

Fall 2023

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Fall semester is almost behind us and, with it, another successful season for OIBR faculty. In the last six months, OIBR has received a record-breaking 16 funded awards. These awards, featured in this edition of the Owens Observer, run the gamut from pilot grants and NIH ROIs to NSF post-doctoral program awards and large grants from the Department of Defense. These awards are a significant accomplishment for our faculty and allow them to move their research forward in innovative ways. Please take a few minutes to read about the exciting work that these faculty are doing. I also invite you to read **Andrea Horsman's** interview with **Jennifer McDowell**, who came on board as OIBR Associate Director on January 1 and is already an invaluable member of the OIBR team. And be sure to check out **Paula McIntyre's** "Tips from the Experts" column, in which she explains the UGA motor vehicle use policy and reminds us about the new Individual Investigator Report, which allows for individual tracking of faculty credit associated with external awards. Finally, I am happy to announce the five newest graduates of the OIBR Grant Development Program (**Daniel Jung, Jessica Knight, Soroya McFarlane, Ivanka Pjesivac, and Emily Rosenzweig**), as well as to welcome the 2023-2025 cohort of GDP participants (**Michael Barger, Erin Hamel, Pablo Lapegna, Niyantri Ravindran, and Melissa Robertson**). I hope that you will join us at the OIBR annual meeting on December 5th, where the GDP graduates and members of the new GDP cohort will be introduced. At the annual meeting we will also be announcing the recipients of the Rising Star Award, Eby Mentoring Award, and the OIBR Service Award, as well as providing you all with an update on OIBR activities while enjoying hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. See you there!



## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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**Research**

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**Distinguished Scholars,  
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# JENNIFER McDOWELL, PH.D. PROFESSOR, PSYCHOLOGY & ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OIBR



*Interviewed by Andrea Horsman*

Dr. Jennifer McDowell's doctoral training is from University of California, San Diego (UCSD) – MA and PhD in Experimental Psychology. She joined UGA in 2002 and has been affiliated with the Owens Institute since 2015. She is currently a Professor in Psychology.

When asked how she became interested in Psychology, Jennifer said her mom was a school counselor, so perhaps being inundated with psychological thinking was one reason. As an undergraduate at Swarthmore College, she had an inspiring professor who taught Physiological Psychology, Dr. Allen Schneider. Jennifer still strives to reach his level as a teacher and a mentor, and they remain in touch.

Since 2001, Jennifer has been a PI or co-PI on externally funded grants. Her research focuses on behavioral and neural correlates of cognitive control and how they differ under conditions of health and disease. She uses behavioral measures (including infra-red eye tracking) and multi-modal neuroimaging techniques, mostly magnetic resonance imaging that allows her to evaluate brain structure, function, and connectivity. She studies populations that have known challenges with cognitive control, primarily people with psychotic disorders of various types (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder). Jennifer also studies populations that may be at risk for changes in cognitive control (hypertension, overweight, obesity).

Some of her current research involves understanding psychosis, and improving diagnosis and treatment. The work is part of the "B-SNIP (Bipolar Schizophrenia Network on Intermediate Phenotypes)" consortium that includes 4 other sites located at academic medical centers (Harvard, University of Chicago, UT Southwestern and Yale), funded by several NIH grants.

Jennifer also has a long-standing collaboration with colleagues at Medical College of Georgia/Augusta University investigating the impact of hypertension on cognition and neural structure, function, and connectivity among participants in the 25-year longitudinal Georgia Stress and Heart Study (funded by NIH).

When asked about her vision for her research, Dr. McDowell said, "A psychotic disorder such as schizophrenia can be devastating. There are medications that treat the symptoms, but there are a proportion of people who aren't successfully treated. One seemingly achievable goal in this research area is to improve treatment – either by creating better medications or determining a better way of identifying who will respond to which medications. The B-SNIP Consortium is

currently conducting a couple of studies towards this end, one of which is a clinical trial of a medication comparison. Hopefully we are learning to predict who will respond best to what type treatments."

"One of the things that we noticed in our studies across the years is that there are individuals across all walks of life who have challenges with cognitive control. Most families have a member who has difficulty arriving at class on time and with the correct materials, or who doesn't remember to pay their bills. I'm interested in ways of improving cognitive control through behaviors. The brain is plastic, it continually changes in response to input, and experience. I am particularly interested in behavioral interventions that could enhance cognitive control, perhaps via exposure to stimuli, or through extensive practice, which would have broader application," she said.

When asked what she finds most exciting about her field of work, Dr. McDowell exclaimed, "The brain!" There are 86 billion neurons in our brains – that start with the existence of a single cell that proliferates at a rate of 15 million per hour during parts of pregnancy. Given that complexity, it is remarkable that most of our brains work well enough to help us navigate daily life. Minor or major brain anomalies result in a nearly endless list of issues: headaches, depression, Parkinson's disease, seizure, stroke, OCD, sleep disorder, vertigo, etc. This is why, "everyone benefits by learning about the brain".

