



Commencement Ceremony  
Miami, Campus

October 7, 2022



*Program*

Salutation

Message from the Student Council President

Message from the President

Message from the Interim Chancellor

Diploma Presentation

Closing



## *To the Families of the Graduates*

We all recognize the help, support, respect and love that our family has provided us throughout the academic journey that we complete today. Our achievements are the fruit of mutual work and efforts.

Love is appreciated through love. Just to say “Thank You” is not enough. We want to dedicate this great moment, our Graduation, to all of you.



**CARLOS ALBIZU-MIRANDA, Ph.D.**

*Founder and First President*

*Albizu University*

Dr. Carlos Albizu was a pioneering and visionary man who dedicated his life to improving the well-being of Puerto Rico. Dr. Albizu labored to improve the mental health services offered to his fellow countrymen, while providing opportunities for Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics to complete a program of study in higher education which was not available at the time.

Dr. Albizu was born on September 16, 1920 in the city of Ponce, Puerto Rico. In 1943, he attained a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Puerto Rico with a concentration in psychology and history. As there was no graduate program in the field of psychology on the Island, he decided to attend the University of Minnesota to begin his graduate studies in clinical psychology. After a year, due to financial reasons and to the lack of financial aid programs available to minorities, he returned to Puerto Rico to work and so postponed completing his doctoral studies. In September of 1950, Dr. Albizu secured a teaching assistant position and moved to Purdue University, where he attained a master's degree in experimental psychology in 1951, and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology in 1953. His doctoral dissertation focused on the relationship between social class factors and test performance.

Dr. Albizu joined the faculty in the Psychology Department of the University of Puerto Rico where he attained the rank of full professor, retiring in 1975 after 22 years of service.



Upon returning to Puerto Rico, Dr. Albizu felt great concern about the lack of opportunities for students on the Island to engage in graduate studies in the field of psychology. He fervently believed that the training acquired abroad did not provide psychology students with the skills needed for an effective and culturally-sensitive intervention with Hispanic populations. He therefore founded the Puerto Rico Institute of Psychology in 1966, which became the first psychology graduate program on the Island, and the first school of professional psychology in the United States and its territories.

Dr. Albizu was not only a visionary but also a man with great courage. After ten short years, Dr. Albizu foresaw the same needs in South Florida where the increasing influx of Caribbean and Latin American immigrants created a critical need to provide culturally-sensitive mental health services for this population.

He thus established the Miami Institute of Psychology in 1980. Master's and doctoral level programs in the field of psychology were offered, concentrating on the needs of underrepresented minority groups. The institution offered opportunities for studies in higher education that were otherwise inaccessible to the majority of Hispanics and other minority populations.

Dr. Albizu passed away in 1984, but his legacy of excellence in mental health and education continues to contribute significantly to the social and economic development of the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States, through the culturally sensitive professional training offered at the campuses in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Miami, Florida.

In January of 2000, the Board of Trustees changed the name of the institution to Carlos Albizu University in response to its strategic plan to become a multidisciplinary university responsive to the educational and workforce needs of the pluralistic and diverse population of the United States. Albizu University was the first regionally accredited, secular university in the United States named in honor of a Hispanic.



## *History*

Albizu University (AU) is a private, nonprofit, specialized university-level institution offering associate, bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology, business, education, criminal justice, and speech and language pathology, and doctoral degrees in psychology and human services. Albizu University has campuses in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Miami, Florida, and an extension center in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico.

The origin of Albizu University dates back to the year 1966, when the Puerto Rico campus, originally known as the Caribbean Center for Advanced Studies, was founded with the specific objective of offering a Master of Science degree in clinical psychology. At that time, there were very few mental health professionals on the Island and most received their professional education outside of Puerto Rico.

Upon completion of those studies, returning mental health professionals were confronted with the necessity of adapting their training to Puerto Rican socio-cultural realities. The Caribbean Center for Advanced Studies was established by Dr. Carlos Albizu, a renowned Puerto Rican psychologist, in response to the need for culturally sensitive professional training. Starting in 1972, the Puerto Rico campus began offering doctoral degrees (Ph.D. and Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology), thus becoming the first university offering culturally sensitive doctoral training in clinical psychology in Puerto Rico.

