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FACULTY, GUEST PRESENTERS,
and PRESLEY CENTER & CDC CENTER STAFF

Roxie Alcaraz, M.A.
Project Manager/Staff Research Associate III
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Roxie’s academic background is in experimental psychology. Prior to her work at the Presley Center, she worked at California State University San Bernardino coordinating research projects related to minors’ access to tobacco and the relationship between gender and ethnicity and health risk behaviors and the effects of such behaviors on mental health. As Project Manager of the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention, she coordinates and/or monitors all activities of the project. She was a member of the mayor of Riverside’s Red Team on Youth Violence Prevention and will be working with Dr. Nancy Guerra on developing a comprehensive resource guide on community approaches to early violence prevention for children ages 0-5. In addition, she is a part-time psychology instructor at Riverside Community College.

Sandra Graham, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Education
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University of California, Los Angeles
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Dr. Graham’s teaching interests include motivation, the social psychology of learning and instruction, and issues in the education of minority children. Her research interests are in the areas of attribution theory, the relationship between cognition and emotion, the development of achievement-related affect, and motivational processes in minority populations. She is extensively published in these areas of expertise. As a member of the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention consortium, Dr. Graham is working with Dr. Cynthia Hudley on redesigning an after-school intervention program for aggressive youth ages 8 - 11 that Dr. Hudley originally developed in 1989. In addition, from 1994-1996 Dr. Graham was chair of the Interdepartmental Master’s Program in African American Studies and associate director of the Center for African American Studies at UCLA. She is currently director of an NIMH Training Grant in Applied Human Development in the Department of Education at UCLA; Associate editor at Developmental Psychology; and a member of a MacArthur Foundation Research network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice.
Nancy Guerra, Ed.D.
Professor of Psychology
Associate Director, Robert Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies
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Dr. Guerra’s professional research interests and practice experience have focused on youth development and violence prevention. She has served on a number of national expert panels and study groups, such as the President's Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office of Education’s National Standards Project, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's study group on serious and violent juvenile offenders. Most recently, she was the principal investigator on an 8-year large-scale preventive intervention study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. This study evaluated the impact of a comprehensive and long-term intervention involving children, teachers, and families on the prevention of aggression and violence in inner city and urban communities. Currently, she is the principal investigator on the evaluation of a school-wide wellness promotion and violence prevention project funded by a grant from SAMSHA to the Riverside Unified School District. Dr. Guerra is also the principal investigator on the grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which funds the Southern California Developing Center for Youth Violence Prevention. The Center’s efforts involve a multidisciplinary collaboration of faculty from six southern California universities with a focus on bridging the gaps between research and practice.

Cynthia Hudley, Ph.D.
Professor of Education
University of Southern California
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Dr. Hudley is a Professor of Education at the University of Southern California. Her research interests and expertise are in school-based youth violence prevention, academic engagement and motivation among children at risk for delinquency, and prevention programs for youth. Dr. Hudley’s experience with youth both as an educator and a researcher is impressive. She is credentialed in California as a teacher; a reading specialist; a learning handicapped specialist; a resource specialist; a community college instructor; and a school administrator. In addition, she has conducted numerous workshops and professional presentations on issues pertaining to youth violence prevention and intervention. As a member of the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention consortium, Dr. Hudley coordinates all intervention activities for the center. Her contribution to the Center’s intervention core involves working with Dr. Sandra Graham on redesigning an after-school intervention program for aggressive youth ages 8 - 11 that she originally developed in 1989.

Rowell Huesmann, Ph.D.
Professor of Communications Studies and Psychology
Senior Research Scientist, Research Center for Group Dynamics
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A Professor of Communications and Psychology at the University of Michigan, Dr. Huesmann’s research interests include the causes of violent behavior, social cognition and computer simulations of behavior. He is an expert in youth violence prevention and intervention.
research design and data analysis. In addition, Dr. Huesmann is an internationally recognized authority on the role of violence in the media in stimulating aggressive behavior. He has been interviewed frequently on television and radio programs regarding his research findings and has testified before Congress about the effects of violence in the media. He has authored three books and numerous articles on violence in the media and its effect on people's own aggressive behavior. He is the past president of the International Society of Research on Aggression and is a member of the National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR).

