

June 15, 2020

Dear Department of Psychiatry Faculty and Staff,

As a Department, our research mission is to improve mental health across the lifespan through prevention, early identification, and state of the art treatment of psychiatric disorders. To reach these goals, our faculty have been actively engaged in basic and clinical research aimed at understanding both risk for developing illness and the underlying mechanisms associated with psychiatric disorders.

The success of our department investigators is reflected by the significant number of funding awards received since January 2020, totaling \$6,799,319. The awards are sponsored by a variety national and local institutes and organizations.

The newly received grants will allow us to further develop programs on early intervention for depression and anxiety, genetic risk for psychiatric disorders, identification of neurobiologic markers for illness, and development of novel treatment approaches. The funding will also enable programmatic expansion for studies on pain management and opioid misuse, emotion regulation and mood disorders, advanced genetic analysis of suicide risk, evaluation of programs on suicide prevention, and the impact of COVID-19 on mental health and well-being.

Below you will find details of the funding that has been received January – May 2020. Moving forward, we will announce funding awards on a monthly basis.

We recognize and appreciate the recent efforts of our researchers, their teams, and research administration.

Sincerely,

**Deborah Yurgelun-Todd, PhD**

*Professor and Vice Chair for Research  
Department of Psychiatry  
Director, Neuroscience Initiative  
University of Utah*

## RESEARCH FUNDING SUMMARY OF AWARDS JANUARY THRU MAY 2020

*\*Click on investigator name to jump to specific funding information*

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)	SPONSOR	AWARDED AMOUNT	FUNDING START DATE	FUNDING END DATE
<a href="#">Bakian, Amanda</a>	VPR Interdisciplinary Seed Grant, University of Utah	\$49,859	05/15/2020	05/14/2021
<a href="#">Bakian, Amanda</a> <a href="#">Gray, Douglas</a>	Undisclosed	\$40,000	06/01/2020	05/31/2021
<a href="#">Coon, Hilary</a>	Huntsman Mental Health Institute	\$324,400	01/01/2020	12/31/2020
<a href="#">Coon, Hilary</a>	National Institute of Mental Health	\$381,346	04/01/2020	01/31/2021
<a href="#">DiBlasi, Emily</a>	Brain & Behavior Research Foundation	\$70,000	01/01/2020	12/31/2020
<a href="#">Kanekar, Shami</a>	School of Medicine – Funding Incentive Seed Grant	\$50,000	03/01/2020	02/28/2021
<a href="#">Kim, Joseph</a>	NIH, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences	\$29,544	03/01/2020	02/28/2021
<a href="#">Kim, Joseph</a>	The Immunology, Inflammation, and Infectious Disease (3i) Initiative & Office of the Vice President for Research	\$25,000	05/01/2020	04/30/2021
<a href="#">Kious, Brent</a>	Greenwall Foundation	\$424,296	07/01/2020	06/30/2023
<a href="#">Kondo, Douglas</a>	University of Utah Research Foundation	\$18,000	05/01/2020	04/30/2021
<a href="#">Langenecker, Scott</a>	King's College	\$15,370	01/01/2020	12/31/2020
<a href="#">Langenecker, Scott</a>	Utah State Board of Education	\$770,000	03/01/2020	06/30/2021

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PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)	SPONSOR	AWARDED AMOUNT	FUNDING START DATE	FUNDING END DATE
<a href="#">Love, Tiffany</a>	VPR Interdisciplinary Seed Grant, University of Utah	\$30,000	05/15/2020	05/14/2021
<a href="#">McGlade, Erin</a>	Game Culture Foundation	\$57,270 (Year 2)	N/A	N/A
<a href="#">McIntosh, J. Michael</a>	NIH, National Institutes of General Medical Sciences	\$449,875 (Year 1/5)	04/01/2020	01/31/2021
<a href="#">McIntosh, J. Michael</a>	NIH, National Institutes of General Medical Sciences	\$43,599	04/01/2020	03/31/2025
<a href="#">Renshaw, Perry</a> <a href="#">Yurgelun-Todd, Deborah</a>	NIH, National Institute of Drug Abuse	\$2,729,308 (Year 1/7)	04/15/2020	03/31/2027
<a href="#">Shabalin, Andrey</a>	Brain & Behavior Research Foundation	\$70,000	01/01/2020	12/31/2020
<a href="#">Welsh, Robert</a>	University of Utah Seed Grant	\$25,000	05/01/2020	04/30/2021

