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EDUCATION:

The University of Texas at Tyler	Masters in Clinical Psychology	2021
The University of Texas at Tyler	Bachelors Degree in Psychology	2019
Baylor University	Nursing Transfer Student	2018

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:

Doctoral Research Assistant	2022-
UT Tyler Department of Psychology and Counseling -Under the supervision of Olga Berkout, PhD. Associate Professor of Psychology	
- Created a spreadsheet of mental health providers in HRSA approved areas and conducted recruitment. - Aided in survey logic in Qualtrics and IRB modifications. - Transcribed audio files for qualitative content analysis.	
Research Assistant	2023-2024
UT Health Science Center Pulmonary Clinic- Under the supervision of Nelly Yuen, PhD and Benisha Rodgers, BSN	
- Assisted in organizing data for a study that aimed to address the barriers to mental health care in a population with cystic fibrosis (CF). - Assisted with data cleaning and statistical analysis.	
Research Assistant	2021-2024
UT Health Science Center Department of Psychology-Under the supervision of Nelly Yuen, PhD and Karan Singh, PhD	
- Assisted in collecting data for longitudinal behavioral health study. - Created initial procedures, flowcharts, and mapped out experimental design. - Created Qualtrics survey design including recoding, codebook variable labeling, survey logic, and workflows. - Lead data cleaning and created sheets of project specific variables.	
Graduate Research Assistant	2020-2021
UT Tyler Department of Psychology and Counseling -Under the supervision of Samantha Estrada, PhD. Assistant Professor of Psychology	
- Studied statistical anxiety conducted data analysis using rasch analysis and exploratory factor analysis. - Cleaned and recoded dataset variables.	
Graduate Research Assistant	2019-2021
UT Tyler Department of Psychology and Counseling -Under the supervision of Sarah Sass, PhD. Associate Professor of Psychology	
- Conducted research on attentional blink in anxiety, COVID-19 effects, and implicit racial bias, including EEG data collection and visual search task design in E-Prime. - Managed data collection, participant recruitment, and statistical analyses (t-tests, exploratory factor analysis, and repeated measures ANOVA). - Adapted lab experiments for virtual participation and created counterbalanced stimulus sets based on gender, race, and emotion.	

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Psychological Assessment Practicum Student

2024-2025

Wellspring Assessments - Under the supervision of Jonathan Ridenour, PsyD

- Conduct psychological assessments for referrals, disability evaluations, Texas Workforce Commission, and private clients.
- Administer, score, and interpret assessments, including WAIS-IV, WAIS-V, WRAT-4, CPT-3, CATA, WISC, PAI, WMS-IV, D-KEFS, and WPPSI.
- Provided mental health services through therapy interventions.

Clinical Trial Practicum Student

2022-2024

The University of Texas Health Science Center - Under the supervision of Dr. Yuen, PhD

- Conducted clinical trials for the online Unified Protocol with underserved population.
- Interacted weekly with participants to support intervention adherence.
- Aided in treatment adherence program in a Cystic Fibrosis clinic.

Psychological Assessment Practicum Student

2021

The University of Texas Health Science Center - Under the supervision of Crystal Frazier, PsyD

- Observed, conducted, and interpreted assessments in various clinicals including family medicine, bariatrics, and healthy aging clinics.
- Assessments included MoCA, PTSD-I, RBANS-A, Trail Making Test A&B, Clock Drawing Test, Beck Anxiety Inventory, Beck Depression Inventory, and Grooved Pegboard.

Academic Mentor

Academic Success Assistance Program - Under the supervision of Kristie Allen, M.A.

2020-2021

- Mentored students by providing academic coaching, advocacy, and resources, including web-based modules supporting academic success.

Therapy Practicum Student

Rusk-Panola Child Advocacy Center - Under the supervision of Jeffrey Wherry, Ph.D

2021

- Provided trauma-focused therapy and crisis intervention for families.
- Conducted psychometric evaluations using CATS, TSCC, TSCYC, and CSBI.
- Provided crisis intervention to rural populations.

