

Valerie Jones Taylor

Candidate Statement

My first SPSP meeting was in 2004 (as a graduate student), and I have attended nearly every SPSP convention since. At these conferences, I have had the opportunity to engage with a range of early career to senior scholars, learn about new and exciting research, and construct grant theories and swamp stories with peers who would become lifelong collaborators and friends. Reuniting with colleagues each year reignites my intellectual excitement, deepens my professional ties, and reaffirms my belief in social and personality psychological science to inform our understanding of the psychological functioning and behavior of individuals and groups imbedded in cultures and societies. My faith in this science (and in our learning experiences) has led me to grapple with questions of identity, stereotyping, and prejudice in academic contexts and interracial interactions and investigate ways to improve race relations while amplifying the voices and concerns of historically marginalized groups.

I have several core values that I believe make me a strong candidate for the Science Programming member-at-large for SPSP. I sincerely believe in broadening participation in our field, and I have strategically worked towards this goal in my research, teaching, and mentorship. I value research that seeks to build and test theory and applied work that speaks to the lived experiences of diverse populations. I believe that we should care about and seek out diverse perspectives using traditional and non-traditional methodologies to rigorously and authentically examine phenomena. I value the effort and time it often takes to collect and publish data that includes non-traditional and/or historically marginalized populations. I believe in collaboration and stretching ourselves to integrate theory and ideas in novel ways with people and teams in our subfields and beyond. I believe that in this particular social and political moment in history, we (as a field) should seek opportunities to broadly publicize our work and be out front in disseminating these ideas to the world. Over the years, I have shared these values with my undergraduate and graduate collaborators and students and colleagues in varied collegiate spaces, from liberal arts undergraduate teaching institutions to research institutions. I have worked in my institutions' psychology department and affiliated programs (i.e., Africana Studies) to strategically plan courses, campus workshops, and speakers series and symposia that integrate these values. If selected, I would bring these values (and more!) with me in my role on the Science Programming committee to work alongside other SPSP committee members to continually improve our organization and field.