



If you are looking for information about the **DOCTORAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM** at one of the Connections Schools:

**Connections Day School, South Campus,  
New Connections Academy and/or Connections Academy East**

you've come to the right place!

However, these 4 individual sites have recently joined forces to become the **Connections Internship Consortium (CIC)**! Being a new Consortium, our website is currently Under Construction, so bear with us as we work through the process of developing our content.

In the meantime, here is a *brief overview of the Connections Internship Consortium*, along with information on *how to apply for the 2019-2020 training year*. For further information on each individual school, please see the web addresses identified below this section.

We look forward to receiving your application!

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The *Connections Internship Consortium (CIC)* is a Doctoral Internship Training Program comprised of four private therapeutic day schools with the shared mission to integrate school, family and community in order to provide the highest quality academic and therapeutic programs to our youth. These programs are designed to enable students to become successful learners through a sense of belonging, mastery, generosity and independence. The aim of the *Connections Internship Consortium* is to provide Doctoral Interns with comprehensive and individualized clinical training that facilitates the acquisition and refinement of clinical/therapeutic skills in evidence-based assessment and treatment; that teaches Doctoral Interns to emphasize the unique strengths and needs of students with social, emotional, and behavioral disabilities; and that prepares future professional psychologists to become proficient in the delivery of high quality, culturally competent clinical services to schools, families, and communities.

CIC is committed to providing a high quality, broad-based clinical training experience to our Interns. The CIC program assures that clinical and professional development occurs through

experiential learning, as well as the provision of clinical services combined with scholarly inquiry. The CIC training approach is generalist in nature and prepares Interns to function within a multi-disciplinary setting. There is a strong emphasis on evidence-based training and practice, and Interns are exposed to best-practices through a variety of training, supervisory, and structured learning opportunities. Interns are provided the opportunity to develop skills in the provision of individual, family, and group therapy, as well as crisis management services, to children and adolescents ranging in age from 6 - 21 who present with a wide variety of emotional and behavioral issues. In addition, there is a focus on providing training and skill development in the areas of multicultural competence in clinical work, professional consultation and supervision, and adherence to codes of professional conduct and ethics.

The four CIC member schools include: Connections Day School (CDS) located in Libertyville and founded in 1998; South Campus (SC) located in Palatine and founded in 2001; New Connections Academy (NCA) located in Palatine and founded in 2006; and Connections Academy East (CAE) located in Lake Forest and founded in 2015. Youth who attend the schools present with a wide variety of diagnoses, including: Anxiety, Bipolar Disorder, Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Adjustment Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and/or Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

CDS, CAE, and SC each have programs that provide alternative educational and therapeutic supports to children and adolescents with primary educational eligibilities of Emotional Disability (ED), Learning Disability (LD), Other Health Impairment (OHI), Autism (AUT), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and/or Intellectual Disability (ID). Additionally, these three sites provide comprehensive Substance Abuse supports as needed. NCA (and part of CAE) are programs that primarily provide alternative educational and therapeutic supports to children and adolescents with primary education eligibilities of Emotional Disability (ED), Learning Disability (LD), Other Health Impairment (OHI), Autism (AUT), and provide supports to children and adolescents with a primary educational eligibility or DSM-V diagnosis of high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

All CIC sites provide an educational and therapeutic environment that is based on a nurturing model of the Circle of Courage (Lakota-Sioux Reclaiming Youth) which promotes the development of pro-social skills in four quadrants: Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. This is based on a positive, nurturing model, where positive reinforcement and natural consequences for behaviors are frequently utilized. All Connections Internship Consortium sites avoid using restrictive and/or punitive methods of behavioral management and do not have an isolated time-out room. The Behavioral Intervention Specialists, Building Staff, and Doctoral Interns are trained in Non-Violent Crisis Prevention Training (CPI) and use of therapeutic holding which is only employed as a last resort, when a child is determined to be unsafe to him/herself or others. Staff Members at all consortium sites employ a variety of methods to support and assist students in making academic progress, appropriately manage their behavior, and develop and/or improve their coping, problem-solving and social skills. Staff members maintain supportive, nurturing relationships with our students and families.

## **TRAINING PROGRAM AIMS**

The aim of the Connections Internship Consortium is to provide Doctoral Interns with comprehensive and individualized clinical training that facilitates the acquisition and refinement of clinical/therapeutic skills in evidence-based assessment and treatment; that teaches Doctoral Interns to emphasize the unique strengths and needs of students with social, emotional, and behavioral disabilities; and that prepares future professional psychologists to become proficient in the delivery of high quality, culturally competent clinical services to schools, families, and communities.

