2018 May Commencement - our newest PhD's

Left to right:
Jaclyn Weisman, Anna Hood, Associate Professor Tom Rodebaugh, Professor Desiree White, Associate Professor Josh Jackson, Associate Professor Lori Markson, Hyesung Hwang, Professor Tom Oltmanns, Juliette McClendon-Iacovino, Jihyun Suh, Professor Richard Abrams, Christina Di Iorio, Associate Professor Ryan Bogdan

Jay Pratt, PhD ’96 - Department of Psychology, University of Toronto has been elected as a Fellow by The Royal Society of Canada (RSC)

New Faculty
Clara Wilkins

Former Psychology major Kristina Olson, BA ’03 wins NSF Waterman Award

Caroline Francis, Psychology major
Undergraduate Researcher of the Week

Dr. Barch receives 3.5 million dollar grant
The Psychological & Brain Sciences Department Outstanding Teaching Award recipient for the 2017/2018 academic year was Jan Duchek. This is Jan's 4th department teaching award dating to the 2006/07 academic year.

"...because she is not only the sweetest and most caring person but is also a wonderful teacher who has constantly amazed me every class. She is so passionate about children and developmental psychology in general and I have learned so much from being in her class. She engages the class with questions, brings humor in at the right times and teaches us through story-telling. She deserves every teacher award out there and I am so proud to be her student."

Jan Duchek has also won the David Hadas Teaching Award. Jan is the 3rd member of the department to win this award since 2011. Established in 2008 by Pamela W. Hadas, the David Hadas Teaching Award honors and publicly recognizes an outstanding tenured faculty member in Arts & Sciences who demonstrates commitment and excellence in teaching first-year undergraduate students.

Jan has taught a variety of courses in psychological and brain sciences, but most frequently she teaches the 'Introduction to Psychology' course, which usually holds hundreds of first-year students. She also organizes the Mind Brain and Behavior (MBB) program for first-years, and serves as the director of Cornerstone. In recent course evaluations, her students praised her, saying "Professor Duchek was extremely engaging, hilarious and always made the material interesting. She also made sure to allow people to ask questions and participate despite the size of the class. I always enjoy going to Psychology because of her." In her accepting remarks, Duchek said that teaching brings joy to her life and is her reason for getting out of bed in the morning, especially following the recent death of her son. She thanked her colleagues, her husband, and Pamela Hadas.

Tammy English was nominated for the Outstanding Faculty and Mentor Award for 2017-18. This award is part of the Outstanding Faculty and Staff Awards (OFSA): an annual signature event of the Graduate Student Senate, designed to honor faculty mentors and staff members who facilitate graduate student success.

Len Green receives the Victor G. Laties Lifetime Service Award, given by the Society for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior. The Society of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior (SEAB) is most notably responsible for the journals, The Experimental Analysis of Behavior, and The Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. Len was President and Chair of the Society, a member of its executive board for 17 years, and Editor of the journal, among other things.

The journal is "primarily for the original publication of experiments relevant to the behavior of individual organisms." In 1968, the society established the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis for "the original publication of reports of experimental research involving applications of the experimental analysis of behavior to problems of social importance." It appears quarterly.
Awards & Accomplishments continued…

Head wins 2018 Suffrage Science Award

Denise Head, associate professor of psychological and brain sciences in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, is one of 11 female scientists from around the world awarded scientific heirlooms by their peers at the fifth Suffrage Science Awards for Life Sciences, held June 6 at the Academy of Medical Sciences, London.

Designed to celebrate women in science and encourage others to enter science and reach senior leadership roles, the awards are items of jewelry inspired by the suffrage movement. Previous award holders choose recipients based on their scientific achievements and ability to inspire others. The awards are passed along from one recipient to the next.

Denise Head (right), associate professor of psychological and brain sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, receives a Suffrage Science Award June 6 at a ceremony in London. (Photo: Casey Gutteridge/MRC London Institute of Medical Sciences)

Head’s research explores age-related brain changes and their relations with cognition. She also holds appointments as a research assistant professor of radiology at the School of Medicine and as associate professor of African and African-American studies in Arts & Sciences. Denise was nominated by Professor Uraina Clark, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Uraina’s reasons for her nomination were as follows: “Denise is conducting an innovative program of cognitive neuroscience research that advances our understanding of factors that contribute to memory and cognitive declines in older adults. Her work also reveals how simple interventions (such as exercise) might help to slow these declines. Dr. Head’s neuroimaging research, with its focus on understanding and maintaining cognitive health in older adults, is both timely and critical.

