



Commencement Ceremony Miami Campus

October 10, 2025



Program

Salutation

Aperture

Message from the Student Leader

Mr. Victor Gomez Garcia

Message from the President

Dr. Nelson E. Soto

Musical Interlude

Doral Academy Elementary School Choir

Introduction of the Commencement Speaker

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Dr. Antonio E. Puente

Message from the Commencement Speaker

Dr. Jennifer F. Kelly

Diploma Presentation

Closing



To the Families and Loved Ones of the Graduates

We recognize the love and support that our families and loved ones have provided to us throughout the academic journey that we complete today.

Our achievements are the fruit of mutual work and effort.

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 earned 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 earned 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 in Puerto Rico, 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 to extend the benefit of graduate psychology programs that were sensitive to cultural ethnic issues in the continental United States. In January 2000, the university in Miami and the university in Puerto Rico (along with one university center) were renamed Carlos Albizu University in honor of its founder and is now known as Albizu University.

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.



History

Albizu University (AU) is a private, nonprofit, specialized university-level institution offering bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology, business, education, exceptional student education, counseling, teaching English to speakers of other languages, and speech and language pathology. Additionally, AU awards a graduate certificate in applied behavior analysis, 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, counseling, 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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Samira Sainsurin

Student Leader

Victor Gomez Garcia



Commencement Speaker



Dr. Jennifer F. Kelly is an internationally recognized psychologist, leader, and advocate with more than four decades of service in clinical health psychology and pain management. A native of Gulfport, Mississippi, she earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Florida State University. She is the founder and owner of the Atlanta Center for Behavioral Medicine.

Dr. Kelly served as the 2021 President of the American Psychological Association (APA) and has held numerous leadership roles, including service on the APA Board of Directors and as Past President of the Georgia Psychological Association. She has dedicated her career to advancing psychology through advocacy, mentorship, and diversity initiatives, and has served as Federal Advocacy Coordinator for more than twenty years.

Her many honors include the Raymond D. Fowler Award for Outstanding Contributions to APA (2024), the Nathan W. Perry, Jr. Award for Career Service to Clinical Health Psychology (2023), and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Florida State University (2021). She is a Fellow of multiple APA divisions and has authored widely on health psychology, equity, and professional practice.

Albizu University is proud to welcome Dr. Jennifer F. Kelly as the 2025 Commencement Speaker.



2024-2025

Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education

Ana Maria Mesa

Bachelor of Science in Psychology

Monica Agramonte
Ana Teresa Aleman Belendez
Camila D. Amador Gonzalez
Osmeida Arango Marrero
Giselle Batlle Carlos
Nunzia Valeria Battaglia Lamberti
Jessica Camejo
Luis Mario Cantin
Natacha Capote
Amadis A. Carlo Posada
Aymara C. Castellanos Cortez
Ariana A. Cortes Arroyo
Simmone Cruz Sardinas
Emily De la Pena
Amani Kiara Denise Stephens
Melanie Escobar Tain
Yaneth Fernandez
Gabriela Beatriz Fher Acosta
Roberto Figueredo De La Campa
Terina Garcia
Claudia Maria Garcia Gomez
Franchesca Garcia Guzman
Yurema Godoy Chill
Melissa Gonzalez
Adyaneth Herce
Denise Hernandez
Liz Betty Hernandez Turro
Patricia Iturralde
Emily Izquierdo
Susana Martin
Emelina Martinez
Alejandra Martinez Sarmiento
Moises Medina Aslan
Amalia Milian Ynfante
Evelyn M. Millan Avila
Eliany Molgado Alberdi
Adriana Cecilia Oms Gonzalez
Christoula Christine Papaioannou
Lauren Parets Castillo



Maraivy Perdomo Albornas
Cira M Perera Perez
Melissa M. Perez
Ayleen Perez
Leydi Perez Villalobos
Karla Pineiro
Daniela Ponce Cots
Kamila Ponzoa
Ilia Dulena Pulgar
Luz Helena Rodriguez
Mabel Rodriguez
Yirian Vilma Rodriguez Fustes
Liuba Rojas
Raydel W. Santana Cespedes
Veronica Julieta Santella
Camila Sosa Molina
Mailen Tamayo
Esperanza J. Tejera Castillo
Kirsi Vazquez Aguilar
Maria Gabriela Vergara

Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis

Rachel Acosta Mena
Dayana Aguirregaviria
Edmund Castillo
Patricia Gonzalez
Daynelis Palenzuela Tejera
Marianela Rosales
Gabriela Torras Ceballos

Master of Science in Exceptional Student Education

Rocio Rodriguez Casas

Master of Science in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Stephanie M. Cepero

Master in Business Administration Healthcare Management

Maryvelisse Carpintero
Camille Clos Torres
Mariliana Collazo Feliciano
Andrea M. De Leon Perazza
David Perez De Jesus
Aracelis Santos Gonzalez



Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology

Janell I. Alzate
Zoraida Anaya
Breanna Arocha
Gabriella Susana Bell
Zulay Milagros Borges Alvarez
Madison Amber Butchin
Lisandra Concepcion Aponte
Joey Cruz
Daniella Diaz
Carli Dunn
Briana R. Gilbert
Gabriela Gonzalez
Briana Hernandez
Maria K. Hernandez
Melissa Janeth Leon
Christian Loretta
Deidy Martin
Jackeline Ann Mendoza
Danielle Karina Navarro
Anais Negrillo
Amanda Liz Pabellon
Maria K. Pacheco
Leidy Mariam Perez De Alejo
Arlette Pomares
Claudia Cecilia Quintana Artiz
Yelena Rodriguez
Ashley Rojas
Cynthia Rosario
Yaimarie Saez
Arianna Sanjuan
Karla Toribio
Yesenia Valdivia
Astrid Veintimilla
Deidtre M. Whack
Kathryn Sue Wollmann
Ashley Lauren Young
Lazaro Zaragoza



Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Yumarie Aquino Villanuev
Arnold Bustillo
Rafael Carrion Rivera
Cristina Colon-Mas
Luander Gilbert
Zorimar Gonzalez Cotto
Danays Jaime
Samantha Jareno Alvarado
Danisbel Muro Martinez
Delimar Andrea Pagán Crespo
Lorean Rivera Miranda
Marissa Rivera Vazquez
Kiara J. Rodriguez
Alondra Noelia Santiago
Rowan St. Clair

***Master of Science in Psychology with a Major in
Marriage and Family Therapy***

Giselle Alfonso
Luis Ernesto Baltar Diez
Rocio Borda
Christelle Bruneau
Silvia Castellar Aronson
Michael Jeremy Castillo
Emily Cruz
Gabriella Franco
Pamela Gonzalez Marquez
Claudia Gonzalez Torano
Diana Guerrero
Denise Martinez
Eiler Mesa
Nina Moreno
Nadia Nasri
Mercedes Nobmann
Jesus Alberto Nunez
Nathalia Lorraine Orta
Sharole Osbourne
Lauren Paez
Merlin Ramirez
Melissa Rodriguez Garcia
Dianelys Rodriguez Hernandez
Paulina Sanabria Fernandez
Cassandra Timo
Margaryta Zelena



***Master of Science in Psychology with a Major in
Mental Health Counseling***

Liena Agüero
Jennifer Alguino
Monica Alvarez Valdes
Maria Elena Benitez De Lopez
Claudia S. Boye
Jennifer Alejandra Casallas
Carolina Isabel Castillo
Sabrina Chavez Salvatorelli
Wanda I. Cruz Medina
Guerlin Cruz Sanchez
Melissa Cuni
Madeline Delaosa
Janet Enriquez
Valentina Escovar
Markus Fenelon Contreras
Janireth Fermin
Lucy Amelia Fernandez
Amaya D. Friol Miralla
Ian C. Garrastegui Gutierrez
Tatiana Gomez
Jorge David Gomez Chiang
Idalgis Guerra
Laura Estefania Guio Guzman
Yelena Iznaga Soria
Javier David Lacaba
Alissa Lago
Jacileni Machado
Rachel Carrie Malcolmson
Claudia Fernanda Medina
Anahi C. Melendez Mendoza
Alexandra Helen Migiliano
Sabrina Milian Villar
Aida Liz Morales
Yilena Morales Estrada
Eric Morales Martinez
Elizabeth Morejon
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Karla F. Urbina
Maximilian Ray Valdes
Anay Valdivia
Carlos Javier Vazquez Urquijo
Melanie Viera
Digna Villar Arencibia
Dennis Villatoro
Brigette Michelle Villaverde
Camila Ysalgue Delgado