Connections Internship Consortium is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). At this time, each of our four sites have three fully funded internship positions available. The CIC Training Program provides a planned, programmed sequence of training experiences with the primary focus being on assuring breadth and quality of training.

The Doctoral Internship program utilizes the practitioner-scholar model of training. Rather than the production of original research, the model of training emphasizes the development of professional competencies that are based on current research, scholarship, and practice. Interns have access to a professional library of books, journals, and videos and are urged to critically evaluate current theory, research and practice when approaching their clinical tasks.

## **SEQUENCE OF TRAINING, CLINICAL WORK, SUPERVISION & TRAINING**

### ***Sequence of Training***

The Internship training year is designed sequentially such that Interns build competence and become more independent under supervision as the year progresses. The Intern training sequence occurs in four phases:

- The first phase is the didactic phase, which involves a one-week, detailed series of presentations regarding the policies and procedures of the Connections Internship Consortium and the clinical training department.
- The second phase of training is site orientation, which allows Interns to become familiar with their work setting and school staff from various disciplines.
- During the third phase of training, Interns receive their own cases and work with their supervisors regarding the disposition of the cases.
- The fourth phase involves increasingly independent, supervised work on the part of the intern. The Intern may be expected to serve as a leader in clinical staffings and team meetings, develop special treatment programs for their students, complete crisis assessments, and develop more in-depth conceptualizations of emotional and social functioning of students on their caseload.

### ***Clinical Work***

- Provide individual and group therapy to children, adolescents, and their families presenting with a wide variety of clinical issues, including but not limited to: Anxiety, Bipolar Disorder, Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Adjustment Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Collaborate weekly with families, and provide parent education and family therapy on a regular basis.
- Consult routinely with teachers and milieu staff regarding clinical and behavioral interventions
- Consult routinely with Board Certified Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Develop students' SCERTS profile and track therapeutic progress and outcome data on a quarterly basis (NCA & CAE sites)
- Develop social/emotional treatment goals for the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Participate in multidisciplinary treatment staffings and IEP meetings
- Clinical documentation
- Participation in crisis and risk assessments as needed
- Complete 2000 hours of training with a minimum of 25% (500 hours) direct client contact hours

### ***Supervision***

- Individual supervision (**2 hours/week**) with two licensed clinical psychologists. Live supervision will be used, including review of audio/video taped sessions, in vivo observation, co-therapy and other modalities.
- Clinical Team Group Supervision (**1 hour/week**) with two licensed clinical psychologists.
- Supervision Group (**1 hour/week**) focused on review of supervision-specific topics and the dynamics, models, and elements related to building supervision skills and utilizing an effective supervision model.
- Assessment Group Supervision (**1 hour/week**) focused on review of current assessment topics.
- Bi-weekly case consultation with a CIC Board Certified Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist on issues related to psychopharmacology.
- Bi-weekly case consultation with a Marriage and Family Therapist.

### ***Training***

- Participation in **4.5-5 hours/week** of Structured Learning Activities, including, Case Conference Seminar, Intern Seminar, Family Therapy Seminar and Consultations, Psychiatric Consultation.
- Intern Seminar (**2 hours/week**) focused on review of various clinical cases and issues related to the field of professional psychology, including ethics, legal issues, and diversity.

- Case Conference Seminar (**1.5 hours/week**) focused on case formulation, formal case presentations, and integration of understanding of clinical diagnosis and family dynamics. Each Intern will present a case in Case Conference two to three times per year. Facilitated by licensed clinical psychologists with a strong focus on didactic training in evidence-supported clinical interventions and modalities.
- Family Therapy Seminar (**1.5 hours/month**) with a Marriage and Family Therapist.
- All Staff Developmental Training (**1.5 hours/week**) covering relevant educational, therapeutic and milieu topics.
- Ongoing consultation with multi-disciplinary staff, including Art Therapist, Music Therapist, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists.

### **CIC STIPEND, RESOURCES, AND BENEFITS**

Doctoral Interns are required to complete a minimum of 2000 hours of supervised clinical experience throughout the year. This time is spent in direct service, indirect service, extended day coverage at South and NCA, didactic training, supervision, milieu activities, and special projects.

The Doctoral Internship is 12 consecutive months (interspersed with legal holidays, approximately 2 weeks of winter break, 1 week of spring break, 1 week of summer break and an abbreviated summer schedule) for a total of 197 standard work days. Standard work hours are Monday thru Friday with site-specific start and end times: (NCA and CDS – 8:00am to 4:00pm; South Campus – 7:45am to 3:45am; and CAE – 7:30am to 3:30pm). Interns cannot work with students or their families during holidays or on weekends, as supervisors are not present to ensure their safety and oversee their clinical and training responsibilities. Supervisors are on-site full time throughout the standard work hours. Interns receive a stipend of \$23,000.00 annually paid bi-weekly. Electronic deposit of paychecks is available.