Dr. Albizu devoted his life to the training and formation of multiculturally competent psychologists on the island of Puerto Rico as well as on the mainland. Albizu University continues in this tradition of cultural sensitivity and is today an educational institution whose programs of study and research are founded, both in theory and practice, on our multicultural heritage.

Through the founding of the Miami campus in 1980, Albizu University responds to the need in the continental United States for graduate psychology programs sensitive to cultural and ethnic issues. Through the academic offerings at both campuses, AU provides professional training that is relevant and responsive to the educational needs of the communities served and to the needs of culturally sensitive research, thereby contributing to the development of the professions of psychology, business, education, criminal justice, human services, and speech and language pathology.



## *Historical Overview of the Academic Costume Code*

The origins of academic dress date back to the 12th and 13th centuries, when universities were taking form. The ordinary dress of the scholar, whether student or teacher, was the dress of a cleric. With few exceptions, the medieval scholar had taken at least minor orders, made certain vows, and perhaps been tonsured. Long gowns were worn and may have been necessary for warmth in unheated buildings. Hoods seem to have served to cover the tonsured head until superseded for that purpose by the skull cap.

A statute of the University of Coimbra in 1321 required that all “Doctors, Licentiates, and Bachelors” wear gowns. In England, in the second half of the 14th century, the statutes of certain colleges forbade “excess in apparel” and prescribed the wearing of a long gown. In the days of Henry VIII of England, Oxford and Cambridge first began prescribing a definite academic dress and made it a matter of university control even to the extent of its minor details.

The assignment of colors to signify certain faculties was to be a much later development, and one which was to be standardized only in the United States in the late 19th century. White taken from the white fur trimming of the Oxford and Cambridge B.A. hoods, was assigned to arts and letters. Red, one of the traditional colors of the church, went to theology. Green, the color of medieval herbs, was adopted for medicine, and olive, because it was so close to green, was given to pharmacy. Golden yellow, standing for the wealth which scientific research has produced, was assigned to the sciences.

European institutions have always had great diversity in their specifications of academic dress and this has been a source of confusion. In contrast, American colleges and universities opted for a definite system that all might follow. A significant contribution to the development of this system was made by Gardner Cotrell Leonard of Albany, New York. Mr. Leonard designed gowns for his class at Williams College in 1887 and had them made by Cotrell and Leonard, a firm established by his family in Albany, New York. He was greatly interested in the subject and following the publication of an article by him on academic dress in 1893, he was invited to work with an Intercollegiate Commission made up of representatives of leading institutions to establish a suitable system of academic apparel.

The Commission met at Columbia University in 1895 and adopted a code of academic dress, which besides regulating the cut and style and materials of the gowns, prescribed the colors which were to represent the different fields of learning.

In 1932 the American Council on Education authorized the appointment of a committee “to determine whether revision and completion of the academic code adopted by the conference of the colleges and universities in 1895 is desirable at this time, and, if so, to draft a revised code and



present a plan for submitting the code to the consideration of the institutional members of the Council.”

The committee reviewed the situation through correspondence and conference and approved a code for academic costumes that has been in effect since that year. A Committee on Academic Costumes and Ceremonies, appointed by the American Council on Education in 1959, again reviewed the costume code and made several changes.

In 1986, the committee updated the code and added a sentence clarifying the use of the color dark blue for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

*“Historical Overview of the Academic Costume Code,” Eugene Sullivan, American Council on Education, reprinted with permission from American Universities and Colleges, 15th Edition © 1997 Walter de Gruyter, Inc.*





