



UNIVERSITY OF  
**GEORGIA**

Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research

## The Owens Observer

Newsletter of the  
Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research

### August 14, 2025

We're kicking off the semester with an information-packed issue of the OIBR newsletter, and I'm excited to share a few highlights. On **September 9**, we'll host a **speed networking event** open to all OIBR faculty—be sure to register soon to secure your spot. Our **annual meeting will take place on October 15** over lunch in the Rialto Room at the Hotel Indigo; please save the date and watch your email for the invitation and RSVP request.

This issue also introduces our new **Grant Development Program** participants and welcomes **Sierra Carter** as the new Associate Director of the Center for Family Research. You'll also find news of recent grant awards, faculty research highlights, and much more. I hope that everyone has a great fall semester!

**Jody Clay-Warner**  
Director

# Upcoming Events

JOIN US - Limited to 30 Participants

2025



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## OWENS INSTITUTE FOR BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

### SPEED NETWORKING

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>>>> >>>> Tuesday Sept. 9, 2025 

3:30 pm   
Networking starts promptly at 3:45pm

Miller Learning Center, Reading Room #303 

[RSVP NOW](#)

[oibr@uga.edu/events](mailto:oibr@uga.edu/events) 

OWENS INSTITUTE FOR BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER  
15  
2025

Hotel Indigo - Rialto Room  
12:00pm - 1:30pm

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

# SAVE THE DATE

# Funding News

Congratulations to our Distinguished Scholars, Affiliate and Grant Development Program graduates who have recently received research project funding



Dr. **Drew Abney** (Psychology), Distinguished Scholar, received a NSF grant for the project titled "Collaborative Research: A longitudinal investigation of caregiving, everyday motor experiences, and motor skill development using wearable sensing" in the amount of \$21,527. The proposed project links infants' motor experiences- the motor behaviors infants practice in daily life- to motor development- their mastery of new motor skills- and understand how infants and caregivers co-determine motor experiences in daily life. Project period: 10/1/2025-9/30/2028



Dr. **Rifat Haider** (Health Policy & Management), Distinguished Scholar, received a National Institutes of Health award titled "Characterizing chemsex patterns and adoption of harm reduction measures among men in the South" in the amount of \$405,490. This study will provide preliminary data on the patterns of chemsex; and psychosocial and other drivers of chemsex, PrEP, and condom use among men in Georgia, a Southern state with high HIV burden. The study will also evaluate the effectiveness of the EMA approach for tracking chemsex practice among men. Co-Investigators: **Nathan Hansen**, Health Promotion & Behavior, and **Jeremy Gibbs**, School of Social Work. Project period: 7/15/2025-6/30/2027



Dr. **Soroya McFarlane** (Communication Studies), Affiliate, received a National Institutes of Health AIM-AHEAD subaward via the University of North Texas for the project "THRIVE AI: Community-Engaged AI for Health" in the amount of \$99,327. The purpose and role of the PAIR Project is to establish the THRIVE Community-engaged AI Research Lab at the University of Georgia to improve maternal health. Year 1 focuses on capacity building, formative research, and development of a research proposal for Year 2. Co-Principal Investigator: **Ishtiaque Fazlul**, Health Policy & Management. Project period: 5/1/2025-4/30/2026

# Research Spotlight

## UGA Researcher Plays Key Role in Landmark International Study Aimed at Preventing Schizophrenia



[Learn More](#)

## Faculty News

### A New Associate Director for the Center for Family Research



Dr. **Sierra Carter**, has joined the faculty of UGA's Department of Psychology and will become the next associate director of the [Center for Family Research](#).

Carter is a leader in studying health disparities and how the effects of discrimination and racism play out in the health of Black Americans. Read more about Dr. Carter in this [Scholar Spotlight](#).

