Economists estimate that 47% of US jobs will be automated in the future. But which skills will be most relevant to staying employed as labor markets change? I address this question in several studies, including a large US representative sample (N = 346,660) that was tracked over time. The studies measure social background, intelligence, personality traits, vocational interests, and creativity, as well as their effects on job selection. For example, in two follow-ups (11 and 50 years later) I recorded occupations and coded their probability of being automated based on the skills required and technological developments. Regardless of social background, people who were more intelligent, more creative, more mature, sociable, interested in arts, sciences, and leadership at baseline, selected into jobs with a lower probability of automation later on. This highlights the importance of personality and creativity on occupational selection and in shaping the labor market.

Speaker Biography
Dr. Damian is an Assistant Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Houston. Her current research examines the role of diversifying experiences, life events, and personality by social context interactions on personality development, and downstream consequences for creativity, success, well-being, and workforce readiness. Dr. Damian has been awarded the Frank Barron Award for research on creativity by Division 10 of APA. She has published 30 works so far, including 19 journal articles in reputed international journals. Dr. Damian’s research has been covered in national and international media, such as Good Morning America, The Washington Post, Der Spiegel, and The Guardian.