Jennifer is the recipient of the William A. Owens Creative Research Award, the UGA Graduate School Outstanding Mentor Award, and the UGA Center for Undergrad Teaching Research Opportunities Master Level Faculty Mentoring Award. She was also in the inaugural class of the Leadership Institute on Women in Psychology sponsored by the American Psychological Association. In January 2023 Jennifer started her role as the Associate Director of OIBR. In this role she works co-operatively with the Director, **Dr. Jody Clay-Warner**, and the Assistant Director, **Kim Cherewick** to fulfill the 3 main missions of OIBR: a) pre- and post-award grant administration, b) collaboration and networking, and c) career development (with Director of Faculty Development, **Dr. Dawn Robinson**).

Jennifer said, "OIBR is a treasure! I worked with the amazing personnel for a long time, particularly surrounding grant support. There is literally no way that we could conduct the research that we do without their assistance. Our work across projects is complex and varied, and OIBR staff meet each challenge with knowledge and professionalism. I want to do whatever I can to contribute to continuing the success of this workplace and its mission."

She and her husband, **Dr. Brett Clementz**, co-direct the Clinical and Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory. They have 2 daughters (and a dog named Flurry). Taylor is in her last year at the University of Washington double majoring in Environmental Studies, and Food Systems, Nutrition and Health. Lauren is a Sophomore at Auburn University majoring in Hotel and Restaurant Management.

For fun Jennifer loves to read and always has multiple stacks of books awaiting her attention. She also enjoys canoeing and hiking. She played tennis for her college team but hadn't played for over 20 years when she picked up a racket last year. Fortunately, she gained some perspective because not only is tennis good exercise and a great escape, "it is also more fun than I remember!" she said.

# CENTER SPOTLIGHT: CENTER FOR FAMILY RESEARCH

The Center for Family Research (CFR) was established in 1985 as an integral part of the Owens Institute for Behavioral Research (OIBR) at the University of Georgia. The purpose was to bring together scholars from diverse disciplines to explore innovative and dynamic ways of examining family life. The Center quickly became very successful in stimulating intellectual interchange and enhancing its members' ability to obtain extramural funding. Grant-supported projects focused on family processes, family stress, and prevention/intervention efforts.

For over 30 years, scholars from several disciplines at the Center for Family Research (CFR) have examined the stressors faced by families living in the Southeastern United States, with a particular focus on Black families and the protective factors that help them overcome the challenges caused by those stressors.

This work has been funded with support from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) continuously since 1995 and has resulted in hundreds of publications as well as intervention programming for youth and families. By adding biological markers and brain imaging to a long history of behavioral methods, CFR scholars continue sharing the influence of different factors and how best to shield developing Black youth from harmful outcomes.

## Some key features of CFR work

### Understanding family-based resilience to stressors

CFR researchers were among the first to conduct prospective research on the contributions of contextual factors to the development of health vulnerabilities in Black Americans and the family processes that protect them, and that work continues today as a central line of research. For instance, CFR Director **Dr. Steve Beach** and colleagues recently found that the more stress Black adults felt during the COVID-19 pandemic, the more depression they experienced. But it differed based on the quality of their romantic relationship before the pandemic. Those whose relationship quality had improved before the pandemic experienced less depression, and this improvement helped protect them from the negative effects of COVID-19 related stressors. Those stressors, like many others, also contribute to health and epigenetic aging, highlighting the importance of family-based resilience



*A study under way at CFR uses fMRI imaging in early and late adolescents at the Bio-Imaging Research Center (BIRC)*

### Conducting longitudinal studies

CFR has followed thousands of youth and families for years and in some cases for decades. These longitudinal studies provide deep and powerful insights into important questions. For instance, as part of the continuing Strong African American Families Healthy Adult Project (SHAPE)—a longitudinal study of Black fifth graders and their caregivers which began over 20 years ago—**Dr. Katie Ehrlich**, Associate Professor of Psychology, and colleagues have been studying stressful exposures in adolescence that can predict inflammation in adulthood, which is important because chronic inflammation can contribute to the development and progression of age-related diseases. The study team recently found that adolescents' exposure to parental depression in adolescence was predictive of their inflammation at age 31. This effect was mediated by unsupportive parenting when the youth were 16 to 18 years old.

### Exploring families' lifespan

Researchers at the CFR have delved into understanding families across all life stages. For instance, **Dr. Justin Lavner**, Psychology Associate Professor, and his team focused on sleep differences among Black infants. They conducted an intervention with new mothers, observing that infants whose mothers participated in the program slept longer at night, woke up less often, and had an increased chance of achieving at least 12 hours of total daily sleep compared to a group receiving child safety information.

### Creating and testing family-centered prevention programs

From work begun in the 1990s, CFR created two family programs for youth and their caregivers. The Strong African American Family (SAAF) and SAAF-Teen programs. Under the direction of **Dr. Tracy Anderson**, CFR Assistant Director, trains facilitators around the country to deliver the programs. Recently, **Dr. Steve Kogan**, Athletic Association Professor of Human Development and Family Science, began exploring the feasibility of adding a virtual reality component to the programs as a way of enhancing and expanding their reach.

