

# CHRISTINA N. ARMENTA, PhD

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## Summary of Relevant Qualifications

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- Experience designing both single time-point and longitudinal studies.
- Experience conducting positive interventions in workplaces and high schools.
- Experience managing multiple research projects simultaneously.
- Experience and advanced training in research, experimental design, and statistical techniques using R and SPSS.
- Experience collaborating with both academic and nonacademic researchers, administrators, teachers, and students.
- Experience getting buy-in from nonacademics.

## Professional Experience

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### GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHER | UC RIVERSIDE

2012 - PRESENT

#### • Advisor: Sonja Lyubomirsky

- Designed and conducted both single time-point and longitudinal studies using an online survey engine (Qualtrics.com).
- Gained experience designing and conducting positive interventions in applied settings, including workplaces and high schools.
- Developed skills analyzing and interpreting data in R and SPSS.
- Managed multiple projects simultaneously.
- Presented research to different audiences, including undergraduates, graduate students, high school teachers, and professors
- Gained experience creating summaries for corporate partners.
- Main projects include:
  - *Gratitude and self-improvement.* Conducted a study exploring the relationship between expressing gratitude and self-improvement in several high schools in the United States and companies in France and Germany, as well as several countries in Africa. Presented the results of this study at a psychology conference in San Diego, CA. Also conducted a more time-intensive version of this study with 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders in four different high schools in the United States and presented preliminary results at a research convening in Philadelphia, PA and a poster at a psychology conference in San Antonio, TX.
  - *Expressing gratitude in the workplace.* Examined the immediate emotional experience of expressing gratitude in four different companies in France and presented a poster on the results of this study at a psychology conference in Long Beach, CA.
  - *Expressing different types of gratitude.* Currently exploring the immediate emotional experience of expressing gratitude towards the self versus others with working adults in the United States and Hungary, nursing students in Taiwan, and university students in India.
  - *Self-affirmation and humility.* Currently conducting a study with employees in France and Brazil, investigating whether affirming one's self-relevant values promotes a more secure, accepting identity, thus leading to greater happiness, positive affect, and humility.

- *Emotional experiences and behavioral intentions elicited by stories.* Currently conducting a study exploring which kinds of stories elicit positive emotions and move people to engage in positive behaviors.
- *Social interactions and competitiveness.* Currently conducting a study investigating the impact of competitiveness on social interactions using RFID badges.

**CONSULTANT | BRIGHTEN** **2017 – PRESENT**

- Currently working with a new social media app giving recommendations to modify existing features in order to maximize felt gratitude, life satisfaction, and happiness in users.

**CONSULTANT | SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY** **2016 – PRESENT**

- Currently working with a major social media company to design a study exploring the impact of expressing gratitude in users.

**CONSULTANT | JUMP ASSOCIATES** **2017**

- Worked with an innovation and strategy consulting firm providing expert advice and guidance to help inform a project for a major retailer.

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT | UC RIVERSIDE** **2011 - 2012**

- **Positive Activities and Well-being Lab, PI: Sonja Lyubomirsky**
- Designed studies using an online research-oriented tool (modernresearch.org).

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT | UC RIVERSIDE** **2011 - 2012**

- **Leadership Lab, PI: Thomas Sy**
- Brainstormed ideas and piloted priming studies to explore how individuals perceive followers and potentially influence how leaders perceive their subordinates.

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT | UC RIVERSIDE** **2012**

- **Life Events Lab, PI: Kate Sweeny**
- Acted as a confederate in a study examining how people deliver good and bad news and helped run a study simulating women’s physical examinations.

**Teaching Experience**

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**TEACHING ASSISTANT | UC RIVERSIDE**

- Psychology of Happiness and Virtue (with Dr. Katie Bao) **2012 Winter**
- Introductory Psychology (with Dr. Rebecca Richert) **2013 Summer**
- Industrial Organizational Psychology (with Dr. Thomas Sy) **2013 Fall**

**Research Interests**

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**USER/CONSUMER EXPERIENCE**

- How can the consumer’s overall experience and satisfaction with a product be improved and lead to the most joy and delight?
- How do changes in features or products effect the user’s overall experience and enjoyment with a product?
- Which changes should be made to ensure that the product, app, or website is as intuitive and delightful as possible?

**POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS IN APPLIED SETTINGS**

- Extending the generalizability of positive interventions (practicing gratitude, kindness, savoring) to applied settings, such as workplaces and schools.

- Exploring the impact of positive interventions on work/school-related outcomes, including grades, health, job performance, and job/school satisfaction.
- Understanding the effect of happiness on motivation, performance, job/school satisfaction, empowerment, and organizational citizenship behaviors.
- Exploring cultural differences in the success of positive interventions with employees in France, Germany, Spain, Brazil, Hungary, Taiwan, and Africa.

