

## **American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery**

### **2025 Integrated Health Section Executive Council Member-at-Large**

Dr. Valentina Ivezaj is Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine, Director of Obesity and Bariatric Research Initiatives and the Associate Director of Assessment Training and Research at the Yale Program for Obesity, Weight, and Eating Research (POWER). She is a licensed clinical psychologist whose work examines the intersection of obesity and eating disorders with a focus on metabolic and bariatric surgery. She independently and jointly contributes to federally-funded clinical research in this area. Her current NIH-funded trials examine behavioral and pharmacological treatments for disordered eating and/or weight concerns after metabolic and bariatric surgery. She also established a focus in novel areas including alcohol misuse and disordered eating following bariatric surgery. She currently serves as the co-director of the ASMBS Master's of Behavioral Health committee and has delivered multiple presentations at ASMBS.

The next phase of the metabolic and bariatric surgery field will include better understanding the utility and effectiveness of new anti-obesity medications as adjunctive therapy before and after surgery. Empirical evidence that guides when to intervene and which adjunctive treatments to use throughout the bariatric surgery process is needed. Thus, her work will continue to examine psychological treatments and novel pharmacotherapy, alone and in combination, to treat suboptimal outcomes and help inform personalized care models. Her long-term goals include advocating for improved care *following* surgery, including expanding care and outcomes beyond weight to include more emphasis on integrated health such as improved psychological care post-surgery. She also has a passion for mentoring and training the next generation of early-career colleagues in clinical research and assessment and treatment delivery focusing on the psychosocial needs of individuals undergoing metabolic and bariatric surgery.