CFR Director, **Dr. Steve Beach**, who took over directorship after **Dr. Gene Brody's** recent retirement, says that new initiatives at CFR this year focus on neuroscience, inflammation, aging, and preventative intervention, using multidisciplinary approaches. He adds, "We are excited to explore the ways that families act as a reservoir of resilience and health in difficult times." More info. about CFR: <https://cfr.uga.edu/>



# Tips from the Experts



**Paula McIntyre**  
OIBR Business Mgr.

## Driving for Official State Business

As a state employee you are covered under a General Liability Insurance Policy while driving state-owned vehicles or while driving personally owned or rented vehicles on official state business. The automobile physical damage policy provides coverage for damage to state-owned vehicles only. Damage to rental vehicles driven on official state business is covered under the state rental car contract. Damage to personally owned vehicles driven on official state business is not covered by the state auto physical damage policy. Employees are encouraged to check with their personal insurance company to verify whether their personal automobile insurance policy covers damage to their personally owned vehicle while operating on official state business.

The [UGA Motor Vehicle Use Policy](#) requires all UGA faculty, staff, volunteers, and independent contractors to complete the following annually to be qualified to drive a state-owned vehicle or to drive a personally owned or rental vehicle on official state business:

1. Online training in the Professional Education Portal (PEP)
2. [Driver Acknowledgement Form](#)
3. [Motor vehicle check](#) (if driving 3 or more days per week on official state business)

If you have any questions about Auto Liability or the Motor Vehicle Use Policy, please contact the UGA Insurance and Claims Management Office at [vsilcott@uga.edu](mailto:vsilcott@uga.edu), 706-425-3083, or [Insurance and Claims Management](#).

## Individual Investigator Report

The new [individual investigator report](#) (*link requires VPN outside the Athens campus network*) is now available to view activity by academic credit. The university will soon be rolling out an enhanced version which will allow you to view year-over-year trends in proposals, awards, and expenditures by major unit and department. Center and Institute credit is also forthcoming.

## Allowable Purchases

Is this purchase allowable or unallowable? Please refer to the [Allowable and Unallowable Expenditures by Fund Source Matrix](#)

# Congratulations to our newest Distinguished Scholar

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. Drew Abney**

Assistant Professor,  
Psychology





# Welcome New OIBR Affiliates



**Dr. Javad Anjum**  
Assistant Professor  
Communication Studies &  
Special Education

*Research Interests:* Eye tracking; Stroke; Cognition; Language



**Dr. Alexandra Cooper**  
Postdoctoral Associate  
Biochemistry & Molecular  
Biology

*Research Interests:* Instructor reasoning; Research teaching; Science practice instruction



**Dr. Ishtiaque Fazlul**  
Assistant Professor  
Health Policy & Management  
and International Affairs  
(Jointly)

*Research Interests:* Health economics; Education economics



**Dr. Daniel Gibbs**  
Assistant Professor  
Social Work

*Research Interests:* Child well-being; Professional decision-making; Foster care; Data science; Social work and the law



**Dr. Charles Geier**  
Professor  
Human Development & Family  
Science

*Research Interests:* Cognition; Computational methods; Diversity; Emotion; Experimental methods; Food & Nutrition; Mental health; Mental illness and disorders; Networks; Neuroscience; Obesity; Physical health and well-being; Psychophysiology; Risk behaviors; Substance use & addiction; Youth; Adolescence; Emerging adulthood



**Dr. Stephanie Halmo**  
Postdoctoral Research  
Associate  
Cellular Biology

*Research Interests:* Student thinking; Metacognition; Problem solving; Group work



**Dr. Niying Li**  
Assistant Professor  
Clinical & Administrative  
Pharmacy

*Research Interests:* Aging; Gerontology; Immigration; Policy; Regulation; Compliance; Survey methods



**Dr. Lauren Luther**  
Assistant Research Professor  
Psychology

*Research Interests:* Schizophrenia; Negative symptoms; Digital phenotyping; Mobile health interventions



**Dr. Dax Ovid**  
Assistant Professor  
Physiology and Pharmacology

*Research Interests:* Curriculum studies; Higher education; Instructor talk; Study abroad



**Dr. Tatiane Russo-Tait**  
Assistant Professor  
Cellular Biology

*Research Interests:* Critical consciousness; Equity; Social justice in STEM

# Welcome New OIBR Affiliates Cont.



**Dr. Katelyn Stauffer**  
Assistant Professor  
Political Science

*Research Interests:* Bias; Discrimination; Inequality; Diversity; Experimental methods; Gender; Identity; Survey methods



**Dr. Kimberly Watkins**  
Assistant Professor  
Financial Planning, Housing and  
Consumer Economics

*Research Interests:* Bias; Discrimination; Inequality; Culture; Diversity; Education; Learning; Emotion; Gender; Identity; Marriage; Family; Close relationships; Mental health; Personality; Physical health; Well-being; Sexuality; Sexual identity; Social psychology; Survey Methods



