



## INTRODUCTION

Hello Graduate Family. With November here, we are already past the halfway of fall. Keep pushing -- you're almost there. Towards that end, we're presenting you an interview from an alumnus who was once in your shoes and would love to share her journey. Please welcome, Dr. Kelli England Will.

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## INTERVIEW WITH KELLI ENGLAND WILL, PhD

### PROFESSOR, LICENSED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST AT EASTERN VIRGINIA MEDICAL SCHOOL



**XP: Where do you work?**

**Dr. Will:** I am a Professor of Pediatrics in the Division of Community Health and Research at Eastern Virginia Medical School. My division works to create change in the community to address pediatric health challenges. Our research informs initiatives that improve the health and safety of children and teens. If it's a big problem threatening the health of families in our community, there's a good chance someone in our division is focused on it.

**XP: When did you attend graduate school at ODU?**

**Dr. Will:** I started my undergraduate studies at ODU in 1991 and received my Master's in Psychology from ODU in 1998. Afterwards, I went on to receive my doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Virginia Tech. When I started here, ODU was heavily a commuter school, so much of the campus that is now beautiful green space was concrete parking lots. Many of the

buildings weren't here either. The Convocation Center didn't exist—and we for sure weren't making headlines because our football team beat Virginia Tech! There are many things that have not changed since my time here, like the wonderful faculty and the outstanding educational opportunities.

**XP: What encouraged you to pursue a graduate education?**

**Dr. Will:** I am a first generation college student, so I honestly didn't set out to get a master's or a doctorate, but I was a good student, and my ODU undergraduate advisors gave me the nudge I needed to apply to graduate school. I am so proud to hold degrees from ODU. I would have NEVER dreamed I'd be doing what I am now, but my experiences in graduate school made it possible.

**XP: Describe your area of research.**

**Dr. Will:** My research is community-engaged and applied on a large-scale, such as in schools, organizations, and mass/social media. I blend behavioral theory, psychological principles, and best practices in public health and risk communication to devise novel program approaches that motivate behavior change among hard-to-change populations. My main areas of interest are injury control, substance abuse prevention, and risk communication. Recently funded projects are focused on messaging and intervention approaches in motor vehicle safety (see [www.carsafetynow.org](http://www.carsafetynow.org)), and on the development of effective countermeasures to combat e-cigarette and tobacco use among teens and young adults (see [www.rethinkvape.org](http://www.rethinkvape.org)).

**XP: What encouraged you to choose your current field?**

**Dr. Will:** I chose Psychology early, but I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do in the field until I was in graduate school at ODU. I tried a lot of research specialties and worked with wonderful mentors in graduate school, including Drs. Elaine Justice, Robin Lewis, and Louis Janda. Then one semester I landed an assistantship with a new professor who had just received a grant, Dr. Bryan Porter (he's now the Associate Dean of the Graduate School). Dr. Porter was conducting community-engaged research (applied experimental psychology) and his grant was focused on reducing roadway injuries at high-crash intersections. He began by quantifying that one out of three light cycles had at least one red light runner—or roughly 10 red light runners per hour. We worked with city engineers to strategize and put up signage, developed a grassroots campaign, made TV commercials, and talked with city stakeholders and state legislators about potential solutions such as red light cameras.

*Continued on Page 2*



*Above: Filming for a child safety intervention project*

## INTERVIEW WITH KELLI ENGLAND WILL, PhD (CONTINUED)

All along, I was his right hand, attending every meeting, assisting with every report, helping write grants, and helping strategize with stakeholders—helping MAKE A DIFFERENCE! and I loved it. I truly would not be where I am without the experience of my ODU graduate program. I use the skills daily that I learned in graduate school.