Tia Kim, M.A.
Doctoral Student, Developmental Psychology
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Tia is a second year doctoral student in developmental psychology at University of California, Riverside. She assisted on numerous research projects as an undergraduate, has presented research at conferences, and has three professional publications. Tia's research interests are in the area of youth violence, gangs, and cultural and ethnic issues. As a research assistant at the Presley Center, Tia works on the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention project. She has authored papers and fact sheets for the Center's website as well as represented the Center at national conferences. She is currently working on a book chapter on ethnic identity, social group membership, and youth violence.

Cheryl Maxson, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Criminology, Law, and Society
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Professor Maxson's academic and research interests lie in the areas of Crime and Delinquency, especially youth violence, juvenile justice system, street gangs; law and society; and program evaluation. She is widely published and has done numerous invited lectures and professional conference presentations in the above topic areas. As the principal investigator or co-principal investigator, she is currently involved in several research projects on youth violence prevention and intervention. In addition, Dr. Maxson has served as a consultant for a number of government offices, commissions, organizations, and agencies such as the U.S. Surgeon General, the National Institute of Justice, the L.A. County Community Development Commission, the California Department of Health, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, to name only a few. Dr. Maxson joined the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention consortium in 2001 and has been involved primarily as a reviewer for the Center's website resources and publications on gangs.

Andrei Novac, M.D.
Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
Director, Traumatic Stress Program
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Dr. Novac is an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Traumatic Stress Program at the University of California, Irvine. His areas of research are the impact of traumatic stress on mental disorders and intergenerational transmission of trauma and its relation to violence. He is currently researching the neurobiology of violence and brain imaging. As a member of the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention
consortium, Dr. Novac is involved in the intervention core and the health care core. He has worked with consortium members at USC Family Medicine to develop a youth violence screening instrument for physicians. The Youth Violence Screening System (YVSS) will be based on a variety of instruments that are currently available.

Mario Ozuna-Sanchez
Program Coordinator
Male Involvement Program
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Born and raised in East Los Angeles, Mario Ozuna-Sanchez grew up in a home with an alcoholic father and drug addicted brothers. He describes his childhood and adolescent years as “gang infested.” In addition, Mario became a father himself at the age of 15. Although he was faced with many barriers and obstacles from birth through adolescence, with his Mother’s help he accomplished his goal to finish high school. Since then, Mario has gone on to attend San Jose State University where he is currently working on two Bachelor’s degrees - one in English and one in Sociology with an emphasis in Criminology. He is employed by the Mexican American Community Service Agency, Inc. (MACSA) in San Jose, California. For the past three years he has been the Program Coordinator for the Male Involvement Program, a state initiative focused on promoting responsibility and pregnancy prevention among male youth; Street Reach, a gang intervention program; and a mentoring program for young women. In addition, Mario has worked with a number of youth organizations such as the Santa Clara Valley YWCA and SEA Impossible in East Los Angeles. Mario is also a member of the National Compadres Network.