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Bakian, Amanda		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> VPR Interdisciplinary Seed Grant, University of Utah		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$49,859	<b>START DATE:</b> 05/15/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 05/14/2020
<b>TITLE:</b> Defining Opioid Exposure as a Critical Risk Factor for Suicide Death		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> The opioid epidemic and rising rates of suicide deaths are related public health crises that are of critical national importance. Our study aims to accurately identify and characterize opioid exposure among Utah suicide deaths. We will test for differences in individual and familial-level characteristics in opioid-related suicides vs. opioid-related controls and opioid-related suicides vs. non-opioid related suicides. The impact of our research will be to improve our understanding of the role of opioids in suicide in Utah.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Bakian, Amanda & Gray, Douglas		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Undisclosed		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$40,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 06/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 05/31/2021
<b>TITLE:</b>	A Proposal to Determine the Effectiveness of the Hope4Utah Program: A School-Based Suicide Intervention	
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Although numerous school-based suicide intervention programs exist, their effectiveness has not been well investigated. The Hope4Utah program was established in 1999 and is one Utah's original school-based suicide prevention programs. The goal of our study to conduct a comprehensive analysis on Hope4Utah's effectiveness at reducing suicide ideation, attempts, and deaths among Utah youth.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Coon, Hilary		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Huntsman Mental Health Institute		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$324,400	<b>START DATE:</b> 01/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 12/31/2020
<b>TITLE:</b> Discovery of Genetic Risk for Suicide Using WGS		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Identify suicide deaths uniquely prioritized for high genetic risk using familial risk statistics from Utah Population Database genealogical data dating to the 1800s. Generate comprehensive whole genome sequence data on these cases to discover risk variants, genes, and gene pathways. Determine demographic and diagnostic associations with genetic sequence risk.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Coon, Hilary		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> National Institute of Mental Health		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$381,346	<b>START DATE:</b> 04/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 01/31/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Genetic Risk Discovery in a Population-Based Resource of 10,000 Suicide Deaths with DNA		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Engage in biospecimen collection from Utah suicide deaths (&gt;3,500 additional DNAs for a total of 10,000; collection and banking of new skin biopsies for a total of 6,500; collection and banking of brain tissue blocks from ~30 suicides and ~30 controls per year). Link suicide deaths and Utah population controls to comprehensive phenotype data in the Utah Population Database. Pursue focused genetic analyses of familial risk subtypes determined through extensive electronic health data in relatives of suicide deaths; Contribute to consortium collaborative studies.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> DiBlasi, Emily		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Brain & Behavior Research Foundation		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$70,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 01/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 12/31/2020