Typically, the CIC training year will begin at the start of the academic year (early-August); however, specific start dates required for orientation and specialized CIC wide trainings will be determined each year. Intern job responsibilities include working to build a strong, safe, healthy and therapeutic milieu, which includes assisting with arrival and dismissal and providing assistance to school staff throughout the milieu, as requested.

Interns are eligible for health and dental benefits, 16 sick leave, and 2 personal days during the training year. (\*If all days are utilized, the 2000 hour requirement may not be met\*). Interns are also able to take advantage of free daily staff lunch (provided by Organic Life) and free parking. Interns are covered by the site's liability insurance.

### **CLINICAL STAFF**

Psychology is one of several professional disciplines within the Connections Internship Consortium. Each site has a Site Training Director who is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist

and is on-site full time as the Primary Supervisor. Additionally, there is an Auxiliary Supervisor who is also a Licensed Clinical Psychologist at each site at least 20 hours per week. There are at least two additional Licensed Clinical Psychologists who support interns through didactics and direct supervision weekly at each site. The entire psychology staff participates in the internship training program, both through direct supervision, presentation of seminars, and program review/planning. During the training year, each intern has the opportunity to work with many of the psychologists on the staff, with flexibility to pursue common interests.

Psychologists at the Connections Internship Consortium come from a variety of educational backgrounds and theoretical orientations which are reflected in different approaches to clinical practice and supervision. They provide exposure to a diversity of clinical styles and professional interests thereby allowing interns to learn from a range of professional models.

**Connections Consortium Clinical Team:**

Kati Hefferon, Psy.D.

Illinois School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Connections Internship Consortium Training Director | Owner/Founder of Connections Schools

Sol Rappaport, Ph.D., ABPP

DePaul University

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Owner/Founder of Connections Schools

**Site Specific Directors of Training and Auxiliary Supervisors:**

**Connections Day School (CDS):**

Kristen Mittl Pollina, Psy.D.

Illinois School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Site Training Director | Primary Supervisor

Giovanna Vitullo, Psy.D.

Illinois School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | SEDOL Diagnostic Coordinator & IAES Program Coordinator | Primary Supervisor

**South Campus (SC):**

Vanessa Davidson, Psy.D.

Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Site Training Director | Primary Supervisor

Caroline Novotny, Psy.D.

Midwestern University

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | SEDOL Diagnostic Coordinator & IAES Program Coordinator | Primary Supervisor

**New Connections Academy (NCA):**

Gwen Grant, Psy.D.

Florida Institute of Technology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Site Training Director | Primary Supervisor

Charlotte Edwards, Psy.D.

Illinois School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Chief Clinical Consultant | Primary Supervisor

**Connections Academy East (CAE):**

Ruth Tompkins, Psy.D.

Illinois School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Site Training Director | Primary Supervisor

Carlos Garcia, Psy.D.

Adler University

Licensed Clinical Psychologist | Assistant Senior Psychologist | Primary Supervisor

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

CIC currently offers 3 full-time internship positions at 4 different CIC sites: NCA, CAE, South and CDS. Students from Clinical Psychology doctoral training programs who have met all the requirements of their program for application for Doctoral Internship are invited to apply for internship at the Connections Internship Consortium. Connections Internship Consortium adheres to the APPIC Match policies and participates in APPIC Match and uses the online AAPI. ([www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org))

**Preferred Applicants:**

CIC will base its selection process on the entire application package noted above; however, applicants who have met the following qualifications prior to beginning internship will be considered “preferred”:

- Application indicates: at least 900 practicum hours preferred
- Three hundred hours (300) in assessment services to diverse client populations which address a range of presenting problems using a variety of assessment/ diagnostic approaches
- Three hundred hours (300) in methods of intervention and treatment provided to diverse client populations which address a range of presenting problems
- Three hundred hours (300) of formal supervision (both individual and group)
- Dissertation proposal defended
- Some experience or special interest in working with diverse populations
- Current enrollment and good standing in an APA-accredited doctoral program

