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Announcing the 2019 Recipients of the Small Grants Program for Early Career Scholars

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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. Now in its second year, 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.

This year, the Society is awarding up to $7,500 USD to each of the fourteen selected projects, directly supporting a diverse group of early career researchers from institutions in the United States, Colombia, New Zealand, Belgium, and Canada. The 2019 projects were selected from a highly competitive pool of 126 applications and cover many research areas and topics, including: school adjustment, maternal attachment, neurocognition, aging, migration, ethnic-racial socialization, memory, and academic outcomes.

The grant recipients will be recognized at the 2021 SRCD Biennial Meeting.

SRCD thanks all 35 reviewers involved in the selection process and congratulates the 2019 Small Grant recipients:

Lauren Bader, Jeremy I. Borjon, Dawn Y. Brinkley, Andrea Bustamante and Manuela Jiménez, Fiorella L. Carlos Chavez, Jesse Coe, Shereen El Mallah, Christopher Erb, Elif Isbell, Jia Li Liu, M. Dalal Safa, Adam J. Hoffman and Hannah Schacter, Lien Peters and Kiran Vanbinst, and Veronica Whitford.

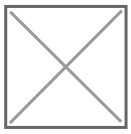
Read on to learn more about the 2019 Small Grant recipients!

Lauren Bader
University of Michigan
“Antecedents of Maternal Sensitivity and Mother-Infant Interactional Attunement in a Rural Community in Africa”



Lauren Bader is an NICHD T32 Postdoctoral Fellow in Developmental Science in the Deparment of Psychology at the University of Michigan (under the supervision of Dr. Brenda Volling). She received her Ph.D. in Child and Family Studies from the University of Tennessee in 2017 (under the supervision of Dr. Hillary Fouts). Beginning in September 2019, Lauren will begin a Research Fellowship in Psychology at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Toulouse, France. Her research has focused on mother-infant attachment relationships and infants’ socio-emotional development. The 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support her current study on how maternal sensitivity is linked to mother-infant interactions and how context-specific sociocultural variables contribute to this relationship among the Gamo of Southern Ethiopia—a very different context of child development than typically studied. Maternal sensitivity to infants’ signals is linked to infant attachment and is believed to help build a reciprocal parent-infant relationship. However, the majority of studies that look at this relationship include participants from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies. Furthermore, sociocultural factors may contribute to variation in the association between maternal sensitivity and mother-infant interactions.

Jeremy I. Borjon
Indiana University, Bloomington
“An open-source wireless vest for measuring autonomic function in infants”



Jeremy I. Borjon is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with Linda B. Smith and Chen Yu at Indiana University, Bloomington. He received his Ph.D. in Psychology and Neuroscience from Princeton University under the supervision of Asif A. Ghazanfar and with funding from the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program. His developing research program studies the dynamics and development of attention and action in late infancy. The 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support the development of a wireless autonomic vest to capture cardiorespiratory activity and posture in infants 9-24 months of age. The schematics of the vest, instructions for its construction, and a suite of custom software will be made freely available for public use. Use of the vest will encourage a more complete understanding of the multimodal coordination of infant behavior and has applications for many areas of developmental research such as emotional processing, stress, and social development.

Dawn Y. Brinkley
University of Georgia
"Joint Engagement of Low-Income African American Fathers and Their Young Children, Language Development, and Early Academic Achievement"



Dawn Y. Brinkley is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Georgia. She received her Ph.D. in Psychological Sciences from the University of Texas at Dallas. Her teaching philosophy focuses on student-centered learning with the intent of encouraging students to take an active role in their learning. She stresses the importance of critical thinking and awareness of self-biases and misconceptions. Her research focuses on enhancing the understanding of positive parenting practices and child outcomes, particularly among fathers of at-risk and low-income students with the intent of informing policy and intervention efforts aimed at reducing academic achievement disparities between low-income African American children and their majority peers. The 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support her current study examining how specific characteristics of father-child interactions influence the acquisition of language skills and academic development among African children from a sociocultural perspective of development.