<b>TITLE:</b> The Role of Structural Variants in Risk of Suicide Death		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Genetic studies have greatly improved our understanding of the biological basis of suicide risk yet only a fraction of genetic variation influencing suicide risk has been accounted for. Dr. DiBlasi's project funded through the 2019 Brain &amp; Behavior Research Foundation Young Investigator Grant (NARSAD) will test the hypothesis that rare structural variants contribute to risk of suicide death using the large and unique genetic dataset and resources available in the Utah Suicide Genetic Risk Study (USGRS). She will compare USGRS data to a recent, very large control resource for over 10,000 structural variants matched for ancestry.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Kanekar, Shami		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> School of Medicine – Funding Incentive Seed Grant		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$50,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 03/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 02/28/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Sex-Based Study of Cyclocreatine as a Potential Therapeutic for Altitude-Related Depression and Anxiety		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Living at altitude is linked to increased depression, anxiety and greater treatment-resistance to antidepressants, which may contribute to the higher suicide rates noted at altitude. Using a novel translational animal model, we propose to study the potential of the bioenergetic compound cyclocreatine towards restoring the brain bioenergetic deficit linked to living at altitude and thereby improving altitude-related depression and anxiety.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Kim, Joseph		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> NIH, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$29,544	<b>START DATE:</b> 03/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 02/28/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Affect Control Functions of the Prefrontal Cortex		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> This study utilizes transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) techniques to probe frontal lobe function, with key implications for psychiatric and neurological disorders impacted by emotion regulation difficulties. The long-term goal of this research is to develop novel treatment targeting specific brain deficits associated with emotion regulation disorders.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Kim, Joseph		
<b>SPONSOR:</b>	The Immunology, Inflammation, and Infectious Disease (3i) Initiative & Office of the Vice President for Research	
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$25,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 05/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 04/30/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Psychological Impact of Social Isolation in Older Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Ecological Momentary Assessment Study		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> In this study, potential mental health consequences of social isolation in the aging population are examined by deploying mobile phone surveys to older adults who are disproportionately impacted by loneliness and isolation. Risk factors and resiliency factors will be examined as variables that potentially moderate the impact of social isolation on emotion regulation and mental well-being.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Kious, Brent		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Greenwall Foundation		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$424,296	<b>START DATE:</b> 07/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 06/30/2023
<b>TITLE:</b> Physician Aid-in-dying, Suffering, and Psychiatry		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> An increasing number of states in the U.S. allow aid-in-dying for persons with terminal illnesses. A variety of ethical theorists have asked whether aid-in-dying for persons suffering primarily from psychiatric illnesses should not also be permitted. This multipart project examines the ethics of aid-in-dying for persons with psychiatric illnesses, the assessment of suffering in those with psychiatric and terminal illnesses and its role in justifying a, and the potential effects of permitting aid-in-dying on the risks of suicide and self-stigma for persons with psychiatric illnesses.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Kondo, Douglas		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> University of Utah Research Foundation		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$18,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 05/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 04/30/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> COVID-19: Peripheral Hypoxia		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Seed grant funding from the University of Utah Research Foundation for special emphasis: emerging COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 research. This project proposes to examine peripheral hypoxia inducible factor-1 and in vivo brain energy metabolism in both asymptomatic patients and those presenting with severe symptoms.</p>		



