



# EKU Department Psychology Newsletter

Eastern Kentucky  
University

**Spring 2020**

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## Longtime Department Chair Retires

It is with mixed emotions that the psychology department learned that our visionary leader of the past 17 years, Dr. Robert Brubaker, was announcing his retirement in June 2020.



Dr. Brubaker is a native New Yorker and has been a member of the ECU faculty for 36 years. He joined the ECU Department of Psychology in 1984 after receiving his M.A. in Experimental Psychology, his Ph.D. in Clinical-Community Psychology from University of South Florida, and completing a pre-doctoral internship at the University of Mississippi Medical Center/VA Medical Center. In his undergraduate studies, Dr. Brubaker completed a bachelor's degree in Music at Oklahoma City University.

His hard work and accomplishments have not gone unnoticed (he wouldn't let that happen!). Dr. Brubaker became the coordinator of ECU's M.S. program in Clinical Psychology in 1987 and founded the ECU Psychology Clinic in 1990. Since its founding, this clinic has served the mental health needs of members of the ECU and the larger county and regional community. The presence and growth of the clinic and Dr. Brubaker's foundational work with the ... pg. 2

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## COVID-19 Made It a Semester Like No Other

The spring 2020 semester had been progressing like any other up until spring break. It was during break that ECU announced that all classes would move online and that spring break would be lengthened another week for the transition to occur. Student and faculty alike were sent scrambling to adjust to the new modality of instruction.

Fortunately, the psychology department has a robust history of providing online instruction and even offering the psychology major totally online. This gave instructors in the department who had not taught online before a wealth of resources and colleagues to consult with as they made the transition. While it has been a challenge, the department and the hard working faculty have done their best to make sure the last half of the semester was as enriching as the beginning.



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## Cont. from p. 1—Retiring Department Chair

EKU Psychology Master's program enabled the EKU Psychology department to not only serve the community but also to successfully recruit clinical faculty and eventually to build our current PSY. D. program in clinical psychology.

As department chair, in collaboration with the department faculty and supportive administration, a few of Dr. Brubaker's accomplishments and innovations include spearheading and nurturing:

- B.S. Animal Studies Major
- M.S. in General Psychology
- Certificate in Mental Health/Deafness
- PASS program (Psychology Academic Support Services)
- Center for Applied Psychology
- Inner Space Camp for high school students
- All online e-campus undergraduate degree
- Online graduate degrees in Industrial Organizational and ABA specialty areas

Dr. Brubaker has served in a number of roles within the university and community at large. He served on the Steering Committee for the EKU Chairs Council for 13 years. He served for many years on the Public Education Committee for the Kentucky Chapter of the American Cancer Society.

He enjoyed devoting time and energy to the organizations that served his children including serving for 7 years on the Site Based Decision Making Council at Model Lab School and coaching 13 seasons of youth soccer for the Madison County Youth Soccer Association.

As a clinical psychologist, Dr. Brubaker maintained an active side practice. He was the Madison and Estill Counties Emergency Services provider for Bluegrass Comprehensive Care for 11 years and the Director of Clinical Services for Initiatives, Inc., a behavioral health/Employee assistance provider in Lexington, for 12 years.

Dr. Brubaker was the editor of the Journal of Psychological Practice and also served as an associate editor for the Journal of Alcohol Studies. He was a reviewer for the Surgeon General's report on the health consequences of smokeless tobacco use. He was also an influential early member of the Council of Applied Master's Programs in Psychology, an organization devoted to promoting practice rights for master's level clinicians in psychology. He was a board member of the Kentucky Psychological Association for years. The list of Dr. Brubaker's responsibilities and achievements could go on and on.

Continued on p. 9

## Osbaldiston Named Department Chair



Please join me for a moment in pondering Dr. Brubaker's contributions to the Department of Psychology, where he served for 37 years, including 17 years as Chair. When you think of all the emails that he must have answered...then you pause and realize that he was at EKU before there even was email.

I am honored and humbled to be the next Chair of the Department. Although we are starting off in unusual times, we have much to be grateful for. The University's mission and the Department's goals are as relevant and critical as ever before, and although we can't say for sure what the future holds, we certainly are equipped to rise and meet every challenge.

To me, the Department is special because of the people. Thank you to the students, alumni, staff, and faculty who have help create such a wonderful place. I look forward to working closely with you while you are on campus and hearing of your successes once you leave us!

## Sea World and Comparative Psychology

This semester, Dr. Radhika Makecha asked SeaWorld to Skype with her Comparative Psychology (PSY 333). Her class covers animal cognition and behavior, and part of this includes animal learning. Sea World San Antonio was



happy to Skype with her class and cover some of the basic principles of animal training from Shamu stadium. The students were able to witness whales engaging in

trained behavior as well as animal enrichment (anything that physically or mentally stimulates an animal), such as getting water sprayed in their mouth, an all-time favorite!

## Psychology/Animal Studies Colloquium

The Psychology Department hosted a colloquium geared towards Psychology and Animal Studies students in February regarding careers in both fields! Graduate students and alumni from both programs were on the panel and gave insights into their valuable experiences. A special thanks to Ines Elena (Experimental Psychology), Lauren Rice (School Psychology), Becca Banks (Primate Rescue Center), Julia Bellendir (I/O Psychology), and Shelby Smith (Clinical Psychology) for their participation on the panel, which was a huge success! Students learned valuable advice on pursuing careers as well as making it successfully through their undergraduate careers. Even faculty learned a few tips, like scheduling time for exercise.



## EKU Telepsychology Clinic Responds to the Pandemic

Dr. Michael McClellan founded the ECU Telepsychology Clinic in the spring of 2019 as a specialty clinic within our departmental Psychology Clinic. Since this specialty clinic was formed, doctoral students in the clinical psychology program have been providing mental health services by videoconference to the rural communities of Corbin and Manchester, Kentucky. That experience and familiarity with providing mental health services via telepsychology have proven invaluable during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, the vast majority of the clinical services provided in the Psychology Clinic were delivered face-to-face. In March, immediately after ECU and most of the country began shutting down services in an effort to implement social distancing, most mental health clinics began shutting down while they contemplated shifting services to telehealth. We were able to rapidly expand our capacity to provide services through the Telepsychology Clinic and provide continuity of care for our patients.

In the beginning, we prioritized high-risk patients in an effort to keep them safe. We are also one of the few academic programs in the country training doctoral students how to treat suicidal clients via telehealth. After our high-risk patients and clinicians became acclimated to the telehealth environment, we immediately began offering services to all of our remaining therapy patients and we were able to begin accepting new therapy clients. We are planning on fully integrating telehealth-based services into our Psychology Clinic after state and national social distancing measures are relaxed and face-to-face-delivered services are allowed to resume. This integration will continue to allow our clinical students to receive cutting edge training and provide more flexibility to our patients. Face-to-face-delivered services will never go away, but telehealth-based services provide an equivalent and desirable option when in-person services are not possible or when patients do not have the time to commute into our offices to receive care.



Photo: Brandon Creech, doctoral student, with Dr. McClellan pictured above.

## Department Professors Honored for Teaching and Research



Two of the psychology department's faculty were honored for their teaching or research at our college. Dr. Robert W. Mitchell received the CLASS Research and Creative Activity Award. The award is based upon both past accomplishments and evidence of continuing research at ECU. This is the third time he has won a research award at ECU. His research concerns a variety of topics, most related to human-animal interaction and animal cognition. He is the founder and coordinator of the Animal Studies program at ECU.

Dr. Matthew Winslow won the Outstanding Teaching & Mentoring Award for the 2019-2020 academic year in the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences. This award recognizes faculty who teach, mentor, and guide students both in and outside of the classroom.



Dr. Winslow emphasized his transition to ungrading in his application for the award. Ungrading is an approach that attempts to replace the focus on grades in most classes with a focus on learning. Ungrading requires all the feedback of traditional courses, but none of the grades. Students also tell Dr. Winslow what grade they deserve in his courses, and why they deserve those grades. Dr. Winslow also included a series of couplets in his application comparing traditional teaching techniques with the newer ungrading approach. For example, traditional approach instructors know best, students obey the instructor compared to the newer approach where students and instructors collaborate.

## Psychology Major Earns National Study Abroad Award



Being the first is a way of life for freshman psychology major Cassidy Foster. She became the first person in her family to attend college this past fall when she enrolled in ECU. Now, with the help of the Stemler Study Abroad Scholarship from Alpha Lambda Delta, an honor society for first-year students, she will be the first in her family to travel internationally.

"Earning this award means a lot to me because I will be the first person in my family to travel abroad," said Foster. "Without this award, there is a very low chance I'd be able to go on the study abroad trip."

The Harlan, Kentucky native, who is also earning a minor in women and gender studies, originally planned to travel to Italy this summer, but due to the pandemic, has postponed travel until Summer 2021. She plans to study "Enchanting Women of Ireland" with Dr. Lisa Day, director of women and gender studies at ECU.

Each year, Alpha Lambda Delta awards twenty Stemler Scholarships nationally in the amount of \$2,000. Earning the award places Foster in the top ten of dozens of applicants across the country. "After hearing about her life and goals, I knew (Foster) would be a strong competitor for the Stemler," said Dr. Travis Martin, faculty adviser for Alpha Lambda Delta. "Personally, I think she is a great example of why ECU is a school of opportunity."

Those goals include increasing access to mental health care in her rural hometown. After graduation, Foster hopes to return to Harlan and open a private counseling practice that caters to low-income families. In addition to her membership in Alpha Lambda Delta, Foster is active in the NOVA/TRIO Student Support Services Program and is working to become a peer mentor in a Foundations of Learning Course next semester. In addition to the Stemler award, she has also received a Nova Study Abroad Grant and the First-Year Outstanding Academic Achievement Award.

## Psychology Major Goes to Graduate School in Ireland

One of ECU's long-time motto is "Come Here, Go Anywhere". This is certainly true of Emma Moore, an ECU Psychology graduate of 2019. Emma has had an interest in international public health even as an undergraduate student at ECU. She was able to complete several study-abroad opportunities, including studying at the Mahidol University in Bangkok Thailand in 2016 and at the University of Ghana in 2018. She has also taken part in volunteer trips to the Philippines and Costa Rica. Even with all of her travels and time spent on studying-abroad, Emma had maintained an excellent academic record during her time at ECU. She was on the President's list and Dean's list multiple years, received the Regent's Scholarship, the Library Research Award, and the Outstanding Senior Award. Emma is now taking her talent abroad once again - this time to Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland. Emma has been accepted into the Master's Program in Public Health at the university, where she will be at the forefront of fighting global pandemic.



## I/O Graduate Becomes Award Winning Photographer



I-O program graduate Sarah Waiswa ('06) has worked as a photographer in Kampala, Uganda and Nairobi, Kenya. After earning her degree, she worked in the corporate world for many years before deciding to follow her passion and pursue photography full time. She was a second year fellow at the Goethe Institute's Photographers Master Class (Nairobi, Kenya 2017 and Johannesburg, South Africa 2018.) In 2015, she was awarded first place in the story and creative categories in the Uganda Press Photo Awards and second place in the Daily Life and portrait categories. In 2016 she was awarded the Discovery Award in Arles, France and in 2017 she was awarded the Gerald Kraak Award in Johannesburg, South Africa. In 2018, she was named a Canon Brand Ambassador and was selected for the World Press Photo 6x6 Africa Program. Through her work, Sarah desires to "illustrate the plight of various social issues on the continent, in a contemporary and non-traditional way," hoping "to help change the narrative on Africa by generating dialogue on developing issues as they happen." Her work can be viewed at <http://www.sarahwaiswa.com/>.

## Seniors Continue to Finish Research Despite Interruptions

Senior Thesis students have had more obstacles than most this semester in their quest to complete their posters and various manuscripts. The switch to a total online environment in the middle of the semester hit right when most students were at crucial stages in their research. Despite the additional challenges, the seniors have stepped up and have been able to deliver very strong research that is of high quality.

In addition to finishing their research online, most of the conferences that the students had planned to present their research at have been shifted to a virtual setting. Other students are expected to present at national conferences next academic year. Senior thesis projects show the excellence and strength of our ECU seniors, and will play an important role in showing of their talents when it comes to applying for graduate school and careers.