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### Welcome Class of 2025–2027 Grant Development Program Participants



**Niyong Li, Ph.D., MSc**

Assistant Professor, Clinical & Administrative  
Pharmacy

Research Interests: Disparities in access to new  
Alzheimer's therapies, and Health disparities



**Ashley Sanders, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, Psychology

Research Interests: Socioeconomic inequity, Childhood stressors, Adaptive skills, Neuro development, Neuroimaging, and Public health policies



**Eunhae Shin, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, Health Policy & Management

Research Interests: Health economics, Health policy, Healthcare delivery, and Health services research



**Liyuan (Leah) Wang, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, Health Promotion & Behavior

Research Interests: Technology-enabled interventions, Health disparities, Youth behavior, and Early development



**Lorenzo Villa Zapata, Ph.D., Pharm.D.**

Assistant Professor, Clinical & Administrative Pharmacy

Research Interests: Cancer care, Data methods, Health services research, Survey data, and Care delivery

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## Welcome New Affiliates

**Sharon Kane**, Assistant Professor, Financial Planning, Housing & Consumer Economics

**Jessica Flannery**, Assistant Professor, Psychology

## Opportunities

Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis



### **CARMA**

This is just a friendly reminder that the [Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis \(CARMA\)](#) is an incredibly valuable resource available to you via OIBR's sponsorship of UGA's institutional membership. As a UGA faculty member, you can set up a profile, sign up for programs and courses, and request to receive their newsletter. Please contact Kim Cherewick at [ksilvis@uga.edu](mailto:ksilvis@uga.edu) with any questions.

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## OIBR Pivot Funds 2026

The OIBR Pivot Fund 2026 allows researchers to continue to conduct important work, while responding to the current funding climate. Funds can be used to collect data, purchase data sets or equipment, or for other needs, as identified by the investigator. Funds cannot be used for conference travel or personnel funding (faculty or student). The budget cannot exceed \$5,000.

The application should contain: 1) one paragraph describing your current research; 2) one to two sentences explaining how you are pivoting your research; 3) one page describing the project for which you are seeking funding, your qualifications for conducting the proposed research, and intended external grant mechanism(s); 4) budget, budget justification, and timeline; and 5) a current CV.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the OIBR Leadership Team. Send applications (as a single PDF in the order listed above) to [oibr@uga.edu](mailto:oibr@uga.edu), with the subject line "Pivot Funds."

## Policy Updates

### NIH tightens rules on AI use and sets new limits on proposal submissions

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has issued Notice [NOT-OD-25-132](#) outlining new guidance on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in research applications. NIH will not consider applications—or sections of applications—substantially developed by AI to be original work of the applicant.

Effective for proposals received on or after **September 25, 2025**, NIH will also limit each Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD) or Multiple PI to no more than six new, renewal, resubmission, or revision applications per calendar year. Collaborative submissions where the faculty member is listed as a co-investigator or other senior/key personnel are not affected by this limit.

NIH notes that in 2024, only 1.3% of applicants exceeded six PI/PD applications. Faculty are encouraged to carefully plan proposal roles in light of these changes.

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## NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRP) Application Cycle Opens on September 1

NIH will begin accepting applications for the Extramural Loan Repayment Program (LRP) on September 1. Awardees can receive up to **\$100,000** in qualified educational debt repayment with a two-year award.

To learn more about eligibility requirements, application dates, and the benefits of receiving an LRP award, visit the [LRP website](#), check out their [overview video](#), and attend one of their upcoming events:

- October 7 – LRP Technical Assistance Webinar
- November 6 – LRP Ask Me Anything Session

**Deadline to apply is November 20, 2025.**

## OIBR News

### Online Open Office Hours

**Kim Cherewick**, Assistant Director, and **Jenny Claire Carey**, Post Award Operations Manager, are hosting weekly office hours **starting on September 8th**. Drop in via Zoom from **10-11am every Monday** to ask any grant-related questions. Contact Kim at [ksilvis@uga.edu](mailto:ksilvis@uga.edu) to receive the meeting link or with any questions.



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*Have news? Please send kudos, announcements or other items to Andrea Horsman at [ahorsman@uga.edu](mailto:ahorsman@uga.edu). Distribution occurs monthly on the second Monday of the month. The deadline for submissions is the first Wednesday.*



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