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2021-2022

*Bachelor of Arts in Exceptional Student Education*

Allison Alvarez

*Bachelor of Science in Psychology*

Rocio Angelica Abreu

Heidy Acosta Escalona

Ana Elvira Alonso Alvarez

Marlene C. Alvarez-Jacinto

Laura Alvarez Jorge

Emilio Jorge Balceiro Simeón

Duber J. Baptista Villalobos

Maryvelisse Carpintero

Andy Casanova Ramirez

Jadiye Concepcion

Markus Contreras

Karem De La Cruz

Jasmine Fondon

Gretel Garcia Fregio

Monica Garcia Garcia

Amy Gonzalez

Lilianis Hernandez Prieto

Sindy Lopez

Teresa Lopez, *Distinguished Award Recipient*

Jessica Marie Martinez

Jesus Alberto Nunez Rosales

Esthefany Odicio

Lauren Paez

Miriam Quintana

Ayremis Rodriguez

Marilyn Rueda

Nelson Silberberg

Melissa Silva

Olivia Sora Lugo

Anay Valdiviz Marrero



*Master of Science in Psychology*  
*Mental Health Counseling*

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Diana Aguirre Marimón

Frederick Alkarra

Yaimilyn Alonso Rodriguez

Catherine Alvarez

Stephanie P. Alvarez

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Justin Michael Marshall

Greuly A. Mendoza

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Dahumy Munoz Padron

Laura Ojeda

Rafael Peña

Lucy Andrea Perez Suarez

Daniela Natalia Pino

Joanna Priscilla Rodriguez

Daniel Rodriguez Garcia



Miriam Aimee Rodriguez Orozco

Rachel N. Rosado Tavárez

Björn Sveinsson, *Distinguished Award Recipient*

Bryan Valladares

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Anais Elora Vega

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Kenny Vega

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***Master of Science in Psychology  
Marriage and Family Therapy***

Jacqueline Andre Louis

Paula Sabó Callegari

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Angela L. Garcia Marin

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Jennifer Lan Helle

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Maria Carolina Lizarralde

Melissa Lidia Martinez

Natalia McCarthy

Endelst Ortega Rubio

Magdalena Maria Palmero

Victor Pinto

Denise Ramos-Diaz

Maria Trujillo Bravo

Melinda Williams

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Vanessa Carrasco

Vilma H. Jagessar

Alexander Maximilian Mazarredo

Karen Andrea Morales

Elsa Elizabeth Napoles

Lolamaria Robbio



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School Counseling***  
Stephanie Marie Ruiz

***Master of Science in Psychology  
Mental Health Counseling & School Counseling***  
Monik Mossini  
Ivelisse Planas Torres  
Denise Ramos-Diaz  
Gretel Rivera

***Master of Science in  
Industrial and Organizational Psychology***  
Marietta Hernandez-Lage  
Mannie Alejandro Lizarazo  
Gurlyn Angelica McIntosh  
Claudia S. Navarro Melendez  
Anatoliy Oleynikov, *Distinguished Award Recipient (Online program)*  
Iris Paola Pacheco  
Cristina Rivera Padin  
Emily Marie Rivera Velazquez  
Camila Toro-Sepúlveda  
Lorena Araujo Vasconcelos, *Distinguished Award Recipient  
(Campus-based program)*

***Master of Science in  
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages***  
Chantelle Marie Almeida  
Hellen D. Forchue  
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Rejane Marra  
Mayara Revuelta Cepero

***Master of Science in Exceptional Student Education***  
Maysa Cespedes  
Yoan David Collado  
Yanet Fernandez Miranda



Ariadna Gonzalez Forte  
Vivian Rodriguez Nordmann, *Distinguished Award Recipient*  
Kassandra Tarride

*Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology*

Violeta Marie Acosta  
Arlet Alamo  
Yassel Amaran Lopez  
Raven Noel Bishop  
Kashua Gerena Bonilla  
Maria Hanna Cap  
Georgina Cerff  
Paola A. Cesari Gratzel  
Veyondra Nicole Christmas  
Kayla Ada Connell  
Claudia Virginia Corrales  
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Jennifer Liliana Guzmán Rincón  
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Anthony Michael Hernandez  
Kanasha Kelly  
Ermine Helen Khacheryan  
Lydia Kuchmak  
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Keyla Losa  
Katelyn Losada  
Duneisy Marrero  
Naeomi Martin Cayon  
Kaleena Mayan  
Anita McCurry  
Marianela Medina  
Jamila Mercado