## The End of an Era – School Psychology Program Graduates Last Cohort

This month the ECU School Psychology program will graduate its last cohort. The decision to close down the accredited program was based on financial reasons when ECU was faced with large budget cuts from the state. The ECU school psychology program, in existence for about four decades, has a long history of graduating students who become amazing professionals. As expected, most of our graduates have become awesome school psychologists, with alumni also becoming program coordinators, special education directors, and even a superintendent. Several of our alumni have risen to state and national level notoriety as award winners and leaders in the field, including executive council members and presidents of school psychology professional organizations. Although you will find ECU school psychology graduates in nearly every county of Kentucky, ECU alumni also are scattered throughout the country serving children, youth, families, and schools in large urban districts, small rural districts, and through the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. Over the years, many children's lives have been positively impacted and many more will continue to be enhanced because of our incredible graduates. The ECU school psychology faculty look forward to hearing from our alumni from time to time about the exemplary work they are doing. Thanks for the wonderful ride. We are proud of the good work that you all are doing!



## I/O Program Update

The I-O Master's program is completing its third year as an online degree program. The program continues to experience tremendous growth, with over 60 students currently enrolled. With our courses 100% online, the program was able to carry on as normal with ECU's transition to online learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have now graduated 20 students, with another 12 scheduled to graduate this summer. As a culminating experience in the program, each student completes an independent applied consulting project for an organizational client. By August of 2020, 32 students will have completed capstone projects for organizations located throughout the country. These projects have ranged in scope from completing job analyses in order to create job descriptions, onboarding materials, and selection procedures, to conducting organizational needs assessments, and developing, delivering, and evaluating training interventions.



Photo: I-O graduate student Ashley Cauley was selected to carry the CLASS banner at the December 2019 graduation ceremony. Photobomb courtesy of Dr. Brubaker.

Several graduate and undergraduate I-O students are currently involved in the Center for Applied Psychology and Workforce Development (CApP; <https://psychology.eku.edu/center-applied-psychology-and-workforce-development-capp>). Tia Johnson (I-O), Bonnie Blair (I-O; B.S. in Psychology, 2019), Jessica Baker (I-O; B.S. in Psychology, 2019), Bailey Bird (B.S. in Psychology with a Psychology of the Workplace concentration in progress), and Lyndon Cornish (B.S. in Psychology in progress) are developing an online professional development workshop series for ECU Psychology majors. These workshops will provide additional career development resources for undergraduate psychology students.

In other good news, I-O master's student Danielle Wilson has been accepted into the I-O Ph.D. Program at the University of Houston. U of H was recently ranked by SIOP as 9th across I-O doctoral programs in both research and applied development opportunities for students. Danielle will be working with Dr. Vincent Ng, whose research focuses on character assessment and development, and in Dr. Paras Mehta's lab, focusing on applications of multilevel structural equations modeling in educational and organizational research.

## Clinical Program PsyQ update: Spring 2020

The 2019-2020 academic year has been a rewarding and challenging year for the Psy.D. program to say the least! In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program marches on and has adjusted fairly well to the “new normal.” Along with everyone else in the field, we have moved the delivery of our psychological training to remote and online platforms. We already incorporated telepsychology in our program and had a telehealth clinic embedded in the Psychology Clinic, but the COVID-19 pandemic has kicked all of this into overdrive. We have expanded those services in the Clinic and are prepared to offer all services using telehealth technology.

The faculty have also been busy sharing our expertise during the pandemic in various media outlets. In March, Dr. Theresa Botts appeared on a segment of *Kentucky Newsmakers* on WKYT (CBS-Lexington) to talk about mental health and coping with COVID-19. Similarly, Dr. Melinda Moore and Dr. Michael McClellan appeared on a segment of the Eastern Standard (WEKU) in March entitled *Mental Health in Eastern Kentucky* to the use of technology to deliver care to remote and rural areas. Dr. Moore and Dr. Botts did another segment on the Eastern Standard entitled *Psychological Chronicle of Life Under COVID -19*. Dr. Moore also served as the host of a diverse panel of faith leaders in a webinar to discuss many of these challenges of COVID-19. Similarly, Dr. Dustin Wygant did a Facebook Live event with Crossroads Church about the emotional challenges of dealing with COVID-19.