***Master of Science in Psychology with a Double Major in
Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling***

Alfonso Harry Milson
Yadira Rosa

Master of Science in Psychology en Route to Doctor of Psychology

Lorianne Alvarez
Samantha Arencibia Ramos
Luisa Fernanda Banuelos
Shelbie Bobrow
Nicole B. Busquets
Ruth Esther Cabrera
Melanie Anne Camilli Duenas
Brhyde Camron
Roxana Curbelo
Claudette Donnarumma
Abigail Olivia Fried
Victor E. Gomez Garcia
Marien Gonzalez
Ashley Marie James
Macarena Jones
Samuel Lang
Mariana Levi
Kathia Llanes
Naglaa Mabrouk
Rafael Molina
Magela Nemisis Moraga



Andreina Paez
Amalia Perez Carrion
Amanda Perez Carrion
Maria Karla Ramirez Valdes
Luzmarina Reyes
Ashley Lynn Rivera Escobar
Diana Rivero
Lilian Rodriguez
Natalie A. Rowe
Isabella Sacchi Lopez
Samira Sainsurin
Victoria Sierra
Nadia Saleem Sultan
Vanessa Szabolcsi
Mohammadreza Tavakoli
Regine Thermy Jean Baptiste
Wilson Jose Trabal Morales
Romy Valdespino Rodriguez

Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology

Krystal Gianina Acevedo
Andrea Veronica Altamirano
Casey Ameda
Eboni Barrow
Maria Fernanda Bayron
David Benitez
Esteban Colon Jr.
Stephanie Noelia Condori
Karla Correa
Geraldine Rose DeBianchi
Pamela Del Castillo
Rebeca Evora
Dayron Gonzalez
Jordyn H. Hazan
Gabriella Elizabeth Junco
Anna Landestoy
Krystell Leonor
Paola Lopez Saavedra
Silvia Maria Lugo Merced
Gendry Montesino
Darby Lee Mortenson
Nancy Ospina
Stefania Paparoni
Yaneelee M. Perez-Haddock
Leticia Pinheiro do Prado



Yuvalie Marie Ramallo
Meili Rasika Rego
Ciara M. Rejuste
Daylene M. Rodriguez
Kimberley Shore
Nadia Rayne Swiecicki
Ambar Ximena Zapata Zamora

Doctor of Philosophy in Human Services

Sofia Aneas Garcia
Oxana Garkavchenko
Ana Maria Guzman Diaz
Ana Mateo
Gorka Iñaq Meneses
Nathalie Morales
Sandy Mujica
Alfredo Ramos
Lizzette Roman Marrero
Jacqueline D. Stallone
Priscilla Valerio



2025 Distinguished Award Recipients

The Distinguished Award Recipients exemplify our values of excellence in academics and commitment to social responsibility.

They are selected by the program faculty.

Roberto Figueredo

Bachelor of Science in Psychology

Maryvelisse Carpintero

Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management

Leidy Perez

Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology

Samantha Jareño

Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Nina Moreno

Master of Science in Psychology

Kimberley L. Shore

Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology

Ana Maria Guzman Diaz

Doctor of Philosophy in Human Services



Roberto Figueredo

2025 Distinguished Bachelor of Science in Psychology Award Recipient

Born in Cuba, Roberto Figueredo moved to the United States in 2011 and now lives in Miami with his wife and son. While completing his studies at Albizu University, he also worked as a health insurance broker and a Registered Behavior Technician, roles that reflect his dedication to helping others in meaningful and practical ways.

