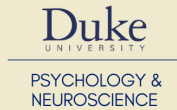


IMPACT

REPORT

2022-2023



CHARLES LAFITTE FOUNDATION PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGICAL & NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH AT DUKE UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR
- 2 BY THE NUMBERS
- 3 UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT
- 5 GRADUATE RESEARCH
- 6 CONFERENCE TRAVEL
- 7 IN THEIR WORDS
- 9 FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR



As P&N reflects on the 22-23 academic year, it is clear that support from the Charles Lafitte Program in Psychological Research played many roles: it helped students to attend conferences; funded student-led research programs; continued to support faculty research (which in turn provided additional research opportunities for students). We remain very grateful for how the funding supports research training and research excellence in our department.

I'm excited to report that this year we sent students around the country to conferences, whereas last year we restricted attendance to virtual conferences. Virtual conferences increase accessibility, but virtual attendance prevents the kind of networking and informal conversations that make conferences so invaluable to young scientists. This year Duke's presence was felt across the country, from West Coast destinations like San Diego and San Francisco to

East Coast venues in Atlanta, Washington DC, and Orlando, among others. We hope to fund even more student travel this coming year, as people regain their confidence in travel and re-experience the benefits of in-person interactions.

I'm also pleased to report that most COVID restrictions on human subjects research have been lifted, meaning that some delayed faculty-led projects finally took off. For example, Associate Professor Eve Puffer's team is using Lafitte funds to support data collection in Africa, something that was not possible until recently.

On behalf of all of our students, staff, and faculty, I want to express my gratitude to the Charles Lafitte Foundation.

Elizabeth J. Marsh

Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology & Neuroscience, Duke University

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN OUR PROGRAMS

BY THE NUMBERS

13

UG Travel Awards

24

Graduate Travel Awards

14

Small Grants

5

URS Matching Grants

1

Local/Virtual Conferences

9

Graduate Research Grants

UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

Psychology major Anna Greenleaf '23 was the recipient of a travel grant to attend the Society for Consumer Psychology's Annual Conference, as well as a Small Grant awardee.

"One of my most valuable experiences at the Society for Consumer Psychology conference was seeing the beautiful community that is present within academia, and within Duke's alumni network."

A native of New York City, Greenleaf arrived on Duke campus as a freshman with a curiosity about human behavior and aspirations to engage in research.

"One of the reasons I chose Duke is because of the resources and environment the university offers to scholars interested in research," she said.



"I am so grateful to have attended the Society for Consumer Psychology's Annual Conference. After getting my name tag, I was overjoyed, unable to hide my smile."

Greenleaf's interest in human behavior resulted in more than three years of research experience in several Duke labs exploring group dynamics, human decision-making and clinical psychology, with the ultimate objective of examining the impact of mental health conditions on prosocial behaviors in the workplace.

Greenleaf's research, rooted in understanding the impacts of unequal access to resources, further inspired her to investigate a new hypothesis during her junior year: Would the presence of resource inequality make it less likely that a chain of paying it forward would start and continue?

This research question provided new insight into how income inequality can harm individual and collective wellbeing.

In her senior year at Duke, Greenleaf achieved a publication milestone as a coauthor of a study from Associate Professor of Psychology & Neuroscience Zachary Rosenthal, published in "Frontiers in Psychology." The paper explored under-researched mental health conditions such as misophonia, a condition in which certain sounds, such as chewing, trigger negative emotional reactions.



The Lafitte funding facilitated my passion for experimental social psychology, allowing me to further develop the skillset needed to conduct rigorous social science research.



"The Lafitte funding facilitated my passion for experimental social psychology, allowing me to further develop the skillset needed to conduct rigorous social science research."

Greenleaf is also a Costanzo Teaching Fellow for Psychology 101 – another Duke Psychology & Neuroscience program which has benefitted from Lafitte Foundation funding – and a recipient of the Jerome S. Bruner Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research, the highest honor an undergraduate researcher can receive from the department.

GRADUATE RESEARCH

AWARDEE	PROJECT TITLE
Anna Smith	"Exploring the role of memory recollection in aesthetic experiences of visual art"
Rachael Wright	"Emotion regulation learning and strategy choice"
Ethan Whitman	"Sex, gender, and sexual orientation differences in biological aging"
Kathy Xie	"Association of age 3 brain health with age 45 physical function"
Mercedes Muñoz	"Race or Ethnicity? Demographic Forms as Signals of Inclusion for Latinx Students"
Meltem Yucel	"Gossip's double-edged sword"
Jane Rothrock	"Effects of Mood and Perseverative Thinking on Memory"
Jiayue Liu	"Pre-stimulus EEG as an Indicator of Perceptual Difficulties in Noise"
Natalia Espinosa	"Uncovering Latin American forms of agency: An analysis of the 2022 FIFA World Cup Players"