<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Langenecker, Scott		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> King's College		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$15,370	<b>START DATE:</b> 01/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 12/31/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Integrating NIMH Research Domain Criteria (RDoC) into Assessing Depression in the TENDAI Study		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Adherence to HIV antiviral medication regimens is much lower in those who have comorbid mood disorders. The MEND2 team will assist colleagues in Zimbabwe in understanding how depression treatment will increase adherence and what cognitive skills predict better outcomes.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Langenecker, Scott		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Utah State Board of Education		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$770,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 03/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 06/30/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> SafeUT		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Suicide is the leading cause of death for youth in Utah. The SafeUT crisis text messaging application is Utah's signature effort to address this pressing public health problem. The Utah State Board of Education has provided funding for Drs. Langenecker and Kious, the lead investigators of the SafeUT Research and Quality Improvement Program (ReQuIP), to evaluate the effectiveness and increase the quality of the SafeUT app, by assessing user satisfaction, barriers to use, effectiveness of SafeUT chats, geo-spatial analysis of suicide losses, and the frequency of suicide crises averted.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Love, Tiffany		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> VPR Interdisciplinary Seed Grant, University of Utah		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$30,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 05/15/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 05/14/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Neural Mechanisms and Predictors of Treatment Response in Opioid Misuse		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> This project will utilize functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to explore the neurobiological mechanisms which support and predict successful treatment from co-occurring opioid misuse and chronic pain with an innovative behavioral intervention, Mindfulness-Oriented Recovery Enhancement (MORE).</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> McGlade, Erin		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Game Culture Foundation		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$57,270 (YEAR 2)	<b>START DATE:</b> N/A	<b>END DATE:</b> N/A
<b>TITLE:</b> Multimodal Neuroimaging and Neural Substrates of Internet Gaming Disorder		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> In 2018, the World Health Organization declared Internet Gaming Disorder a significant issue, including it in the ICD-11 manual. Prior research has identified functional brain differences between individuals who play video games extensively and those who do not. The current study is further characterizing neurobiological and clinical differences in individuals who play video games compared to those who do not. Study findings will systematically identify neural substrates related to excessive video gaming and their association with mood and anxiety symptoms.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> McIntosh, J. Michael		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> NIH, National Institutes of General Medical Sciences		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$449,875 (YEAR 1/5)	<b>START DATE:</b> 04/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 01/31/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> Development and Application of Nicotinic Acetylcholine Receptor Targeted Peptides for Biomedical Research		
<b>SUMMARY:</b> The purpose of this research program is to develop Conus as a sophisticated resource for study of nicotinic acetylcholine receptors. We will exploit the resulting compounds to help develop alternatives to opioids for the treatment of chronic pain.		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> McIntosh, J. Michael		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> NIH, National Institutes of General Medical Sciences		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$43,599	<b>START DATE:</b> 04/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 01/31/2025
<b>TITLE:</b> Administrative Supplements for Equipment - Purification System		
<b>SUMMARY:</b> Supplemental funding to purchase equipment.		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Renshaw, Perry & Yurgelun-Todd, Deborah		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> NIH, National Institute of Drug Abuse		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$2,729,308 (YEAR 1/7)	<b>START DATE:</b> 04/15/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 03/31/2027
<b>TITLE:</b> 1/21 ABCD-USA Consortium: Research Project Site at U Utah		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> The objective of the ABCD consortium is to establish a national, multisite, cohort and database by studying youth prospectively in order to examine brain and cognitive development from childhood through adolescence. A representative community sample of 11,900 children has been enrolled across the ABCD Consortium. All participants undergo comprehensive assessments, including state-of-the-art brain imaging using magnetic resonance imaging, neuropsychological testing, bioassays, mobile activity monitoring, and careful assessment of environment, psychopathological symptoms, substance use, and social functioning. The goal of the study is to identify both biological and environmental factors that contribute normative developmental trajectories and to risk profiles for neuropsychiatric disorders.</p>		

<b>INVESTIGATOR(S):</b> Shabalin, Andrey		
<b>SPONSOR:</b> Brain & Behavior Research Foundation		
<b>AMOUNT:</b> \$70,000	<b>START DATE:</b> 01/01/2020	<b>END DATE:</b> 12/31/2021
<b>TITLE:</b> A Methylation Study of Suicide Death		
<p><b>SUMMARY:</b> Conduct a methylome wide association study of suicide. I will search for epigenetic markers of suicide in both the bulk blood tissue and individual blood cell types. and then contrast results with those for schizophrenia and depression. This study has potential to reveal novel targets for early detection and intervention.</p>		

**INVESTIGATOR(S):** Welsh, Robert**SPONSOR:** University of Utah Seed Grant**AMOUNT:** \$25,000**START DATE:** 05/01/2020**END DATE:** 04/30/2021**TITLE:** Minority Health Disparities and Health Information During The COVID-19 Pandemic

**SUMMARY:** Dr. Welsh's MIND Lab at the University of Utah is coordinating with the Utah Department of Health Office of Health Disparities to better understand how minorities receive health information about COVID-19. This project will monitor, through survey research, how information is received, and how individuals are understanding and implementing CDC and UDOH guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic.