

# The Owens Observer

Newsletter of the  
Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research

Fall 2022

[www.oibr.uga.edu](http://www.oibr.uga.edu)

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Welcome to the latest edition of the OIBR newsletter, newly christened "The Owens Observer." Inside these pages you'll find news about recent funding and awards, a welcome to our new affiliates and distinguished scholars, and announcement of our current class of Grant Development Program participants. In addition, we have several pieces of "news-that-you-can-use," including information about the new Data Management and Sharing Policy that will soon be affecting all federal grants. This edition of the newsletter also introduces a new column, Did You Know That?, which will feature a member of the pre- or post-award staff providing grant-related tips for faculty. In this edition, Paula McIntyre explains UGA's Reduction in Force (RIF) policy and the new post-doc appointment policy, as well as points you to a useful resource for understanding your Federal Financial Report. In this newsletter, you'll also get to meet new OIBR staff member Chris Thornton, who has already earned a reputation as a pre-award specialist extraordinaire. And, be sure to check out the feature story on Cindy Suveg and her new NIH project, as well as the Work Group Spotlight highlighting the Computational Social Science Work Group (CSSWG). Our affiliates and distinguished scholars have clearly been busy this fall! Hope to see you all at our annual meeting on December 7th.



## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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**New Grants & Awards**

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**Work Group Spotlight**

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**Tips from the Experts**

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**New Distinguished  
Scholars, Affiliates &  
GDPS**

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**NIH and NSF Policy  
Updates**

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**Funding News**

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**Institute News & Events**

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# CYNTHIA SUVEG, PH.D. PROFESSOR, PSYCHOLOGY



## GRANT TITLE:

A culturally informed model linking physiological stress regulation and behavioral and academic adjustment in Latinx children

## FUNDING SOURCE:

National Institutes of Health

## AWARD & AMOUNT:

R01 for \$3,117,133

## CO-INVESTIGATORS:

Margaret Caughy, Professor, HDFS  
Justin Lavner, Associate Professor, Psychology

*Interviewed by Andrea Horsman*

Approximately a decade ago, Dr. Cindy Suveg received pilot grant funds from OIBR as well as funds from a NIDA parent grant housed in the Georgia Center for Contextual Genetics and Prevention Science within the Center for Family Research. At that time, she wanted to learn more about how biological processes interact with environmental factors to influence development, and those pilot grants allowed her to do that and were foundational to the R01 that she was recently awarded.

From her pilot projects, Dr. Suveg knows the Latinx population in Athens and the surrounding communities is growing, yet Latinx families are underrepresented in research. This is especially problematic because Georgia is a new immigrant area, which means that local communities may be less likely to have the infrastructure in place to support Latinx families than communities in states where immigration is more established.

Dr. Suveg and her team are focusing specifically on Latinx families with young children and are using a cultural neurobiological approach to identify predictors of school readiness in Latinx children and the ways that parents support healthy development in their children. They will also examine factors that influence Latinx parents' own well-being.

The study will include assessments of biological, behavioral, and sociocultural environmental factors across individual (child), interpersonal (parent-child relationship), and societal (immigration stress) levels over a 3-year period. The team hopes that study findings will offer novel information about the ways that culture and biological processes intersect to influence the well-being of Latinx families.



Dr. Suveg is grateful for the opportunity to work with very inspiring mentors during her research career. Her graduate school mentor, Dr. Janice Zeman, and postdoc mentor, Dr. Phil Kendall, were genuinely enthusiastic about the research process and were committed to mentoring. She is very thankful to have had these mentors who encouraged her to think deeply about things and enjoy the research process.

Reflecting on her research, Dr. Suveg said, "Hearing directly from families about their experiences is the most rewarding." "I go into this work with hypotheses about things, but I always learn way more in the process than I knew when I started. This research also requires a very strong team to do it successfully, and I find it rewarding to work with collaborators both here at UGA and beyond, as well as a big team of outstanding students."

**More information about this research:**  
**Development & Psychopathology**  
**(DAP) Lab**



## New Face

Chris Thornton  
Grants Coordinator III

Chris has been at UGA since 2020, joining OIBR this past August. He executes all pre-award activities but primarily assists Principal Investigators with the development, coordination, and submission of proposals for extramural funding.

