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# Announcing the 2023 Recipients of the Small Grants Program for Early Career Scholars

Driven by its Strategic Plan, the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) recognizes the importance of capacity building for early career scholars seeking to establish their research programs, especially considering the limited funding available for conducting exploratory work and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Small Grants Program for Early Career Scholars addresses this need within developmental science by supporting pilot or small-scale research projects proposed by members who completed their doctoral degree within the last five years.

The Small Grants Program celebrates its sixth year by awarding up to $7,500 USD to each of the seven selected projects, directly supporting a diverse group of early career scholars doing research in the United States, Turkey, and Kenya. The 2023 projects were selected from a highly competitive pool of 157 applications and cover many research areas and topics, including mental health disparities for Latinx families, discrimination against Multi-racial experiences, exclusion and social mobility, parental and teacher involvement and the impact on child development and social bias, and cognitive and socio-emotional development of children with developmental disabilities.

SRCD thanks all 57 reviewers involved in the selection process and congratulates the 2023 Small Grant recipients:

Drs. Annabelle Atkin, Thania Galvan, Buse Gönül, Joshua Jeong, Nicolette Rickert, Katharine Scott, and Melissa Washington-Nortey.

The grant recipients will be recognized at the 2025 SRCD Biennial Meeting. Read on to learn more about this year's Small Grant projects and researchers!



**Annabelle Atkin**

**“A Mixed Methods Study of Racial Socialization in Families with Multiracial adolescents”**

Dr. Annabelle Lin Atkin is an Assistant Professor in Human Development and Family Science at Purdue University. She received her Ph.D. in Family and Human Development from Arizona State University. Her research interests are in the race-related development of Multiracial and Asian American adolescents and young adults. The 2023 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support her mixed methods study involving individual interviews and family discussion sessions with diverse Multiracial adolescents and their parents/caregivers to understand how families discuss racial identity and discrimination for each of their child’s racial group memberships. This work will advance understanding of how families discuss monoracism, or discrimination against Multiracial experiences. Parents will also share barriers they face in discussing race, and resources they would be interested in to build their socialization competence so that this work can inform future interventions for parents.

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**Thania Galvan**

**“Cognitive Vulnerabilities in Depression Risk among Trauma-Exposed Latinx Youth”**

Dr. Thania Galvan is an Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at the University of Georgia. She earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Denver. Her research is centered on promoting the well-being and positive development of Latinx youth and their families. Specifically, Dr. Galvan uses community-driven, culturally and contextually responsive research methodologies to understand the factors that contribute to, maintain and/or exacerbate mental health disparities for Latinx families. Funding from the 2023 Small Grants Program for Early Career Scholars will support a project that will explore cognitive markers associated with Latinx youths’ depression risk following trauma exposure.

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**Buse Gönül**

**“Adolescents' Reasoning about Social Inequalities and Exclusion in Turkey: The Role of Intergroup Contact”**

Buse Gönül is a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology at the University of Maryland and Assistant Professor of Psychology at Eski Shir Osmangazi University. She earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Middle East Technical University, Turkey. Her research program focuses on developmental processes of moral reasoning and intergroup relations. More specifically, Dr. Gönül examines children's and young adults' social inclusion and exclusion decisions in intergroup contexts and reasoning about social and economic inequalities, social class, and access opportunities. The 2023 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support her research examining adolescents' reasoning about exclusion and social mobility based on social class and the role of intergroup contact on adolescents' willingness to challenge peer and parent messages toward class-based social exclusion in Turkey.



**Joshua Jeong**

**“Fathers’ parenting and early child development: a longitudinal study in rural Kenya”**

Joshua Jeong is incoming Rollins Assistant Professor in Global Health at Emory University. He studies how fathers influence early child development in low- and middle-income countries. He uses mixed-methods research and implementation science to inform the design of parenting interventions that can support not only mothers, but also fathers. The SRCD Small Grants Program will support expansion of data collection within one of his ongoing projects in rural Kenya. More specifically, this award will facilitate the systematic recruitment of fathers in addition to mothers and collection of new data about fathers’ parenting practices with their young children to explore longitudinal associations with early child development outcomes.

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**Nicolette Rickert**

**“Fostering Academic Engagement among Lower SES, Ethnically Diverse Youth:  The Collective Effects of Support from Caregivers and Teachers”**

Dr. Nicolette Rickert is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Georgia Southern University. She received her Ph.D. in Applied Psychology from Portland State University in 2020 with a concentration in Developmental Science in Education and a minor in Quantitative Statistical Methodology. Dr. Rickert's research focuses on how the complex social ecologies of youth's school and family lives shape the development of their academic engagement and motivation. More specifically, her lab investigates how the collective and differential impacts of parent and teacher involvement act as protective factors for students' educational success, especially over school transitions. The 2023 SRCD Small Grants Program for Early Career Scholars will support research aimed at discovering the challenges, strengths, and needs identified by youth, their parents, and their teachers in fostering students' academic engagement.



**Katharine Scott**

**“Eyes-Have-It: Developing and Validating a Measure of Preschool Teachers' Implicit Racial Biases”**

Dr. Katharine Scott is currently a Postdoctoral Research Scholar at Northwestern University and an incoming Assistant Professor of Psychology at Wake Forest University beginning in Fall 2023. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In Dr. Scott’s research, she synthesizes social and developmental psychology frameworks and methodologies to understand children’s social biases and evaluate the role adults can play in preventing or mitigating children’s social biases. The 2023 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support her project on the development and validation of measures to better understand racialized experiences in preschool settings. In particular, this project will focus on assessing teachers’ racial biases, with the ultimate goal of understanding the sources of and reducing the prevalence of early emerging disparities in education.

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**Melissa Washington-Nortey**

**“A Pilot Study Exploring Social Support Among Families of Children with Developmental Disabilities in Rural and Urban Kenya”**

Melissa Washington-Nortey is a postdoctoral research associate and project manager for the SPARK project being implemented in Kenya and Ethiopia. She is based in the Department of Psychology within the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Neuroscience at King’s College London in the United Kingdom. Melissa earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University in Virginia, USA. Her research explores parental and contextual factors influencing the cognitive and socio-emotional development of children with developmental disabilities, with a special interest in working with families of African heritage. She is also passionate about building research capacity in under-resourced settings and disseminating efficacious strategies from these contexts to benefit the global community. Funds from the 2023 SRCD small grants award will support foundational work exploring social support among families of children with developmental disabilities on the African continent and its impact on child outcomes.

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