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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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For Immediate Release

September 3, 2020

Fordham Professor Eric C. Chen Receives Presidential Award from American Psychological Association

New York, NY - Psychological and Educational Services (PES) at Fordham University has received the distinguished Presidential Award from the American Psychological Association's (APA) Society of Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy (Division 49) for his outstanding contributions and exceptional service to the field. This is one of the few times a member of APA Division 49, which promotes the advancement of the field of group psychology and the modality of group psychotherapy through research, education and clinical practice, has been recognized with this honor.

Awarded Fellow status with the APA in 2016, Chen serves on the Board of Directors of APA's Division 49, where he was recently elected to serve an additional three-year term. He has served as associate editor of the society's journal and chairs the diversity committee. Chen is also a national leader in the field of cultural diversity in groups, as reflected in his professional presentations and publications. To date, he has mentored more than 30 doctoral dissertations.

Chen "has done an incredible job doing what group therapists do best, which is reaching out to people in the time of loss, pain and isolation to provide hope and connection," said Cheri Marmarosh, Ph.D., president of APA Division 49's Society of Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy in presenting the award at the association's annual meeting. "During these challenging last seven months, he wasted no time in reaching out to others. First, he organized a community check-in so some division members could feel less isolated and more supportive. Soon after, he reached out with the online resources for group therapists — nine pages, which he continually updates so that others have the resources that they need. After that, he organized a webinar with Dr. Aziza Belcher Platt, titled "Black lives matter in therapy groups too: 'How do therapists disarm racial micro-aggressions in groups?'" She added, "When it would be easy to give up, Eric works harder to reach out on the Board. His presence, his character and passion for social justice have made our division stronger in a very short amount of time."

“I am honored to receive this award,” said Chen. “The dual pandemics of coronavirus and racial injustice have presented us with transformational challenges and opportunities. In the spring 2020 semester, I was appointed as Interim PES Chair to work with my colleagues to accompany our students until the end of the semester. In these moments of darkness, it has also been a privilege for me to serve others outside Fordham through my roles and responsibilities in APA Division 49.”

“Eric Chen is (almost to a fault) one of the most generous faculty members in Fordham, said Akane Zusho, Ph.D., Interim Dean of the Fordham Graduate School of Education. “He truly personifies the Fordham dictum of service of others and fostering the intellectual, moral and religious development of its students, and preparing them for leadership in a global society.”

Chen received his bachelor’s degree in Chinese from National Taiwan Normal University and taught Chinese in a high school in Taiwan before coming to the U.S. to pursue his graduate degrees. He received his Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Arizona State University. Since joining Fordham in 1995, he has served as PES Division Chair (2003-06), Vice Chair (2019-20), and Interim Chair (2020), and as Training Director of the Ph.D. counseling psychology program (2010-12). He currently coordinates the mental health counseling master’s program.

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