He was born and raised just down the road in Gainesville, GA. He received a Bachelor's degree from North Georgia College in Dahlonega, majoring in English with a minor in Biology. He went on to receive a Master's degree in English from the College of Charleston in Charleston, SC.

Chris loves being able to play a small role in making the cutting-edge research performed at UGA a reality. Prior to working at UGA, Chris worked for the Social Security Administration adjudicating disability claims. He says, "To be able to see first-hand and help to make a reality some of the research ideas that have a direct impact on the people that I previously worked with is very cool."

He is a die-hard Dawgs and Atlanta Braves fan, rarely missing any games. He is also a voracious reader and cinephile (primarily horror, sci-fi, and fantasy). More importantly, he has three cats, Indigo, Ivy, and Quinn, who are all very spoiled!

## "Did you know?" Tips from the Experts



- The University of Georgia **Reduction in Force (RIF)** Policy and procedures have been revised. Departments are no longer required to complete a RIF Request Form to terminate positions funded by research or sponsored program financial sources.
- The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs has revised its **policy and guidelines for postdoc appointments**. PIs now have two distinct options for postdoc appointments: defined-term and open-term. The defined-term option requires an up-front defined end date and formal continuation letters, and has less notice requirement at the time of separation, while the open-term option does not require a defined end date or formal continuation letters, but requires additional notice at termination.
- Have you received an email with your project's annual **Federal Financial Report**? Here is a [link](#) to a helpful resource that outlines what this report is and its importance.

*Please contact your OIBR grant manager with any questions you may have about any of this information.*

# Congratulations to our newest Distinguished Scholars

The title "OIBR Distinguished Scholar" is reserved for faculty who have major external grant projects managed by OIBR and who are nationally recognized in their field. Nomination by an active Distinguished Scholar and approval of the OIBR executive committee is required.



**Dr. Rebecca Nesbit**  
Associate Professor,  
Public Administration &  
Policy



**Dr. Cynthia Suveg**  
Professor,  
Psychology







# OIBR WORKGROUP SPOTLIGHT

## Computational Social Science Workgroup

Directed by Dr. Dawn T. Robinson, Sociology, and Dr. Xiaobai (Angela) Yao, Geography

Traditional social and behavioral science efforts focus on individual, small group, or aggregated data on social processes to create “manageable” data sets. This has led to robust methods for the examination of observations and self-reported data in the field and laboratory and many important scientific insights. New technologies are providing massive, complex, comprehensive, more rapidly available data sets, creating new analytic and conceptual challenges for the Social and Behavioral Sciences.

As a result of many discussions about raising the profile of big data and social informatics research within social sciences at UGA, the social science department heads in Franklin College and the director of the Owens Institute for Behavioral Research, launched the Computational Social Science workgroup (CSSWG) in the Fall of 2014 as a workgroup within OIBR.

Dramatic advances in the ability to utilize data sources such as video surveillance, e-mail conversations, social media exchanges, geolocation information, and other products of an increasingly wired world, provide the potential for examination of social processes moment-by-moment, over expanses of time and space. These exciting new opportunities can facilitate new insights into the structure and content of relationships of interest to researchers. They provide new possibilities for tracking the social underpinnings of both behavioral problems as well as chronic and infectious diseases. In addition, entirely new social forces are emerging that require examination. Modern digital connections and divides represent new patterns of large-scale social behavior that are, as yet, poorly understood.

CSSWG welcomes scholars across the disciplines who are focused on the challenges and opportunities afforded by the increasing availability of massive quantities of complex, digital data about human activity over time and place as well as scholars using mathematical models and computer simulations to theorize about social behavior. Both of these forms of “computational social science” are core to the mission of this work group.

The workgroup annually hosts distinguished speakers and workshops to promote interdisciplinary interaction and collaboration among faculty and graduate students interested in formal and analytic approaches to modeling social processes and phenomena. Current work group members include social and behavioral science faculty from fifteen units across UGA.

If you would like more information about CSSWG, contact Dawn Robinson at [sodawn@uga.edu](mailto:sodawn@uga.edu).

