

# Inneké L. Vargas

Sam Houston State University • Department of Psychology and Philosophy

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## Education

**Sam Houston State University** • Clinical Psychology, PhD (forensic emphasis) • in progress

**Wichita State University (WSU) • 2020 • BA • summa cum laude • Psychology • (departmental honors distinction)**

**Minor • Criminal Justice**

**Certificate • Community Psychology**

**Cohen Honors College Interdisciplinary Track • Law & Public Policy**

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## Research Experience

### **A Focus Group of Students' Reactions and Resilience Towards Experiences of Racism**

**Principal Investigators:** Drs. Craig Henderson & Jeffrey Gardner

**Fall 2023**

This focus group is part of a study regarding students' experiences of racism and discrimination and factors that may help them cope with these experiences. The data will be used to develop an intervention that would help promote resilience and build coping skills for students who are experiencing race-related stress.

- Co-facilitated focus group discussion
- Managed participant enrollment and compensation

### **Project TREAD: Tracking Real-Time Exercise and Drinking**

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Jeremiah Weinstock

**Fall 2021 - Fall 2022**

Project TREAD utilized activity tracking and daily diary surveys to capture alcohol use behaviors and physical activity among college students. The study aimed to better understand alcohol use behaviors to inform intervention initiatives.

- Completed participant enrollment, orientation, and compensation
- Downloaded activity data using ActiLife software
- Facilitated final project data download and multi-site distribution

### **Women's Health Network (WHN): An Evaluation of a Community Program**

**McNair Scholars Project**

**Principal Investigator:** Inneké L. Vargas

**Research Mentor:** Dr. Amy K. Chesser

**Fall 2019 - Summer 2020**

The WHN was developed to foster health equity for women in the state of Kansas. This project explored the impact of community engagement on a patient-centered model of care.

- Gathered and analyzed qualitative and quantitative survey results using Qualtrics
- Transcribed and coded research records using NVIVO
- Conducted and transcribed semi-structured interviews using Panopto

### **Assessing Post-COVID Real Estate Market Trends for Southern California**

**Principal Investigator:** James Chung

**Role:** Paid Research Internship • Project Lead

**Summer 2020**

This highly competitive research internship incorporated semi-structured interview assessments to gauge post-COVID behavioral economics for a real estate development client.

- Reported significant findings in self-guided weekly research sprints
- Conducted proprietary data scrubbing using Google Analytics
- Created and analyzed qualitative and quantitative survey reports using Qualtrics

## **Assessing the Impact of Racial Categorizations on Mental Health Service Utilization and Outcomes**

### **McNair Scholars Project**

**Principal Investigator:** Inneké L. Vargas (**Senior Honors Thesis**)

**Advisor:** Dr. C. Brendan Clark

**Fall 2019 - Summer 2020**

This comparative study was conducted to determine if minority student perceptions of therapeutic rapport differed as a function of race compared to non-minority students at a predominately white institution (PWI).

- Administered modified STTS-R questionnaire using SONA
- Created participant surveys using Qualtrics
- One-way ANOVA response data comparison using SPSS

## **Beyond Bingo: The Impact of Activity Engagement in an all-African American Assisted Living Community**

**Principal Investigator:** Inneké L. Vargas

**Research Mentor:** Dr. Molly M. Perkins

**Summer 2019 - Fall 2019**

This secondary analysis of ethnographic observation investigated how barriers and facilitators of meaningful activity engagement affect the eight domains of palliative care.

- Reviewed and coded over 818 observed hours of transcribed interviews using NVIVO
- Analytical reporting of health instrument data: MoCA, OARS, grip strength, the Iowa Pain Thermometer, QoL-AD, and FACIT

## **The Trajectories of Care in Assisted Living (TLC) Study**

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Molly M. Perkins

**Role:** Emory University Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) Fellow

**Summer 2019**

The overarching goal of this five-year NIA funded study was to address critical knowledge gaps and identify best practices for end-of-life care in assisted living communities.