Switch Board Administrator

UT Health East Texas Behavioral Health Center

2018-2020

- Managed visitation hours and patient intake procedures.
- Assisted with administrative tasks, including insurance documentation.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Teaching Assistant

2020

UT Tyler Department of Psychology and Counseling - Under the supervision of Sarah Sass, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Psychology

- Assisted instructor in teaching students' developmental psychology and abnormal psychology courses.
- Enhanced curriculum by incorporating cultural and diversity-focused content.

PUBLICATIONS:

Miller, A., Holmes, S., Crawford, C., Elliott, K. S, Sims-Rhodes, N., Cornwell, H., **Barena, E.**, Nabulsi, E. H., Sass S., Tiruneh, Y., Singh, K. A Tale of Two Wards: How Age Influences Hospital Charges and Length

of Stay for Medical and Psychiatric Patient Populations in Rural Texas. [Submitted to the Southern Medical Journal]

- Kennedy, B. R., Thomas, C., Sass, S. M., **Barena, E.** & Estrada, S. Clinical assessment considerations during pandemics: Expanded validation of the COVID Stress Scales. [Submitted to Sage Open].
- Nair, M., Dighe, R., Doucet, M., Hardin, J., Martinez, E., **Barena, E.**, Thomas, J., Bluesummers, A., Berkout, O.V. Building a fair, equitable, and inclusive lab culture from the ground up. [Accepted to the Behavior Therapist]
- Berkout, O., **Barena, E.** (2025) Mental health shortfalls: Perceptions of unmet needs and barriers to care. *Journal of Administration and Policy in Mental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-025-01438-x>
- Cornwell, H., Sims-Rhodes, N., **Barena, E.**, Brewer, J., Boone, L., Sass, S. M., Elliot, K., Tiruneh, Y., Singh, K. P. (2025) Psychological Distress and Indicators of Wellbeing Using the Dual Continua Model. *Journal of Positive Psychology and Wellbeing*. <https://doi.org/10.47602/johah.v5i1.94>
- Estrada, S., **Barena, E.**, Martinez, E. (2025) Psychometric Properties of the Statistical Anxiety Scale and the Current Statistics Self-Efficacy Using Rasch Analysis in a Sample of Community College Students. *Journal of Applied Measurement*, 24(3/4), 102–120.
- Sims-Rhodes, N., Cornwell, H., **Barena, E.**, Dubre, V., Elliott, K., Nabulsi, E. H., Yuen, N., Sass S., Miller, A., Tiruneh, Y., Singh, K. (2024) Barriers and Facilitators of Behavioral-Health Modality Change Adoption During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*. <https://doi.org/10.2147/JMDH.S472060>
- Elliot, K., Nabulsi, E., Sims-Rhodes, Dubre, V., **Barena, E.**, Yuen, N., N., Morris, M., Sass, S., Kennedy, B., Singh, K., (2024). Modality Changes for Behavioral Health Service Delivery during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review. *Frontiers in Psychiatry: Digital Mental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.641605>

PRESENTATIONS:

Talks:

