

# THE URBAN PSYCHOLOGIST

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## Chair's Corner



**Dr. Martin Antony**  
Department of  
Psychology Chair

In Fall 2014, Ryerson University released its 5-year academic plan, called “*Our Time to Lead*.” The plan ([www.ryerson.ca/provost/planning](http://www.ryerson.ca/provost/planning)) emphasizes four interconnected priorities, including (1) increasing student engagement and success through exceptional experiences, (2) increasing excellence, intensity, and impact of scholarly, research, and creative (SRC) pursuits, (3) fostering an innovation ecosystem, and (4) expanding

community engagement and city building. Over the past year or so, academic units (e.g., faculties, departments) have been busy developing their own academic plans to complement the university plan. I am happy to announce that the Psychology Department has now completed a draft academic plan for 2014-2019.

The **Psychology Academic Plan** includes five main objectives:

**1. Enhance Experiences and Outcomes for Undergraduate students.** This objective includes a number of strategies for maintaining high levels of student engagement in our BA program, ensuring high quality teaching, further supporting student participation in experiential learning and e-learning, and supporting high student retention rates.

**2. Enhance Learning Experiences and Outcomes for Graduate Students.** Here our goals include enhancing research opportunities for graduate, exceptional learning experiences, and solid preparation for personal and professional success.

**3. Maintain or Enhance Scholarly, Research, and Creative (SRC) Activities.** The Department will continue to work toward increasing levels of external funding,

furthering the Department’s publication record in high quality peer-reviewed journals, and participating in conferences and other avenues for knowledge transfer and dissemination.

**4. Enhance Internal and External Reputation of Psychology Department.** The Department of Psychology has worked hard over the past decade to achieve a positive reputation within the academic and clinical communities, and continually strives to advance our standing, both within the University and beyond.

**5. Increase Engagement in our Community.** The Department will continue to make meaningful contributions to the community through increased participation and outreach to local community members and relevant stakeholders.

Our new academic plan includes strategies and initiatives for achieving our goals and for measuring whether they have been met. I want to thank **Dr. Amelia Usher** for her extensive work on helping to develop the plan, as well as the entire Psychology Department for their contributions. In the coming weeks, the plan will be shared with our students who will have an opportunity to provide further feedback as the plan is updated continually.

### A Final Note...

On June 30, 2016, my 5-year term as Chair will come to an end. A search for a new Chair is currently underway, with an announcement expected shortly. It’s been an enormous pleasure and privilege serving as Chair in the Department of Psychology at Ryerson. I want to thank our staff, faculty members, students, and university leaders for making my job so rewarding.

**Martin M. Antony, PhD**  
Chair, Department of Psychology



# Undergraduate Program Updates



**Dr. Tara Burke**  
Undergraduate  
Program Director

## March Break Open House

Twice a year, Ryerson hosts an “Open House” where prospective students can come take campus and residence tours, and attend program-specific sessions. On March 18th, Psychology once again hosted a large group of enthusiastic students, along with their parents, to tell them a little more about what to expect should they choose to come to Ryerson. Given the terrific turnout we had for both the fall and winter sessions, we anticipate another extremely strong group of applicants for the 2016-2017 academic year.

## Program Updates

Ryerson has what is known as a tripartite (three part) curriculum; students are required to take a certain number of courses outside of psychology to better ensure they have some breadth when it comes to the content of their degree. This structure, in part, meant that our own students are unable to enroll in certain designated “Liberal Studies” courses, popular with students in other programs across the university, such as *Sport Psychology*, or the *Psychology of Sex*. We have therefore created two brand new Professionally Related courses that our own students will have access to: PSY 550 *Human Sexuality* and PSY 560 *Sport, Exercise and Performance*. We are also rolling out a brand new *Advanced Statistical Methods* (PSY811) course.

## Upcoming Events

For our graduating students, convocation for the Faculty of Arts will be on the afternoon of Friday, June 7th at 2:30 pm. In addition, we hope to see many of you at our upcoming Student Research and Awards Celebration, to be held in the evening on Tuesday, June 14th, 2016.



Shruti Vyas, 4th year BA  
student & PSA President

## PSA Update

Greetings from the **Psychology Students Association** (PSA), the undergraduate course union! We had a very successful Fall 2015 term, having run several bake sales and student socials. We also held a fun and exciting Halloween party, collaborating with many different programs including Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Politics, and more. The Winter term is off to a great start. We recently helped organize a Thesis

& Graduate School Information Session for undergraduate students hoping to enroll in the thesis course. We also hosted a mindfulness and stress relief session in March, with the help of very enthusiastic stress and mindfulness researchers from our own department. Our St. Patrick’s Day social was enjoyed by many of us who needed a bit of a break from exams and assignments! Finally, the PSA recently organized elections for next year’s Executive. We look forward to the rest of the semester and to seeing many new faces on the new 2016-2017 PSA Executive Team!



The 2015-2016 PSA Executive Team with the newly designed Psychology sweaters (L to R): Patryk Wrobel (Academic Rep Year 3), Maria Ilief (VP Operations), Emily Veall (VP of Finance), Domenica Fanelli (Deputy of Finance), Andie Woodside (VP of Marketing), Shruti Vyas (President), and Vincent Le (Academic Rep Year 2).

# Graduate Program Updates



**Dr. Julia Spaniol**  
Graduate Program  
Director

It has been a busy Fall and Winter for the Graduate Program. Our program received its initial accreditation by the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) in 2012, and with the end of the first accreditation cycle on the horizon, our first CPA reaccreditation self-study was submitted in December.

**Dr. Stephanie Cassin**, Director of Clinical Training, coordinated completion of the self-study, with contributions from program faculty, students, and staff. The self-study revealed a program in great shape, and

we look confidently toward the site visit by CPA representatives this Spring. On the Psychological Science side, we held our first-ever **Graduate Career Paths Panel** in November. **Dr. David Day**, Director of Psychological Science Training, invited six panelists representing a range of career paths for research psychologists. The panel included two of our recent program alumnae, **Dr. Lucy McGarry** and **Dr. Meera Paleja**, as well as senior PhD psychologists holding leadership positions in the public and private sectors.