- Constructed thematic coding trees using NVIVO
- Collected ethnographic data through semi-structured interviews

## **Women Involved Network (WIN for Kansas): Community Collaboration to Create Health Equity**

### **McNair Scholars Project**

**Principal Investigator:** Inneké L. Vargas

**Research Mentor:** Dr. Amy K. Chesser

**Fall 2018 - Summer 2019**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of a collaborative approach to reducing community-identified health disparities for women in the state of Kansas.

- Created and distributed surveys using Qualtrics
- Analyzed quantitative survey results using Qualtrics
- Gathered qualitative data using open forum panel discussions

## **Assessing Health Literacy and Stroke Symptomatology in Older Adults**

### **McNair Scholars Project**

**Principal Investigator:** Inneké L. Vargas

**Research Mentor:** Dr. Amy K. Chesser

**Fall 2017 - Summer 2018**

The purpose of this study was to determine short term retention rates of health literacy interventions regarding stroke signs and symptoms among older adults and their caregivers.

- Administered pre- and post-intervention health literacy survey
- Input and analyzed data using Qualtrics
- Created survey reports using Canva

**Behavioral Economics and Progressive Personality****Principal Investigator:** Dr. C. Brendan Clark**Role:** Student Assistant**Fall 2017**

The purpose of this study was to determine if moral elevation can increase or temporarily change opinions about immigrants, minorities, and established authority.

- Input and analyzed data using SPSS

**Publications**

- Chesser A, Keene Woods N, Bowen A, **Vargas I. L.**, & Hawley S. (2021). Mental health literacy and women: A systematic review. *The Kansas Nurse*, 96(1), 6-19.
- **Vargas, I.L.**, Keene Woods N., Bennett C., Paluri J., McCray Miller M., Chesser A. (2021). The women's health network: An evaluation of a community based initiative. *Journal of Family Medicine and Disease Prevention*, 7(1), 1-5. 10.23937/2469-5793/1510136.
- Keene Woods, N., **Vargas, I.**, McCray-Miller, M., Drassen Ham, A., & Chesser, A.K. (2021). SARS-CoV2, the COVID-19 pandemic and community perceptions. *Journal of Primary Care & Community Health*, 12, 1-5. 10.1177/2150132721995451.
- **Vargas, I. L.** (2020). The significance of racial categorizations on mental health service outcomes. *McNair Scholars Program Journal of Research Reports*, 25.
- **Vargas, I. L.** (2019). Improving health equity in female adolescence and womanhood in the state of Kansas. *McNair Scholars Program Journal of Research Reports*, 24, 95-98.
- **Vargas, Inneké L.**, Bender Alexis, Kemp Candace, & Perkins Molly. (2019). Beyond bingo: the impact of activity engagements in an all-African American assisted living community. *Innovation in Aging*. 3. S959-S960. 10.1093/geroni/igz038.3480.

**Conference Presentations**

- Keene Woods, N., McCray-Miller, M., **Vargas, I.**, & Chesser, A. (2021, October). The Importance of Health Literacy Screening to Advance Health Equity. American Public Health Association Conference. Virtual conference.
- **Vargas I.L.**, Clark, C.B. Assessing The Impact of Racial Categorizations on Mental Health Service Utilization and Outcomes. Poster presentation for the Black Doctoral Network Conference; October 29-31, 2020; Virtual Conference.
- Keene Woods, N., McCray-Miller, M., **Vargas, I.L.**, & Chesser, A. Women's Health Network: Health equity through a lifespan approach. American Public Health Association Conference; October 24-28, 2020. San Francisco, CA.
- **Vargas I. L.**, McCray-Miller M, Keene Woods N., & Chesser A. Women's Health Network: An Evaluation of a Community Program. Poster presentation for The North American Menopause Society; September 28, 2020; Virtual Conference.
- **Vargas I.L.**, Clark, C.B. Assessing The Impact of Racial Categorizations on Mental Health Service Utilization and Outcomes. Oral presentation for the MKN Heartland McNair Research Conference; September 26, 2020; Virtual Conference.