**XP: Can you describe one of your intervention programs?**

**Dr. Will:** Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children over age five, and are a major cause of injury and medical spending for all ages. My team created the Boost 'em in the Back Seat intervention ([www.boosterseats4safety.org](http://www.boosterseats4safety.org)), which is an empirically-supported video designed to raise perceptions of vulnerability among those parents who would otherwise ignore an educational message. The video features a 9-year-old boy who is injured in a crash when not riding in a booster seat. His mother, not realizing her 4th grader still needed a booster seat, is distraught. The video was released to the public over social media just before Thanksgiving 2017. Within weeks, it had been shared in 137 countries, generating newspaper and television interviews and appearing in the feeds of national media outlets like the Today Show and Good Housekeeping, as well as popular parent blogs like Scary Mommy. The video has garnered over 20 million views, has been shared by over 450,000 people, and has received over 90,000 comments. The companion website, housing the fit test for booster seat use, has also received over 147,000 views from every state in the U.S. and across the world. The video's approach is empirically supported to significantly increase caregivers' knowledge, risk-reduction attitudes, sense of fear related to the hazard, efficacy related to the recommended behaviors, and most importantly, observed booster seat use.

**XP: What is your favorite aspect of your job?**

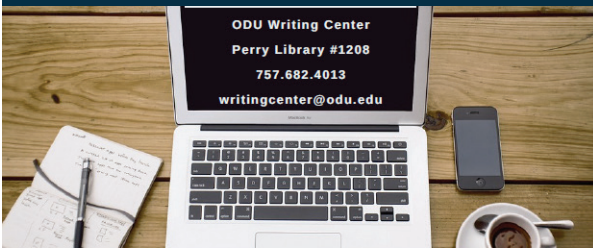
**Dr. Will:** My job is fun. I get to be creative. I feel like I'm making a difference. I'm using my research skills to inform prevention. I should mention that I discovered this wonderful yet little-known EVMS division at which I'm now working through another ODU mentor of mine. Dr. Debra Major set me up with an internship here when I was still in graduate school. She knew of my interests and thought this place would be perfect for me. I said then that I would come back and work here one day. To my utter surprise, I really did! I've been in my division for 15 years and love my job.



Above: Additional filming for a child safety intervention project

**XP:** I found Dr. Will's experience amazing and exciting, especially with the thought of the paths that each of you will be able to share. It is my hope that you found inspiration in her experience. Please let me know your thoughts. You can reach me at [xpalmer@odu.edu](mailto:xpalmer@odu.edu).

## WRITE-INS AND XSEDE WORKSHOP



Are you working on a publication, thesis or dissertation and would like some like-minded company or dedicated access to writing consultants? Come to Room 1208 in Perry Library on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Workshops are available upon request.

### WHAT IS A WRITE-IN?

- Dedicated writing time to work on thesis, dissertation, or other writing.
- Writing Center consultants available for consultations.
- Workshops available upon request (with advance notice).

### WHAT TO BRING

- Writing to work on
- Headphones (optional)
- Snacks and/or something to drink

\*Computers are available for grad student use.

Interested in Big Data and how it can boost your studies and overall command of your field? Want a hands on experience granting you access to powerful tools such as Hadoop, Spark, and Tensorflow? Want to get into machine learning and deep learning? If so, you're in luck. ODU Research Computing is hosting the XSEDE Big Data Workshop, Tuesday and Wednesday (December 4-5) from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Webb Center, in the James-Lynnhaven Rooms (Rooms 1303-1304). For more information, visit: [https://www.odu.edu/content/odu/announcements/student/2018/11/16/xsede\\_workshop\\_big\\_d.html](https://www.odu.edu/content/odu/announcements/student/2018/11/16/xsede_workshop_big_d.html), and sign up quickly. Spots are limited.

**SATURDAYS 11AM-3PM**

**[odu.edu/graduateschool](http://odu.edu/graduateschool)**

## 3MT: THREE MINUTE THESIS



### When

Thursday  
November 29, 2018  
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

### Where

ODU University Theatre  
4608 Hampton Blvd.

### RSVP by November 26th

### Questions?

Email The Graduate School:  
ATTN Dr. Bryan Porter  
[bporter@odu.edu](mailto:bporter@odu.edu)



Old Dominion University's Graduate School invites YOU to attend the 2018 Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) Competition.

The 3MT is an academic competition that challenges graduate students to describe their research within three minutes to a general audience. 3MT celebrates the discoveries made by research students and encourages them to communicate the importance of their research to the broader community.