**Dr. Lusi Xie**  
Assistant Professor  
Agricultural & Applied  
Economics

*Research Interests:* Behavioral economics; Agri-environmental policies; Ecosystem services



**Dr. Yingying Zeng**  
Assistant Professor  
Social Work

*Research Interests:* Assessment; Evaluation; Bias; Discrimination; Inequality; Gender; Immigration; Mental health; Policy; Regulation; Compliance; Youth; Adolescence; Emerging adulthood



**Dr. Liwei Zhang**  
Assistant Professor  
Social Work

*Research Interests:* Infant and Child development; Maltreatment; Trauma; Mental health; Violence; Injury

## Awards



**Dr. Paula Lemons** was named  
Southeastern Conference  
Academic Leadership  
Development Program Fellow  
for 2023-2024



**Dr. Dawn Robinson** received the  
2023 Lifetime Achievement Award  
from the Sociology of Emotions  
Section of the American  
Sociological Association

# 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. Daniel Jung**  
Health Policy & Management  
Assistant Professor  
GDP Class of 2021-2023

Grant Title: "Improving health equity for Medicare beneficiaries receiving home health care through machine learning applications"

Agency: National Institutes of Health



**Dr. Jessica Knight**  
Epidemiology & Biostatistics  
Assistant Professor  
GDP Class of 2021-2023

Grant Title: "Neural mechanisms linking cardiovascular and mental health for adolescents with congenital heart disease"

Agency: American Heart Association



**Dr. Soroya McFarlane**  
Communication Studies  
Assistant Professor  
GDP Class of 2021-2023

Grant Title: "'Miss, make sure you remember me! I want to share my story': Culture, media and participatory health education to address teenage pregnancy in Jamaica"

Agency: Spencer Foundation



**Dr. Ivanka Pjesivac**  
Journalism  
Associate Professor  
GDP Class of 2019-2021

Grant Title: "The language of disinformation and elections: How global conspiracy theories on Twitter transfer locally and affect American democratic process"

Agency: National Endowment for the Humanities



**Dr. Emily Rosenzweig**  
Educational Psychology  
Assistant Professor  
GDP Class of 2021-2023

Grant Title: "CAREER: Understanding and reducing perceived costs to motivate STEM career persistence"

Agency: National Science Foundation



# Class of 2023-2025 Grant Development Program Participants



## Dr. Michael Barger

Assistant Professor  
Educational Psychology

*Research Interests:*  
Early childhood learning;  
Motivation and achievement in  
STEM



## Dr. Erin Hamel

Assistant Professor  
Communication Sciences &  
Special Education

*Research Interests:*  
Early childhood teaching;  
Workplace supports; Education  
quality



## Dr. Pablo Lapegna

Associate Professor  
Sociology

*Research Interests:*  
Environmental and rural  
sociology; Social movements;  
Political sociology; Health



## Dr. Niyantri Ravindran

Assistant Professor  
Human Development & Family  
Science

*Research Interests:*  
Dynamics of parent-child  
interactions; Parental socialization  
of emotion; Stress reactivity and  
regulation in parents and children;  
Emotion regulation; Social  
competence; Peer relationships



## Dr. Melissa Robertson

Assistant Professor  
Psychology

*Research Interests:*  
Social relationships; Mentoring  
and supervision; Diversity and  
inclusion; Health and wellbeing;  
Measurement and methodology

# Funding News

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

Dr. Drew Abney (Psychology), Distinguished Scholar, received a NSF Collaborative grant for the project “Collaborative Research: The temporal structure of infants' everyday behaviors: Language and play interactions in the home environment” in the amount of \$138,337. This study quantifies how infant vocalizations, mother speech, and infant object play are temporally structured, relate to one another, and align with infants' phonological and word production. The team will leverage broad community partnerships to communicate findings to educators, practitioners, home-visiting staff at community agencies and to caregivers of young children across three study sites. Project period: 9/1/2023-8/31/2026

Dr. Abney also received a U.S. Army Research Institute grant for the project titled “Dynamic models of interaction for trust building in diverse contexts” in the amount of \$301,340. The objective of this proposal is to provide an assessment of trust-building that is more easily employed, more flexible, and more dynamic than current assessments while still providing instructors and learners with highly valid feedback. Project period: 9/26/2023-3/25/2025

Dr. Brian Bauer (Psychology), 2022 Grant Development Program Participant, received a NIH CTSA pilot award from Emory for the project titled “Examining changes in suicidality as a result of long COVID in individuals from underrepresented populations (CTSA Pilot)” in the amount of \$55,476. The expected project outcomes include identifying key targets that impact Long COVID-related suicide risk. The results of this research are expected to have a significant positive impact because they will help improve the mental health and well-being of underrepresented populations and contribute to broader suicide prevention efforts. UGA Co-I: Dr. Thania Galvan, Psychology. Project period: 8/1/2023-7/31/2024