On February 1st, we hosted another inaugural event, the “**Graduate Visiting Day**.” Fifty-two short-listed candidates from all over Canada, selected from among nearly 350 applicants, attended the day-long, invitation-only event. The program included information sessions, meals, individual meetings with faculty and current students, and an end-

of-day social hour. Major kudos to **Lisa Vuong**, our Graduate Program Administrator, who once again proved her outstanding event-planning skills! By all accounts, Visiting Day was a big success, and we are now completing the challenging but exciting task of selecting 15 candidates for Fall 2016 admission.

## More Winners

Last October, 14 of our students received their MA degrees and 10 received their PhDs – a record number of Ryerson Psychology graduate degrees at Fall convocation! More recently, two of our current PhD students were honoured with prestigious external dissertation awards. As reported elsewhere in this issue, **Skye Fitzpatrick** received a *Dissertation Research Award* from the American Psychological Association, and **Danielle MacDonald** received the *Virginia A. Roswell Dissertation Award* from the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. Congratulations also to **Sasha Mallya**, **Leorra Newman**, and **Fiona Thomas** who each received a *CIHR Health Professional Student Research Award*. These awards are presented annually to health professional students enrolled in a Canadian program leading to licensure. In addition to winning external honours and awards, our students have also fared well in university-level competitions. In February, PhD students **Jen Rouse** and **Marie Faaborg-Andersen** placed first and third, respectively, in a *6-word memoir competition* held by the Yeates School of Graduate Studies, beating out over 300 submissions!



Dr. Martin Antony welcomes short-listed applicants from across Canada and the USA on our inaugural Graduate Visiting Day event, held on Feb 1, 2016.

# Dr. Lixia Yang Recognized for Excellence in Graduate Education



Dr. Lixia Yang

Dr. Lixia Yang has been awarded the **Yeates School of Graduate Studies (YSGS) Outstanding Contribution to Graduate Education Award in the Faculty of Arts**. This award recognizes Ryerson faculty members who demonstrate excellence in graduate student mentoring and an ability to prepare their students for productive careers. Each year, only one member from each of Ryerson's faculties receives the award. This is the second year in a row that this award has gone to a Psychology Department faculty member.

Congratulations, Lixia, on this well-deserved accomplishment!



Dr. Candice Monson and colleagues chat with Prince Charles. Photo courtesy of David Foote, *Auspic*.

## Candice Monson Joins Team Charged by Prince Charles to Develop Early Interventions for Disaster Victims

Dr. Candice Monson was selected to represent Canada on a committee charged by HRH Prince Charles to create an early intervention for disaster victims. There is a pressing need for a brief and effective early intervention in light of existing interventions (e.g., Critical Incident Stress Debriefing) yielding minimal or even deleterious effects. The Prince's Charities funded a 2-day meeting in Sydney, Australia, in November 2015, with representatives also from the United States, Australia, and United Kingdom. Prince Charles kicked-off the meeting focused on developing the intervention and methodology for testing it across the participating nations. Work continues to refine and test the intervention and to leverage funding for multinational studies.

## Honours Thesis Updates



**Dr. Colleen Carney**  
Undergraduate Thesis Director

An undergraduate thesis is a wonderful opportunity to get experience conducting independent research, as well as make contacts with professors who can write letters for graduate school applications or other future endeavors. If you are thinking of applying to graduate school, the thesis course is an important item for your graduate school application, so please consider applying. The Psychology Students' Association (PSA) held a thesis information event this past Fall that was well-attended. Thanks to the PSA for

organizing the event, as well as to Annabelle Torsein and Alexandra Irwin for providing their perspectives on getting into graduate school. To learn more about how to apply, please see: [www.ryerson.ca/psychology/undergraduate/thesis/](http://www.ryerson.ca/psychology/undergraduate/thesis/). The deadline for submitting your application is **April 8, 2016**, and you need your preferred supervisor to sign the form in advance of the deadline, so now is a good time to look at the application and start scheduling appointments with potential supervisors.

I am pleased to report that we have another stellar undergraduate thesis class this year, who have started their data collection and analyses this semester. The Department was treated to presentations of their proposals on November 25, 2015. Some of the highlights included studies concerning: the effects of dance on visual attention and processing speed, the role of emotion labelling in reducing emotional intensity, emotion-based factors and university students' attitudes about engaging in risky sexual behavior, an assessment of the framing effect and its influence on individual's decision-making in plea bargains, and the effects of dance on body satisfaction and quality of life for older adults with Parkinson's disease. I received many compliments about the sophistication of this year's proposals, and the caliber of presentation skills were also excellent. We are looking forward to seeing the final undergraduate thesis projects, which will be presented at our annual **Thesis Poster Day on April 8, 2016** (10am – noon) on the second floor of Psychology Research and Training Centre (105 Bond Street). Please save the date and come out to support our wonderful students.

## PGSA Update



Sofia Puente-Duran  
PGSA President

The **Psychology Graduate Students Association** (PGSA) has had an exciting, event-filled year, with many new initiatives! The PGSA had the pleasure to end finish up 2015 by hosting the *7th Annual Psychology Research Symposium* on October 30. This year's symposium showcased the growth and expansion of our department, by bringing together our psychology graduate students, staff, and faculty with the goal of highlighting current research being

conducted by graduate students in the Psychology Department. This year, we implemented a new strategy as a way to facilitate the dissemination of research that takes place in our labs. Instead of individual students presenting their research, as had typically occurred in the past, we invited representatives from several labs to speak as a group regarding the exciting research taking place in their labs. These "lab talks" provided an ideal setting for students to engage in formal discussion of research and share knowledge and expertise, as well as setting the stage for possible new cross-lab collaborations. This new initiative received overwhelmingly positive feedback! Additionally, our keynote speaker was Dr. Joel Katz, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Health Psychology at York University, who discussed his renowned research on the psychological, emotional, and biomedical factors involved in pain. Thanks to all who attended! We kicked off 2016 with a Welcome Back Holiday Event, which was a great opportunity for our diverse student body to chat over snacks and drinks.

Earlier this Winter term, the PGSA held elections for the new executive committee. Welcome and congratulations to the new PGSA executive council for the 2016-2017 academic year. They will begin their executive term this Spring!

### 2016-2017 PGSA Executive Council members:

**Jaclyn Ludmer** - President

**Stephanie Cosma** - Vice-President/Social-Coordinator

**Brittany Jamieson** - Secretary/Treasurer

**Ammaar Kidwai** - Clinical Representative-at-Large

**Zahra Vahedi** - Psychological Science Representative-at-Large

**Lillian Krantz** - PhD Student Representative

**Emily Thomas** - MA Student Representative

Thanks to the support of the psychology graduate department for the opportunity to have a tremendous year as the 2015-2016 PGSA executive committee, and sharing particularly meaningful and valuable experiences.

