

Current and Past Trainees



Christina Pereira

I am a graduate student at U of T's Institute of Medical Science, working in the General Adult Psychiatry and Health Systems Division under the supervision of Drs. Stefan Kloiber and Isabelle Boileau at the Brain Health Imaging Centre. My research focuses on using PET and fMRI to examine how the endocannabinoid system is involved in social anxiety disorder and the regulation of social stress.

The most rewarding part of my research is being able to build my knowledge of the field knowing that one day my work will add to our understanding of the brain and mental health conditions.



Megan Mio

I recently completed my doctoral training at the Centre for Youth Bipolar Disorder and the University of Toronto, Department of Pharmacology, supervised by Dr. Benjamin Goldstein. I am interested in the intersection between mood disorders and risk for cardiovascular disease, and ultimately how to integrate vascular measures into the conceptualization, monitoring and treatment of mood disorders. My thesis focused on a novel type of retinal vascular imaging, which is new to psychiatry and has never been studied in any youth psychiatric population. It was incredibly rewarding to spearhead a new line of work, successfully defend my thesis and see some of this work published in the *Journal of Affective Disorders*!



Carolin Kilian

I joined the Institute for Mental Health Policy Research in May 2022 as a post-doctoral research fellow working with independent scientist Dr. Charlotte Probst. My research focuses on modelling alcohol policy effects across socioeconomic groups to reduce social inequalities in alcohol-related harms.

One of the things I enjoy most about my work is being part of a team researching topical and highly relevant questions, while having the opportunity to learn something new every day.



Victoria Armineh Babikian

I wear several hats — I am a research trainee at the Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre supervised by Dr. Yani Hamdani, an occupational therapist, the founding director of a nonprofit organization called Therapists for Armenia, and an international PhD student at the University of Toronto (U of T) studying rehabilitation sciences and global health. My research is related to disability inclusion and health equity in partnership with self-advocates across international contexts. I am passionate about making the world a more inclusive place. I recently presented my doctoral work at the Nordic Network of Disability Research Conference in Iceland, as well as the U of T Rehabilitation Sciences Institute Research Day where I was awarded one of the people's choice best oral presentation awards!



Jenny Lepock

I received my doctorate in Medical Sciences from the University of Toronto where I successfully discovered that the N400 event-related potential response — a measure of semantic priming and meaningful context integration — is abnormal in persons at clinical high risk for psychosis, as it is in schizophrenia. I am currently in my third year of a postdoctoral fellowship with the Slight Family Centre for Youth in Transition and a psychiatrist in the Schizophrenia Division at CAMH. I am supervised by Dr. Michael Kiang.

I recently published an article in the *European Journal of Neuroscience* entitled “N400 event-related brain potential index of semantic processing and two-year clinical outcomes in persons at high risk for psychosis: A longitudinal study.” Our findings suggest that the N400 ERP may be valuable primarily as a state or short-term prognostic biomarker for real-world functional impairment in those at high risk for psychosis.



Kosar Teymouri

I am a second-year master's student at CAMH, Tanenbaum Center for Pharmacogenetics, supervised by Dr. James L. Kennedy. My research is focused on the complement C4 gene and its association with the clinical subtypes of schizophrenia. I think the most rewarding part about my research is the feeling I get when I finish analyzing my data, lean back and look at my results and try to interpret them. Because this is when I get most excited to be part of a collaboration of researchers that are working hard to solve the mystery of this complex illness. I just presented my research at three conferences in three different cities as a poster, oral presentation and symposium. I have fallen so much in love with research that I am in the process of transferring to a PhD!



Alysha A. Sultan

I graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with an Honours BSc degree in Psychology and the University of Toronto with a PhD in Pharmacology and Toxicology. My PhD focused on the neurostructural and neurofunctional correlates of cannabis use in adolescents with bipolar disorder. My post-doc is at the Centre for Youth and Bipolar Disorder, supervised by Dr. Benjamin Goldstein. It builds upon my PhD research and focuses on genetic factors of cannabis use in relation to neurostructural and neurofunctional correlates in adolescents with bipolar disorder. The possibility of making a positive impact and helping future generations through my research is very motivating and rewarding for me.



Chloe Lau

I completed my PhD in Clinical Psychology at the University of Western Ontario and psychology residency at the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences. During my PhD, I studied at the University of Zurich and the University of Florence to conduct cross-cultural research with international researchers.

During my PhD, I had the opportunity to co-author 32 peer-reviewed journal articles, four chapters, and over 40 refereed conference presentations. I developed two novel mental health screening algorithms currently employed across 90 mental health agencies. With CIHR postdoctoral funding, I aspire to learn from the brilliant minds at CAMH at the Campbell Family Mental Health Research Institute/Clinical Research, under the supervision of Dr. Lena Quilty!



Gil Angela Dela Cruz

I am a second year Masters Student at the Institute of Medical Sciences, University of Toronto and the Centre for Complex Interventions at CAMH. I am supervised by Dr. David Castle. When I first started out, I had serious imposter syndrome and really did not want to admit when I did not know how to do something. I would spend hours trying to figure things out on my own, when in fact I had such a wonderful team to help me out and guide me during this learning opportunity. My advice to those beginning their research training is do not be afraid to ask questions when you need to! You have so many resources available to you, and sometimes you just have to ask. If you do not know where to start, talk with your supervisor!



Kody Kennedy

I completed my PhD at the Centre for Youth Bipolar Disorder, under the supervision of Dr. Benjamin Goldstein, where I am currently a scientific associate. My research focuses on the vascular-bipolar connection and understanding the underlying mechanisms that contribute to the excessive rates of cardiovascular disease among individuals with psychiatric disorders.

I was recently honored to receive a junior investigator award from the International Society of Bipolar Disorders for my research using cardiac MRI to measure cardiac microvessel function and structure in youth with bipolar disorder. I hope to continue and extend this research to include other psychiatric disorders.