Rebekah Danielle Miller

Katerin Mora Batan

Patricia Morales

Morgan Taylor Murphy, *Distinguished Award Recipient*

Yeily Oliver Regueira

Natalia Andrea Osorio

Lindsay Peek Lopez

Jorge Luis Perez

Monica Perez

Claudia Quintana-Padron

Amanda Raude

Ursula Maria Recarte

Victoria Robayna

Yaymi Roche

Danielle Rodriguez

Glory Maty Rosa

Michelle Rossi

Andrea Carolina Sanchez

Lai Yen Suarez

Neyshaliz Torres Soto

Natalie Urrutia

Jomarys Vazquez-Adorno

***Master of Science in Psychology***

Krystal Gianina Acevedo

Casey Améda

Maria Fernanda Bayron Vazquez

Kristin Marie Borracci-Pastiu

Daylene Capote

Geraldine Rose DeBianchi

Rebeca Evora Matozinho

Dayron Gonzalez

Jordyn Hannah Hazan

Bianca Johnson

Gabriella Elizabeth Junco

Anna Lorena Landestoy Alejandro

Krystell Leonor

Paola Lopez Saavedra

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Gendry Montesino  
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Brooks Edward Peterson  
Leticia Pinheiro Prado  
Yuvalie Marie Ramallo  
Kimberley Shore  
Nadia Rayne Swiecicki  
Emily Thompson

*Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology*

Breona Alvarado  
Kristin Marie Borracci-Pastiu  
Henri Coizeau  
Zayda Costa  
Melissa I. Costero  
Jaclyn Teresita Dujarric  
Yilkania Garcia  
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Christine Michelle Pope Funk  
Heidys Prieto, *Distinguished Award Recipient*  
Leslie Ruiz  
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Christopher Sanchez  
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*Doctor of Philosophy in Human Services*

Ramon de Jesus Alvarez, *Distinguished Award Recipient*

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## **Teresa Lopez**

*2022 Distinguished Bachelor of Science in Psychology Award Recipient*

Teresa Lopez was born in Havana, Cuba in 1989. At the age of 15, she arrived in the United States with her mother, full of dreams and aspirations, but also with the many fears that being an immigrant brings. Teresa graduated from Coral Park Senior high school in 2018. Since she wanted to work as a nurse, following her high school graduation she enrolled in a program to become a Certified Nursing Assistant, just to find out after completing the program that nursing was not her calling.

Looking for a more rewarding career, she enrolled in Keiser University from where she graduated with an associate degree in occupational therapy assistant and since then she has been working in pediatrics as an OTA. With the desire of furthering her education, Teresa started a career in psychology at Albizu University during the hard times of the Covid-19 pandemic, and two years later she completed her Bachelor of Psychology degree with a Minor in Behavior Analysis, from which she graduates today.

As described by her professors, Teresa was one of those students who possessed a combination of intellectual focus and social aptitude. She performed extremely well in the program and often made critical points in class; she also showed great persistence and eagerness to learn. Having a generous spirit, she was always available to assist others in her class who needed help.

Teresa is very proud of herself and of being the first woman in her family to achieve this educational milestone. She is very grateful to her mother who has always advised her to study to build a career and become an independent woman. Teresa is determined to continue fulfilling her dreams and to remain strong in her will, despite the ups and downs she might encounter on the road.

Albizu University congratulates Teresa on her accomplishments and wishes her success in her future endeavors.



**Vivian Rodriguez Nordmann, M.S.**

*2022 Distinguished Master of Science in Exceptional Student Education Award Recipient*

Ms. Vivian Rodriguez Nordmann enrolled in the Master of Science in Exceptional Student Education Program in early 2019 at Albizu University. In March 2019, she was diagnosed with cancer, and through treatment and consultations, along with AU advising, support, and counseling, she remained at Albizu, eventually taking one course per term. Speaking very often with her program advisor about her dreams, her goals, and desire to do well in the program, she strengthened her determination to complete her academic journey. Her daily mantra included: "Don't give up. God is always there for you.". She never gave up, and she is now commencing as a Distinguished Student Award recipient!