# Class of 2022-2024 Grant Development Program Participants



**Dr. Brian Bauer**

Assistant Professor  
Psychology

Research Interests:  
Suicide; behavioral economics;  
decisions



**Dr. M. Rifat Haider**

Assistant Professor  
Health Policy & Management

Research Interests:  
HIV/AIDS; substance abuse;  
maternal & child health



**Dr. Glenna Read**

Assistant Professor  
Advertising & Public Relations

Research Interests:  
Video surveillance; media  
effects; social representation &  
message processing; decision-  
making



**Dr. Sachiko Terui**

Assistant Professor  
Communication Studies

Research Interests:  
Health communication;  
intercultural communication;  
interpersonal communication;  
health disparities

## Congratulations to Upcoming Grant Development Program Graduates

*Successful completion of the program requires submitting an extramural grant proposal through the Institute by the end of the program.*



**Dr. Drew Abney**

Psychology  
Assistant Professor  
GDP Class of 2020-2022

*Submitted Proposal:*  
James S. McDonnell Foundation  
"Sensorimotor cascades: Integrating real-time movement dynamics during the sleep and awake periods of human infants."



**Dr. Sycarah Fisher**

Educational Psychology  
Associate Professor  
GDP Class of 2020-2022

*Submitted Proposal:*  
National Institutes of Health  
"Implementing evidence-based drug use interventions with minoritized youth in high-stress schools."

# Funding News

Congratulations to our Distinguished Scholars and Affiliates who have recently received research project funding.



Dr. Drew Abney (Psychology), Affiliate, received an award from the James S. McDonnell Foundation for his project entitled, "Sensorimotor cascades: Integrating real-time movement dynamics during the sleep and awake periods of human infants" in the amount of \$249,781. This project leverages the PI's scientific expertise in quantifying the dynamics of behavior throughout multiple timescales of development, emerging wearable sensor technologies with rigorous computational applications, and a key team of collaborators to explore the relationships between dynamic movement patterns during sleep periods and profiles of naturalistic sensorimotor behaviors during awake periods. Understanding how the spatiotemporal organization of body movements during sleep periods is associated with naturalistic sensorimotor behaviors during awake periods can pave the way for a richer, more complete understanding of sensorimotor development. Project period: 10/1/2022 - 9/30/2026



Dr. Brett Clementz (Psychology), and Co-I Dr. Jennifer McDowell (Psychology), both Distinguished Scholars, received a R01 award from NIH for their project entitled, "5/5 - Biomarkers/Biotypes, Course of Early Psychosis and Specialty Services (BICEPS)" in the amount of \$1,359,000. This project characterizes the trajectories of outcome in early course psychotic disorders treated in coordinated specialty care programs and seeks to identify clinical and biological features, and biological subtypes of psychotic disorders that may help predict outcome. Project period: 8/15/2022 - 6/30/2027



Dr. Erin Dolan (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology), Distinguished Scholar, received a R01 award from NIH for her project entitled, "The IMPACT Study: Improving Mentorship Practice through Attributions and Conflict Training" in the amount of \$1,390,943. Biomedical research is the backbone of essential advances fueling public health and well-being, but graduate training in biomedical research is plagued by high attrition and deteriorating student well-being. The present research will address a critical source of influence on these issues, particularly among students who are underrepresented in biomedical fields: the mentoring relationships that biomedical graduate students experience with their research advisors. Dr. Dolan will propose to design and experimentally test the effectiveness of a low-touch and high-touch intervention that equips research advisors with the motivation and conflict management skills needed to improve their mentoring relationships and examine how these interventions affect mentoring relationships and students' career-related outcomes. Project period: 9/10/2022 - 6/30/2027



Dr. Paula Lemons (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology), Distinguished Scholar, received an award from NSF for her project entitled, "Collaborative Research: Defining functions of an essential, conserved protein that uniquely links the mitochondrial matrix with the cytoplasm" in the amount of \$327,027. This proposal leverages the power of evolutionary and functional studies in two divergent plants, the flowering plant *Arabidopsis thaliana* and the bryophyte *Physcomitrium patens*, to understand how the AAA+ and ATAD3-N domains contribute to the essential roles of ATAD3. Additionally, a major broader impact of the project will engage students from groups underrepresented in STEM in a two-year program to foster STEM workforce diversity. Project period: 8/15/2022 - 7/31/2026