Dr. Anita Brown (Center for Family Research), Distinguished Scholar, received an award from the United Way of Metro Atlanta for the project titled “United Way of Greater Atlanta: Parents as teachers FY24” in the amount of \$85,000. The Center for Family Research at UGA provides the administrative and fiscal home for the Technical Assistance and Quality (TAQ) team of the Georgia Home Visiting Program. The TAQ team supports the delivery of high-quality home visiting services, emphasizing (1) fidelity with model guidelines, (2) data-informed practice, and (3) continuous quality improvement. Funds used by UWGA are used to support the Parents as Teachers programs being implemented in counties within the UWGA catchment area. Project period: 10/1/2023-9/30/2024

Dr. Brown also received an award from the Georgia Department of Human Services for the project “Training and technical assistance for First Steps Georgia FY24” in the amount of \$51,372. The Home Visiting Technical Assistance and Quality team at the University of Georgia's Center for Family Research (CFR) has been providing technical assistance (TA) and training to Georgia's First Steps sites since 2010 when the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program was initiated in Georgia as a strategy for strengthening the local early childhood systems of care across the state. In FY2024, CFR will continue to provide TA and training for DFCS-funded First Steps sites. Project period: 10/1/2023-9/30/2024

# Funding News Cont.

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



**Dr. Alexandra Cooper** (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology), Affiliate, received a NSF Postdoctoral Fellowship for the project titled “Postdoctoral Fellowship: STEMEdIPRF: Pedagogical content knowledge for course-based undergraduate research instruction” in the amount of \$341,260. The proposed work will define and characterize pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) associated with research instruction (i.e., teaching a Course-based Undergraduate Research Experience) in order to identify the knowledge of science research and of students, as well as the knowledge of pedagogies useful for guiding students in research. The development of a measure of PCK for research instruction will enable the STEM education research community to investigate the development of research teaching PCK among CURE instructors and relate research teaching PCK to student outcomes. Project period: 1/1/2024-12/31/2025



**Dr. Erin Dolan** (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology), Distinguished Scholar, received a STEM Ed OPRF from NSF for the project titled “Biology education research postdoctoral fellowship” in the amount of \$1,249,972. This research fellowship will prepare a diverse cohort of scholars to carry out biology education research that generates robust empirical findings, catalyzes theory development and broadens participation in four overarching areas: equity and justice in STEM; institutional and systemic change; learning, cognition and instruction; and design and measurement. UGA Co-I: **Dr. Logan Fiorella**. Project period: 9/1/2023-8/31/2026



**Dr. Thania Galvan** (Psychology), Affiliate, received a small grants program award from the Society for Research in Child Development for the project "Cognitive vulnerabilities in depression risk among trauma-exposed Latinx youth" in the amount of \$7,445. To date, Latinx adolescents remain vastly underrepresented in the Emotion Regulation (ER) and Executive Function (EF) literature, and no research has examined how these constructs underlie the relation between trauma and depression in Latinx adolescents. To that end, the objective of this proposal is to examine a culturally responsive model investigating the influence of ER and EF on depression risk in trauma exposed Latinx adolescents. Project period: 8/1/2023-7/31/2024



**Dr. Laura German** (Anthropology), Director of Center for Integrative Conservation Research, Affiliate, received a NSF Planning Grant for the project “Planning: FIRE-PLAN: ITEST-FIRE: Convergent Pyroscapes: Catalyzing innovative and inclusive wildland fire science and education in western North Carolina” in the amount of \$196,799. This project will engage partners from western and Indigenous organizations in the co-production of innovative and inclusive fire science strategies and decolonial, convergent education. It will also lay out a plan for the development of an inquiry-based curriculum that integrates Native and western science and technology, contributing to increasing the number of Indigenous youth interested in pursuing careers in forest fire management. UGA Co-I: **Dr. Elizabeth King**, Ecology. Project period: 1/1/2024-12/31/2025



# Funding News Cont.

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



**Dr. Stephanie Halmo** (Cellular Biology), Affiliate, received a NSF BCSEER grant titled “BCSEER: Enhancing science learning and collaboration through social metacognition” in the amount of \$349,997. The proposed research will yield novel insights that will guide practice on how to promote social metacognition to enhance learning in STEM. The project will lead to improved STEM education through the development of a guide for students on how to be socially metacognitive during group work. This will position all students to gain more from opportunities to work collaboratively with their peers in college science classrooms and STEM careers, ultimately fueling scientific progress. UGA Co-I: **Dr. Julie Stanton**, Cellular Biology. Project period: 10/1/2023-9/30/2026



**Dr. Jessica Knight** (Epidemiology & Biostatistics), Affiliate and 2021 GDP Graduate, received a NIH CTSA pilot award from Emory for the project titled “Addressing stress-related pathways of disparities in cardiovascular health for young Georgia families using a wearable biometric device (CTSA Pilot)” in the amount of \$57,337. The team proposes a novel approach that combines ecologic momentary assessment, wearable technologies, and machine learning analytics to measure and evaluate heart rate variability (HRV) response to stress. Findings from this proposal will inform subsequent NIH and AHA applications on utilizing and incorporating our model in prevention studies to reduce stress and consequent CVD in youth. In the longer term we could use this model in other youth populations including those with obesity, sleep disorders, diabetes, and mental health disorders. UGA Co-Is: **Dr. Kyle Johnsen**, Engineering; **Dr. Michael Schmidt**, Kinesiology; **Dr. Allan Tate**, Epidemiology & Biostatistics. Project period: 8/1/2023-7/31/2024



**Dr. Catherine O'Neal** (Human Development and Family Science), Distinguished Scholar, received a USAA Educational Foundation grant for the project “A Proposal to measure the effectiveness of financial literacy efforts across the DoD” in the amount of \$600,000. This project will evaluate the instructor-led and computer-based financial literacy efforts across the DoD. Project period: 9/1/2023-2/28/2024



**Dr. Assaf Oshri** (Human Development and Family Science), Distinguished Scholar, received a NIH R01 award for the project “A Neuroecological approach to examining the effects of early life adversity on adolescent drug use vulnerabilities using the ABCD dataset” in the amount of \$3,050,148. The proposed research utilizes a large, longitudinal dataset: the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study (ABCD; N=11,883; ages 9-10 at baseline and 11.5-12.5 at wave 6). The team aims to test (a) the developmental cognitive mechanisms that mediate the effect of ELA on drug use vulnerabilities and attendant drug use and misuse (b) the moderating influence of family, peer, school, community, and sociocultural contexts on the neurocognitive processes that lead to drug use vulnerabilities. Modeling multilevel latent change in ecological, behavioral, and neuroimaging data is critical to further the precision and specificity of developmental models and preventative intervention programs for drug use resilience in adolescence. UGA Co-Is: **Dr. Larry Sweet**, **Dr. Kalsea Koss**, **Dr. Charles Geier**. Project period: 9/15/23-7/31/28

# Funding News Cont.

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



Dr. Suhang Song (Health Policy and Management), Affiliate, received a NIH CTSA pilot award for the project titled “Trends and modifiable risk factors to reduce racial/ethnic disparities in cognitive function and dementia: Evidence from the health and retirement study (CTSA Pilot)” in the amount of \$60,400. The proposed research goals of this proposed study are to (1) describe and monitor trends in racial/ethnic disparities in cognitive function and dementia prevalence, and (2) identify and assess whether modifiable risk factors reduce racial/ethnic disparities, using Health and Retirement Study (HRS), a nationally representative longitudinal survey fielded every two years with over 37,000 individuals aged over 50 years. This research will preliminarily identify modifiable risk factors that lead to national-wide interventions to address racial/ethnic disparities in cognitive function and dementia. UGA Co-Is: Dr. Grace Bagwell, Dr. Janani Rajbhandari-Thapa, Dr. Zhuo Chen, Dr. Mahmud Khan (all in Health Policy and Management). Project period: 8/1/2023-7/31/2024



Dr. Michelle vanDellen (Psychology), Distinguished Scholar, received a NIH R01 award for her project “Randomized controlled trial of dyadic financial incentive treatment for dual smoker couples: Evaluation of efficacy, mechanisms, and cost effectiveness” in the amount of \$2,920,773. The proposed research systematically examines the efficacy, mechanisms, and cost effectiveness of mechanisms of implementing financial incentive treatments in dual-smoker couples, and compares them to a no-incentive control on abstinence at end of treatment. Support for the efficacy of dyadic financial incentive treatments for dual-smoker couples would be a scalable intervention for implementation at the population level. UGA Co-Is: Dr. Ye Shen, Epidemiology & Biostatistics. Project period: 9/8/2023-8/31/2028



## Policy Updates

### NIH subrecipient monitoring

NIH recently issued [updated policy guidance for subaward written agreements](#). The policy clarification is intended to remind NIH recipients that they must comply with longstanding policy requirements requiring primary recipients to have effective internal controls in place to ensure that subawards are being carried out in compliance with terms and conditions (45 CFR 75.303) and they must monitor the activities of subrecipients as necessary to ensure that the subaward is used for authorized purposes which include the need to review and monitor financial and performance reports. Primary recipients acting as pass-through entities “must have the right of access to any documents, papers, or other records of the non-Federal entity which are pertinent to the Federal award...” (45 CFR 75.364). **NIH will require that foreign subrecipients provide copies of all lab notebooks, all data, and all documentation that supports the research outcomes as described in the progress report, to the primary recipient no less than once every six months.**

# Gene Brody retires leaving a legacy of research

Dr. Gene Brody, Distinguished Scholar, is an accomplished researcher who has received numerous awards for his work, including a Regent's Professorship at UGA and a lifetime achievement award from the Association for Psychological Science. His work on prevention efforts for American youth has been well-regarded among other researchers and those who work directly with the Black population. After 46 years of successful funding, research, and findings, he decided to retire this past summer to focus on his family and personal interests.

