

VINCENT D. LAI

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EDUCATION

- 2022-Present **Ph.D. in Psychological Sciences**
Rice University, Houston, TX
Dual Degree: Health Psychology & Behavioral Medicine,
Industrial-Organizational Psychology
Faculty Advisor: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.
- 2017-2021 **B.A. in Psychology**
Rice University, Houston TX
Minor: Biochemistry and Cell Biology
Honors Thesis: “Fear of Missing Out During the COVID-19
Pandemic: Relationships with Social Distancing and Depressive
Symptoms”
Faculty Mentors: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.,
Angie S. LeRoy, Ph.D.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

* *Indicates joint first-author position*

- LeRoy, A. S., Weyland, A. Kanemitsu, J., Tsay-Jones, A., **Lai, V.**, Wu-Chung, E. L., Vela, N., Perozo, A., Maza, V. I., & Suchting, R. (Under Review). Development & Initial Testing of an Online Security Prime Writing Intervention During COVID-19. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*.
- Paoletti, J., Phetmisy, C. N., **Lai, V. D.**, & Fagundes, C. P. (2023). Perceived income inadequacy is associated with Epstein-Barr Virus latency and mental health outcomes in informal caregivers who are also employed in the healthcare industry. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*
- *LeRoy, A. S., ***Lai, V. D.**, Tsay-Jones, A., & Fagundes, C. P. (2023). Fear of missing out and depressive symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*.

PRESENTATIONS

- Lai, V. D.** (2023, June 29). *Missing Out Hurts! The Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Its Consequences for Well-Being* [Invited speaker]. Plasticity of Well-being Summer Workshop, Wisconsin, Madison, United States.

Lai, V. D. (2023, April 17). *The Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) and Its Consequences for Well-Being*. [Invited speaker]. Rice Psychological Sciences Cognitive, Health, and Affective Weekly Seminar, Houston, TX, United States.

Lai, V. D. (2023, February 25). *Feeling FoMO Hurts: How the Fear of Missing Out Impacts Health*. [Invited speaker]. ComSciCon Houston 2023, Houston, TX, United States.

LeRoy, A. S., Maza, V. I., Weyland, A., Kanemitsu, J., Tsay-Jones, A., **Lai, V.**, Vela, N., Perozo, A., Wu-Chung, L., Suchting, R., & Fagundes, C. P. (2023, March 8-11) *Development & Initial Testing of an Attachment-Informed Online Expressive Writing Intervention During COVID-19*. [Poster presentation]. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society (APS), San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Lai, V. D., LeRoy, A. S., Fagundes, C. P. (2021, April 21). *Fear of Missing Out During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Relationships with Social Distancing and Depressive Symptoms* [Poster presentation]. Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium, Houston, TX, United States.

Jones, A. F., Vela, N. D., Kanemitsu, J. H., **Lai, V. D.**, Perozo, A. B., Weyland, A. H., LeRoy, A. S., Fagundes, C. P. (2021, April 21). *Expressive Writing During COVID-19: A Novel Stress-Reduction Intervention Tailored for Those Most At-Risk* [Poster presentation]. Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium, Houston, TX, United States.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student Researcher August 2022-Present

Biobehavioral Mechanisms Explaining Disparities (BMED) Lab

Rice University, Houston, TX

PI: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.

- Process and store blood specimens obtained from study participants
- Perform immunological assays, including serum and plasma isolation from blood, Luminex, ELISA, flow cytometry, mitochondrial stress tests, monocyte stimulation
- Assist in leading experimental visits with study participants and collecting quantitative and qualitative data

Project Coordinator August 2021-July 2022

Biobehavioral Mechanisms Explaining Disparities (BMED) Lab

Rice University, Houston, TX

PI: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.

Project: "Project CHROMA": Study funded by the National Endowment for the Arts that examines the benefits of creative music engagement on cognition and health

- Managed research assistant training and daily productivity
- Assisted with community recruitment, outreach, and follow-up
- Led experimental visits with study participants

- Collected anthropometric measurements (e.g., blood pressure, height, weight, torso measurements)
- Assisted in collecting quantitative and qualitative data, including the collection of biomarkers
- Administered neuropsychological assessments (WCST, MMSE, DKEFS, WAIS)

Senior Research Assistant

January 2021-April 2021

Biobehavioral Mechanisms Explaining Disparities (BMED) Lab

Rice University, Houston, TX

PI: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.

Projects: “Project HEART”: Study funded by the National Institutes of Health that examines the biobehavioral effects of spousal bereavement in adults; “COVID-19 Study”: Study that assesses the influence of early life stress on severity of COVID-19 symptoms

- Assisted with community recruitment, outreach, and follow-up
- Led experimental visits with study participants
- Collect anthropometric measurements (e.g., blood pressure, height, weight, torso measurements)
- Assisted in collecting quantitative and qualitative data, including the collection of biomarkers
- Distributed online surveys and questionnaires to participants using Qualtrics

Research Assistant

August 2020-May 2021

Biobehavioral Mechanisms Explaining Disparities (BMED) Lab

Rice University, Houston, TX

PI: Angie S. LeRoy, Ph.D.