Don't forget to check us out online to keep up-to-date with PGSA's news and events, website: [psychlabs.ryerson.ca/pgsa](http://psychlabs.ryerson.ca/pgsa). Follow us on Instagram (@RyersonPGSA) and Twitter (@pgsa\_ryerson). Use the hashtag #PGSA when sharing photos of our events online!

## Psychology Graduate Students Win 6-Word Memoir Contest

Congratulations to **Jen Rouse** and **Marie Faaborg-Andersen**, who received first prize and third prize, respectively, in the Yeates School of Graduate Studies (YSGS) **6-Word Memoir Contest**. YSGS asked graduate students to answer the question, "What are the best things about being a grad student at Ryerson?" in six words. The contest was inspired by Ernest Hemmingway's 6-word short story, "For sale: baby shoes, never worn."

More than 300 entries were received from across the university, with the winners receiving \$500 (first prize), \$400 (2nd prize) or \$300 (third prize). The awards were celebrated at a special event on February 3, 2016.



YSGS Dean Jennifer Mactavish presents Jen Rouse with first prize for her 6-word memoir, "Big city, alone. Ryerson becomes home."



Marie Faaborg-Andersen and Dean Mactavish. Marie's winning entry: "Pioneering research in an urban paradise."



Dr. Janice Kuo

## Dr. Janice Kuo and Colleagues Test a New Abbreviated Treatment for Borderline Personality Disorder

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is a severe and complex mental health disorder characterized by extreme difficulties with emotion management and suicidal behaviours, thus making it one of the most difficult and expensive psychological disorders to treat. The *Borderline Personality Disorder & Emotion Processing Lab (BEP Lab)*, headed by **Dr. Janice Kuo**, has developed a program of research broadly aimed at identifying ways in which treatments for BPD can be made more effective and efficient.

**Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)**, a 1-year multimodal, intensive treatment, is currently considered the gold standard treatment for BPD. However, while the availability of DBT has expanded over the past decade, there remains a significant imbalance between its demand and the programs that are sufficiently resourced to offer the treatment. While briefer forms of DBT may enhance treatment access, its effectiveness is currently unknown. Thus, the *BEP Lab* has partnered with scientists from the *Centre for Addiction and Mental Health* (Dr. Shelley McMain) and *Simon Fraser University* (Dr. Alex Chapman) to launch the *FASTER* study, which compares the clinical and cost-effectiveness of 12-month standard DBT with 6-month standard DBT in a sample of 240 individuals with BPD and suicidal behaviours. Dr. Kuo and her collaborators expect that this study will have enormous practical value by informing whether an abbreviated version of DBT can be viable treatment alternative, thereby increasing accessibility and reducing costs and resources for the BPD population.

## Sexual Technologies are Shaping Sexual meanings, Messages and Practices



Dr. Maria Gurevich

The **SHiFT (Sexuality Hub: Integrating Feminist Theory) Lab** examines the cultural, medical and political forces that shape sexual norms and practices. A key focus is the role of specific sexual technologies — sexuopharmaceuticals, pornography, sexual expert advice, and penile rehabilitation techniques — in changing conceptions of sexual normalcy, health and satisfaction.

One current 3-year SSHRC funded project by **Dr. Maria Gurevich**, the lab director, examines the recreational use of sexuopharmaceuticals, such as Viagra. Marketing of the most recent drugs (e.g., Staxyn) emphasize safety and suitability for younger men without erectile dysfunction (ED), for whom stress is cited as contributing to erectile difficulty. As sexuopharmaceutical marketing expands the definition of ED and its intended users, these drugs are touted as performance and pleasure enhancers and as a preventative measure against sexual failures among younger men, as well as repairing relationships and bolstering masculinities. These promises are being taken up by young men (aged 17-30) without an ED diagnosis, whose recreational use is growing.

Phase 1 of this project addresses online popularized medical and pharmaceutical marketing representations of sexual enhancement medication (SEM). Phase 2, currently launching, focuses on interviews with recreational SEM users and their partners. Study 1, under review in *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, examined popularized medical web forum content pertaining to recreational use of SEM, with a particular emphasis on the discrepant representations of gay/bisexual men and straight users. Differential discourses of recreational SEM use emerged, reflecting hierarchies of respectability and responsibility, in both online forums and the empirical literature. Gay/bisexual SEM use is confined to a risk rhetoric, emphasizing stereotypical alignment of these men's sexuality with promiscuity, reckless excess, and disease. In contrast, straight men's use is framed as considered and legitimate, and driven by appropriate (heteronormative) motivations for socio-emotional health, and relationship improvement, stability and preservation.

Study 2, under review in *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, found that pharmaceutical industry promotion of SEM reinvigorates dominant discourses about normative masculinity norms using the rhetoric of modern and improved sexuality. The ideal targeted user is increasingly younger, and consumption of SEM is represented as achieving: elite status and exclusive pleasures; (natural) masculine authenticity and choice; egalitarian relationships and a contemporary urban, fast-paced life; and a prepared, proficient and romantic sexual partner status. Women are also increasingly used in promotional materials; their responsibility centers on coaching and coaxing potential SEM users.



Dr. Trevor Hart

## Trevor Hart Receives University-Wide Research Award

Congratulations to **Dr. Trevor Hart** who received the **2016 Ryerson Social Innovation and Action Award** at the Ryerson Awards Night on March 17, 2016. This university-wide award is given out annually to recognize a research project, typically with community partners, focused on advancing social goals. This award recognizes Dr. Hart's work on disseminating his research on an HIV prevention program he created and tested. This program, called **Gay Poz Sex**, is an HIV prevention and sexual health promotion program that is led by HIV-positive gay men who are facilitators of a group counselling intervention. Dr. Hart is Director of the *HIV Prevention Lab* in Ryerson's Psychology Department.



Dr. Frank Russo

## Frank Russo Receives Prestigious Early Career Award

**Dr. Frank Russo** has been named as the **2016** winner of the **International Commission of Acoustics Early Career Award**.