CONFERENCE TRAVEL

Graduate Conferences

Society for Research in Child Development
Society for Affective Science
Organization for Human Brain Mapping
The Society for Personality and Social Psychology
International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies
Society for Neuroscience
Boston University Conference on Language Development
Cognitive Neuroscience Society
American Psychopathological Association
The Mind & Life Summer Research Institute
Society for Biological Psychiatry
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Society for Affective Science

UG Conferences

Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Cognitive Neuroscience Society
Society for Consumer Psychology
Association for Research in Otolaryngology
Society for Research in Child Development
Safety in Spine Surgery Summit
Southeastern Psychological Association

Local/Virtual Conference

Triangle Chapter of Society for Neuroscience



IN THEIR WORDS



Elissa Harris '23 successfully presents her poster at the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) 2023 Biennial Meeting, featuring her Lafitte Foundation URS grant-funded independent study work. Harris was also a co-author on a symposium talk featuring her independent research.

“My mentor stressed the importance of discussing my career goals with the people I met at the SRCD conference, especially those in my field. While at the conference, I got to practice a lot as I went around to different posters and symposiums and met people for lunch. As a result, I feel that I am more prepared to network in academic spaces in the future.”



Shenyang Huang, PhD candidate, presenting his research at the Cognitive Neuroscience Society (CNS) 2023 Annual Meeting in San Francisco – first as a 5-minute “data blitz” talk and then as a poster during a two-hour poster session. CNS is one of the most well-attended conferences in the field of cognitive neuroscience.

“My research presentations attracted audiences from other research institutions at different stages of career – graduate students, postdocs, and Principal Investigators – and interesting questions were raised for future exploration. Attending this conference was a valuable experience for me to practice presentation skills and connect with many fellow researchers working on similar questions or using similar methodologies.”

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Seeds Worth Nurturing: Critical Thinking and Goal Setting Skills for Adolescents

In 2021, Dr. Timothy Strauman was elated to receive a Faculty Seed Grant. In partnership with Dr. Ann Brewster of the Duke University Social Science Research Institute (SSRI) and the Durham Public Schools (DPS), he proposed a mini-course to help equip adolescents, many of whom face significant adversity, to thrive academically and maintain their well-being.

Although the grant award was placed on hold due to Covid-19 research restrictions, Dr. Strauman knew that the collaborative research would be well worth the wait. When the schools finally lifted Covid-19 visitor restrictions, the team implemented their intervention, targeting high school students who were identified pre-high-school as potentially benefitting from skillset development and preventive intervention.

“Students were struggling more than ever to cope with the challenges of life in the face of the pandemic,” shared Dr. Strauman “and colleagues from DPS and other local school districts were in need of solutions to help increase the students’ success”.

One in five students from DPS drop out of high school, and these numbers are compounded when mental challenges and the pandemic are factored into the equation. To tackle this challenge, the team drew on Dr. Brewster’s expertise in integrating preventive interventions into classroom settings and Dr. Strauman’s experiences as a clinical and social psychologist studying the prevention and treatment of depression and anxiety.

The end result was a novel classroom-based intervention: The students participate in a condensed version of the department’s Introduction to Psychology course where they learn about their cognitive styles, the brain and its functions, goal setting, critical thinking skills, and how social influences such as discrimination and racism can affect them.

In addition to immediate assessment of the intervention, Strauman and Brewster plan to follow the students over the course of their high school careers.

P&N students contribute to the research and obtain a great deal of experience. Graduate students assist with data analysis and curriculum development, while undergraduate students travel to the sites to assist with data acquisition and serve as high school interventionists.

As part of the intervention itself, students travel to The Brain Imaging Center to participate in data collection sessions using functional magnetic resonance imaging both before and after completing the intervention. The scanning sessions also provide opportunities for students to learn about research, consistent with one of the goals of the mini-course: “Become Your Own Scientist”. The scans are used to assess students’ cognitive styles prior to the start of the program, and then monitor the changes that occur as a result of acquiring a new set of critical thinking and goal setting skills. “The adolescents love their experience at the Imaging Center” Dr. Strauman noted. “Another reason why we introduce them to the Center is to expose them to career possibilities in STEM fields. This helps to create future scientists.”



Tim Strauman, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience

“We predict that by learning these skills, students will perform better academically and better maintain their well-being,” Dr Strauman said.

“We believe it’s very important to get the word out that these students can learn the skills, want to learn the skills, and practice them effectively” Dr. Strauman shared. “although a lot of people think it’s too late to intervene with teenagers, [we are proving that] it is not.”