Andrea Bustamante & Manuela Jiménez
Universidad de los Andes / Arizona State University
“Development of an Online Course for Early Childhood Educators in Colombia”



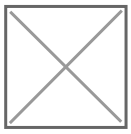
Andrea Bustamante (left) is a Postdoctoral Researcher with the Early Childhood Education Research Group at the School of Education in the Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia. She received her Ph.D. in Education from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Her work focuses on the development of pre-service and in-service teachers’ socio-emotional and classroom management skills.



Manuela Jiménez (right) is an Assistant Research Professor at the T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics at Arizona State University. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, Applied Developmental Science from the University of Virginia. Jiménez is interested in understanding how to support teachers in engaging in teaching practices that effectively promote children's learning, development, and well-being.

The 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support the development and pilot testing of an online course for Colombian early childhood teachers focused on promoting high-quality teacher-child interactions. This course seeks to make a contribution in response to the need for early childhood initiatives and programs developed in and for Latin American contexts.

Fiorella L. Carlos Chávez
University of Missouri, Columbia
“Youth as ‘Bread-Winners’: An Exploration of the Adult-Like Behaviors and Experiences of Latino/a Emancipated Migrant Youth in their Origin Countries and in the U.S.”



Fiorella L. Carlos Chavez is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at the University of Missouri, Columbia. She graduated with a Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Science from Florida State University. As an immigrant Latina, Fiorella's research focuses on the well-being of Latino immigrant families and youth in the U.S. She is particularly interested on the implications of family, work, and cultural-related stressors on Latino migrant youth's mental health and development. Her 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will examine the adult-like behaviors and unique characteristics of Latino emancipated migrant youth (EMY) in agriculture through the application of an exploratory sequential mixed-method design. For her dissertation titled: "Family Decisions, Stressors, And Health Challenges Among Latino Emancipated Migrant Farmworker Youth: A Mixed-Methods Approach," Fiorella was awarded a two-year initiative grant from Kappa Omicron Nu (KON), the National Honor Society for the Human Sciences. She is also one of four 2019 SRCD Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award winners as well as the 2019 SRCD Latino Caucus Dissertation Award recipient.

Jesse Coe
Brown University/Emma Pendleton Bradley Hospital
"Parent-Child Relational Boundaries as Moderators of Links between Child Maltreatment, Cellular Aging, and Mental Health"



Jesse Coe is an NIMH T32-funded Postdoctoral Fellow at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University and its affiliated teaching hospitals (Emma Pendleton Bradley Hospital and Rhode Island Hospital). She earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Rochester. Through the 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars, her research project aims to gain a better understanding of the biological mechanisms underlying links between child maltreatment and the development of psychopathology and the moderating factors that buffer or exacerbate this risk. The primary goal is to test whether parent-child relational boundaries (cohesion, enmeshment, disengagement) moderate links between maltreatment and cellular aging (telomere shortening, mitochondrial dysfunction), which in turn predict children's internalizing and externalizing symptoms in early childhood. This project will integrate multiple disciplines (developmental psychology, biology) and theoretical perspectives (family systems

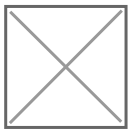
theory, biological models of maltreatment) toward the goal of identifying potentially feasible targets of prevention and intervention.

Shereen El Mallah
University of Virginia
“African American Adolescent Development in Context: The Role of Congruence Across Socialization Agents and Settings”



Shereen El Mallah is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Virginia. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Broadly, her research examines the developmental and sociocultural factors that contribute to positive academic and psychosocial outcomes for children and adolescents. Her recent work has focused on improving cross-cultural measurement practices, primarily as they pertain to ethnic minority youth and advancing understanding of ethnic minorities’ schooling experience (with careful consideration of the distinct cultural resources and constraints offered within contexts). The 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will examine home-school dissonance among African American students, making an intentional shift away from the overreliance on a comparative framework (majority-minority comparisons) and towards looking at diversity within ethnic groups. The study aims to draw attention to diversity and social justice in schools, with a focus on the culture-based experiences that African American students have outside school, the role of such experiences in formal learning contexts, and the potential consequences of cultural mismatch.