### **Application Process:**

- Applicants must register with APPIC as a prospective intern through the National Matching Services [www.natmatch.com/psychint](http://www.natmatch.com/psychint). Applicants must obtain an APPIC registration number to be eligible to participate in the matching process.
- **Site Specific Match Numbers: (these will be added as soon as we have them)**
  - Connections Day School (CDS) match number is:
  - Connections Academy East (CAE) match number is:
  - South Campus (SC) match number is:
  - New Connections Academy (NCA) match number is: 2134.
- Applicants must complete and submit the online AAPI (APPIC standard application) and includes the following:
  - Cover letter (as part of AAPI): Please specify which sites you are interested in being considered for.
  - Case Conceptualization Example or De-identified Report Example
  - Completed Program's Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness from Director of Training
  - Current Curriculum Vita (as part of AAPI)
  - Three Standard Letters of Reference, two of which should be from direct supervisors of your clinical work (as part of AAPI).
  - Official Transcripts of ALL graduate work
  - All application materials **MUST BE SUBMITTED BY Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**. Applicants with incomplete files may not be considered for an interview.
  - **Please Note:** All application materials must be received by the date noted in the current APPIC directory listing in order to be considered.
  - Upon interview, applicants will also complete a Site Specific Employment Application.
  - It is acceptable to have a personal and/or telephone interview; however, preference is given to on-site personal interview
  - Applicants must submit rank order lists according to APPIC guidelines.

### **Screening & Interview Process:**

- The CIC site agrees to abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any ranking related information for an intern applicant.
- All applications will be screened by CIC Training Committee, using a standard Application Rating Scale, and evaluated for potential goodness of fit with the internship program.
- The CIC Training Committee will hold a selection meeting to determine which applicants to invite for interviews based upon the results of this screening process.

- All applicants will be notified by email by **Thursday December 20<sup>th</sup>** whether they have been chosen for an interview. Interviews will be scheduled in December and January and will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Interviews will be conducted using a standard set of interview questions, although members of the Training Committee may ask additional interview questions of applicants as appropriate.
- The interview typically consists of 2 hours of a formal interview with the members of Training Committee and site specific clinical staff, tour of the school, and discussion of training program with current interns.
- The candidates are rated on a numeric scale during the formal interviewing process.
- After all prospective interns have been interviewed, the Training Committee meets and ranks the candidates according to their application materials and their interview responses.
- The numerical ratings from the interview are weighted with the committee's impression of the candidate to form the rank order that is submitted to NMS.
- The Training Committee will hold a meeting after final interviews are completed, in order to determine applicant rankings. The full application package and information gleaned from the interview process will be utilized in determining applicant rankings.
- **Please Note:** All interns who match with CIC must successfully pass fingerprint-based criminal background check, medical examination and drug screening before beginning employment. Instructions for providing this information or completing the background check and drug screening will be sent out to all who match after the match process is complete. An offer of employment or training is contingent upon passing the background checks and drug screening, and submitting fingerprint data, and all required health and medical examination forms.

Questions regarding any part of the selection process or CIC academic preparation requirements may be directed to the Site Specific Training Teams (see contact information below).

**Site Specific Contact Information:**

**Connections Day School (CDS) | Libertyville:**

Kristen Mittl Pollina, Psy.D. | Director of Training  
Email: [kpollina@connectionsdayschool.net](mailto:kpollina@connectionsdayschool.net)

**South Campus (SC) | Palatine:**

Vanessa Davidson, Psy.D. | Director of Training  
Email: [vdavidson@southcampus.net](mailto:vdavidson@southcampus.net)

**New Connections Academy (NCA) | Palatine:**

Gwen Grant, Psy.D. | Director of Training

Email: [ggrant@newconnectionsacademy.net](mailto:ggrant@newconnectionsacademy.net)

**Connections Academy East (CAE) | Lake Forest:**

Ruth Tompkins, Psy.D. | Director of Training

Email: [rtompkins@connectionsacademyeast.net](mailto:rtompkins@connectionsacademyeast.net)

**If you are interested in learning more about our long-standing individual Doctoral Internship Programs, please see the individual Clinical Training Program pages for each of our member programs:**

**Connections Day School**

[http://www.connectionsdayschool.net/pages/Connections\\_Day\\_School/Clinical\\_Training\\_Program](http://www.connectionsdayschool.net/pages/Connections_Day_School/Clinical_Training_Program)

**South Campus Day School**

[http://www.southcampus.net/pages/South\\_Campus\\_School/Sports](http://www.southcampus.net/pages/South_Campus_School/Sports)

**New Connections Academy**

[http://www.newconnectionsacademy.net/pages/New\\_Connections/Clinical\\_Department](http://www.newconnectionsacademy.net/pages/New_Connections/Clinical_Department)

**Connections Academy East**

[http://www.connectionsacademyeast.net/pages/Connections\\_Academy\\_East/1174040080738880466](http://www.connectionsacademyeast.net/pages/Connections_Academy_East/1174040080738880466)