- Sims-Rhodes, N., Cornwell, H., **Barena, E.**, Dubre, V., Elliott, K., Nabulsi, E. H., Yuen, N., Tiruneh, Y., Miller, A., Sass, S., Singh, K. (2024, April 12) *Perceived Barriers and Facilitators of Behavioral-Health Modality Change Adoption During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. East Texas Research Conference (ETRC), Tyler, TX.
- Rodgers, B., Yuen, N., **Barena, E.**, Hicks, C., Rowe, P., Hall, A., Bratteli, R., Guerra, S., Couch, L., Amaro-Galvez, R., & Tallmadge, W. (2023, November 2- 4) *Fostering Health and Connection: The Vital Role of The Daily Care Check-in (DCC) in Enhancing Cystic Fibrosis Patient Treatment Adherence*. North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference, Phoenix, AZ.
- Barena, E.***, Hicks, C.*, Berkout, O.V. (2023, July 14 - 15). *Self-Compassion and Stigma: Impact on Help-Seeking for Mental Health Issues*. Louisiana-Mississippi Contextual Behavioral Science Conference, Virtual
- Barena, E.** [Chair] (2023, July 14 - 15). *Psychological Flexibility in the Social Media Age*. [Symposium] Louisiana-Mississippi Contextual Behavioral Science Conference, Virtual.
- Nabulsi, E. H., Sims-Rhodes, N., Yuen, N., **Barena, E.**, Kennedy, B. R., Elliott, K., Morris, M., Sass, S., Singh, K. (2023, April 21). *Conducting Behavioral Health Research in a Rural Community in Northeast Texas*. East Texas Research Conference (ETRC), Tyler, TX.
- Barena, E.**, Criddle, J., Berkout, O.V. (2023, March 31- April 2). Understanding unmet mental health needs: An examination in a community sample. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, Frisco, TX.
- Barena, E.** (2022, October 22 - 23). *ACES, Attachment, and the Patient-Provider Relationship*. Trauma Informed Care Conference (STAR), Atlanta, Georgia
- Estrada, S., **Santistevan*, E.**, Martinez, E. (2021, June 28- July 1). *What are the introductory statistics tasks that require the highest self-efficacy for community college students?* United States Conference on Teaching Statistics, Virtual.

Posters:

- Barena, E.,** Melendez, D., Adair Blackwell, M., Hardin, J., Berkout, O. (2025, July 17-20) *Easing Distress for Better Rest: The Role of Self-Compassion in Sleep Quality*. Association of Contextual Behavioral Science (ACBS) Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Adair Blackwell, M., **Barena, E.,** Berkout, O. (2025, July 17-20) *Psychological flexibility, self-concealment, and pliance: Mediating the effects of loneliness on life satisfaction*. Association of Contextual Behavioral Science (ACBS) Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Melendez, D., Adair Blackwell, M., **Barena, E.,** Berkout, O. (2025, April 5) *Unpacking loneliness: The roles of self-compassion and self-concealment*. Lyceum, Tyler, TX.
- Barena, E.,** Melendez, D., Dighe, R., Berkout, O. (2025, March 28-30) *Influence of Client Background on Barriers and Facilitators of Care Seeking Behaviors*. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, Little Rock, AR.
- Crawford, C., Sass, S., Singh, K., Tiruneh, Y., Cornwell, H., Elliott, K., Miller, A., Sims-Rhodes, N., Nabulsi, E., & **Barena, E.** (2025, March 28–30). *Age, hospital charges, and length of stay for rural hospital patients* [Conference presentation]. 2025 Southwestern Psychological Association Annual Conference, Little Rock, AR.
- Nair, M., Dighe, R., Doucet, M., Hardin, J., Martinez, E., **Barena, E.,** Thomas, J., Berkout, O. (2024, August 23-24) *Building a fair, equitable, and inclusive lab culture from the ground up*. La Miss Conference, Virtual.
- Barena, E.,** Dighe, R., Weide, A., Berkout, O. (2024, June 17-18) *Mobile Applications: Attitudes Among Diverse Populations with Mental Health Issues*. Society for Digital Mental Health Conference, Virtual.
- Martinez, E., Nair, M., **Barena, E.,** Berkout, O. (2024, April 12) *Exploring the Relationship between Loneliness, Stigma, Psychological Flexibility, and Psychological Distress*. East Texas Research Conference (ETRC), Tyler, TX.
- Barena, E.,** Brewer, J., Boone, L., Sims-Rhodes, N., Cornwell, H., Elliott, K., Yuen, N., Tiruneh, Y., Miller, A., Sass, S., Singh, K. (2024, April 12) *Breaking Down Barriers: Exploring Challenges in Accessing Mental Healthcare in Northeast Texas*. East Texas Research Conference (ETRC), Tyler, TX.
- Estrada, S., Tsai, Chia-lin., **Barena, E.,** Hardin, J., Nair, M., Owusu, G., Thomsen, L. (2024, August 8 – 10) *Reliability Generalization of the Current Statistics Self-Efficacy: Preliminary Findings* American Psychological Association (APA) Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.
- Doucet, M., **Barena, E.,** Hardin, J., Bluesummers, A., Berkout, O. (2024, March 28- March 30) *Fear of Missing Out: An Investigation of Psychological Flexibility as a Mediator*. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX.
- Snease, T., Criddle, J., **Barena, E.,** Berkout, O. (2024, March 28 – March 30) *Digital ACT for maladaptive eating and weight concerns: A systematic review*. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX.
- Barena, E.,** Sims-Rhodes, N., Hayden, C., Nabulsi, E., Cornwell, H., Morris, M., Elliott, K., Yuen, N., Sass, S., Singh, K. (2023, November 16 - 19) *Predicting Health Condition Count for Patients at a Rural Integrative Primary Care Hospital: The Influence of Mental Health Status and Adverse Childhood Experiences*. Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT) Convention, Seattle, WA.
- Rodgers, B., Yuen, N., **Barena, E.,** Hicks, C., Rowe, P., Hall, A., Bratteli, R., Guerra, S., Couch, L., Amaro-Galvez, R., & Tallmadge, W. (2023, November 2- 4) *Fostering Health and Connection: The Vital Role of The Daily Care Check-in (DCC) in Enhancing Cystic Fibrosis Patient Treatment Adherence*. North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference, Phoenix, AZ.
- Sims-Rhodes, N., **Barena, E.,** Nabulsi, E., Kennedy, B. R., Yuen, N., Elliot, K., Morris, M., Sass, S.M., Singh, K. P. (2023, March 31 – April 2) *Examining mental health conditions and barriers to care in rural Northeast Texas*. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, Frisco, TX.
- Barena, E.,** Kennedy, B. R., Sims-Rhodes, N., Sass, S. M. (2023, March 31 - April 2) *Valence and Arousal Ratings for a Diverse Face Stimulus Set*. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, Frisco, TX.
- Santistevan*, E.,** Chhabra, P., Neiderstadt, K., Kennedy, B. R., Sass, S. M. (2021, April 21). *Supporting a Racially Diverse Facial Dataset: Normative Valence and Arousal Ratings Across Race and Moderation by Race*. Honors Lyceum, Tyler, TX.

- Santistevan*, E.**, Martinez, E., Estrada., S. (2021, April 21). *What Causes the Most Anxiety in An Introductory Statistics Course Interpretating, Asking for Help, Statistics Exams? A Rasch Analysis of The Statistical Anxiety Scale*. Honors Lyceum, Tyler, TX.
- Carver, K. S., Ismail, H., Kennedy, B. R., Reed, C. M., Nguyen, N., **Santistevan*, E.**, Sass, S. M. (2020). Novel visual search training with anxious college students. Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) Annual Conference, Frisco, TX.

SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS:

Grants:

Estrada, S., Tsai, C. L., **Barena, E.*** Thomsen, L. * (2023). Psi Chi International Honor Society Faculty Research Grant. Total funded: **\$2,000** “Current Statistics Self-Efficacy: A Reliability Generalization Study”

Scholarships:

University of Texas at Tyler Graduate Scholarship, **\$1,000**

Awards:

1st Place Research Poster at the East Texas Research Conference, **\$1,000**

Psi Chi Regional Poster Competition Finalist at SWPA Conference 2025

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

Association for Contextual Behavior Science (ACBS)	2022-
Collaborative Family Healthcare Association (CFHA)	2021-
HSTAT Taskforce on ACEs and Resilience (STAR)	2020-2023
American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS)	2020-
Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology	2018-