Christopher Erb
University of Auckland
“Linking the behavioral and neural dynamics of cognitive control across development”



Christopher Erb is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology at the University of Auckland where he directs the Cognitive, Manual, and Neural Dynamics (CMND) Lab. Christopher received his undergraduate degree from the University of Cincinnati, where he worked with Dr. Heidi Kloos. After completing his Ph.D. under the supervision of Dr. David Sobel at Brown University, he worked as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with Dr. Stuart Marcovitch and Dr. Janet Boseovski. Christopher's research uses motion-tracking technology to investigate how processes across perception, cognition, and action are reflected in the spatial and temporal dynamics of children's hand movements. The 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will support a new line of research that combines motion tracking with electroencephalography to explore how the behavioral and neural dynamics of cognitive control change across development.

Elif Isbell
University of Michigan
"Investigating the associations between children's socioeconomic status, classroom auditory environments, and the neurobiology of distractor suppression"



Elif Isbell is an NICHD T32 Postdoctoral Fellow in Developmental Science in the Department of Psychology at the University of Michigan. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology (Cognitive Neuroscience) from the University of Oregon and was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her research focuses on the development and neuroplasticity of cognitive control skills in early childhood. This 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will examine the associations between socioeconomic status, classroom auditory environments, and the neurodevelopment of distractor suppression in kindergarten. The ability to suppress distractors is critical for pursuing goals. Socioeconomic adversity is linked to poorer distractor suppression in children, as demonstrated by stronger neural responses to distractors. As children transition to school, the classroom may become a major auditory environment that can mitigate or perpetuate this link. To investigate these associations, the project will pinpoint the neurodevelopment of distractor suppression in kindergarten with electroencephalography and assess human-produced and ambient background noise in the classrooms with audio recorders worn by

children.

Jia Li Liu
University of Maryland, College Park
“Ethnic Racial Socialization Among Low SES and Middle SES Chinese American Families”



Jia Li Liu is the Calvin J. Li Postdoctoral Fellow in Asian American Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. She received her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Connecticut. Liu’s research interests include immigrant parents’ cultural belief systems, reciprocal interactions between child temperament and parenting, and the development of culturally responsive parent education programs for Asian American families. Her 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars seeks to understand the frequency and content of ethnic-racial socialization messages that low SES and middle SES Chinese immigrant parents convey to their young children. This will be accomplished through a videotaped parent-child shared book-reading activity and a semi-structured interview with parents. Jia Li hopes that this work will enhance our understanding of Asian immigrant parenting and ethnic identity development.

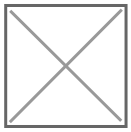
M. Dalal Safa
Harvard University
“Bicultural Identity and Competence Development”



Dalal Safa is a NSF SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellow under the sponsorship of Dr. Adriana Umaña-Taylor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She trained in Family and Human Development at Arizona State University and in Social and Intercultural Psychology at the Université Livre de Bruxelles. Her program of research examines antecedents and consequents of biculturalism. The research project – funded by the 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars – seeks to advance scientific knowledge of culture and

development, specifically relative to the mechanisms by which minority adolescents develop bicultural identities and competencies, and the associations between bicultural identity formation processes and positive development. The project is organized in two phases: Phase 1 involves a qualitative investigation aimed at identifying and providing adolescents with opportunities and tools to engage in bicultural identity processes and to develop bicultural competence. Phase 2 involves a pilot test of the tools and strategies developed in Phase 1. The pilot test will enable examining feasibility of implementation and preliminary data to test psychological theories of biculturalism and development.