Mark McDaniel, professor of psychological and brain sciences in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, is one of three leading experts in cognitive and learning sciences appointed as permanent members of a Learning Research Advisory Council formed by Macmillan Learning.

The council comprises leading experts in cognitive and learning science who are advising and critiquing the design principles and processes Macmillan Learning is using to develop next-generation learning experiences that deliver better outcomes. Other permanent council members include Robert Atkinson of Arizona State University and Christopher Dede of Harvard University. McDaniel is co-director of the university’s Center for Integrative Research on Cognition, Learning, and Education and co-author of “Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning.”

STUDENTS

Emorie Beck has won the department Outstanding Assistant award.

Emorie, a student in Josh Jackson’s Personality Measurement & Development Lab, was the Assistant in Instruction in Experimental Psychology and Intro to Psychological Statistics.

“What motivates this nomination, however, is her enthusiasm combined with her expertise. If you know Emorie, you know she is deeply passionate and knowledgeable about psychometrics, statistics, and personality (and lots of other topics). Enthusiasm goes a long way when teaching undergraduates, and Emorie’s enthusiasm is contagious.”

Emorie Beck also won the Inside the Grant Panel competition at the SPSP annual conference for her proposal “Personalized Interventions: Using Networks to Change Behavior and Predict Outcomes.”
Awards & Accomplishments continued…

NSF’s Graduate Research Fellowship Program recognizes and supports individuals early in their graduate training in the fields of Science, Technology, Education, and Mathematics.

2018 recipients include

Violet Brown  
Taylor  
Hendershott  
Drew McLaughlin  
Ruthie Shaffer  
Brett Rappaport

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Jihyun Cha won a 2018 American Psychological Association Dissertation Research Award.

Lameese Eldesouky won the 2018 Psi Chi | APS Albert Bandura Graduate Research Award. The purpose is to recognize the best overall graduate research by an APS and Psi Chi member.

Lameese also won 1st place with her work “ Appearing Warm vs. Competence: Expressive Suppression is Differentially Predicted by Impression Management Goals” at the WU ArtSci Graduate Research Symposium! This event is organized by the Graduate Student Senate and promotes dissemination of research findings for a general audience.

Meghan McDarby, a graduate student in psychological and brain sciences in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, has been selected for a James McKenney Student Travel Award from the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE). This award provides travel funds for students to attend the AGHE Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference.

Meghan also 2nd place for her presentation at this year’s Friedman Center for Aging 3-Minute Thesis Competition!

Grace Monterubio was accepted into the Washington University Clinical Research Training Center’s Predoctoral Standard Program

Grace was also awarded a RSH Scholarship from the Academy for Eating Disorders. This scholarship is aimed at supporting graduate students who are pursuing a career related to the prevention or treatment of eating disorders, as well as the amelioration of weight bias.

Jessica Nicosia won 2nd place for her research on “Age-Related Slowing from an Upcoming Explicit Recognition Decision on Implicit Speeded Word Pronunciation.” at the WU ArtSci Graduate Research Symposium! This event is organized by the Graduate Student Senate and promotes dissemination of research findings for a general audience.
Awards & Accomplishments continued…

The 3MT is an academic competition that challenges PhD students to describe their research within three minutes to a general audience. 3MT celebrates the discoveries made by research students and encourages you to communicate the importance of your research to the broader community.

Marilyn Piccirillo was the winner for her presentation at this year’s Friedman Center for Aging 3-Minute Thesis Competition!

Marta Stojanovic won 1st place and People’s Choice for her presentation at this year’s Friedman Center for Aging 3-Minute Thesis Competition!

The Three Minute Thesis competition (3MT®) is an academic research communication competition developed by The University of Queensland, Australia. This competition format challenges students to communicate an issue they are passionate about to a non-specialist audience in just three minutes.

Emily Streeper won a PsiChi Research Grant for her dissertation research. Emily also won the People’s Choice award in the Friedman Center for Aging 3-Minute Thesis Competition.

Matthew Wynn received the 2018 Student Paper Award from the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Society of Clinical Geropsychology (SCG; Division 12, Section II). The purpose of the award is to acknowledge an exemplary geropsychology research paper by a student.

Christopher Zerr was awarded the William C. Howell Scholarship by the American Psychological Foundation/Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology.

The following items hi-lite the work of the Psychological & Brain Sciences faculty, postdocs and graduate students.

Richard Abrams
- Act fast to pay attention

Natasha Bailen, Haijing Wu Hallenbeck, Renee Thompson
- How to Deal with Feeling Bad About Your Feelings

Dave Balota
- The First Step Toward a Personal Memory Maker?

Deanna Barch
- St. Louis Area Brain Bee Takes Teens Inside the Human Mind
- Perfectionism in young children may indicate OCD risk

John Baugh
- ‘Herre’ and ‘thurr’: how St. Louisans celebrate identity and accents on 314 Day
- ‘What’s up with that white voice?’: The tricky art of linguistic code-switching
- Wash U linguist analyzes American dialects, discrimination

Tim Bono
- Breaking out of the workplace slump
- Want to be happier? Think like a bronze medalist
- Getting a ‘like’ on Facebook won’t make you happy
- Scrolling For Happiness
- Bono debut book tackles strategies for happiness
- A Wash. U. prof explains what really makes us happy
- 6 Things Doctors Tell Their Friends About Happiness
- The American Loneliness Epidemic: Are Poor Social Skills to Blame?
- Let’s be clear: Are you happy?
- Finding the Medicine for Your Soul
- Procrastination: The Hidden College Epidemic
- This is the Psychological Reason Why Black Friday Shopping Feels Stressful
- Why Hotels Want You to Stop Instagramming Your Vacation
- Science-based tips for a better, happier New Year

Todd Braver
- Get ready for the longest Election Day ballot of all time, St. Louis County

Andrew Butler
- Q&A with Andrew Butler
- Twitter users retweet fake news almost twice as much as real news
- 5 Tips for Using Multiple-Choice Tests to Bolster Learning
- Why the ‘None of the above’ answer is poor test design

Brian Carpenter
- You Need a Will Even if You’re Young and Healthy
- Working With Older Adults

Patrick Hill
- How can I live longer? Researchers say the key to longevity may be simpler than we think
- What is ‘purpose’ and why does it make us healthier? A professor of philosophy & psychiatry helps us find out
- The Awesome Health Benefits of a Purposeful Life

Joshua Jackson
- Spouse’s personality influences career success, study finds
- Warren Buffett says the most important decision you’ll ever make has nothing to do with your money or career
Calvin Lai

- Can Artificial Intelligence Weed Out Unconscious Bias?
- Starbucks is turning to a type of workplace training that ‘really took off after Ferguson’
- Starbucks to Conduct Company-Wide Racial-Bias Training
- What’s unconscious bias training, and does it work?
- Back-to-back racial profiling allegations in St. Louis highlight need for training to combat bias
- Starbucks halts brewing so its employees can talk about race
- Unconscious bias training can only take you so far
- Is it possible for artificial intelligence to be unbiased?
- Gmail stopped Smart Compose from suggesting pronouns to avoid sexism

Alan Lambert

- Wash U professor answers 10 questions about the psychology behind conspiracy theories
- WashU Expert: Voter turnout differs with anger vs. disgust

Mark A. McDaniel

- Foresee and Forget: How to Remember the Future

Mark A. McDaniel and Roddy Roediger

- The Secret to Student Success? Teach Them How to Learn.

Toshi Miyatsu

- Boost Your Study Strategy With Retrieval and Distributed Practice

Steve Petersen

- Brain scans may help diagnose neurological, psychiatric disorders

Tom Rodebaugh

- For People With Social Anxiety, The Internet Is A Blessing And A Curse

Henry L. Roediger III

- How To Optimize Your Memory When Reading
- America is a nation of narcissists, according to two new studies
- What the Ancients Can Teach Us About How to Remember

Henry L. Roediger III and Adam Putnam

- Sorry Virginia, U.S. history isn’t all about you

Henry L. Roediger III and Andrew DeSoto

- Chester A. Arthur Is the Most Forgotten President in U.S. History, According to Science

Henry L. Roediger III, Mark A. McDaniel

- Seven memory skills that will make you smarter

Denise Wilfley

- $14 million to fund research aimed at reducing childhood obesity

Clara Wilkins

- Men as the real victims? After Kavanaugh, #HimToo gains attention
- On #MeToo, Americans More Divided By Party Than Gender

Jeff Zacks

- Why we mix up movies and real life
- Tricks of the film-maker’s trade
- The Movies’ Fixation on the End Times Can’t Be Good For Us
- Apocalypse Numb
- Unless we spot changes, most life experiences are fabricated from memories
- Movies Can Influence You To Become A Scientist As Well As A Murderer
- Making sense of the ‘uncanny’: Wash U neuroscientist explains science behind Halloween horror flicks

Christopher Zerr

- Quick learners have better long-term retention

Christopher Zerr and Kathleen McDermott

- Quick learners remember more over time
Alumni and longtime Washington University supporters Nick and Barrie Somers have made a significant commitment to the university for long-range capital needs. In recognition, the Psychology Building — which houses the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences in Arts & Sciences — will be named Somers Family Hall.

“We are exceptionally grateful to Nick and Barrie for this incredible gift,” Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton said. “The Somers family legacy is one of great friendship and generosity to the university, and we could not be more pleased to honor the Somers name by placing it on a prominent and appropriate campus landmark.”

“This is a tremendous contribution that will benefit one of our finest academic departments,” said Barbara Schaal, dean of Arts & Sciences and the Mary-Dell Chilton Distinguished Professor. “Somers Family Hall provides space to our faculty for their groundbreaking research, as well as the exceptional teaching and mentoring they provide to our students at all levels. Nick and Barrie have always been wonderful supporters of the university and Arts & Sciences, and I am so grateful to them for this gift to support important facilities on our campus.”

Nick and Barrie Somers met while students in Arts & Sciences, and graduated together from Washington University in 1984. Nick, who currently is managing partner and founder of SV Investment Partners and serves as principal owner and executive chairman of Minneapolis based International Decisions Systems Inc., earned his undergraduate degree in economics, followed by an MBA from the University of Chicago. He currently serves as a member of the university Board of Trustees.

Barrie Somers earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology, and she said her studies have enriched her life. “I have always loved learning about what people are thinking and what motivates them,” she said. “I used my education in psychology when I worked in advertising, and I continue to use it to this day.”

The couple’s deep roots at the university extend to their two daughters, who also graduated from the university, one in 2013 and one in 2016. Additionally, Barrie’s father, B.A. “Dolph” Bridgewater Jr., has been associated with the Board of Trustees since 1983, and her mother, Barbara, has served on the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts National Council for three decades.

“We’re a WashU family. We’re locked in,” Nick Somers said. “Barrie and I started dating when we were at the university, and our daughters cemented our loyalty to the institution. Since our daughters’ graduations, we have intensified our engagement, and we contribute however we can.”

Nick and Barrie Somers have strong connections to the psychology department. Their daughter Payton, AB ’13, earned her degree in psychology, like her mother, and she now works as a mental health therapist in San Francisco. Their daughter Caroline “Kiki,” AB ’16, currently resides in Los Angeles where she is studying to be a counselor in the health and wellness field. William, the youngest of the Somers children, attends Williams College in Williamstown, Mass., where he is majoring in economics and statistics.

In addition to their recent commitment for Somers Family Hall, Nick and Barrie Somers made a gift in 2013 to name the Somers Family Economics Suite in Seigle Hall. They also have supported annual scholarships in Arts & Sciences for two decades and endowed the Bridgewater Family Scholarship in Arts & Sciences. They have served on the Greater New York Executive Committee for Leading Together: The Campaign for Washington University and the Parents Council. In addition to his duties as a trustee, Nick Somers is a member of the Arts & Sciences National Council and the New York Regional Cabinet. Barrie serves as a member of the Sam Fox School National Council. Opened in 1996, the Psychology Building was designed by the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of Chicago, the same firm that designed Chicago’s famed Willis (formerly Sears) Tower. Its original construction cost was $28 million, and a $5 million addition in 2006 increased its size by 16,500 square feet. Within its current 120,000 square feet, the building contains four levels of laboratory space, seminar rooms, classrooms, faculty offices and lounges.

A formal dedication of Somers Family Hall will be held on May 3, 2019.

Media Contact: Julie Hail Flory
Mental health researcher Deanna Barch, of Washington University in St. Louis, has been awarded a $3.5 million MERIT award from the National Institute of Mental Health, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Barch is chair of the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences in Arts & Sciences and the Gregory B. Couch Professor of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine.

The grant will support up to five years of research — with the expectation of additional years of funding. MERIT (Method to Extend Research in Time) awards provide long-term grant support to outstanding investigators with the opportunity for long-term stable support to foster continued scientific creativity and to minimize the administrative burdens associated with preparing and submitting grant applications.

Investigators cannot apply for MERIT awards, but rather are selected by the NIH through an internal review process. Selection of NIMH MERIT awardees is based on nomination by NIMH program staff, with concurrence and favorable recommendation by the National Advisory Mental Health Council. Fewer than 5 percent of funded NIH investigators are selected to receive MERIT awards.

Barch, an expert on the behavioral and brain mechanisms that lead to mental health problems, studies how and why individuals with psychosis and other mental illnesses have problems with memory, thinking and the ability to carry out the activities of daily living. She has been particularly interested in how disruptions in the brain circuits that normally support goal-directed action contribute to these types of problems among individuals with illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and depression.

With the grant funding, Barch will continue studying what is referred to as effort-cost decision-making (calculations that individuals perform to estimate the amount of physical or cognitive “work” required to obtain a reward) and how disruptions in the brain systems that support this kind of decision-making may be a key contributor to motivational challenges among individuals with schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder and depression.
Former Psychology major Kristina Olson, BA ’03 wins NFS Waterman Award

UW’s Kristina Olson wins NSF Waterman Award for studies of ‘how children see themselves and the world’

Kim Eckart UW News

Kristina Olson, associate professor of psychology at the University of Washington, has won the National Science Foundation’s Alan T. Waterman Award, given to one outstanding scientist under age 40. Dennis Wise/U. of Washington

The National Science Foundation today named Kristina Olson, University of Washington associate professor of psychology, winner of this year’s Alan T. Waterman Award. The Waterman Award is the U.S. government’s highest honor for an early career scientist or engineer, recognizing an outstanding scientist under the age of 40 or within 10 years of receiving a Ph.D. As part of the honor, Olson receives a five-year, $1 million research grant.

Olson, who runs the Social Cognitive Development Lab at the UW, created the TransYouth Project, which is the nation’s largest longitudinal study of transgender children, an effort for which she is renowned.

She is the first UW faculty member to receive the Waterman Award in its 43-year history. She is also the first psychologist to receive the award and the first woman to receive it since 2004.

“Winning this award was a true shock as I was unaware I’d even been nominated. I am truly humbled and honored to have even been nominated. More than anything, this award is a reflection of the hard work, dedication and brilliance of the staff, students and collaborators with whom I work. Only through their contributions am I even in consideration for this award,” Olson said.

According to the NSF, Olson is being recognized for “innovative contributions to understanding children’s attitudes toward and identification with social groups, early prosocial behavior, the development of notions of fairness, morality and inequality, and the emergence of social biases.”

Cheryl Kaiser, chair of the UW Department of Psychology, said Olson’s work “breaks tremendous new ground.” Examining how children view inequality, for example, can ultimately impact how they address such issues as adults.

“Our childhood ideas about fairness can shape how we as adults understand injustice and whether we maintain or challenge inequity in society,” Kaiser said. “Kristina’s work is profound, and has implications for how children develop to become changemakers in the world.”

Olson was recruited to the UW in 2013, where she established the Social Cognitive Development Lab to explore three strands of child-focused research: the emergence of prosocial behavior, the development of bias and responses to inequality, and children’s reasoning about social categories. She launched the TransYouth Project to examine, over the course of 20 years, gender development and well-being among participants who were between the ages of 3 and 12 when they joined the study; to date, more than 300 transgender children have enrolled from 45 U.S. states. (Many of their siblings have been recruited, too, as a comparison group.)

The Waterman Award will help maintain and expand the study, Olson said. The research team is now recruiting children who identify as gender nonconforming - those who haven’t socially transitioned, as the current transgender participants have. Eventually, the study will include teenagers who are in the process of transitioning, she said, as well as intersex children.

