Welcome back to the quarterly newsletter of the Institute for Innovations in Developmental Sciences (DevSci)! In each issue, you will find exciting updates and information relevant to our community of scholars including: feature articles, research highlights, award announcements, and member spotlights.

We hope that you enjoy this new way to keep you informed of DevSci news and events. If you would like to suggest content to be featured in an upcoming issue of the DevSci Digest, please contact us at devsci@northwestern.edu! We look forward to hearing your feedback!
JOINING THE DEVSCI TEAM

Tamirah Gore
Senior Research Administrator
Tamirah Gore joins DevSci & MSS with 10+ years of research experience. Previously she worked at Northwestern University with the Office for University Research Centers & Institutes before moving on to her most recent position as a Research Administrator for Emory University.

Oluwamitose (Tose) Akinmola
Research Assistant
Tose Akinmola is a research assistant on the When 2 Worry Study which explores links between language development and emotional well-being in young children. She recently graduated with a BS in Psychology from the University of Georgia where as a research assistant, she studied the emotional, behavioral, and physical impacts of chronic stress on low-income, Black American youth. She is interested in early childhood predictors of psychopathology and the protective effects of parental engagement.

Brianna Sinche
Senior Research Study Coordinator
Bri has worked in various public health and research capacities for the past 10 years. She has worked on immigrant health research projects at Oregon State University and Oregon Health and Science University and in college student health education programming in southern Illinois. Most recently, Bri and her husband moved to Chicago from Ecuador, where they were both teaching at institutions of higher education.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

For full position postings please visit careers.northwestern.edu

Position Available:
Infant/Toddler MRI Technologist/Coordinator
Job ID: 42368

Position Available:
Clinical Assessment & Coding Coordinator
Job ID: 43390

Position Available:
Research Operations Manager
Job ID: 43066

Position Available:
Research Data Analyst
Job ID: 43371

Position Available:
Developmental Sciences Manager
Job ID: 43065

JOINING THE DEVSCI COMMUNITY

Open Position in Your Lab? Tell us!

Please share your available open position(s) in your lab for Research Assistant, Study Coordinator, Postdoctoral Fellows or other opportunities!

We will feature these opportunities in our bi-weekly listserv announcement, & boost the announcement via our Social media platforms which reaches the broader DevSci community, OURs Office, & peer research institutions!

Please send all opportunities (including links to the lab, instructions for application and/or a position flyer) to: devsci@northwestern.edu
In April and May 2021, DevSci hosted a series of small focus groups for both faculty and trainee members. Participants shared their thoughts regarding DevSci’s strengths and discussed opportunities for growth or change.

In early June 2021, DevSci community members participated in a survey which provided additional feedback and insight regarding the Institute-at-large.

On June 17th, over 40 members of the DevSci community participated in an afternoon-long retreat designed to identify and prioritize goals for the Institute. Utilizing feedback from the focus groups and survey, participants engaged in a series of dialogues which resulted in DevSci’s Strategic Priorities.

In October and November 2021 three Working Groups met to advance DevSci’s Strategic Priorities in the following areas: Expanding the Broader Impacts of DevSci (Co-Chaired by Drs. David Uttal & Ellen Wartella); Advancing the Developmental Sciences Workforce (Co-Chaired by Drs. Malika Shah & Sarah Pila); Research Resources for Developmental Sciences (Co-Chaired by Drs. Susanna McColley & Claudia Haase)

In December 2021 the three Working Groups provided feedback on a short list of the Goals and Initiatives developed from the October & November meetings.

January 2021 the initial Draft of Strategic Priorities & Operational Objectives One-Pager was disseminated to the broader DevSci community for feedback. Feedback was then analyzed for community interest

In the coming months, DevSci will refine the Strategic Priorities & Operational Objectives based on the DevSci community & External Advisory Board feedback received Spring 2022. The Finalized Long-form Strategic Plan will be disseminated in early 2022.

Strategic Planning Timeline:

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To what extent does this strategic priority excite you as a DevSci community member?

Research & Collaboration: A lot
Training & Professional Development: A lot
Community Engagement: A great deal
Visibility: A moderate amount
Organizational Infrastructure: A lot

Percent respondents

Not at all / A little | A moderate amount | A lot | A great deal

Questions about the Strategic Planning Process? Contact DevSci Director of Strategic Communications, Dr. Niki Woitowich at nicole.woitowich@northwestern.edu

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**Research Methods Intensive Summer Seminar**

DevSci Institute will host the DevSci Undergraduate Research Methods Intensive Summer Series (RMISS) again for Summer 2022. RMISS supports DevSci faculty-affiliates and their undergraduates joining labs as entering researchers. The course is designed to both serve as a scaffold for those students interested in working in DevSci affiliate labs with little research experience and to ensure that faculty researchers benefit from added support and guidance for their undergraduate trainees.

Look out for an email in late March to Early April for more details. If you have questions regarding the content, etc. please contact: devsci@northwestern.edu

Or, visit our website for more information - linked

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**Neurodevelopmental Core Update**

The Neurodevelopmental Core has updated its services and price reference sheet. You can now find details about the services and associated prices on the Neurodevelopmental Core website page.

Visit the Neurodevelopmental Core website or contact: devsci@northwestern.edu

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Questions about the Strategic Planning Process? Contact DevSci Director of Strategic Communications, Dr. Niki Woitowich at nicole.woitowich@northwestern.edu

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**DevSci Digest**

[Image: DevSci Digest logo]

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The Mental Health, Earlier T32 Training Grant's Seminar

Neurodevelopmental Mechanisms of Psychopathology in Context and Application

The Course Thus Far
The Mental Health, Earlier (MHE)-T32 Core Weekly Seminar, "Neurodevelopmental Mechanisms of Psychopathology in Context and Application" examines RDoC-inspired approaches to studying neurodevelopmental mechanisms of psychopathology across different systems and constructs (e.g., acute threat, reward learning, cognitive control, social communication). The RDoC seminar uses a unique lens to expand understanding and explication of RDoC within developmental and environmental contexts and emphasizes intersecting areas of high relevance to RDoC application, particularly (a) computational methods, (b) the intersection of physical and mental health, and (c) intervention, prevention, and implementation.