Photo: 3<sup>rd</sup> year students, Anna Stanton, Brandon Creech, and Sydney Camargo present their research at the 2019 APA Conference in Chicago, IL. (Faculty supervisors: Dr. Michael McClellan and Dr. Richard Osbaldiston)

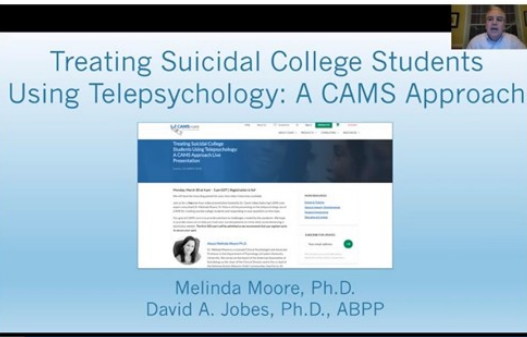


Photo: Sarah Critchfield (4th year), Allison Simpson (4th year), Haley Ingram (3rd year), and Kristen Gibson (3rd year) point to their names in the conference program with Dr. Bundy. They traveled to OCALICON, the annual conference of the Ohio Conference on Autism and Low Incidence Disabilities in Columbus, Ohio, to present their research on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Our biggest news came on May 5, 2020, when we were informed by the American Psychological Association that our program was granted **Full Accreditation**, with our next scheduled site visit in 2029! APA was sufficiently impressed with our program that they granted us the maximum amount of time (10 years) before we have to complete another self-study and site visit. We were previously awarded Accredited, On Contingency in 2018, but were able to move to Full Accreditation with our updated outcome data on program graduates.

The program continues to be full with over 50 students across 5 cohorts. We graduated 6 students in August of 2019. All are already employed in either full time positions or post-doctoral training. This February we matched all 12 of our fourth-year students to APA-Accredited internships! We placed students in Kentucky, Indiana, Colorado, Arkansas, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Alaska!

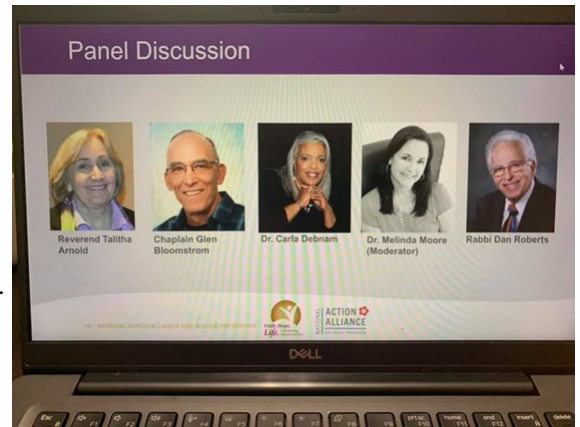
## Dr. Moore Presents at Suicide Treatment Trainings



Dr. Melinda Moore joined the creator of The Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS), Dr. David Jobes, on a webinar to international clinicians to highlight the use of CAMS Telepsychology in the ECU Psychology Clinic. The ECU Psychology Clinic, which provides this suicide-focused treatment framework, responded quickly to the university shutdown on March 17th and quickly moved toward delivering this care via telepsychology by March 24th to suicidal clinic clients. The ECU Clinical Psychology doctoral program trains doctoral students to treat clients in this approach and routinely holds CAMS Consultation group meetings. Dr. Michael McClellan founded the ECU Telepsychology Clinic within the ECU Psychology Clinic and this made moving suicide-focused care to this format possible.

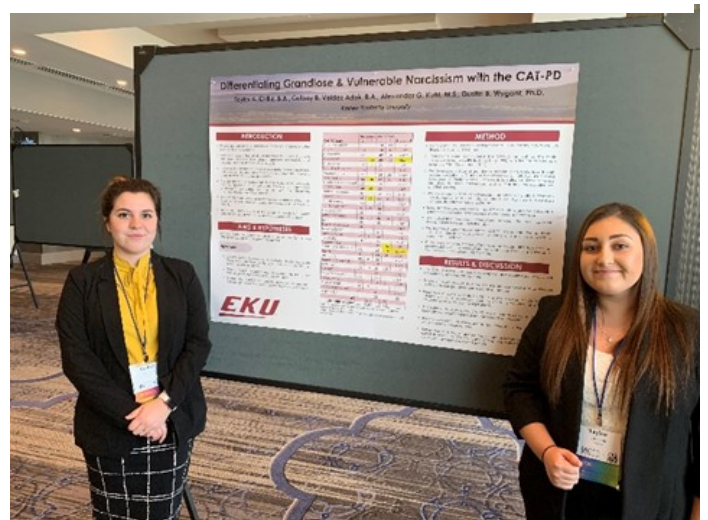


Dr. Melinda Moore moderated a panel of faith leaders for the National Action Alliance's Faith Communities Task Force webinar on Strengthening Faith Community Connectedness during the COVID-19 Pandemic on March 30, 2020.



## Dr. Wygant Takes Students to Personality Assessment Conference

In the first picture, 3<sup>rd</sup> year students Samantha England, Brian Keller, and Anna Stanton present their research on psychopathy with Dr. Wygant at the 2019 Annual Conference of the Society for Personality Assessment in New Orleans. In the second picture, 2<sup>nd</sup> year students Colbey Adair and Taylor Chille present their research on narcissism at the same conference.





## General Masters Psychology Program Update

The Experimental Psychology Masters program has had three recent graduates. Bailey McGuffin completed her thesis with Dr. Lawson, studying the "Impact of the Big 5 and sensation seeking personality traits on everyday deception." She is starting her Ph.D. in Neuroscience, Biomedical Sciences at the University of Alabama – Birmingham in the fall. Farshad Sadr, working with Dr. Gore, finished his thesis on "Self and communication in long-term romantic relationships." Emily Mink, working with Dr. Osbaldiston, completed her thesis on "Eating disorders, suicidality, and interpersonal theory of suicide."

## Applied Behavior Analysis Program

As a child, were you ever asked to take a time-out? Did you ever receive a bonus or special recognition at work for a job well done? You might be more familiar with the work conducted in ABA than you originally realized.

What exactly is ABA? ABA stands for applied behavioral analysis - a scientific field focused on helping people reach their outcomes through behavior change. Contemporary applied behavior analysts identify the desired outcomes of their clients and work to help clients reach these goals. This work is done, in collaboration with the client, through a variety of techniques for deeply understanding and changing behavior.

ABA is a valued and valuable career path that can be used to help people of all ages, cultures, and walks of life change their behavior to reach their goals and ultimately improve their quality of life. Analysts can work in a variety of settings since they can be found in any place that behavior changes are needed; many go on to work in hospitals, clinics, mental health and substance abuse facilities, and schools. Behavior analysts can also work in businesses to address employee and organizational behavior. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the field of applied behavioral analysis has a projected 23 percent growth rate from 2016 to 2026, an above average growth rate indicating ABA is to be a booming career field for years to come.

At EKU, our ABA course sequence has been verified by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). EKU's coursework, along with supervised fieldwork, prepares students to sit for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst exam. Upon passing the BCBA exam, individuals can pursue independent practice and insurance reimbursement for their services.

## Cont. from p. 2—Retiring Department Chair

But to most of his colleagues and former students, he's known simply as "Brubaker" and is in equal parts loved and harassed! As far as we know, he's the first department chair to declare an official second language in the department (French) and to force all office staff to adopt French names. (He taught in the Kentucky Institute for International Studies Paris program for 8 summers). He may also be the only department chair to encourage tribute in the form of baked goods and to establish a second office location at Purdy's coffee shop.

Bob is looking forward to a number of exciting pursuits in retirement including visiting his two sons (now grown up and working in Illinois and North Carolina) and other family. He will remain active in the International Urban Sketchers organization. He plans to continue his active sketching and painting activities, as well as his love of world travel. We congratulate him on his accomplishments and on the news of his retirement. We wish him well as he embarks on his new job: ensuring that he enjoys his retirement. The hours are flexible!

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Let's Hear from Alumni



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