### **POSITIVE ACTIVITIES AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT**

- Exploring the relationship between positive activities and self-improvement efforts. Can expressing gratitude help bolster people's efforts towards self-improvement?
- How and why might different positive activities (e.g., expressing gratitude, committing kind acts) lead to greater or worse self-improvement?

### **Education**

<b>PH.D   UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE</b>	<b>2017</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Social/Personality Psychology           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Dissertation: The impact of expressing gratitude and self-improvement on adolescents.</li> <li>· Advisor: Sonja Lyubomirsky</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>M.A.   UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE</b>	<b>2014</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Social/Personality Psychology           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Thesis: The mixed emotional effects of expressing gratitude in the workplace.</li> <li>· Advisor: Sonja Lyubomirsky</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>B.A.   UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE</b>	<b>2012</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Psychology, <i>magna cum laude</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Minor: History</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

### **Awards**

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	<b>2014 - 2017</b>
Graduate Student Mentorship Program – two quarters full support	<b>2014</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Declined one quarter</li> </ul>	
Chancellor's Distinguished Fellowship	<b>2012 - 2013</b>
CCPOA Scholarship	<b>2008 - 2012</b>
AVID Dream Foundation	<b>2008</b>

### **Contributor to grant**

Gratitude as a trigger of self-improvement in adolescents.	<b>7-01-15 to 6-30-17</b>
Bridging Research and Practice: Character Lab Competition.	
Amount of Award: \$142,888. PI: Lyubomirsky, S.	

### **Publications**

- **Armenta, C. N., Jacobs Bao, K., Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2013).** Is lasting change possible? Lessons from the Hedonic Adaptation Prevention model. In Sheldon, K. M., & Lucas, R. E. (Eds.), *Can happiness change? Theories and evidence*. New York: Elsevier.
- **Armenta, C. N., Ruberton, P. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2015).** Psychology of subjective wellbeing. To appear in Wright, J. (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of social and behavioral sciences (Vol. 23, pp. 648-653)*. Oxford: Elsevier.

**Armenta, C. N.**, Fritz, M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (in press). Functions of positive emotions: Gratitude as a motivator of self-improvement and positive change. *Emotion Review*.

Layous, K., Sweeny, K., **Armenta, C. N.**, Na, S., Choi, I., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2017). The proximal experience of gratitude. *PLOS ONE*.

### **Submitted for Publication**

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Chancellor, J., Margolis, S. M., **Armenta, C. N.**, Zilca, R., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2016). *Hedonic adaptation to positive activities: The importance of variety*. Manuscript under review.

Fritz, M. M., **Armenta, C. N.**, Walsh, L. C., Lyubomirsky, S., (2017). *Gratitude Facilitates Healthy Eating Behavior in Adolescents and Young Adults*. Manuscript under review.

### **Popular Press**

**Armenta, C. N.** & Lyubomirsky, S. (2017, May 23). How gratitude motivates us to become better people. *Greater Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life*.

### **Other Works in Progress**

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Jacobs Bao, K., Boehm, J. K., **Armenta, C. N.**, & Lyubomirsky, S. (2016). *Using surprise to stay happier: Thwarting hedonic adaptation to positive events*. Manuscript under revision for resubmission.

### **Conference Presentations**

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#### **INVITED TALKS**

**Armenta, C. N.** (April, 2017). *Positive Activities in the Classroom: The Impact of Kindness and Gratitude in Adolescents*. Invited talk, Learning and Brain Conference, Arlington, VA.

**Armenta, C. N.** (July, 2016). *Gratitude as a Trigger of Self-Improvement in Adolescents*. Invited talk, Character Lab Research Convening, Philadelphia, PA.

#### **INVITED DISCUSSANT**

**Armenta, C. N. & Hunter, J. (March, 2017)**. *Future of Well-being*. Invited talk, University of California Well-Being Conference, Riverside, CA.

#### **PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

**Armenta, C. N.**, Fritz, M., Walsh, L., Lyubomirsky, S. (2017, January). *Gratitude and self-improvement in adolescents*. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychologists, San Antonio, TX.

**Armenta, C. N.**, Layous, K., Nelson, S. K., Chancellor, J., Lyubomirsky, S. (2016, January). *Gratitude and self-improvement in the workplace*. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychologists, San Diego, CA.

**Armenta, C. N.**, Layous, K., Nelson, S. K., Chancellor, J., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2015, February). *Expressing gratitude in the workplace*. Poster presented at the meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.

### **Membership**

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Society for Personality and Social Psychology  
Association for Psychological Science