- **Vargas I.L.**, Clark, C.B. Assessing The Impact of Racial Categorizations on Mental Health Service Utilization and Outcomes. Oral and poster presentation for McNair Scholar Symposium; July 28, 2020; Wichita KS.
- **Vargas I. L.**, McCray-Miller M, Keene Woods N., & Chesser A. Women's Health Network: An Evaluation of a Community Program. Poster presentation for the Institute for Healthcare Advancement Virtual Conference; July 20-24, 2020; Costa Mesa, CA.
- **Vargas I. L.**, McCray-Miller M, Keene Woods N., & Chesser A. Women's Health Network: An Evaluation of a Community Program. Oral presentation for the 2020 Gender & Sexuality Conference; March 13, 2020; Wichita, KS.
- **Vargas I. L.**, McCray-Miller M, Keene Woods N., & Chesser A. Women's Health Network: An Evaluation of a Community Program. Poster presentation for the Undergraduate Research Day at the Capital; March 4, 2020; Topeka, KS.
- **Vargas, I. L.**, Bender, A. A., Kemp, C. L., Perkins, M. M., Beyond Bingo: The Impact of Activity Engagement in an all-African American Assisted Living Community. Poster Presentation for Gerontological Society of America International Conference; November 13-17, 2019; Austin, TX.
- **Vargas I. L.**, McCray-Miller M, Keene Woods N., & Chesser A. Women's Health Network: An Evaluation of a Community Program. Poster presentation for the Kansas Public Health Association; September 25, 2019; Topeka, KS.
- McCray-Miller M., Keene Woods N., **Vargas I. L.**, Chesser A. Women Health Network: Engagement and Health Equity. Oral presentation for the Kansas Public Health Association; September 24, 2019; Topeka, KS.
- **Vargas, I. L.**, Keene Woods, N., McCray-Miller, M., Chesser A., Women Involved Network (WIN for Kansas): Community Collaboration to Create Health Equity. Poster presentation for Heartland Conference; September 20-22, 2019; Kansas City, MO.
- **Vargas, I. L.**, Bender, A. A., Kemp, C. L., Perkins, M. M., Beyond Bingo: The Importance of Meaningful Activity Engagement in Assisted Living. Poster Presentation for Emory University Summer Undergraduate Research Experience; August 1, 2019; Atlanta, GA.
- **Vargas, I. L.**, Keene Woods, N., McCray-Miller, M., Chesser A., Women Involved Network (WIN for Kansas): Community Collaboration to Create Health Equity. Oral presentation for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Forum (URCAF) conference; April 19, 2019; Wichita KS.
- **Vargas, I. L.**, Keene Woods, N., McCray-Miller, M., Chesser A., Women Involved Network (WIN for Kansas): Community Collaboration to Create Health Equity. Oral presentation for Southern Nazarene University Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium; March 29, 2019; Bethany, OK.
- **Vargas, I. L.**, Keene Woods, N., McCray-Miller, M., Chesser A., Women Involved Network (WIN for Kansas): Community Collaboration to Create Health Equity. Oral presentation for Women's Summit; March 7, 2019; Wichita, KS
- **Vargas I. L.**, Chesser A., Dusenbury W., Hill T., Rogers N. Assessing Health Literacy and Stroke Symptomatology in Older Adults. Oral presentation for McNair Scholar Symposium; July 27, 2018; Wichita KS
- Chesser A., Dusenbury W., **Vargas I. L.**, Hill T., Rogers N., Assessing Health Literacy and Stroke Symptomatology in Older Adults. Oral presentation for the International Conference on Aging Annual Meeting; July 17 – 18, 2018; Atlanta GA.

- **Vargas I. L.**, Chesser A., Dusenbury W., Assessing Health Literacy and Stroke Symptomatology in Older Adults. Oral presentation for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (URCAF) conference; April 6, 2018; Wichita KS.
  - **Vargas I. L.**, Chesser A., Dusenbury W., Assessing Health Literacy and Stroke Symptomatology in Older Adults. Oral presentation for National McNair Student Research Conference; October 19-21, 2018; Chicago, IL.
  - **Vargas I. L.**, Chesser A., Dusenbury W. Assessing Health Literacy and Stroke Symptomatology in Older Adults. Oral presentation for Heartland Conference; September 21-23, 2018; Kansas City, MO.
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### Professional Experience

Montgomery County Adult Jail • Conroe, Texas • June 2024 - Current

*Student Clinician, Supervised by Samantha Kurus, PhD*

- Conduct group therapy sessions (minimum, medium, & maximum security)
- Provide individual triage and short-term interventions
- Assist in conducting forensic evaluations (competency to stand trial & mental status at time of offense)

Montgomery County Juvenile Probation Department • Conroe, Texas • May 2023 - Current

*Student Clinician, Supervised by Samantha Kurus, PhD*

- Complete psychodiagnostic evaluations
- Conduct clinical interviews
- Administer diagnostic measures: WASI-II, WRAT-5, BASC-3
- Complete integrated reports to the court

Sam Houston State University • Huntsville, Texas • August 2022 - May 2023

*Graduate Teaching Assistant, Instructor*

- Introduction to Psychology (4.7/5 Student Course Rating)

Psychological Services Center • Sam Houston State University • May 2022 – August 2023

*Student Clinician, Supervised by licensed psychologists*

- Conducted individual therapy
- Completed psychodiagnostic evaluations
- Conducted clinical interviews
- Administered diagnostic testing
- Completed assessments

AmeriCorps • Wichita, KS • June - August 2021

*Summer VISTA*

- Community Engagement Center (CEI) *IMPACT* Center
- Managed Support Group Services Database
- Researched and aggregated SUD groups in Kansas
- Created global training program templates

Community Engagement Institute (CEI) • Wichita, KS • March - June 2021

*Research Assistant*

- Early school readiness data research
- State of Kansas school readiness data gathering
- Maternal and child mortality data research

Central Plains Area Agency on Aging (CPAAA) - WSU Applied Learning Program • Wichita, KS • 2020 - June 2021

*Quality Assurance Specialist*

- Developed aging adult needs assessment
- Assisted with compiling and distributing needs assessment
- Analyzed and reported findings for the area plan, strategic planning, and program planning
- Supported analysis of strategic plan progress
- Compiled reports and supporting information to delineate findings

Wichita State University • Wichita, KS • 2017 - 2021

*Research Assistant , Dr. Amy K. Chesser - PCORI grant project, \$250,000*

- Qualtrics survey data entry and analysis
- Consented participants per IRB specifications
- Organized large-scale network and board meetings
- Created quarterly and annual infographic and written report deliverables to grant funder - PCORI
- Participant ClinCard incentive registration and distribution
- Website creation, email communication, and social media manager

City of Wichita • Wichita, KS • 2016 - 2019

*Call Center Information Specialist*

- Managed and resolved citizen concerns
- Maintained transaction records
- Documented call information in accordance with operating procedures and city ordinances

European Wax Center • Wichita, KS • 2014 - 2016

*Licensed Aesthetician*

- Waxing specialist

### Fellowships & Internships

**Community Engagement Institute (CEI) • Spring 2021 • Early School Readiness Research • Paid Internship**  
**WSU • Summer 2020 • Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP), NSF funded • Paid Fellowship**  
**Reach Advisors • Summer 2020 & Spring 2021 • Consumer & Employer Behavior Research • Paid Internship**  
**Emory University • Summer 2019 • Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) • Paid Fellowship**

### Scholastic Achievements

- Dorothy and Bill Cohen Honors College Scholar
- Ronald E. McNair Scholar
- Departmental Honors Distinction - highest honor bestowed on a Psychology student

