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LINDENWOOD'S GUTIERREZ TO PARTAKE IN 2023 ICPS IN BELGIUM

March 2, 2023

Ximena Gutierrez was in awe. And for good reason.

A senior psychology major and social sciences minor at Lindenwood University, Gutierrez is part of a research team whose submission accepted for the 2023 International Convention of Psychological Science from March 9-11 in Brussels, Belgium.

Gutierrez and her team's research detailed gender identity and how it is perceived in numerous social settings was outlined, as well as how same-sex couples convey their gender and how they are understood by their peers.

Professor of Psychology and Sociology Dr. Stephanie Afful recently shared previous research on the subject, which sparked Gutierrez's interest in finding out more through her own research.

"As a member of the LGBTQ+ community and someone who does not fit the heteronormative gender roles I always question how my gender expression influences my everyday interactions, specifically in work, school, and sport settings," said Gutierrez, who is scheduled to graduate in Spring 2024. "Such a simple choice like what clothes to wear brought me anxiety for many of my younger years (and) I feared being judged and excluded for my rejection of gender norms."

Gutierrez said she used her own experience as a guide for understanding the phenomenon her research outlines, particularly with the types of questions that needed to be addressed.

"I had never been exposed to what truly went on behind published journal articles and the struggles each stage brought," she said.

Gutierrez said her group's research began with curating a question, then finding scales to use, and then brainstorming creative ways to get more participants to take the survey. All of which, she said, proved "much more complicated" than she thought.

"When first discussing the possibility of submitting to ICPS, we spoke of it hopefully but understood the difficulty behind conducting all the research and even analyzing the data by the end of October," Gutierrez said. "It was an eye-opening process, but I was very thankful to have had the support from Dr. Afful and my partner Evan Struempf through this very challenging and exciting research opportunity."

After graduating from Lindenwood next spring, Gutierrez plans to pursue her master's degree with hopes of becoming a "scholar."

For now, she's still in awe about her most recent accomplishment. The 2023 ICPS connects an international network of scientists and organizations to promote global interdisciplinary research, according to the Association for Psychological Science website. There also will be a keynote address, as well as Integrative Science Symposia.

"I'm still in shock that we will be traveling to Brussels to present," she said. "I keep telling myself that it's happening, but I don't think it will really hit me until I'm there."