Adam J. Hoffman & Hannah L. Schacter
University of Michigan / University of Southern California
"Mitigating the Harmful Effects of Discrimination among Diverse Adolescents: An Identity-Based Intervention"



Adam J. Hoffman (left) is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Psychology and School of Education at the University of Michigan. In 2017, he earned his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In July 2019, Dr. Hoffman will begin a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychology at North Carolina State University. Generally, Dr. Hoffman's research interests are centered on understanding how social identities, like ethnic/racial and gender identities, change over time and relate to academic motivation and achievement, psychosocial well-being, and mental health. He is also interested in investigating ways to reduce ethnic-racial and gender academic achievement gaps through social identity-based psychological interventions.



Hannah L. Schacter (right) is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Psychology at the University of Southern California. She earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2017. This fall she will begin as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Wayne State University. In her research, Dr. Schacter studies when and why adolescents' interpersonal relationships contribute to their emotional, psychological, and physical health outcomes. Guided by ecological frameworks of development, she investigates how young people's social experiences

and corresponding adjustment are shaped by their broader school, online, and home environments.

Exposure to identity-based bullying and discrimination (i.e., mistreatment based on gender, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, etc.) has a deleterious impact on youth mental health and academic outcomes. This 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars will test the efficacy of a novel, identity-based self-affirmation intervention designed to promote the psychological and school adjustment of socially marginalized adolescents. The overarching goal of the intervention is to leverage adolescents' identities as assets in the face of discriminatory acts.

Lien Peters & Kiran Vanbinst
University of Western Ontario / University of Leuven
“The effect of formal math instruction: A cross-educational study”



Lien Peters (left) is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Western Ontario. She is primarily interested in understanding how children develop arithmetic skills and what neurocognitive and environmental mechanisms underlie arithmetic development. She is also focused on understanding the overlap between arithmetic and reading, and the co-occurrence of learning disorders. Lien uses both behavioral and brain imaging methods, such as fMRI, and is very interested in the use of state-of-the-art multivariate methods to analyze neuroimaging data.



Kiran Vanbinst (right) is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Leuven. Initially, Kiran focused on individual differences in children’s arithmetic development, but across time she became interested in the co-development of arithmetic and reading, and therefore also the comorbidity between dyscalculia and dyslexia. In the past decade, Kiran has built up expertise in developing (longitudinal) research designs as well as collecting and analyzing longitudinal behavioral data. Through this 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars, she and Lien aim to explore whether formal math education moderates findings from developmental research on the cognitive determinants of arithmetic ability.

Both researchers are intrigued by scientific research at the intersection of cognitive psychology, educational neuroscience, and child development. They are convinced that research integrity is core for transparent and innovative research, and therefore believe that Open Science is the future. In that perspective, their collaborative project has been preregistered on the Open Science Framework and the data of this project will be made publicly available.

Veronica Whitford
University of New Brunswick
"Contrasting the Behavioral and Neural Correlates of Reading in Monolingual and Bilingual Children: An Eye-Tracking and EEG Investigation"



Veronica Whitford is a Canada Research Chair – Tier II and Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at the University of New Brunswick. She obtained her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from McGill University (under the supervision of Dr. Debra Titone). She then completed two postdoctoral fellowships in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience: the first at the University of Western Ontario (under the supervision of Dr. Marc Joanisse) and the second at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University (under the co-supervision of Drs. John Gabrieli and Gigi Luk). Her research program focuses on the behavioral and neural correlates of reading in children and adults with diverse language and cognitive backgrounds. The current project, funded by the 2019 Small Grant for Early Career Scholars, will examine how: (1) monolingual and bilingual children allocate visual attention during naturalistic reading conditions and (2) how executive functions (e.g., attention, inhibition, working memory) contribute to word-, sentence-, and text-level reading fluency in these groups of children.