Born in Cartagena, Colombia, Vivian came to America in July 2001 with a bachelor's degree, and continued living in America. Having a hard life, she worked three jobs at a time to support her family, eventually becoming a single mom. Becoming a teacher here was a joy. Vivian loves teaching and taking time with students in the classroom; giving knowledge, creating learning environments; and helping her students successfully develop new concepts. While working with a Head Start Inclusion Program, which included her having at least two cases of students with Special Needs in her classroom, and because of her excellent work, her administrator at the time urged her to enroll in a Masters in Exceptional Student Education, and she did.

Excelling with her graduate studies at Albizu was her goal. Vivian has shared that Albizu's professors were on point with her education and that they kept her "ahead of her game". Working hard to remain a shining student, excelling with sterling caliber assignment, no matter how she felt, she was always dedicated to the fulfillment of all her program requirements. The MS ESE Program at AU has brought a lot to her life, even during her cancer treatment, allowing her to not think about her disease and the extreme pain it was causing her, but about her goals, her professors, her research, her advisors, and all their guidance and support.

Ms. Vivian Rodriguez Nordmann is one of Albizu University's shining assets...hard-working and sincere. Aligned with the Albizu Mission Statement, she is working to improve quality of life and serving our diverse communities. We are very proud of her!



## **Morgan Taylor Murphy, M.S.**

*2022 Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology Award Recipient*

Ms. Morgan Taylor Murphy began the Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology (SLP) program at Albizu University in the Fall 2019 academic session. During her time in the program, she was President of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Albizu Chapter (2020-2021), and recipient of the Title V Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (PPOHA) grant for two years in a row (2020, 2021). She maintained academic excellence throughout her program by maintaining a 4.0 grade point average, and successfully completed clinical practica and comprehensive exams, all while retaining her position as an SLP Assistant supporting the language, speech, and feeding goals of medically fragile children. Ms. Murphy was noted by professors and colleagues to be a caring, passionate, organized, and professional student.

Ms. Murphy's motivations stem from a childhood passion for science, communication, and helping others. When learning about the field of speech-language pathology, she knew it was a perfect match. To further her learning and collaborate with other professionals, she attended state and national conferences such as the Florida Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists convention (FLASHA), and the American Speech Language-Hearing Association convention (ASHA). Morgan has volunteered her services during multiple seminars aimed at increasing the abilities of other SLPs. She has also impacted the South Florida community by providing presentations on the importance of SLP collaboration to a support group for people living with Sjögren's disease.

Ms. Murphy is currently completing her clinical fellowship in a hospital. Her current placement allows her to provide treatment in both in- and out-patient care units for adults. She hopes to continue positively impacting the lives of adults with voice and swallowing disorders. Ms. Murphy states that Albizu University greatly assisted her by providing an enriched academic experience, wonderful faculty support, and an experience catered to her individual goals, for which she will be forever thankful.

Albizu University congratulates Ms. Murphy on her accomplishments and wishes her success in her future endeavors.



## **Björn Sveinsson, M.S.**

*2022 Distinguished Master of Science in Psychology Award Recipient*

Björn Sveinsson enrolled in the Master of Science in Psychology with a major in Mental Health Counseling in Albizu University in 2019. Earlier in 2019 he had earned his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology degree, Magna Cum Laude, from Florida International University.

For as long as he can remember, Björn was interested in understanding and assisting others. Thus, while pursuing his bachelor's degree, he worked as a research assistant at Dr. Sibley's Teen Lab, helping families and children to navigate their symptoms for conditions such as ADHD and autism. During his studies at Albizu, Björn worked as a student coach/mentor and English academic intervention leader at a middle school, and served as Guardian Ad Litem for foster children and their families. He also took advantage of many opportunities to engage in extracurricular trainings.

Björn was selected to participate in the master's program Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training for Professionals HRSA grant project. Through this program, he completed his practicum experience at Agape Network in an exemplary manner. He there provided services to victims of domestic violence and substance abuse, as well as to homeless and dually diagnosed individuals. He also served as the Student Vocal Member for the master's program in the Student Council (2020-2022), and was the Vice-President of the Miami Campus chapter of Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology. Additionally, Björn presented on "Prevalent Pregnancy-Anxiety during COVID-19 in the U.S." at the International Conference of Humanities, Social, & Education Sciences, and received an award at Albizu's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual South Florida Student Research Symposium for his research poster on "Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder & Characteristics of Treatment Resistance". Björn is currently employed at Lotus Counseling.