Don't miss this opportunity to witness top graduate students representing a wide variety of graduate programs competing for prize money and the chance to represent the University at a regional 3MT competition in early 2019.

YOU also help award one of the prizes. Besides a first and second place winner chosen by a community VIP judging panel, the audience votes to determine a People's Choice prize winner.

The 3MT Competition will be held on Thursday, November 29, 2018 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. at the University Theatre at 4608 Hampton Blvd. A reception for attendees begins at 5:00 p.m., and the competition begins at 5:45 p.m.

RSVP by November 26th to: <https://bit.ly/2PleDRe>.

We look forward to seeing you!

## 2-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION NOTICE

Next year, all students will need to use two-factor authentication for using Monarch Key Services, but you can start today. The benefit of two-factor authentication is a greater degree of security over sensitive account information and functions via a second form of authentication that can protect your account in the event that your password is used by unauthorized parties. For more information, visit: [https://www.odu.edu/announcements/student/2018/11/12/duo\\_2\\_factor\\_authent.iframe.html](https://www.odu.edu/announcements/student/2018/11/12/duo_2_factor_authent.iframe.html).

## CULTURAL EXPLOSION INTEREST MEETINGS

The Office of Intercultural Relations will host interest meetings during the week of November 26 to discuss the next Cultural Explosion Event. Meetings will be held on Wednesday, November 28 at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. and Friday, November 30, at 10 a.m., 12 p.m., and 2 p.m. in the Intercultural Center, in Webb Center, Room 1200. For more information, visit: [https://www.odu.edu/content/odu/announcements/student/2018/11/13/remember\\_cultural\\_ex.html](https://www.odu.edu/content/odu/announcements/student/2018/11/13/remember_cultural_ex.html).

[odu.edu/graduateschool](https://www.odu.edu/graduateschool)

## ZINIYA ZAHEDI: AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT (ASEM) INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE (IAC) 2018

Current EMSE PhD Student, Founding President of the Old Dominion University Chapter of the American Society for Engineering Management, and Administrative Faculty Member from the Strome College of Business, Ziniya Zahedi, presented at the American Society for Engineering Management (ASEM) International Annual Conference (IAC) 2018, which was held in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho from October 17-20. Her presentation was titled "Research Agenda in Developing Core Reference Ontology for Human-Intelligence/Machine-Intelligence Electronic Medical Records System".



## LUCAS POTTER: MIT MEDIA LAB GLOBAL COMMUNITY BIOSUMMIT

Lucas Potter, who is a doctoral student in Biomedical Engineering studying cellular metabolism, took a trip to attend MIT Media Lab's Global Community Biosummit (GCBS) on October 24-26. He is the Vice President of the Biomedical Engineering Student Association (ODU-BMESA), Treasurer of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES), Publicity Chair of the Distributed Simulation and Real Time Applications conference, and a board member for both the ODU Engineering Makerspace and Graduate Student Advisory Boards. With the support of the Batten College of Engineering and Technology, Lucas participated in and presented at the GCBS to gather insights for the operation of the Engineering Makerspace and to represent the engineering potential at ODU. His presentation was titled "Metabolic Research on a Budget" and aimed at increasing the availability of tools used to research mitochondrial disorders. This was inspired from past work on low-cost, decentralized water sanitation systems in Honduras for Engineers Without Borders.



## EDITOR'S SPOT

While you're in graduate school, you have a unique opportunity to travel to conferences, summits, and related events. Give it a try! It may electrify you as well. In other news, Thanksgiving is soon upon us. I wish you all safe travels and good times with those dear to you.

Xavier-Lewis Palmer

## ABOUT

Find Graduate School News Online at: [www.odu.edu/graduateschool](http://www.odu.edu/graduateschool).

ODU graduate student Xavier-Lewis Palmer, compiled and edited this newsletter with help from Dr. Robert Wojtowicz, Dr. Bryan Porter, Ms. Missy Barber, and Courtney Nishnick in the Graduate School.

If you have an idea, event, news, or anything otherwise notable that you would like to share, contact Xavier-Lewis at [xpalmer@odu.edu](mailto:xpalmer@odu.edu).



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