Olson said the award also will support another of her goals: establishing a mentorship program aimed to include underrepresented undergraduate students interested in her and related labs’ research at UW: LGBTQ students, students of color, first-generation college students, and those from small colleges with fewer resources for research.
Olson grew up in a diverse college town—something she said made her keenly aware of differences in experience even as a child. She noticed who was treated differently, the groups that formed and the prejudices, and understandings, that revealed themselves over time. She remembers more than one gay classmate who fled an unwelcoming home, friends’ parents who expressed overt racial discrimination and the accepting teachers who provided support and celebrated student’s unique backgrounds.

Questions about how people relate to each other, and how their ideas and issues manifest in society, drove Olson’s initial career choice as a clinical psychologist. She didn’t think of research itself as a professional path; her only image of academic research was being alone in a lab hunched over chemicals, plants or soil.

“I was 100 percent certain I was not going to be an academic. To me, that was being alone in a lab! I wanted to work on teams and understand the struggles people had in the world.” Olson laughs.

But as she pursued her bachelor’s degree in psychology at Washington University in St. Louis, she realized that she could devote herself to studying what she was passionate about—the sources of conflict, how people see one another and how those ideas form early in life. She went on to earn her master’s degree and her doctorate in social psychology from Harvard University and her first faculty appointment at Yale University.

Olson has written about the encounter that led her to start the TransYouth Project: an invitation 10 years ago to a friend’s house for dinner, where she met her friend’s young son before this child transitioned to live as a girl. As she later delved into issues of gender identity, she found a “gaping hole” in research about such children.

“The questions I’m interested in have to do with the categories kids see themselves in, how children see themselves and the world. “Transgender children” is a category we have so little scientific knowledge about,” Olson said. “I’m interested in their experience of feeling you are in a social category that other people don’t think you’re a part of.”

What she’s found, so far, is that children in her study—children who have socially transitioned to the gender they identify with—firmly embrace their gender, just as children who identify as the gender they were born with. In addition, the first results from the TransYouth Project showed in 2016 that transgender participants had normal rates of depressive symptoms, and only slightly higher rates of anxiety, than members of the control group.

People sometimes misunderstand the project, Olson said: No one is performing surgery on these young prepubescent children, for example. Also, she’s not the one instructing parents whether to support their children through a social transition. These children transitioned socially well before she met them, meaning they identify as a gender different from the one they were born with, perhaps with a new name, clothing, toys, activities and friends.

The study started small, but over time, as Olson traveled to interview families and word spread, interest grew. Participants come from cities like Seattle, where gender identity is a relatively familiar topic, to rural communities where transgender children are sometimes isolated or ostracized. The UW, the College of Arts & Sciences and the Department of Psychology helped fund Olson’s initial work, Kaiser said, recognizing the value in supporting early career faculty. Olson’s scholarship exemplifies Psychology’s vision of promoting healthy minds and society through psychological science, she said.

Olson’s research, in those early years, was a “striking act of bravery,” Kaiser added. “It was unusual; it was different. She could have focused exclusively on her research on fairness and prosocial behavior and would have been incredibly productive and continued to be amazing,” she said. “But this was a project Kristina felt was critical for society to understand. This risk paid off as her trailblazing scholarship now has breadth and impact that is remarkable for a scholar at her career stage. She represents the very best of psychological science.”
Eighty-nine new Fellows in the Academies of Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science have been elected by their peers for their outstanding scholarly, scientific and artistic achievement. Recognition by the RSC is the highest honor an individual can achieve in the Arts, Social Sciences and Sciences. “These exceptionally talented scholars, artists and scientists have made an outstanding mark in their fields, advancing knowledge and creating a positive impact on the world. We are thrilled to welcome them, knowing they will continue to work towards a better future for all of us based on deep knowledge and understanding of the past and present” says RSC President, Chad Gaffield.

Jay Pratt is internationally renowned for his ground-breaking studies on how humans allocate attention across the visual field and how certain types of visual information are prioritized by the brain. His research has catalyzed several new lines of research worldwide, including how actions bias activity in visual pathways, how concepts and symbols generate shifts of visual attention, and how much volitional control can be exerted over reflexive attentional processes.

Founded in 1882, the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) comprises the Academies of Arts, Humanities and Sciences, and The College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. The RSC recognizes excellence, advises the government and the larger society, and promotes a culture of knowledge and innovation in Canada and with other national academies around the world.