Today, Björn graduates with distinction. The faculty is proud of his accomplishments and wishes him continued success in all his endeavors.



## **Lorena Araujo Vasconcelos, M.S.**

*2022 Distinguished Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology Award Recipient  
(Campus-based program)*

Lorena Araujo Vasconcelos earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Fortaleza (UNIFOR), Brazil, in 2016. During her studies, she had the opportunity to engage in a Human Resources internship at USIBRAS, a prestigious multinational company with headquarters in Brazil. There, her passion for better understanding human interactions and its effect on people's performance grew stronger, and her hard work led to an opportunity to work assisting their Board of Directors with several projects. After concluding her undergraduate program, the Latin American Institute of Business (LAIQB) granted Lorena a scholarship to attend to specialized courses in International Business Management offered during the summer at San Ignacio University, in Miami, Florida.

In 2017, Lorena earned an MBA in Business Management at UNIFOR. In 2018, she returned to Miami to pursue the Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology program at Albizu University. Her research poster *Leader's perception on Happiness at Work in Brazil and USA* was accepted at all 5 conferences to which she submitted it. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the conferences were canceled. Regardless of this circumstance, its acceptance was gratifying for her. In addition to excelling in her academic courses, Lorena was admitted as an intern at the Training and Development Department at ChenMed to complete her practicum experience. At her site, Lorena dove deeper into exploring the impact of leadership development.

Lorena feels she owes her accomplishments mainly to her parents, her aunts Beatrice and Cecilia who gave her a home in Miami, the guidance of her professors and mentors and the support of family, friends, and coworkers. In her free time, Lorena enjoys watching hockey, swimming, playing music, reading, and gardening. She looks forward to continuing to learn and to assist companies in creating more meaningful experiences in the workplace.

The faculty is proud of her accomplishments and wishes her continued success in all her future endeavors.



## **Anatoliy Oleynikov, M.S.**

*2022 Distinguished Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology Award  
Recipient  
(Online program)*

Anatoliy Oleynikov came from a hard-working immigrant family. He grew up in New York and completed his education in CUNY College of Staten Island where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology degree. Afterwards, he volunteered for a number of years in different nursing homes and hospitals. During this time, he met and created long lasting relationships with many individuals. Additionally, during this time, he fell in love with photography and cinematography, and his images were featured in different online news outlets and magazines. However, he felt something was missing and he started to research different universities for Industrial and Organizational Psychology programs. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit New York in 2020, and the whole state went into lockdown, his decision became clear. He felt fortunate to learn about Albizu University's online program, which allowed him to continue his education uninterrupted during the pandemic.

Anatoliy decided to pursue the M.S. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology degree because of his interest in better understanding the relationship between work and life while also helping organizations to identify the best candidates. More specifically, he was and still is interested in seeing how psychology can influence the growth of individuals in a work-related setting. In his words, "it was an eventful journey with interesting and unique experiences". During his studies at Albizu, he was able to acquire various certifications and skills, and published his first research paper, *Self Determination and Gender Differences (2021)*, in the International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development. He co-authored this paper with Dr. DiDona, who was at the time the IO Coordinator. During his Capstone project, Anatoliy completed the prestigious Six Sigma Certification.

Today, Anatoliy graduates with Distinction, and he has expressed his gratitude to the program, his professors and advisors for their guidance and availability throughout this journey.

The faculty is proud of his accomplishments and wishes him continued success in all his endeavors.



## **Heidys Prieto, Psy.D.**

*2022 Distinguished Doctor of Psychology Award Recipient*

Dr. Heidys Prieto graduated with honors from Florida International University in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Later in 2015, she earned a Master of Science degree in Clinical Mental Health from Florida International University, and in 2018 a Master of Science in General Psychology degree from Albizu University. After attaining her master's degree, she worked as a lead clinician in an influx shelter for unaccompanied minors from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico.

