Allison Bruner

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EDUCATION

University of Maryland, College Park, MD
Bachelor of Science, Psychology — May 2027 (expected)
Bachelor of Science, Human Development
Honors Thesis: *Children's Evaluations, Predictions, and Beliefs about Parental Preference Regarding Multi-Ethnic Friendships* (in progress)
GPA, as of October 2026: 3.974

Relevant Coursework

Research Methods in Psychology	Behavioral Pharmacology	Social Psychology
Data Science for Psychology Majors	Adult Psychopathology	Child Development

GRANTS, HONORS, & AWARDS

Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology — 2025
Inducted into UMD's chapter of Psi Chi based on academic merit, served as Vice President of Communications and Webmaster
Department of Psychology, University of Maryland

SPIRE Summer Undergraduate Research Fund Award — 2025
$3,000 award to pursue independent research
Office of Undergraduate Research, University of Maryland

Herskowitz Family Endowed Scholarship — 2025
$1,000 merit-based scholarship for students in the social sciences
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, University of Maryland

BSOS Distinguished Dean's List of Outstanding Students — 2024-2026
Recognized for a GPA of 4.0 for Fall 2024, Fall 2025, Spring 2026
2024 Fall, 2025 Spring, and 2025 Fall Semester
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, University of Maryland

BSOS Dean's List of Outstanding Students — 2023-2026
Recognized for a GPA of 3.5 or higher for Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Spring 2025
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, University of Maryland

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Social and Moral Development Lab, Supervisor: Melanie Killen, Ph.D. *University of Maryland, College Park.* — January 2024-Present

- Contribute to research on how children and adolescents evaluate social and moral issues in everyday life. Participate in recruitment, data collection, data cleaning, analysis, and scientific communication through social media.
- Projects
    - **Developing Inclusive Youth: An Intervention to Promote Positive Peer Relationships and Reduce Prejudice and Bias in Childhood**
      Study purpose: NSF- and NIH-funded intervention designed to evaluate effectiveness of an intervention program designed to reduce prejudice and promote intergroup friendships among 3rd-5th graders. Converting to a marketable social emotional learning program.
      Duties: Transcribed classroom conversations, conducted market research, gave feedback on project, tested project in classroom context
    - **Children and Adolescents' Reasoning About Teacher and Peer Racial Bias at School**
      Study purpose: Investigate child and adolescent moral evaluations about racial bias in a classroom setting. Conduct individual remote interviews of children using an online vignette tool.
      Duties: Coded content thematically in a collaborative setting, provided feedback on conference presentations
    - **Children's Evaluations of and Reasoning about Confronting Gender Bias in a Science Context**
      Study purpose: Investigate child and adolescent social and moral evaluations about confronting gender bias in peer groups in a science context. Conduct in-person individual interviews of children using an online vignette tool.
      Duties: Assisted with recruitment of programs/schools, conducted interviews, transcribed data, coded content thematically in a collaborative setting
    - **Peer Inclusion and Wealth Assumptions in Academic Contexts**
      Study purpose: Investigate child and adolescent moral evaluations about wealth inequality and math competence across racial contexts. Conduct individual interviews of children using an online vignette tool.
      Duties: gave feedback on protocol development, reviewed literature, recruited participants, conducted data collection interviews, transcribed interviews, coded content thematically in a collaborative setting
    - **Resource Claims and Allocation of Resources**
      Study purpose: Investigate young children's allocation of educational resources between classmates of different economic backgrounds. Conduct individual interviews of children using an online vignette tool.
      Duties: gave feedback on protocol development, transcribed interviews
    - **Children's Evaluations and Expectations about Group Decision Making**
      Study purpose: Investigate children's and adolescent moral evaluations about peer inclusion, parental inclusion, and trait attributions regarding multiethnic peers in social context. Conduct individual interviews of children using an online vignette tool.
      Duties: conducted literature review, assisted with stimuli and protocol development, recruited participants, interviewed individual participants, analyzed data, trained new research assistants in recruitment and interviewing protocols

Honors Thesis: **Children's Evaluations, Predictions, and Beliefs about Parental Preference Regarding Multi-Ethnic Friendships** (in preparation)
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Melanie Killen
Graduate Student Advisor: Clara Plutzer
Committee Members: Dr. Jimena Cosso and Dr. Stephen Gibson
Study purpose: Investigate children's and adolescents' perceptions of parents' preferences of children's close friendships with peers of mono- and multi-ethnic background
Duties: cleaning and analyzing data, writing proposal, collaborating with faculty, writing thesis, presenting and defending thesis

Clinical and Cognitive Neuroscience Lab, Supervisor: Ed Bernat, Ph.D.
University of Maryland, College Park December 2025 - May 2026