#### **Grants:**

- Wichita State New Ventures, \$1,000
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, \$1,200
- AmeriCorps VISTA Graduate Education Grant \$1,342.86
- Cohen Honors College Research Enhancement Grant, \$1,619
- Kansas Comprehensive Grant, \$1,800
- Shocker Innovation Corps Grant, \$2,150
- McNair Scholars Grant, \$6,100
- Federal Pell Grant, \$11,688

**Scholarships:**

- Title IX Scholarship, \$250
- Liberal Arts and Sciences College Campaign Fund Scholarship, \$448
- Rowena Irani Psychology Scholarship, \$500
- McDonalds Honors Scholarship, \$940
- Earl and Alice McCaslin Scholarship, \$1,000
- HALA Scholarship, \$1,500
- Henry & Gerry A. Pronko Scholarship, \$1,971
- Bernard Osher Returning Adult Scholarship, \$6,225

**Awards:**

- WSU Outstanding Senior of the Year 2020
- WSU Adult Learner of the Year, Inaugural Recipient, 2020
- McNair Scholar Highest GPA, 2017/18, 2019/20
- McNair Scholar Leadership Award, 2017/18

**Features:**

- WSU News: Meet a Shocker Profile Feature
- Distinguished Scholar Invitational Keynote Speaker
- Office of Applied Learning Student Feature
- WSU Foundation Student Feature
- WSU Phenomenal Woman of the Year Nominee
- Keith Sherin Global Leaders Program (Den Haag, Netherlands Summer Program) Finalist
- New York Times editorial feature on Reach Advisors internship work

**Extracurriculars**

American Psychological Association (APA) • SHSU • Spring 2023- Current

- Member

Sam Houston Area Psychological Association (SHAPA) SHSU • Spring 2023- Current

- Extern

Society of Physics Students • SHSU Chapter • Spring 2023- Current

- Member

Black Graduate Student Association • SHSU • Fall 2022- Current

- President (Fall 2022-Spring 2023)
- Member

Student Government Association • Wichita State • Summer - Fall 2020

- Returning Adult Senator, Government Relations Committee

TechStars Startup Weekend • Columbia, MO • October 18-20, 2019

- Overall winner: Execution & Design - ZIFTIN

Mortar Board • Wichita State • 2019 - Current

- National College Senior Honor society

Alpha Sigma Lambda • Wichita State Iota Chapter • 2018 - Current

- Non-traditional student national honor society
- Maintained outstanding scholastic achievement standards and leadership characteristics

Fairmount College Student Advisory Council • Wichita State • 2018 - 2020

- President (2020), Vice-President (2018-2019)
- Conduit between students and college dean
- “Supplies for Fines”; school supply donation initiative to remit parking fines and aid students in need
- Organized and hosted college town hall meeting

Psi Chi International Honor Society • Lifetime Membership - Wichita State Chapter • 2017 - Current

- Vice-President (2020); President (2018-2020) ; Recruitment Chair (2017-2018)
- Organized meetings and keynote speakers
- Facilitated research opportunities for club members

### Volunteer Opportunities

Library of Congress • By the People • Virtual Volunteer • 2020 - Current

- Transcription: Walt Whitman prose campaign

Parkinson’s Walk • Wichita, KS • 2019

- Course Monitor

Trio Summer Program • Wichita, KS • 2018

- Summer enrichment program serving underrepresented youth
- Math tutor assistant
- Analog to digital data record file conversion

Rivercross Hospice • Wichita, KS • 2017 - 2020

- Comfort care and emotional support for hospice patients
- Respite care for patient families

Via Christi Medical Mission at Home • Wichita, KS • 2017

- Patient registrar and guide

Midwest Dance Mechanix • Wichita, KS • 2016 - 2021

- Booster concession sales to fund underprivileged company dancer

(updated July 2024)