Project: “Expressive Writing During COVID-19”: Study that examines the use of an expressive writing intervention to reduce stress in at-risk adults during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Tracked study progress and data collection for 300+ study participants
- Distributed surveys and questionnaires to participants using Qualtrics
- Assisted with community recruitment, outreach, and follow-up
- Presented weekly study updates at team and lab-wide meetings

Honors Thesis

August 2020-May 2021

Department of Psychological Sciences

Rice University, Houston, TX

Advisor: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.

Project: “Fear of Missing Out During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Relationships with Social Distancing and Depressive Symptoms”: Project that examined the relationships between practicing social distancing, fear of missing out, and depressive symptoms among at-risk adults during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Distributed surveys and questionnaires to participants using Qualtrics
- Assisted with community recruitment, outreach, and follow-up
- Analyzed data for 103 participants using IBM SPSS Statistics
- Completed and presented formal research report to Department of Psychological Sciences Undergraduate Committee

Research Assistant

August 2019-August 2020

Biobehavioral Mechanisms Explaining Disparities (BMED) Lab

Rice University, Houston, TX

PI: Christopher P. Fagundes, Ph.D.

Project(s): “Project HEART”: Study funded by the National Institutes of Health that examines the biobehavioral effects of spousal bereavement in adults

- Assisted with community recruitment, outreach, and follow-up
- Led experimental visits with study participants
- Collect anthropometric measurements (e.g., blood pressure, height, weight, torso measurements)
- Assisted in collecting quantitative and qualitative data, including the collection of biomarkers

TEACHING AND MENTORSHIP

BUILDing SCHOLARS Summer Internship Program

May 2023-July 2023

- Mentored one undergraduate student for summer research internship and poster presentation
- Evaluated student poster presentations at summer research symposium
- Mentee awarded *Outstanding Poster Presentation* award at symposium

Teaching Assistant

- *Psychopathology*. Rice University (Fall 2023). Teach classes, manage and conduct assignment, paper, and exam grading.

Guest Lectures

- *Who you gonna call? Stressbusters! Behavioral Interventions for Reducing Stress*. PSYC 346: Stress and Health Across the Lifespan. Undergraduate course at Rice University (June 8, 2023).
- *Health and Happiness: Approaching Positive Psychology from a Psychoneuroimmunological Perspective*. PSYC 480: Positive Psychology. Undergraduate course at Rice University (November 4, 2022).
- *The Road to Medical School*. Pre-Health Careers. Elective course at Breakthrough Houston HISD summer program (July 11, 2022)

JOURNAL REVIEWING

Ad Hoc Reviewer, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* (2023-Present)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member, Society for Personality and Social Psychology (2023-Present)

Member, American Psychological Association (2023-Present)

Member, Psi Chi, The International Honor Society in Psychology (2021-Present)

WORK EXPERIENCE

9th Grade Teaching Fellow

June 2021-August 2021

Breakthrough Houston HISD

The Lawson Academy, Houston, TX

Subjects taught: Biology, Pre-Health Careers, Photography

- Managed classrooms of 5-10 students independently using proactive behavior management strategies
- Collaborated with teaching staff and instructional coach to design and implement lesson plans consistent with the Texas state 9th-grade biology curriculum
- Delivered social and emotional learning (SEL) content daily to students featuring topics in diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Led interactive lecture and discussion class sessions featuring fields and topics of interest in medicine
- Led interactive class sessions featuring topics and demonstrations in photography

7th Grade Teaching Fellow

June 2019-August 2019

Breakthrough Houston HISD

Edgar Gregory-Abraham Lincoln Education Center, Houston, TX

Subjects taught: Life Science, Pre-Health Careers, Dance, Chess

- Managed classroom of 10-20 students independently using proactive behavior management strategies
- Collaborated with teaching staff and instructional coaches to design and implement lesson plans consistent with the Texas state 7th-grade life science curriculum
- Led interactive lecture and discussion class sessions featuring fields and topics of interest in medicine

VOLUNTEER AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Student Ambassador

October 2023

Statistical Training and Research Techniques at Rice University

- Assisted with administrative tasks, including directing participants to workshops, taking attendance, and setting up and cleaning up
- Managed program social media accounts, including Instagram and Twitter

Graduate Student Ambassador

August 2023

American Psychological Association of Graduate Students

- Assisted conference attendees with navigating event sessions
- Promoted conference sessions on social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram

- Contributed written reflection to student blog

Vice President

May 2023-Present

Psychological Sciences Graduate Student Association

- Complete and distribute executive board monthly meeting minutes to members
- Advertise and keep records of all events and meetings
- Attend and vote on behalf of PsycGSA at university-wide council meetings

Program Director

May 2023-Present

Future Scientists Advising Program

- Manage college application and admission mentorship program for high school students
- Lead outreach and recruitment of student mentors and mentees
- Provide resources and support for mentorship pairs and groups

STEM Pen Pal

August 2022-Present

Letters to a Pre-Scientist

- Exchange 10 letters per academic year with a middle school pen pal
- Address student inquiries about pursuing careers in STEM
- Motivate and inspire students to explore interests and passions relating to STEM

Newsroom Leader

May 2022-Present

International Collegiate Journal of Science

- Set up and maintain monthly newsletter on Substack showcasing cutting-edge psychological research
- Manage team of eight newsletter writers contributing to monthly editions
- Design research diagrams and geographical maps for newsletter editions

Graduate Student Mentor

May 2022-Present

Psychin' Out

- Support three prospective graduate students with applications to programs of interest
- Communicate weekly with mentees regarding progress on applications
- Find and distribute helpful graduate application resources to mentees

Marketing Director

November 2021-Present

International Collegiate Journal of Science

- Create content for community updates and members' work twice a week to the following social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn
- Design graphics for social media content using the Canva platform
- Lead monthly marketing team meetings to discuss marketing updates and progress

8th Grade School Year Program Teacher

September 2021-April 2022

Breakthrough Houston HISD

Hogg Middle School, Houston, TX

Subject taught: STEM

- Manage classroom of 10-20 students independently using proactive behavior management strategies

- Collaborate with teachers and instructional coaches to design and implement curriculum based on real-world challenges in mathematics and science
- Deliver social and emotional learning (SEL) and project-based learning (PBL) content bimonthly to 20+ students

Marketing Associate

May 2021-November 2021

International Collegiate Journal of Science

- Wrote and posted weekly updates and article summaries twice a week to the following social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn
- Designed graphics for article updates and social media posts using Canva
- Assisted with organization recruitment and outreach
- Met monthly with marketing team to discuss marketing updates and progress

Staff Writer

March 2021-Present

Writer

December 2020-March 2021

International Collegiate Journal of Science

- Write, edit, and publish articles covering topics in psychology and medicine
- Collaborate with peer writers to write group articles focused on topics in gut microbiota brain axis research
- Present articles at monthly community monthly meetings

8th Grade School Year Program Teacher

October 2020-April 2021

Breakthrough Houston HISD

Houston, TX

Subject taught: Mathematics

- Managed virtual classroom environment of 5-10 students independently using proactive behavior management strategies
- Collaborated with teaching staff and instructional coaches to design and implement lesson plans consistent with the Texas state 8th-grade mathematics curriculum
- Led tutoring sessions once a month with students to review and reinforce topics in mathematics using virtual learning tools
- Delivered social and emotional learning (SEL) content once a month to students featuring topics in diversity, inclusion, and equity

Student Mentor

October 2020-April 2021

RemixCS

Rice University, Houston, TX

- Led interactive mentoring and discussion sessions for Houston-area high school students interested in computer science
- Collaborated with mentors to select and present topics related to college admissions and computer science
- Designed and delivered introductory Python programming lessons

Writer

September 2020-May 2021

Rice Catalyst

Rice University, Houston TX

- Wrote, edited, and published science articles for peer-edited science blog
- Collaborated with peer editors and graphic designers to publish article in yearly publication

Treasurer

August 2020-May 2021

Rice Vietnamese Student Association

Rice University, Houston, TX

- Managed online account to access organization finances for event funding and reimbursement
- Presented budget at monthly executive board meetings
- Led small group sessions for annual College Leadership Workshop

7th Grade School Year Program Teacher

October 2019-March 2020

Breakthrough Houston HISD

Edgar Gregory-Abraham Lincoln Education Center, Houston, TX

Subject taught: Mathematics

- Collaborated with teaching staff and instructional coaches to design and implement lesson plans consistent with the Texas state 7th-grade mathematics curriculum
- Led tutoring sessions once a month with students to review and reinforce topics in mathematics

Treasurer

August 2018-May 2019

STEM Students on the Rise

Rice University, Houston, TX

- Co-hosted guest speaker event for Rice students interested in opportunities in STEM
- Managed online account to access organization funds
- Designed graphic logos for use in club social media accounts and promotional materials using Canva

College Volunteer

May 2018-March 2020

Memorial-Hermann Health System

Memorial-Hermann Hospital Texas Medical Center, Houston, TX

Departments: Information Desk, General Medicine, Surgery, Recovery, Pharmacy

- Served for 120 hours in various hospital departments
- Assisted hospital staff with clerical tasks including organizing, replenishing, and delivering supplies
- Assisted visitors and patients with hospital navigation and transport