This prestigious recognition is accompanied by a cash prize and medal. The medal will be awarded at the International Congress of Acoustics, which takes place this September in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The award was modeled after the Fields Medal in Mathematics and has only been granted five times since its inception in 2004. Dr. Russo's award marks the first time that the medal has been granted to an individual hailing from the Americas or to an individual working outside of the core science and engineering disciplines that are commonly associated with acoustics. The award announcement can be found here: <http://www.icacommission.org>



# Ryerson Psychology @ Science Rendezvous 2016

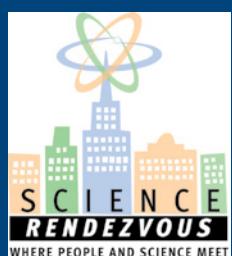
Join us at Yonge-Dundas Square for the 9th Annual Science Rendezvous – Canada's national celebration of science.

This free public event includes exciting research, hands-on activities, displays, stage shows, and much more. It's perfect for the whole family!

Visit the Psychology tent to meet professors, students and staff from Ryerson's Psychology Department, and engage with the sights and sounds that Psychology has to offer.

- Build your own neuron
- Interact with a physical model for neural communication
- See why sometimes you can't spot the difference
- Bamboozle your brain with visual illusions
- Test your ability to read vocal-facial emotions
- Test the limits of your own mind

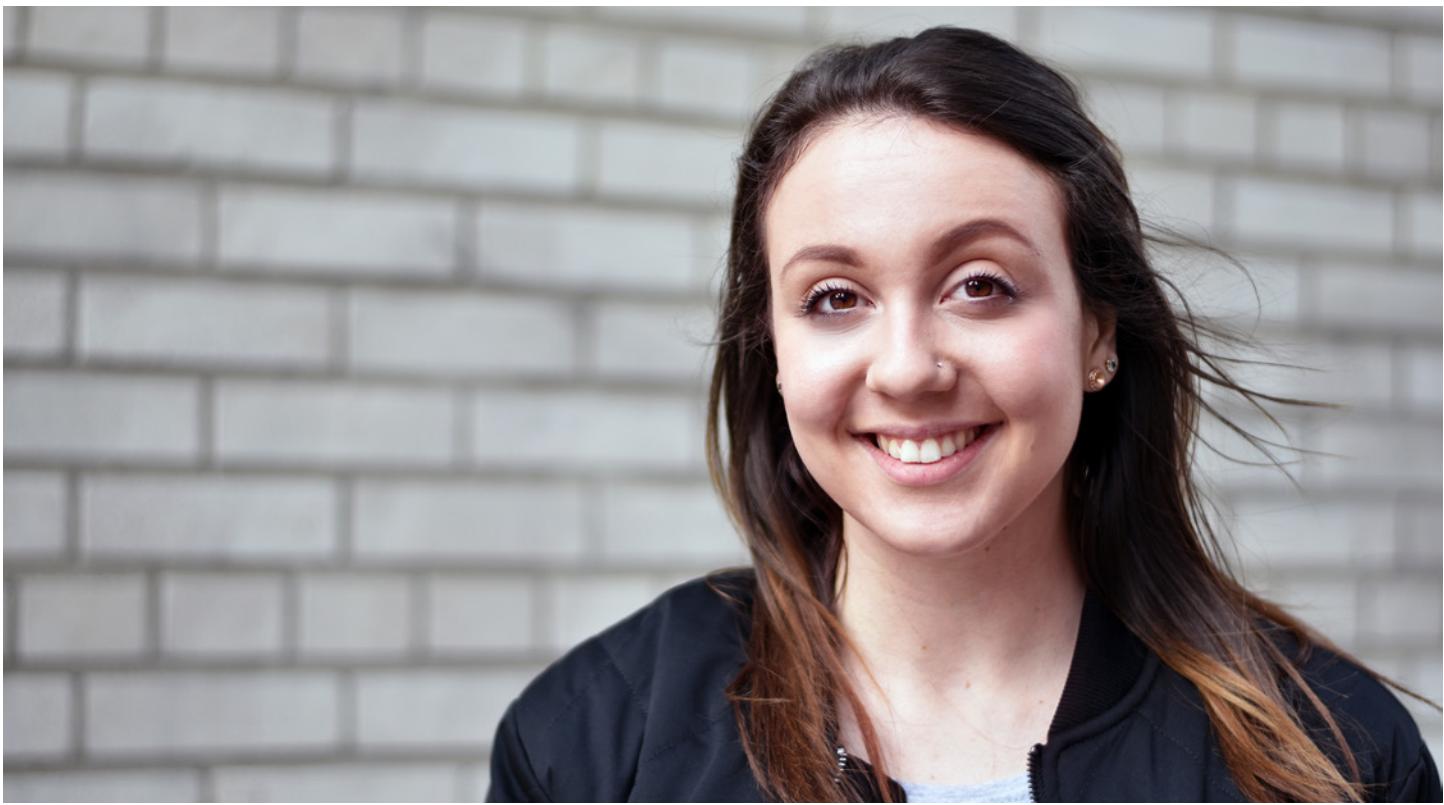
Plus much more!



**Science Rendezvous**  
**May 7, 2016, 10 am to 4 pm**  
**Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto**

[www.ryerson.ca/sciencerendezvous](http://www.ryerson.ca/sciencerendezvous)





Psychology BA student, Erica Naccarato, has worked with the Canadian Blood Services and Ryerson Rams to host two blood donation events on campus.

## Ryerson Psychology Undergraduates Making a Mark in the Community

Despite a heavy course load filled with readings, studying, essay writing, and little time to sleep, Ryerson Psychology undergrads are still finding time to contribute to an incredible range of causes. These are just some of the ways our hard-working students are showing their commitment to improving their community in Toronto and beyond.

Over the last 2 years, varsity volleyball player **Erica Naccarato** (4th year BA student), has worked with the Canadian Blood Services (CBS) and Ryerson Rams to host two blood donation events at the Mattamy Athletic Centre. This year, along with Dr. Winnie Ng (Chair in Social Justice and Democracy at Ryerson), the athlete teamed up with One Match and CBS to host a stem cell registry event at Ryerson with the goal of finding potential donors for cancer patients. The event was met with such success that they facilitated a second stem cell registry event in February 2016 to find a match for a 16-month-old boy with Chronic Granulomatous Disease.