**NEW FACULTY**

Clara Wilkins, PhD, joins the psychological and brain sciences department as an assistant professor. She is a social psychologist whose research examines prejudice, stereotyping, and the self. She explores how social change (e.g. racial and gender progress) affects high-status groups’ perceptions of victimization. She also examines how variation in racial and ethnic minorities’ physical appearance shapes stereotyping and identification. Wilkins directs the Social Perception and Intergroup Attitudes (SPIA) Lab at WashU. She earned her doctorate from the University of Washington before joining the faculty at Wesleyan University.
The College of Arts and Sciences is a hub of innovation and creativity and a continuous source of original contribution to the world of academia. A good deal of that contribution stems from the work done by undergraduates. ArtSci Council draws attention to some of the most stellar work done by undergrads in order to promote their efforts and encourage other students to follow in their example.

Caroline Francis is a junior here at WashU from Menlo Park, California. Majoring in psychology with a minor in biology, for the past year and a half Caroline has worked in the lab of Dr. David M. Holtzman, the Andrew B. and Gretchen P. Jones Professor and Chairman of the Department of Neurology at the Washington University School of Medicine. Dr. Holtzman’s lab is a translational research lab focused on Alzheimer’s research. Caroline describes her work in his lab as “focused on the link between APOE, the gene identified as the greatest genetic risk factor for late-onset Alzheimer’s disease (AD), and the amyloid-β protein (Aβ), the principal component of amyloid plaques seen in the brains of AD patients.” In describing her particular approach to this work, she noted, “We utilized a class of drug called antisense oligonucleotides to reduce apoE in the brains of a mouse model that is genetically engineered to develop plaques. The findings of our research were published in the journal Neuron on December 6th, 2017.”

Caroline was originally not very interested in research but “just wanted to give it a try.” She found Dr. Holtzman’s lab through the Office of Undergraduate Research. Her first few months in the lab were quite stressful as she adjusted to the high expectation of her superiors. But she continued working in the lab and began to develop a true passion for the work she was doing. Though she never really envisioned a career in research, she says now, “I can’t see my future without research.” This sentiment was cemented after she was given the chance to join the BioSURF program, a program through the Office of Undergraduate Research that gave her the chance to continue her work in the lab through the summer.

After WashU, Caroline plans to pursue an MD/PhD in hopes that it will allow her to make a greater as a physician scientist. In the fashion of Dr. Holtzman’s research, she hopes to work in a lab that emphasizes translational research (research that has direct applications in treatment). She believes that, in addition to giving her the chances to pursue all her passions, it will facilitate a greater connection to the community and understand her patients and her research more holistically. Caroline is particularly interested in studying the interesting case of the Tsimane people of Bolivia, an indigenous population that, despite their greatly increase genetic risk for Alzheimer’s and the high prevalence of the disease’s characteristic brain plaque, experience relatively no cognitive decline. She is also especially concerned with ensuring patients are able to access the type of care that they need. In reference to the current state of the American healthcare system in this regard, Caroline says, “I think it’s unfortunate that a lot of pharmaceutical companies make things so expensive,” a problem that, “stretches to the St. Louis community because there’s such a large gradient of wealth in this community.”

Reflecting on her research experience with research through WashU, Caroline noted how supportive the Office of Undergraduate Research is. She does believe, though, that there exists a need for more support for female and minority researchers, considering their underrepresentation in the field. She is particularly interested in the idea of programs specifically for female and minority researchers that exist at other major universities. She also wishes that there had been more opportunities for collaboration and discussion with researchers from other fields. Caroline has a great deal of advice for students hoping to pursue research. She notes that there is “plenty of room to succeed” and advises students to “stick with it. I didn’t love it at first but now it’s such an important part of my life and what I want to dedicate my career to.” She also notes the importance of finding a lab to which you have a personal connection. Caroline’s interest in Alzheimer’s stems from her grandfather’s experiences with the disease and this pushes her to continue to pursue her work.

In addition to her wonderful research, Caroline is very involved on campus as a former WUSA, a member of the psychology honor society PsyChi, current co editor-in-chief of AcStart, a service that reviews all of WashU’s intro classes and makes the information available to all WashU Students.