In 2022, Dr. Prieto completed her Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology degree with a neuropsychology concentration from which she graduates today. Dr. Prieto worked in the Acute and Subacute Adult Neuropsychology Service at Kendall Regional Medical Center, housed in the Intensive Care Trauma Unit and the Critical Care Unit. There she worked closely with patients and families from diverse sociocultural, ethnic, and language backgrounds, which enabled her to work with a broad range of neurological and neuropsychiatric conditions.

Dr. Prieto completed her clinical health internship at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Tyler, Texas where she collaborated with medical residents and attending physicians to conduct brief assessment, intervention, and crisis management for patients within the hospital. During her time at UTHSC, she also conducted integrated neuropsychological assessment batteries for referral questions such as dementia, TBI, and related cognitive dysfunction. Dr. Prieto has provided outpatient individual therapy services to individuals across the lifespan presenting with a wide range of disorders. She also provided individual and group therapy as well as neuropsychological assessments for patients in acute and long-term hospitalization in a state psychiatric facility. Additionally, she had the privilege of supervising UT Tyler Master's level students with their clinical services in the training clinic. Dr. Prieto has experience with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Existential Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and Cognitive Processing Therapy.

Dr. Prieto is presently completing her clinical neuropsychology fellowship at Design Neuroscience Center in South Florida in pursuit of licensure and neuropsychology board certification. She is also developing and engaging in neuropsychological didactic trainings, assisting in and attending group supervision with students in the Master of Science in Psychology program.

Albizu University congratulates Dr. Prieto on her accomplishments and wishes her success in her future endeavors.





## **Ramon de Jesus Alvarez, Ph.D.**

*2022 Distinguished Doctor of Philosophy in Human Services Award Recipient*

Ramon de Jesus Alvarez received a Medical Doctor degree from the University of Havana in 1988. He worked as family physician in rural areas in Matanzas, Cuba, and also as critical care physician of Colon Hospital's Intensive Care Unit (ICU). In 1990, he completed a Family Physician specialization and was assigned to work as subdirector of medical assistance and medical director of several community health centers. Ramon immigrated to the United States in 1995, where he worked as case manager in the health field.

In 2004 Ramon graduated with a master's degree in Psychology (Marriage and Family Therapy) from Albizu University, which allowed him to provide individual, family, and group counseling interventions. Ten years later, Ramon was admitted to Albizu University's Ph.D. program in Human Services, to fulfill his primary professional goal of conducting research in health-related areas. While completing his degree, Ramon worked as coordinator for United Health Care and Florida Blue.

Despite having suffered severe medical illnesses –one of them very recently-- as well as enduring insurmountable obstacles in collecting primary data, Ramon forged on and analyzed a CDC public data set, collected by the National Center for Health Statistics (NHIS), and completed his dissertation on *Hypertension and Cognitive Decline in 65 to 85-Year-Old Adults*. Working independently, Ramon did not miss any time in switching his dissertation to a different type of study and self-teaching on how to extract and analyze secondary data. He used Binary, Logistic Regression Analysis and other analyses that demonstrated significant differences in cognitive decline between patients 65 to 85 years, who adhered to a hypertension-reduction medical regimen and healthy lifestyles, and those who did not. Dr. Ramon de Jesus Alvarez deserves recognition for selecting a pertinent health topic, and for his unswerving dedication, intrinsic motivation, and admirable and commendable work.

Albizu University congratulates Dr. Alvarez on his accomplishments and wishes him continued success in all his endeavors.



***Graduation Honors Criteria:***

Undergraduate cumulative grade point average:

Cum Laude - 3.33-3.49

Magna Cum Laude - 3.50-3.95

Summa Cum Laude - 3.96-4.00

Graduate cumulative grade point average:

Distinction - 3.60-3.94

Utmost Distinction - 3.95-4.00

Graduate students receiving honors cannot:

- ~ Receive a grade of C or lower in any course.
- ~ Receive a NP in or repeated courses, practicum, Internship, Dissertation/Doctoral Project, and/or Comprehensive Examination