Outside of her studies at Ryerson, **Kristy Milland** (3rd year BA student) works as a Community Manager of TurkerNation.com and advocate for the rights of digital workers on Amazon Mechanical Turk. In October 2015, she was invited by a Member of European Parliament to attend a conference in Brussels on Employment and Social Security in the Digital Single Market in Europe. At the meeting, Kristy co-led a workshop where she spoke about the difficulties of digital labour from the perspective of both the workers and the government.

Also heading overseas is **Kendi Kodra** (4th year BA student), who will be traveling to Lesvos, Greece in May 2016 to help Syrian refugees arriving into the country via boat. Through her travels, she hopes not only to offer

relief for incoming refugees by providing supplies and information, but also to raise awareness for the hardship Syrian refugees are facing.

Closer to home, **Stephanie Crlien** (1st year BA student) is coleading the Toronto Chapter of Project HEAL, a nonprofit organization that provides grant funding to individuals with eating disorders who cannot afford treatment in residential or inpatient facilities. The organization hosts events to raise funds, and in doing so, promote awareness of eating disorders. Stephanie hopes that in the coming years, she can recruit enough followers to form an official Ryerson-based group that will aim to reduce the community stigma of eating disorders.

In addition to these roles, several students have been volunteering in hospital settings. For example, **Domenica Fanelli** (3rd year BA student) donates her free time to Princess Margaret Cancer Centre by interacting with and navigating patients around the hospital. Efforts are also being focused in the mental health domain by **Jennifer Gould** (3rd year BA student) who volunteers in the Caritas School of Life drop-in mental health program and **Illara Tucci** (2nd year BA student) who helps run group therapy sessions at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). Serving more of an executive role, **Bridgette Piazza** (3rd year BA student) has been acting as the Sponsorship and Fundraising Chair of the Scarborough Young Philanthropists Council at the Scarborough Hospital Foundation.

This is just a small sample of the fantastic community efforts our highly motivated undergraduate psychology students are involved in. Keep up the good work!



Dr. Morton Beiser. Photo courtesy of David Donnelly/CBC Photo.

## Lending a Hand to Our Future: Documenting, Assessing and Treating Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Refugee Children and Youth.

Between 2008 and 2012, almost 2.3 million immigrants arrived in Canada, and one in five was 15 years old or younger. In addition, by the end of 2016, between 25,000 and 50,000 refugees from Syria will come to this country. Refugee children and youth are at high risk for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and related psychological distress, with rates ranging from 19 to 54% (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011). In response to these alarmingly high rates, *Ryerson Professor of Distinction in Psychology, Dr. Morton Beiser*, is leading **Lending a Hand to Our Future (LHOF)**, a partnership involving researchers, decision makers, practitioners, immigrant service agencies, and other community groups in Ontario.

LHOF is concerned with documenting, assessing, and treating PTSD in refugee children and youth. With Dr. Beiser's leadership, members of the LHOF partnership assess refugee children and youth for the presence of PTSD in brief, unobtrusive ways, and implement treatment for afflicted individuals using a brief, evidence-based, inexpensive procedure. Dr. Beiser and his colleagues are also evaluating the effectiveness of these treatments, and disseminating their findings across the country.

To date, LHOF has trained approximately 60 students from medicine, nursing, psychology, and other health-related areas in PTSD assessment and treatment. Of the approximately 600 children and youth who have been assessed to date, roughly half have PTSD. This partnership is a shining example of integration across disciplines, bringing together research, practice and planning. It holds out the potential for healthcare providers to offer almost immediate treatment to those who need it, while refining treatment approaches through empirical evaluation. LHOF also offers a way to expand the capacity of Ontario's health care system to respond to a considerable amount of unmet need at a relatively low cost.

The project is funded by the *Canadian Institutes for Health Research* and the *Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care*. In addition, *Ryerson's office of the Interim President and Vice-Chancellor*, **Dr. Mohamed Lachemi**, recently committed funding to Dr. Beiser and colleagues to develop online training for therapists in Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET) as part of the LHOF initiative.

# Psychology Doctoral Students Host Event on Refugee and Immigrant Mental Health

In November 2015, PhD students **Sofia Puente-Duran** and **Fiona Thomas** hosted a panel discussion titled, *Diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues among refugee and immigrant populations: Moving from research to practice*. The 2-hour event, funded by an *Educational Student Activity Grant* from the *Canadian Psychological Association* (CPA), brought together over 70 attendees from Ryerson University, other universities, and clinical settings, and included students, social workers, public health professionals, community members, as well as government workers. The panel included a dynamic group of speakers: Drs. Morton Beiser, Samuel Law, Athena Madan, and Ms. Sireesha Bobbili, and was comoderated by cross-cultural mental health experts, Drs. Claire Pain and Lisa Andermann. Combined, these speakers have worked in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and with various immigrant and refugee communities in Canada. Panelists shared their recent research and extensive clinical experiences of working with ethnically diverse individuals both in Toronto and internationally. Evaluation findings indicate that the event was well-received by attendees and that there is a desire for further training in this topic area.

## Follow-Up CPA Event Coming Soon...

In February 2016, it was announced that Ryerson Graduate Students were again successful in obtaining funding through the *CPA Educational Student Activity Grant* program. This newest grant was awarded to **Andrew Brankley**, **Danielle Loney**, and **Jessica Sutherland**. Their event is being planned for June 2016, and will provide networking opportunities for researchers, students, and professionals in Toronto with an interest in psychology, law, and criminal justice.



Sofia Puente-Duran and Fiona Thomas

## Recent Announcements, Awards and Other Contributions

**Drs. Martin Antony, Colleen Carney, Trevor Hart, and Candice Monson** were elected to Fellow status in the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, November 2015.

**Dr. Leslie Atkinson** was appointed Virtual Chair, Stage 1 review, Spring 2016 Project Scheme, CIHR.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** gave the keynote address “Canada has resettled refugees in a hurry before. How can we safeguard their mental health better this time?” at the fourth Annual CHEO Global Health Day: “Migrant Health,” Ottawa, Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario, November 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** gave a plenary address “Yes, they’re resilient, but New Canadian Kids can use help” at the Actua annual conference, January 2016.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was appointed as Scientist, Centre for Research on Inner City Health, Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, St. Michael’s Hospital, Toronto, ON, January 2016.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** consulted with the Premier of Ontario’s cabinet committee to make recommendations on Syrian refugee intake, Queen’s Park, January 2016.