CFR's Director, Dr. Steve Beach said "Dr. Brody has been a leading figure in the field for decades and has allowed the Center for Family Research to become known far beyond the walls of UGA. His presence will be missed, but his influence will continue to be felt for many years as we continue the work of CFR. We celebrate his storied career and wish him the very best as he enjoys his retirement."



## HAVE YOU CONNECTED WITH OIBR YET?



We invite you to connect with our new Owens Institute for Behavioral Research LinkedIn page.

Our goal is to use this resource to promote the research efforts of our affiliated faculty and provide information that supports our mission.

If you post anything about a project where OIBR was involved, please be sure to tag us!

## Policy Updates



The National Science Foundation (NSF) is mandating the use of SciENCv for the preparation of Current and Pending (Other) Support (C&POS) information, effective for new proposals submitted or due on or after October 23, 2023.

To get started, faculty researchers should:

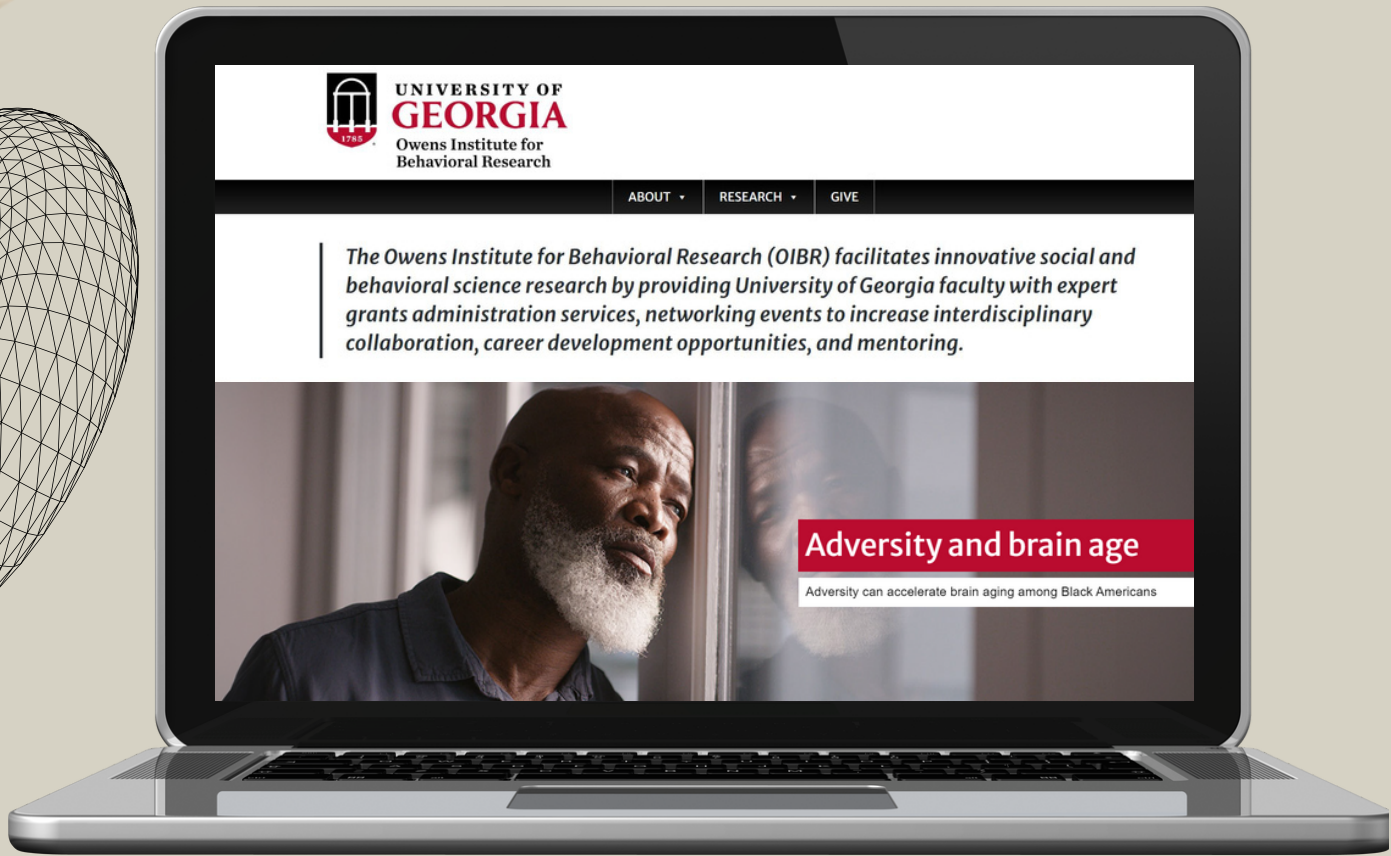
1. Login to [Research.gov](#) (link is external).
2. Set up [My Bibliography](#) (link is external).
3. Create an [NSF Biosketch in SciENCv](#) (link is external).
4. [Delegate access](#) (link is external) to research administrators.
5. Work with your RA to identify projects (including outside consulting that involves the design, conduct, or reporting of research) and in-kind resources that need to be included in your C&POS.