- Contributed to research on hierarchical taxonomy (HiTOP) model of addiction and psychopathology. Utilize methods including EEG, SCID, and other clinical techniques to interact with participants and collect data.
- Projects
    - **Cue Incubation and Reactivity in Recovering Cocaine Users**
      Study Purpose: Investigate the effects of cocaine-related cue exposure (ie. images of cocaine use, handling drug paraphernalia) on recovering cocaine addicts. These effects were measured using self-reported survey data as well as EEG data. A gambling task and blood test were also administered. The study took place at an addiction treatment facility in Baltimore, Maryland.
      Duties: Assisted with EEG set up and clean up, administered clinical interview measures.
    - **Cognitive Anxiety Sensitivity Treatment**
      Study Purpose: Guide a group of 2-7 undergraduate students through an online module intended to reduce stress sensitivity. The module includes psychoeducation, opportunities for discussion, and exposures to physiological sensations that are often linked to stress sensitivity. Collect follow-up data to assess long-term efficacy of the intervention.
      Duties: Assist with protocol development, led clinical interview sessions

Vocational Support Systems, Inc., Supervisors: Pool Ubilus, MS and Gail Paulson, MA
Gaithersburg, MD June 2026-August 2026

- Conducted an annual consumer satisfaction survey for a company that provides services for people with psychiatric disorders.
- *Duties:* updated survey materials, individually scheduled with and interviewed with 25 clients, analyzed data, wrote 20-page manuscript with figured, presented data to company staff

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Clinical Shadowing -Growing Tree Psychological Services with Susan Hoey, PsyD, LPC
The Rose Building, Marlton, NJ 2024-2025

- Shadowed private counseling sessions with Dr. Susan Hoey, a practitioner who specializes in treating anxiety, personality disorders, postpartum mood disorders, and autism spectrum disorders.

- Observed counseling sessions and Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) testing, interacted with clients, and learned about behind-the-scenes operations of a private psychology practice.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Peer Mentor August 2025-December 2025
Office of Undergraduate Research, University of Maryland
- Serve as a peer mentor for two freshmen a professional development course designed to guide students through getting involved in research

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant January 2026 - May 2026
Department of Psychology, University of Maryland
- Serve as a teaching assistant for PSYC437: Assessment and Treatment of Addictive Behaviors with Dr. Abigail Nicolas
- Facilitate class activities, grade assignments, held weekly office hours, attended weekly teaching team meetings

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Plutzer, C., **Bruner, A.**, Killen, M. (2027, April). Children's Expectations and Predictions of Parental Inclusivity of Multi-Ethnic Peers. Poster submitted to the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Atlanta, GA (in preparation)

Plutzer, C., **Bruner, A**., Killen, M. (2027, April). Children's Expectations and Predictions about Including Multi-Ethnic Peers. Poster submitted to the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Atlanta, GA (in preparation)

Blum, R., Montecinos, B., Farooqi, L., **Bruner, A.,** Patel, L., Tallapragada, S., Adler, A., Mattanah, N., Rajendran, K., Bernat, E. (2026, April). The Relationship between HiTOP and Cocaine Craving in Individuals in Recovery. Poster to be presented at the University of Maryland's Spring Undergraduate Research Day and Undergraduate Neuroscience Research Day, College Park, MD

Bruner, A., Plutzer, C., Killen, M. (2025, July). Multi-Ethnic Identities in Developmental Science: A Review and Study Proposal. Poster presented at the University of Maryland's Summer Undergraduate Research Conference, College Park, MD

Kaufman, E.M., Luken Raz, K., Forbes, M.B., Brenner, J., Plutzer, C., Pearl, N., **Bruner, A.**, Fernandes, A., & Killen, M. (2025, May). Children's math and science beliefs about diverse peers are related to STEM occupation expectations. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, Washington, D.C.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Undergraduate Psychology Association, UMD 2024-Present
- Network and attend events with psychology undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and guest speakers at UMD

Human Development Student Association, UMD 2024-Present

- Network and plan and attend events with human development undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and guest speakers at UMD

Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology, UMD 2025-Present

- Serve as Vice President of Communications and Webmaster for UMD's chapter of Psi Chi. Update website, compile and send out weekly newsletter, and host one meeting per semester.

Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity, UMD 2025-Present

- Facilitate petitioning documents, take minutes, and organize chapter meetings and service projects. Led effort to reestablish the Gamma Xi chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi at the University of Maryland

SKILLS & SOFTWARE EXPERIENCE

Proficiency in Excel, Word, R Programming, Canva, Qualtrics, SPSS, and Audacity

Certifications

- Social & Behavioral Research CITI Program
- DataCamp Intermediate R, Introduction to the Tidyverse
- LinkedIn Learning Excel Essential Training (Microsoft 365)
- American Red Cross CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers with First Aid