**Dr. Trevor Hart** received the Ryerson Social Innovation & Action Award, 2016.

Best poster awards were received by **Jaclyn Ludmer** (first prize), **Alexandra Marquis** (second prize), and **Nicole Sugden** (third prize) at the Psychology Graduate Student Association (PGSA) Annual Research Symposium, October 2015.

**Dr. Candice Monson** gave an invited keynote address “Cognitive-behavioral conjoint therapy for PTSD: Harnessing the power of interpersonal relationships” at the annual meeting of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, New Orleans, LA, November 2015.

**Skye Stephens** was first place winner of a dissertation award from the American Psychology-Law Society (American Psychological Association, Division 41). She received the award at the society’s annual conference in Atlanta, March 2016.

A full list of announcements, awards, and other contributions will appear in our 2015-2016 Annual Research and Achievement Report, due to be published in Fall 2016.

# Psychology in the News

Some recent media appearances by members of the Psychology Department.

**Dr. Martin Antony** was interviewed for the Fall 2015 issue of *Esperanza Magazine* on the topic of anxiety and the holidays, November 2015.

**Dr. Martin Antony** was interviewed by *Canadian Press* on the topic of social anxiety and the holiday season, December 2015. The article appeared in at least 8 media outlets, including the *National Post* and *CTV News*.

**Dr. Martin Antony** was interviewed on the *Tim Denis Morning Show* (St. Catharines, ON) on the topic of social anxiety and the holidays, December 2015.

**Dr. Martin Antony** was interviewed on *CBC Radio (Metro Morning)* on the topic of stress in everyday life, January 2016.

**Dr. Martin Antony** was interviewed by *Vice Canada* on the topic of freezing during sexual assault, March 2016.

**Dr. Martin Antony** was interviewed for an online podcast (*Shellbreakers*) on the topic of perfectionism, January 2016.

**Rachel Bar** was quoted in the *Toronto Star* on research concerning the benefits of dance for dementia patients, November 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was quoted by *The Huffington Post* on the topic of Syrian refugee impact on Canada's economy, November 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was quoted by the *National Post* on the topic of logistical challenges of Syrian refugees in Canada, November 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was quoted by the *Ottawa Sun* on the topic of contributing to refugee mental health in Canada, November 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was quoted by *CBC News* on the topic of a Canadian pilot program to help Syrian Refugees with PTSD, December 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was interviewed by *CBC: The Morning Edition* on the topic of refugee resettlement and mental health issues, December 2015.

**Dr. Morton Beiser** was featured in a question and answer session on *CBC News* on the topic of Syrian refugee mental health and his pilot project to assess and treat PTSD among refugee children and youth, December 2015.

**Dr. Colleen Carney** was interviewed by *CityTV: Breakfast Television* on the reason we feel fatigued after daylight saving time changes, November 2015.

**Dr. Colleen Carney** was quoted by *The Inquisitr* on the topic of sleeping in separate beds as an answer to high divorce rates, December 2015.

**Dr. Colleen Carney** was quoted by *Global News* on the topic of scientific perspectives on what to eat for a good night's sleep, January 2016.

**Dr. Colleen Carney** was quoted by *Global News* on the topic of Daylight Savings Time, January 2016.

**Drs. Colleen Carney and Taryn Moss** were quoted in *The Independent* for an article on fear of the dark, February 2016.

**Dr. Colleen Carney** was interviewed by *Reader's Digest* for a story on 11 "harmless" habits that actually causing your insomnia, March 2016.

**Dr. Alexandra Fiocco** was quoted by *Baycrest News, Health Medicine Network, Med India, Science Daily, and Medical Xpress* on the topic of damaging effects of chronic stress and anxiety and how it can increase the risk for mental illness, January 2016.

**Dr. Trevor Hart** was interviewed by *CityNews* on the topic of HIV viral load and HIV serostatus disclosure, November 2015.

**Dr. Trevor Hart** was interviewed by *CityNews Toronto* on the topic of HIV myths and misconceptions, November 2015.

**Dr. Eric Hehman** was quoted by *Yahoo!* for an article on "the punchable face," February 2016.

**Dr. Kelly McShane** had an opinion piece published in *University Affairs* titled "Is interdisciplinary a field or skill?", September 2015.

**Dr. Frank Russo** was interviewed by *Click On Detroit* on the topic of Parkinson's research, October 2015.

**Dr. Frank Russo** was quoted by *Yahoo! Health* on the topic of what's happening in your brain and body when you listen to music, November 2015.

**Dr. Frank Russo** was interviewed on *Global TV News Hour* regarding sound levels in downtown Toronto, February 2016.

**Len Tooley** was quoted by *Metro News* in the article "Toronto AIDS Walk organizers urge Health Canada to approve new prevention drug," September 2015.

**Dr. John Turtle** was interviewed by *CBC Toronto News* on the topic of eyewitness testimony and the Jian Ghomeshi trial, February 2016.

**Andrew Waddling** was featured in the *Toronto Star* on the topic of high university tuition prices, January 2016.

**Ashley Ward** was featured on *CHCH TV (Hamilton)* for her contributions to a new Mission Services program to treat men with addictions, November 2015.

A full list of Psychology media interviews will appear in our 2015-2016 Annual Research and Achievement Report, due to be published in Fall 2016.



Left: RU Lifeline Syria Team Picture with PhD student, Fiona Thomas (top row, second from right). Right: PhD student, Ashley Ward, being interviewed by CHCH TV (Hamilton).

## Psychology Graduate Students Reach Far and Wide

Ryerson's graduate students in Psychology have somehow found time amongst their studies, clinical work, research practica, theses and dissertations to make an impact in a range of provincial, national, and international contexts. Whether it is working on refining oral examinations for prospective physicians, editing association newsletters, integrating evidence-based practices into mental health treatment facilities, or helping Syrian refugees; Ryerson psychology students have been there, lending a hand! Below is a selection of the many examples of Ryerson psychology graduate students' impact in their local and global communities.

- **Andrew Brankley** (PhD student) is a collaborator in research on sex offender risk assessment at the Ministry of Public Safety in Ottawa.
- **Skye Fitzpatrick** served as the graduate student representative for the Clinical Section Executive of the Canadian Psychological Association.
- **Jennifer Khoury** (PhD student) served as student representative for the Canadian Psychological Association.
- **Lillian Krantz** (MA student) serves as student representative for the Ontario Psychological Association.
- **Andrea Linett** (PhD student) is the co-editor for the Canadian Psychological Association's Clinical Section newsletter.

