



Alumnus Nick Wilkes '00 crafts a career of adventure and art

Nick Wilkes '00 started climbing with the [Wisconsin Hoofers Outing Club](#) after a car accident during his senior year of high school hospitalized him for multiple months. The long recovery led him to find alternatives to the fast-moving team sports he had enjoyed in high school. So, he turned to the slower-paced outdoor activities he grew up enjoying, like hiking, paddling, biking, and climbing. Now, he guides climbing trips with [Devils Lake Climbing Guides](#), a guide service he founded in 2012.

"Studying psychology taught me some fundamental things," Wilkes says. "People work in lots of different ways, and you have to get to know whoever you're working with and adapt to how they see and experience the world. As a guide, that's relevant because not everybody understands how to get from point A to point B. I might need to spend some time really helping someone to understand a fundamental concept, so they're not going to get lost later in the curriculum." [Read more.](#)



Psychology student awarded Fulbright to advance brain health research

Jonathan Morris x'26 is spending his summer helping researchers at the McGill University Department of Physiology in Montreal, Canada, investigate how fluctuations in heart rate relate to brain health as a Fulbright Canada-Mitacs Globalink research intern. The research aims to answer the question: How do differences in heart rate and heart rate variability associate with differences in brain activity and health?

After dedicating much time to the thesis he completed during the 2024-2025 school year, Morris is excited to be traveling abroad. His thesis, conducted under the mentorship of MIDUS Affective Neuroscience Project Principal Investigator Stacey Schaefer, investigated how people emotionally recover from encountering negative information and negative experiences. [Read more.](#)



Psych 322 students turn research into action with community projects, exhibits, and survivor support

Over the spring semester, students enrolled in Psych 322: Sexual and Relationship Violence Research and Activism, taught by Dr. Kate Walsh, took on more than just academic study—they became change-makers. Through a dynamic blend of research, critical analysis, and community engagement, these students designed and launched powerful projects aimed at addressing sexual and relationship violence on campus and in the larger community. The semester's projects spanned digital activism, performance, and public exhibits—each rooted in deep care for survivors and social change. [Read more.](#)

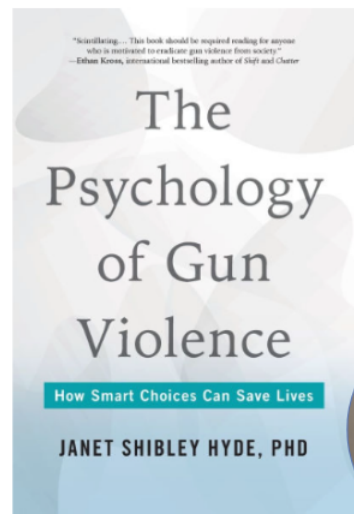


Victor Villacrez '00 and Jonathan Levy '95 join Board of Visitors

The Department of Psychology is delighted to welcome Jonathan Levy and Victor Villacrez to its Board of Visitors. Our Board of Visitors serves the department in helping achieve our goals in education, research, and service as well as maintaining our reputation as one of the premier university psychology departments in the country. Board members' expertise and commitment are valuable human resources for the department's renewal and growth. [Read more about the professional expertise and passion for psychology they each bring to our Board.](#)

The Board of Visitors is just one way to get involved in the department; there are so many others:

- [fill out an Alumni Profile,](#)
- [share an internship or job opportunity with undergraduates,](#)
- [join a student-alumni networking dinner,](#)
- [nominate a Psychology Badger for an achievement award,](#) and more!



Looking for your next book this summer? Our emerit faculty have got you covered!

Maryellen MacDonald's new book, **More Than Words: How Talking Sharpens the Mind and Shapes Our World**, explores how and why we talk - and the benefits we derive from it. You can catch her on **The Next Big Idea Daily podcast**, talking good for you, reveals how producing language can boost your focus, regulate your emotions, improve your mental health, and keep your brain sharp at any age.

You can also pre-order your copy of Janet Shibley Hyde's new book, **The Psychology of Gun Violence: How Smart Choices Can Save Lives**. Drawing on her research as a developmental psychologist, Hyde investigates the motivations behind gun use and misuse to transform readers' understanding of American gun violence and ultimately provide solutions rooted in scientific research.



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