# Funding News Continued



**Dr. Rebecca Nesbit** (Public Administration & Policy), Distinguished Scholar, received an award from AmeriCorps for her project "Examining the Influence of Civic Infrastructure on Rural/Urban Volunteering and Civic Engagement" in the amount of \$297,488. This project explores the institutional, place-based determinants of differences in volunteering and civic engagement behaviors between rural and urban respondents using the confidential Current Population Survey (CPS) Volunteering Supplement, merged with count-level administrative records describing the local civic infrastructure (e.g., number of nonprofits, presence of community foundations). The research will make a significant contribution to the scholarship of volunteerism and civic engagement and professional discussions about building engaged communities by exploring the institutional community-level drivers and inhibitors of volunteering and civic engagement. Project period: 10/1/2022 - 9/30/2025



**Dr. Cynthia Suveg** (Psychology), Distinguished Scholar, received a R01 award from NIH for her project entitled, "A culturally informed model linking physiological stress regulation and behavioral and academic adjustment in Latinx children" in the amount of \$3,117,133. This proposal examines positive parenting as a buffer of the link between child physiological stress regulation and behavioral and academic adjustment during early childhood. The results will identify family and contextual factors that can be leveraged into culturally informed intervention programming to reduce disparities and improve the overall well-being of Latinx families. Project period: 8/1/2022 - 7/31/2027



**Dr. Larry Sweet** (Psychology), and **Dr. Jiaying Liu** (Communication Studies), MPI, both Distinguished Scholars, received a R21 award from NIH for their project entitled, "A neuroimaging approach to advance mechanistic understanding of tobacco use escalation risk among young adult African American vapers" in the amount of \$415,250. This research is expected to yield novel neurobehavioral markers of tobacco use escalation risk among rural young adult African American vapers and advance understanding of how these neuromarkers are impacted by social disadvantages and chronic stressors that are experienced in this population. Findings are expected to reveal neurocognitive mechanisms that underlie tobacco use trajectories and racial disparities in tobacco harm. The study is designed to suggest actionable strategies for prevention scientists and regulators to address a critical need in this vulnerable population. Project period: 6/1/2022 - 5/31/2024



## Policy Updates

Effective January 25, 2023, NIH will be implementing their updated grant application forms and instructions. The most substantive change that will affect investigators is to their Data Management and Sharing (DMS) Policy, which stems in part from the Biden Administration's recent requirement for equitable access to federally funded research. As of January 25, a Data Management and Sharing Plan must be included with every application for funding that will generate scientific data. This document will outline how the scientific data and any accompanying metadata will be managed and shared, taking into account any potential restrictions or limitations. Reviewers will not see this plan unless it is integral to the proposed project. Though specific instructions have not yet been released, related costs will now be allowed as part of both modular and detailed budgets, with associated justifications required. You can find more information about the pending changes [here](#).

If you have questions about sponsor policy changes, let [Kim Cherewick](#) or [Chris Thornton](#) know! Updated materials or resources will be sent out as they become available.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE  
**2023**  
APS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT  
AWARD RECIPIENTS

## Gene Brody receives Lifetime Achievement Award

The Association for Psychological Science has awarded the 2023 James McKeen Cattell Fellow award to OIBR Distinguished Scholar Dr. Gene Brody. This award recognizes APS members for a lifetime of outstanding contributions to the area of applied psychological research. Recipients must be APS members whose research addresses a critical problem in society at large.

Gene Brody is a Regents' Professor in the Center for Family Research at the University of Georgia. His work has changed the landscape of developmental, health, and prevention science by demonstrating its potential for narrowing social and racial disparities in health and well-being. In addition, his prospective investigations of resilience among Black Americans have set a standard for conducting research with historically underrepresented populations that focuses on strengths rather than deficits and uses ecologically and culturally sensitive methods. Brody's renowned work in the development of family-centered prevention programs has been shown to deter youth engagement in risky activities and promote mental and physical health. He has helped many youths in their journey through adolescence by identifying factors in support networks that buffer them from the consequences of chronic environmental stress. No less notable are his theoretical contributions to psychology, wherein he demonstrated how resilience is only "skin-deep" for some Black youth.

## Owens Institute for Behavioral Research Annual Meeting

December 7th, 3:00-5:00pm  
Baldwin Hall  
Pinnacle Room #480  
Parking available at  
North Campus Parking Deck

[RSVP HERE](#)  
by [11/30/22](#)



Please join us for mingling,  
hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, awards and  
our annual State of the Institute  
presentation



## Policy Updates



NSF has announced that as of October 2023, all **Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support** documents will be required to be created utilizing SciENCv. In keeping with their fellow agency, NIH ultimately plans to have all Biographical Sketches and Other Support documents be created in the same manner. For NIH applications, only the Biographical Sketch function is currently available, but they are actively working with SciENCv to add the Other Support functionality to allow investigators to both create and certify within the platform. If you are unfamiliar with the website, SciENCv allows you to login using your NIH or NSF credentials, enter all of your relevant information just once, and then download a compliant Biographical Sketch whenever needed. The platform also allows any account holder to delegate access to assist with the preparation of these documents. SciENCv can be found [here](#).

If you would like a walk-through on how to use SciENCv, let [Kim Cherewick](#) or [Chris Thornton](#) know! Updated materials or resources will be sent out as they become available.



# Welcome New OIBR Affiliates



**Dr. Doris Acheme**

Assistant Professor  
Communication Studies  
*Research Interests:* Intergroup and intercultural communication; social identity negotiation; language attitudes; racial ideologies



**Dr. Stephen Mihm**

Professor  
History  
*Research Interests:* Economic history; history of organizations; communications



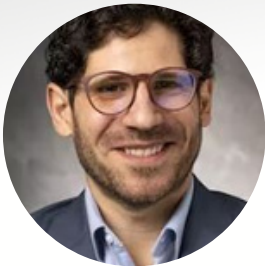
**Dr. Christina Boyd**

Professor  
Political Science  
*Research Interests:* Judicial behavior; gender and racial diversity; political institutions



**Dr. Niyantri Ravindran**

Assistant Professor  
Human Development & Family Science  
*Research Interests:* Parent-child interactions; emotion socialization; emotion regulation; physiological responses to stress



**Dr. Giovanni Dazzo**

Assistant Professor  
Lifelong Education, Administration, & Policy  
*Research Interests:* Restorative forms of inquiry; intersection of validity & ethics; equitable access & participation in research; community-informed policymaking



**Dr. Suhang Song**

Assistant Professor  
Health Policy & Management  
*Research Interests:* Health disparities; health policy; health economics; non-communicable diseases; cognitive aging



**Dr. Denis Dumas**

Associate Professor  
Educational Psychology  
*Research Interests:* Creativity; psychometrics; reasoning; test development; learning



**Dr. Jing Xu**

Assistant Professor  
Kinesiology  
*Research Interests:* Skill learning; human dexterity; cognition; motor control; neurorehabilitation



**Dr. Thania Galvan**

Assistant Professor  
Psychology  
*Research Interests:* Mental health disparities; Latinx youth and families; Latinx Immigrants; Traumatic Stress; Risk and Resilience Pathways



## 2023 Gene Brody Symposium



**Adriana Galván, PhD**  
Professor of Psychology at UCLA

*She directs the Developmental Neuroscience Laboratory, where the focus of her research is on characterizing the neural mechanisms underlying adolescent behavior with an eye towards informing policy (e.g. juvenile justice).*

The Gene Brody Symposium honors Regents Professor and the Center for Family Research Co-Director Gene Brody



**Center for Family Research**  
*Owens Institute for Behavioral Research*  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

### A conversation with **Adriana Galván**

What we are learning about the adolescent brain and how to support youth through this development period

**Save the Date**  
**FEBRUARY 9, 2023**  
**LIVE at 2pm EST**

Watch it here:



Have a question for Dr. Galván?  
Send it to [symposium@uga.edu](mailto:symposium@uga.edu) ahead of time or during the broadcast.

## Have something to share?

Do you have an interesting project that you are working on? Did you recently publish your work? Did you receive an award? Let us help promote you and your research. We

love sharing the accomplishments and successes of our faculty!

Please contact [Andrea Horsman](#) with anything that you would like to share.

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