Roberto chose Albizu University for its reputation in psychology and its supportive, close-knit environment. His experience has been both academically enriching and personally transformative, shaped by professors and classmates who encouraged his growth. One professor noted that his work demonstrated “deep critical thinking, perspective-taking, and the ability to apply his learning to improve society,” making him a proud representative of Albizu as an alumnus.

Looking ahead, Roberto plans to pursue a master’s degree and become a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). He is deeply grateful to his parents and sister for their unwavering support, to his wife for her encouragement, and to his professors and peers—especially Professor Ashdown for his guidance and Professor Picanol for his mentorship throughout his academic journey.



Maryvelisse Carpintero

2025 Distinguished Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management Award Recipient

Maryvelisse Carpintero's journey toward higher education has been defined by resilience, determination, and a deep commitment to lifelong learning. In 2020, she made the decision to return to school to complete her bachelor's degree, inspired by her passion for growth and her desire to be a positive role model for her daughters. She now celebrates the achievement of her Master of Business Administration as both a professional milestone and a personal triumph.

As an older student and single mother of two daughters, Ms. Carpintero balanced the responsibilities of raising a family with the demands of a full-time career and a second job. Her path required sacrifice, discipline, and perseverance, but she overcame every challenge with the encouragement of her loved ones. She credits her daughters as her daily inspiration and her mother for her constant support and motivation.

Ms. Carpintero firmly believes that it is never too late to redefine one's path. Earning her MBA is a testament to the power of resilience, determination, and lifelong learning, as well as to the unconditional love of her family.

**Leidy Perez**

*2025 Distinguished Master of Science in Speech and Language
Pathology Award Recipient*

Leidy Perez has distinguished herself through her academic excellence, clinical skill, and dedication to the field of speech-language pathology. Throughout her program, she consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to her studies, with both individual and group work reflecting her motivation, focus, and perseverance. Her achievements embody the qualities celebrated by the Academic Excellence Award.

Her clinical training included internships at Back in Motion and Specialized PPEC, where she gained experience working with clients across the lifespan. At Back in Motion, she provided evaluation and treatment for adults with communication and swallowing disorders, focusing on language rehabilitation and dysphagia management. At Specialized PPEC, she worked with medically fragile pediatric clients, delivering therapy in early language development, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), and feeding, all within a collaborative multidisciplinary team.

Ms. Perez's unwavering pursuit of excellence and her passion for supporting individuals through evidence-based practice reflect a promising future as a speech-language pathologist. The faculty proudly recognize her accomplishments and congratulate her as a deserving recipient of the Academic Excellence Award.



Samantha Jareño

2025 Distinguished Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology Award Recipient

Samantha Jareño earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Puerto Rico in 1998 and holds certifications as a Master Practitioner, Coach, and Trainer in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). In 2022, she entered the Master of Science program in Industrial and Organizational Psychology at Albizu University, Miami Campus, where she excelled academically and graduates today with Distinction.

As part of her graduate training, Ms. Jareño completed both Practicum I and II, earning Lean Six Sigma Green and Black Belt certifications that she applied to enhance employee engagement and customer service processes. She is an active member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychologists (SIOP) and the American Psychological Association (APA).

Her professional career reflects a balance of corporate, entrepreneurial, and consulting experience. Early roles at Procter & Gamble and Gillette de Puerto Rico gave her expertise in customer service, logistics, and operations. She later served as owner and manager of a childcare and development center in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where she strengthened her leadership in staff development and organizational management. Since 2018, she is the CEO of Coaching Vibes, LLC, a firm dedicated to coaching, consulting, and applied psychology to improve human performance and organizational outcomes.

As an Industrial-Organizational Psychology practitioner, Ms. Jareño plans to expand her consulting practice, focusing on leadership development, employee training, and evidence-based strategies that drive engagement, productivity, and organizational effectiveness. The faculty commends her accomplishments and wishes her continued success in advancing organizational excellence.