• **Skye Stephens** (PhD student) is a member of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers Public Policy and Student Committee and their Campus Sexual Assault Subcommittee.

• **Fiona Thomas** (PhD student) and **Sasha Mallya** (PhD student) are involved with Ryerson University's Lifeline Syria, helping support incoming Syrian refugee families. **Fiona Thomas** is also a committee member on the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture Board of Directors, where she advises on the development of mental health services for refugees in Toronto.

• **Annabelle Torsein** (MA student) sits on a committee for the College of Family Physicians of Canada working in simulated office oral examinations through a biopsychosocial lens.

• **Tyler Tulloch** (PhD student) served for 2 years as the student representative in the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Behavioral Medicine/Integrated Primary Care Special Interest Group.

• **Ashley Ward** (PhD student) works as the Clinical Services Development Consultant for Mission Services, a social service agency in Hamilton. In this role, Ashley works on improving client programming across the organization by bringing evidence based practices.

## Recent Research Grants

**Rachel Bar** (co-principal investigator) received a \$10,000 grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) to disseminate research supporting the benefits of dance for people with Parkinson's disease. Dr. Jennifer Lapum (School of Nursing) is co-principal investigator and **Dr. Michelle Dionne** is co-investigator.

**Dr. Tae Hart** (Co-Investigator) received a \$592,718 grant from the Canadian Cancer Scientific Research Institute to examine an enhanced genetic uptake program for Lynch Syndrome detection in women with endometrial and non-serous epithelial ovarian cancer.

**Dr. Eric Hehman** (principal investigator) received a \$6,500 Institutional Grant funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for the project "Dimensional fluidity: A first step toward a new model of person perception."

**Vivian Huang** received a Legacy Fund Travel Grant, Canadian Association on Gerontology.

**Vivian Huang** received a Student Local Interdisciplinary Network (LINK) Seed Grant in Aging, Canadian Association on Gerontology Student Connection.

**Dr. Frank Russo** (co-investigator) received a

\$99,600 (SGD) grant from the National Research Foundation of Singapore to conduct research towards a new multi sensory ear training platform for children with cochlear implants. Yi Wang is the principal investigator.

**Dr. Julia Spaniol** (co-investigator) received a \$20,000 grant from the Gambling Research Exchange Ontario to examine predictors of problem gambling among seniors in Ontario. Jolynn Pek (York University) is the principal investigator.

*A full list of grants received will appear in our 2015-2016 Annual Research and Achievement Report, due to be published in Fall 2016.*

# Selected Recent Publications

**Morton Beiser, Sofia Puente-Duran, & Hou, F.** (2015). Cultural distance and emotional problems among immigrant and refugee youth in Canada: Findings from the New Canadian Child and Youth Study (NCCYS). *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 49, 33-45.

**Morton Beiser, & Hou, F.** (in press). Mental health effects of pre-migration trauma and post-migration discrimination on refugee youth in Canada. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*.

**Amy Brown-Bowers, Kelly McShane, Wilson-Mitchell, K., & Maria Gurevich** (2015). Postpartum depression in refugee and asylum-seeking women in Canada: A critical health psychology perspective. *Health*, 19, 318-335.

**Cantor, J.M., Lafaille, S.J., Soh, D.W., Moayedi, M., Mikulis, D.J., & Todd A. Girard** (2015). Diffusion tensor imaging of pedophilia. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 44, 2161-2172.

**Becky L. Choma, Haji, R., Hodson, G., & Hoffarth, M.** (in press). Avoiding cultural contamination: Intergroup disgust sensitivity and religious identification as predictors of interfaith threat, interfaith attitudes and Islamophobia. *Personality and Individual Differences*.

**Cassandra J. Crangle, Latini, D.L., & Tae L. Hart** (in press). The effects of attachment and outness on illness adjustment among gay men with prostate cancer. *Psycho-Oncology*.

**David M. Day, Holly A. Wilson, Bodwin, K., & Candice M. Monson** (in press). Change in Level of Service Inventory—Ontario Revised (LSI-OR) risk scores over time: An examination of overall growth curves and subscale-dependent growth curves. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*.

**Fredman, S.J., Phillippe Shnaider, Pentel, K.Z., & Candice M. Monson** (2015). Cognitive behavioral couple therapy for the treatment of relationship distress. In T.J. Petersen, S. Sprich, & S. Wilhelm (Eds.), *The Massachusetts General Hospital handbook of cognitive behavioral therapy* (pp. 277-287). New York, NY: Humana Press.

**Sara N. Gallant** (2016). Mindfulness meditation practice and executive functioning: Breaking down the benefit. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 40, 116-130.

**Trevor A. Hart**, Rotondi, N.K., Souleymanov, R., & Brennan, D. (2015). Psychometric properties of the Social Appearance Anxiety Scale among Canadian gay and bisexual men of color. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*, 2, 470-481.

**Jennifer E. Khoury, Gonzalez, A., Levitan, R., Masellis, M., Basile, V., & Leslie Atkinson** (in press). Maternal cortisol levels moderate the relation between maternal depressive symptoms and infant cortisol levels. *Infant Mental Health Journal*.

**Jennifer E. Khoury & Karen Milligan** (in press). Comparing executive functioning in children and adolescents with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Attention Disorders*.

**Kirchberger, M., & Frank A. Russo** (2016). Harmonic frequency lowering: Effects on the perception of music detail and sound quality. *Trends in Amplification*, 20, 1-12.

**Kirstyn L. Krause & Martin M. Antony** (in press). Treatment of anxiety and obsessive-compulsive related disorders. In S.G. Hofmann (Ed.), *Clinical psychology: A global perspective*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

**Sasha Mallya & Alexandra J. Fiocco** (in press). Effects of mindfulness training on cognition and wellbeing in healthy older adults. *Mindfulness*.

**Kyla P. McDonald & Lili Ma** (2015). Dress nicer = know more? Young children's knowledge attribution and information seeking based on how others dress. *PLoS ONE*, 10: e0144424.

**Silveira, P.P., Gaudreau, H., Leslie Atkinson, Fleming, A.S., Sokolowski, M.B., Steiner, M., Kennedy, J.L., Meaney, M.J., Levitan, R.D., & Dubé, L.** (in press). Genetic differential susceptibility to socio-economic status and childhood obesogenic behavior: Why targeted prevention may be the best societal investment. *JAMA Pediatrics*.