This can take time. For more information on how to do this, please consult [Chris Thornton](#) or [Kim Cherewick](#).



# Visit Our New Website

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



Over the summer we completely revamped our website to better serve you. It is full of useful information and is a great resource for those searching for research collaborators, PI's looking for information to create their research team, OIBR event details, etc.

The ongoing research at OIBR spans an incredibly broad array of topics. From the Research tab, you will find "Research Interests." Just click a topic on the page and everyone affiliated with OIBR that shares this research interest will populate on another page. It is a great resource when looking for collaborators.

The "Grant Support Services" page is packed with helpful information for researchers and PIs alike. The page is separated into "Pre-Award" and "Post-Award" and is clearly labeled for ease of use.

Did you hear about an OIBR event and want more details? From the Home Page scroll down for "Events and Deadlines" to get all of the details for all of our upcoming events.

These are just a few highlights of our new website. Please take a few minutes to check it out. [www.oibr.uga.edu](http://www.oibr.uga.edu)



Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research  
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**SAVE THE  
DATE**

Join us to discuss  
"CURIOUS MINDS: The  
Power of Connection."

# 2024 ANNUAL WILLIAM A. OWENS LECTURE



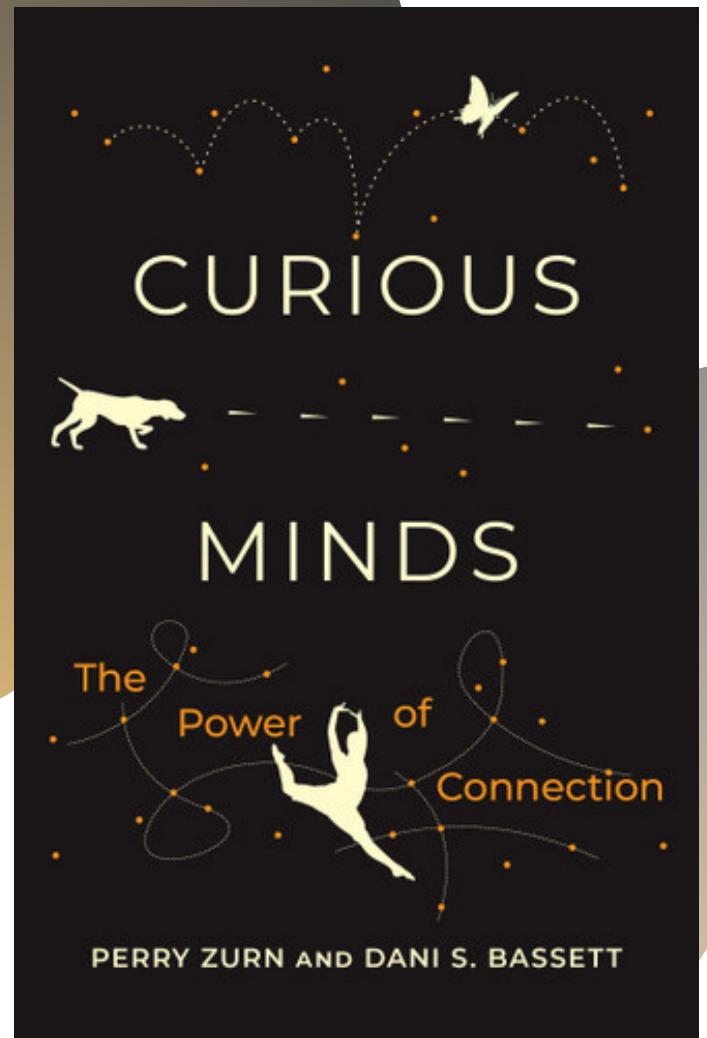
**DANI S. BASSETT**

Professor,  
Bioengineering  
University of Pennsylvania



**PERRY ZURN**

Provost Associate Professor,  
Philosophy & Religion  
American University



**THURSDAY,  
FEBRUARY 22, 2024**

UGA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

**LECTURE 3:00 - 4:00PM  
RECEPTION 4:00 - 5:00PM**



Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research

# Annual Meeting

December 5th, 4:00-6:00pm  
Miller Learning Center  
North Tower #314

[RSVP HERE](#)  
by 11/27



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

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## SHARE GOOD NEWS

Have something  
to share?

Owens Institute for Behavioral Research is here to promote the behavioral and social sciences at the University of Georgia. In order to do this, we look to highlight the great work of our affiliated faculty.

Do you have an interesting project that you are working on? Did you recently publish your work? Did you receive an award? Have you presented at a conference?

Let us help promote you and your research. We love sharing the accomplishments and successes of our faculty!

Please complete the [Share Good News](#) form on our website if you would like to submit something to us for promotion.

After completing this form, Andrea Horsman will reach out to you for more information prior to promoting your submission.