Nina Moreno

2025 Distinguished Master of Science in Psychology Award Recipient

Nina Moreno earned a Bachelor of Science in Clinical Psychology with a minor in Cognitive Sciences from the University of Central Florida. During her undergraduate studies, she began working as a Registered Behavior Technician, providing therapeutic support to individuals with diverse cognitive conditions. This experience guided her professional path, leading her to dedicate five years to the field before pursuing graduate studies in counseling therapy.

In 2023, Ms. Moreno enrolled in the Master of Science in Psychology program at Albizu University, Miami Campus. While she initially pursued a concentration in Mental Health Counseling, she later discovered a strong connection to systemic and relational approaches and transitioned to the Marriage and Family Therapy track. Throughout her graduate studies, she excelled academically, earning consistent recognition from faculty and maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA. She graduates today with Utmost Distinction.

Ms. Moreno has worked extensively with families from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and is especially passionate about supporting neurodivergent populations, including individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Her work emphasizes awareness, acceptance, and understanding of neurodivergent brain chemistry, and she is committed to providing personalized and compassionate care to all those she serves.

Inspired by the unwavering support of her parents, Danny and Andrea, and guided by the wisdom of her uncle, Richard, Ms. Moreno credits her family for instilling resilience and belief in her goals. Outside of her professional endeavors, she enjoys music, travel, and writing. She is currently a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist Intern and looks forward to continuing her growth as a clinician. She is dedicated to living with “radical empathy” and pursuing her work with purpose, curiosity, and compassion.



Kimberley L. Shore

2025 Distinguished Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology Award Recipient

Kimberley L. Shore is beginning a postdoctoral fellowship at McLean Hospital's Fernside Program and holds a clinical appointment at Harvard Medical School. She completed her psychology internship at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs–Orlando VA Medical Center, where she worked with veterans experiencing diverse psychiatric and substance use disorders. Her clinical focus is on the treatment of substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health conditions, with an emphasis on compassionate, nonjudgmental, and evidence-based care.

During her doctoral studies at Albizu University, Dr. Shore received specialized training in integrated primary care settings serving individuals with opioid use disorder and other addictions, supported by a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant. Her dissertation, *Assessment of Areas of Work Life and Burnout Among Healthcare Workers in the Field of Addiction*, examined organizational and demographic predictors of burnout with the goal of informing systemic improvements in addiction care.

Dr. Shore's research and clinical interests center on addiction, recovery, and healthcare worker well-being. She is dedicated to advancing scientific understanding and public awareness of addiction, reducing stigma, and expanding access to effective care.



Ana Maria Guzman Diaz

*2025 Distinguished Doctor of Philosophy in Human Services Award
Recipient*

Ana Maria Guzman Diaz earned dual Bachelor of Arts degrees in Psychology and Dance, along with a Certificate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies from Florida International University. She went on to complete a Master of Science in Psychology with a concentration in Mental Health Counseling at Albizu University, and in 2018 was admitted to the Ph.D. program in Human Services at the Miami Campus.

Dr. Guzman distinguished herself academically, maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA and earning repeated commendations from her professors. Her dissertation, *The Benefits of Sound and Movement Therapy on Perceived Well-Being*, was completed under the guidance of Dr. Irene M. Bravo and Dr. Maria Pérez Abalo. She graduates today with Utmost Distinction.

Alongside her studies, Dr. Guzman has served Miami Dade County Public Schools as an elementary school teacher since 2013 and has worked as a clinical therapist with the Center for Family and Child Enrichment. She has contributed her time to mentoring youth through cheer and dance instruction, engaging in school advisory councils, supporting aging populations, and using photography to capture meaningful community experiences.

Currently, Dr. Guzman teaches at Gertrude K. Edelman/Sabal Palm Elementary School and serves as a Mental Health Counselor at Nova Community Services Corp. Her future plans include obtaining her Mental Health Counseling license and establishing her own practice to continue supporting children, families, and individuals in need. The Albizu faculty proudly celebrate her accomplishments and wish her continued success.



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