision is currently provided by:

Sheila Santiago Schmitt, Psy.D.

Cathy Roberts, Psy.D.

Cindy Ojeda, Psy.D.

Jacqueline Valdes, Ph.D.

Supplementary training is provided by professionals from other mental health disciplines, both within and outside of GEO Care /SFSH.

## Clinical Responsibilities

The interns will have the opportunity to experience some of the many different clinical roles that psychologists play in a hospital setting. The following are examples of training opportunities but are not intended to be an all-inclusive list, as special individual opportunities may exist depending on specific interests.

### **1. Consultation Report**

Following a fairly traditional medical model, interns evaluate the mental status and briefly assess persons served at the request of the unit psychiatrists. These experiences help interns to develop greater skill in assessing, diagnosing, and making treatment recommendations while strengthening their skills in consulting to other professionals.

### **2. Group Treatment**

The primary modality for this patient population is group psychotherapy and psychoeducational and/or skills training groups. A variety of psychotherapeutic groups are offered such as Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Dual Diagnosis, Anger Management, Sexual Education, Smoking Cessation, Relapse Prevention, Cognitive-Behavioral Group for Depression, and Competency Restoration groups. There is opportunity, in some cases, to develop new groups based on the intern’s interests.

### **3. Individual Treatment**

Individual psychotherapy primarily focuses on helping the individual meet their identified role recovery goals. Interns are expected to conduct individual psychotherapy as is needed, particularly as individuals move toward discharge. Individual interventions may include crisis management, cognitive-behavioral interventions, supportive psychotherapy, and skills training.

### **4. Specialized Behavioral Plans**

Specialized Behavioral Plans involve helping the person served attain their goals by application of behavioral principles. These individualized behavioral plans involve a functional analysis of the targeted behaviors, development of a written behavioral plan and implementation of that plan in conjunction with other hospital staff.

### **5. Psychological Assessment**

Psychological assessment opportunities include personality, intelligence, cognitive screening, competence to proceed to trial, forensic risk assessments. Supervision of the integrated psychological reports helps interns to develop and improve their proficiency in administration, scoring, and interpretation.

### **6. Performance Improvement**

Interns will participate in activities that monitor and improve the quality of person served outcomes and services provided. The emphasis of the weekly psychology seminars is on refining the intern's case conceptualization, diagnostic and treatment skills while considering social and cultural variables and current research findings. Practicing clinical psychology in the public and private sectors with its multifaceted challenges is discussed. The challenges of treating the severe and persistently mentally ill, diversity issues, forensic assessment, transference/counter transference issues, integrating research and practice, psychopharmacology, and ethical considerations are some of the issues that are part of these seminars.