**Taft, C.T., Macdonald, A., Creech, S.K., Candice M. Monson, & Murphy, C.M.** (in press). A randomized controlled clinical trial of the Strength at Home Men's Program for partner violence in military veterans. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*.

**Elizabeth J. Pawluk & Naomi Koerner**. (in press). The relationship between negative urgency and generalized anxiety disorder symptoms: The role of intolerance of negative emotions and intolerance of uncertainty. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*.

**Rondina, R., Olsen, R. K., McQuiggan, D., Fatima, Z., Lingqian Li, Oziel, E., Meltzer, J. A., & Ryan, J. D.** (in press). Age-related changes to oscillatory dynamics in hippocampal and neocortical networks. *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*.

**Frank A. Russo, Thompson, W. F., & Cuddy, L. L.** (2015). Effects of emergent-level structure on melodic processing difficulty. *Music Perception*, 33, 96-109.

**Philippe Shnaider, Nicole D. Pukay-Martin, Shankari Sharma, Jenzer, T., Fredman, S.J., Macdonald, A., & Candice M. Monson**. (in press). A preliminary examination of the effects of pre-treatment relationship satisfaction on treatment outcomes in cognitive-behavioral conjoint therapy for PTSD. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*, 4, 229-238.

**Skye Stephens, Michael C. Seto, Alasdair M. Goodwill, & Cantor, J.M.** (in press). Victim choice polymorphism and recidivism among sexual offenders. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*.

**Fiona C. Thomas, Jordans, M.J.D., Reis, R., de Jong, J., & Tol, W.** (in press). Emic perspectives on the impact of armed conflict on children's mental health in Northern Sri Lanka. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*.

**Amelia M. Usher, Kelly E. McShane, & Dwyer, C.** (2015). A realist review of family-based interventions for children of substance abusing parents. *Systematic Reviews*, 4, 177.

**Wilkinson, A.J., & Lixia Yang** (2016). Inhibition plasticity in older adults: Practice and transfer effects using a multiple task approach. *Neural Plasticity*, Volume 2016, Article ID 9696402, 12 pages.

**Ryan S. Williams, Biel, A.L., Pete Wegier, Leann K. Lapp, Ben J. Dyson & Julia Spaniol** (2016). Age differences in the Attention Network Test: Evidence from behavior and event-related potentials. *Brain and Cognition*, 102, 65-79.

**Richard J. Zeifman, Atkey, S.K., Young, R.E., Flett, G.L., Hewitt, P.L., & Goldberg, J.O.** (2015). When ideals get in the way of self-care: Perfectionism and self-stigma for seeking psychological help among high school students. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 30, 273-287.

**Westra, H.A., Constantino, M.J., & Martin M. Antony** (in press). Integrating motivational interviewing with cognitive-behavioral therapy for severe generalized anxiety disorder: An allegiance-controlled randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*.

**Zhang, M. W., Ho, R. C., Stephanie E. Cassin, & Sockalingam, S.** (2015). Online and smartphone based cognitive behavioural therapy for bariatric surgery patients: Initial pilot study. *Technology and Health Care*, 23, 737-744.

A full list of publications will appear in our 2015-2016 Annual Research and Achievement Report, due to be published in Fall 2016.



Graduate student Bailee Malivoire (centre) and undergraduate thesis student Ashley Ferkul (right) are conducting research with Dr. Todd Girard (left, from behind) on the relations between regional grey matter concentrations in the brain and clinical symptoms among those with posttraumatic stress and those with psychosis.

## Cutting Edge Research from the Brain Imaging and Memory Lab on the Brain, Cognition and Mental Illness

Research in the **Brain Imaging and Memory (BIM) Lab** focuses on memory and medial-temporal lobe (MTL) function. Central themes are that memory is not a unitary construct and components of the MTL are neither homogenous nor isolated brain structures. Recent projects investigate memory for spatial locations and routes, words, pictures, events, and autobiographical details, as well as mnemonic processes including pattern separation and completion, recollection and familiarity, and associative novelty. Specific studies target how task performance relates to strategy use, meta-mnemonic operations, emotional and self-referential processing, cognitive biases, and context. This work aims to better understand relations among the brain, neurocognitive abilities, and clinical symptoms.

For example, building on a recent collaboration with the **IMPACT Lab** demonstrating differential brain activation among subregions of the amygdala in posttraumatic stress disorder, current investigation is exploring the relations between regional brain integrity and responses to trauma across time. In addition, building on recent demonstrations of specific deficits in spatial memory related to strategy selection and hippocampal dysfunction in schizophrenia, current research assesses related brain correlates of functional disability in patients. Newer lines of investigation question the nature of autobiographical memory deficits associated with depression. These studies ultimately hold implications for enhancing everyday functioning in people coping with various forms of mental illness.

## QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

For questions or comments regarding content or submissions for future editions, please feel free to contact us:

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Danielle MacDonald



Skye Fitzpatrick

## Danielle MacDonald Receives International Award

Congratulations to PhD student, **Danielle MacDonald** on receiving the **Virginia A. Roswell Dissertation Award** from the *Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT)*. The prize was awarded at the annual meeting of ABCT in Chicago, November 2015. Danielle's research is on an adjunctive cognitive-behavioural intervention designed to promote rapid response to intensive treatment for individuals with bulimia nervosa and purging disorder. Danielle is currently completing her predoctoral internship at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, and completing her dissertation work under the supervision of Drs. Michelle Dionne and Traci McFarlane (UHN). The Virginia A. Roswell Dissertation Award, which includes a monetary award, is given to one individual each year, based on the student's dissertation research.

## Skye Fitzpatrick Wins Prestigious Research Award

Clinical Psychology PhD student **Skye Fitzpatrick** was recently awarded the **2015 Dissertation Research Award** from the *American Psychological Association (APA)*. This prestigious award recognizes doctoral research that reflects excellence in scientific psychology across Canada and the United States. Skye will be using this award to fund her dissertation research, which aims to identify which strategies are optimal under differing conditions in reducing negative emotional intensity in borderline personality disorder. Skye is currently completing her PhD under the supervision of Dr. Janice Kuo in the Borderline Personality Disorder and Emotion Processing (BEP) Lab. Congratulations, Skye!