Robert Nash Parker, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology and Criminology
Director, Robert Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies
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In 1996 Robert Nash Parker was appointed Professor of Sociology and Director of the Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies at the University of California, Riverside. He is currently a Co-PI of the Southern California Center for Academic Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funded national center, and he is Co-PI of “Health People, Healthy Places”, a SAMHSA funded project to reduce the risk of school violence in the Riverside Unified School District. Prior to his arrival at UC Riverside, Dr. Parker taught in Sociology Departments at the University of Akron, Rutgers University, and the University of Iowa; held an appointment as an NIAAA Post Doctoral Fellow at the University of California, Berkeley; and was a Senior Research Scientist and Study Director at the Prevention Research Center, Berkeley, CA, a non profit National Center funded by NIAAA and devoted to the study and prevention of alcohol related social problems. In addition, he has published widely in sociology and criminology on the causes of violence in general and homicide in particular, including a 1995 book published by State University of New York Press, Alcohol and Homicide: A Deadly Combination of Two American Traditions. Overall, Dr. Parker’s research interests include criminal justice policy analysis and evaluation; the relationship between alcohol and violence, both offending and victimization, the relationship between alcohol policy and crime prevention; and the development and application of geospatial statistical models to the study of violence, alcohol, and other social problems.
Olivia Pillado, M.A.
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Olivia is a third year student in the developmental psychology doctoral program at the University of California, Riverside. She is interested in examining the differences between adolescents who are resilient to risk factors they encounter and adolescents who engage in risky behaviors such as unprotected sex and substance use. She is particularly interested in familial and cultural influences as protective factors. As a pre-doctoral research trainee at the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention, Olivia is working on compiling a resource guide of social development measures and is co-authoring a book chapter on ethnic identity, social group membership, and youth violence.

Thomas Simon, Ph.D.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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Thomas Simon received his Ph.D. in Preventive Medicine from the University of Southern California in 1996. He then completed a postdoctoral fellowship with the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He now works as a Behavioral Scientist within the Center’s Division of Violence Prevention. His primary focus is on informing the development of youth violence and suicide prevention programs by studying risk and protective factors for aggressive and suicidal behavior. He serves as a scientific advisor on several CDC-funded longitudinal evaluations of violence and suicide prevention programs and has published more than 30 articles on these topics.

George Tita, Ph.D.
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George Tita is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at the University of California, Irvine. His interests include the study of inter-personal violence with a focus on homicide, urban street gangs, and the community context of crime. His methodological approach includes both qualitative and quantitative designs, with a strong interest in mapping and spatial analysis. He is involved with an interdisciplinary group of scholars working to promote the use of spatial statistics and analysis throughout the social sciences. Prior to joining UC Irvine, Dr. Tita spent two years at the RAND Corporation as a Policy Analyst. There he directed an NIJ funded gun-violence reduction program in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles. The goal of this project is to work with all invested stakeholders to devise and test strategies for reducing gun violence. Partners in this effort include representatives from the criminal justice agencies (LAPD, City Attorney, District Attorney, U.S. Attorney and Los Angeles County Probation Department) and well as the community at large (Homeboy Industries/Jobs For a Future, the local Catholic Dioceses, White Memorial Hospital, and the Association of Street Gang Workers). This work continues at UCI. In addition, Dr. Tita is the principal investigator on a project investigating homicide over a twenty-year period in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts. Dr. Tita is also an elected member of the National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR).
Louis Tuthill
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Louis is a second year sociology doctoral student at University of California, Riverside. His research interests are in sociological and criminology issues of race, class, and inequality, and advanced statistical methods. Louis is the Website Designer for the Presley Center and CDC Center. He has compiled all of the statistical data, charts, graphs, etc. for the website and is currently working on increasing the number of statistical databases related to youth violence and prevention available on both websites.

Kirk Williams, Ph.D.
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Dr. Williams is Professor of Sociology and Faculty Fellow in the Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies at the University of California, Riverside. He received the Ph.D. from The University of Arizona and did post-doctoral work at Yale University. Before coming to UCR in 1998, he served as the founding Associate Director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at The University of Colorado, Boulder. There, he directed research and technical assistance efforts on human development and violence prevention, particularly violence involving youth and intimate partners. He has published widely in these areas, with his most recent publication being a co-edited book of original papers on Violence in American Schools (with Delbert Elliott and Beatrix Hamburg, Cambridge University Press). He has received numerous grants from federal and state funding sources, in addition to private foundations. He also has worked extensively with community-based groups and agencies in violence prevention planning, implementation, and evaluation.