HONORS AND AWARDS

Scholarship Recipient

2022, 2023

Statistical Training and Research Techniques at Rice University

- Awarded in support of program attendance, consisting of statistical workshops and professionalization and networking opportunities

Academic Honors in Psychology 2021
Rice University Department of Psychological Sciences

- Awarded for successful completion and presentation of honors thesis project

Psi Chi, The International Honor Society in Psychology 2021

- Awarded for completing coursework in psychology and maintaining a cumulative GPA in the top 35% of class

President's Honor Roll Spring 2019-Fall 2020
Rice University

- Awarded for excellent academic performance based on semester GPA

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2023 **Statistical Training and Research Techniques at Rice University**
Rice University School of Social Sciences

Plasticity of Well-Being Summer Workshop
Center for Healthy Minds, University of Wisconsin - Madison

Heartsaver CPR AED
Rice University Emergency Medical Services

2022 **Statistical Training and Research Techniques at Rice University**
Rice University School of Social Sciences

CITI Training Certifications

- Biomedical Research - Basic/Refresher
- Social and Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Students - Class Projects
- Data or Specimens Only Research - Basic/Refresher

Rice University

Be There Certificate
Jack.org

Phlebotomy Workshop Certificate
Texas School of Phlebotomy

2021 **Fundamentals of Digital Marketing**
Google LLC

2021 AT&T Summer Learning Academy Externship
AT&T

- 2020
- Positive Psychology**
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, offered through Coursera
- Certificate of Completion**
Intercollegiate Medical Research Journal Club
- Social Psychology with Honors**
Wesleyan University, offered through Coursera
- 2020 AT&T Summer Learning Academy Externship**
AT&T
- How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper**
École Polytechnique, offered through Coursera
- Psychological First Aid**
Johns Hopkins University, offered through Coursera
- 2019
- CITI Training Certifications**
- Biomedical Responsible Conduct of Research
 - Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
- Rice University
- Biosafety and Bloodborne Pathogens Training**
Rice University
- General Laboratory Safety Training**
Rice University

OTHER WRITING

Student Journal Articles

- Lai, V.** (2022, March 31). Mind Missing Out? Fear of Missing Out and the Brain. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science*.
<https://icjs.us/mind-missing-out-fear-of-missing-out-and-the-brain/>
- Lai, V.** (2021, September 11). A Novel Mental Health Literacy Education Program for Pre-Teens. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science*.
<https://icjs.us/a-novel-mental-health-literacy-education-program-for-pre-teens/>
- Troth, J., Attar, R., Gainski, J., **Lai, V.**, Lee, G., Moody, C., & Nelson, M. (2021, August 12). Considering the Microbiota-Gut-Brain-Axis in Cancer Research. *ICJS - International*

Collegiate Journal of Science.

<https://icjs.us/considering-the-microbiota-gut-brain-axis-in-cancer-research/>

Lai, V. (2021, August 8). The Positives of Plushies: Stuffed Animals Have Benefits for Children and Adults. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science.*

<https://icjs.us/the-positives-of-plushies-stuffed-animals-have-benefits-for-children-and-adults/>

Troth, J., Attar, R., Conway, C., Gainski, J., Kifer, A., **Lai, V.**, Lee, G., Moody, C., Prakash, M., & Schwab, J. (2021, May 12). The Gut May Be The Door to Effective Depression Treatment. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science.*

<https://icjs.us/the-gut-may-be-the-door-to-effective-depression-treatment/>

Troth, J., Conway, C., Kifer, A., **Lai, V.**, Lee, G., Lindagal, V., Moody, C., & Prakash, M. (2021, March 19). Exploring the Gut-Microbiota Hypothesis of Neurodegenerative Disease Pathogenesis. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science.*

<https://icjs.us/exploring-the-gut-microbiota-hypothesis-of-neurodegenerative-disease-pathogenesis/>

Lai, V. (2021, February 4). Fighting Hospital Hardships: An Intervention for Reducing Stress in Hospital Workers. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science.*

<https://icjs.us/fighting-hospital-hardships-an-intervention-for-reducing-stress-in-hospital-workers/>

Lai, V. (2021, January 7). The Price of Postponement: The Link Between Procrastination and Sleep Deprivation in Postsecondary Students. *ICJS - International Collegiate Journal of Science.*

<https://icjs.us/the-price-of-postponement-the-link-between-procrastination-and-sleep-deprivation-in-postsecondary-students/>

SOFTWARE AND WEB-BASED SKILLS

Software:

Proficient in R, SPSS, Jamovi, JASP, Qualtrics, Zotero

Web:

Proficient in Canva, ResearchMatch, Google Workspace, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, OneNote)