In addition to PIs Shankman and Wakschlag weekly discussions, other speakers so far this year include: 1) Developmental Psychologist focusing on race-based stressors and mental health in children and adolescents; 2) Pediatric Psychologist on Negative Valence impact on pediatric health; 3) Chief, Section on Development and Affective Neuroscience in the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Intramural Research Program on Advancing Psychiatric Care through Clinical Neuroscience; Child Clinical Psychologist on Negative Valence Intersection on Sleep and Mental Health; and several seminars on Computational Data Science with researchers focusing on Risk Calculation modeling and Structural Neuro-imaging Biomarkers.

Preparing for the Future
February kicked off the start of the courses next Module covering Positive Valence Systems, the second Domain of the Research Domain Criteria (RDoC). The seminar leadership, Drs. Laurie Wakschlag, Stew Shankman, along with Associate Director, Jessica Horowitz, PhD. If you're interested in participating, or presenting to the Seminar and/or the annual summer boot camp please contact Associate Director, Jessica Horowitz, PhD at: jessica.horowitz@northwestern.edu

Complete list of Guest Seminar Presentations
"A Primer on Risk Prediction Methods with a Focus on Mental Health" by Dr. Norrina Allen; "Negative Valence Systems in the Intersection between Sleep and Mental Health" by Dr. Sonia Rubens; "Structural Neuroimaging Biomarkers by Computational Anatomy" by Lei Wang; "Advancing Psychiatric Care Through Clinical Neuroscience" by Dr. Daniel S. Pine; "Race-Based Stressors and Strengths: Implications for HPA Axis Functioning and Disparities in Health and Attainment" by Dr. Emma Adams; "Promoting Well-being among Youth with Chronic Health Conditions and Their Families" by Dr. Bonnie Essner.
I firmly believe finding mentors who will support your interests, encourage your curiosities and nurture your professional development during medical school is so important. I am certainly the beneficiary of all that and much more as I continue to work with Dr. Lloyd-Jones!

James Guo
Second Year Medical Student
DevSci AOSC Affiliate
New Beginnings

Join us in Congratulating Members from our Postdoctoral Community

**NU Postdoctoral Fellow**

**Ursula Moffitt, PhD**

joins Wheaton College as 
**Assistant Professor of Psychology**

Dr. Ursula Moffitt will be starting an Assistant Professor position in the Department of Psychology at Wheaton College. She is "extremely thankful for all of the support and guidance I've received from Dr. Onnie Rogers and the whole DICE lab, including the wonderful graduate students Courtney Jones and Josiah Rosario".

Dr. Ursula Moffitt has helped support a number of amazing Diversity Discussion events on behalf of our Diversity Working Group along with her continued support of members of DevSci's Graduate Student Cluster.

**NU Senior Research Associate**

**Emily Willroth, PhD**

joins Washington University - St. Louis as 
**Assistant Professor of Psychology & Brain Sciences**

Dr. Emily Willroth will be starting a tenure-track Assistant Professor position in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis this summer. She is grateful for the mentorship of her postdoc advisors Drs. Daniel Mroczek and Eileen Graham, her PhD advisors Drs. Iris Mauss and Oliver John, and the many other colleagues and friends who have supported her along the way including her postdoctoral colleagues at NU and the DevSci community.

Dr. Emily Willroth helped support the launch of DevSci's Research Methods Intensive Summer Seminar (RMISS) in Summer 2021.
Coffee Chats with the HEALthy Brain and Child Development (HBCD) Study Northwestern University Site Collaborators

February
Suena Massey, Addiction Psychiatry

March
Marquita Lewis-Thames, Community-Engagement

April
Seema Shah - Bioethics

May
Elizabeth Norton - Cognitive Neuroscience

June
Laurie Wakschlag - Clinical Psychology

July
Renee Edwards - Social Work, Yudong Zhang - Social Work & Biostatistics

Contact our Grad Student Ambassadors for Info
Emily.landau@northwestern.edu
naomipolinsky2022@u.northwestern.edu

Call for Participants
The DevSci graduate student ambassadors are planning to host a professional development panel for graduate students and post-docs who are interested in pursuing a career in academia. This event will be on Friday, March 11th from 10-11am on Zoom. We would like to have current Northwestern faculty members on this panel, including a mix of more junior and senior faculty members. We are also interested in having a faculty member moderate this panel. If you would be interested in being on this panel or moderating, please email Emily.landau@northwestern.edu.

We are planning to cover topics such as how did you get to where you are now, what skills do PhD/post docs need to have to get started successfully in a faculty position, what faculty are looking for when they are hiring, etc. We are also open to other suggestions!

Graduate Student Spotlight!
Courtney Jones
Nominated for our Graduate Student Spotlight for her amazing work on multiracial identity development at the DICE Lab @ DevSci Community Engagement!

‘Courtney is a third-year PhD student advised by Dr. Onnie Rogers. Her research primarily focuses on racial-ethnic identity development in people with multiracial backgrounds. Through her research, she hopes to better understand how and why some multiracial individuals may develop a multiracial or a monoracial identity, considering the roles of family, peers, and broader society. She is also interested in unpacking what having a multiracial background during times of heightened racial tension means for individuals’ perceptions of their role in racial justice activism. Some of Courtney’s previous work has looked at how multiracial children talk about the racial identity-targeted messages that they receive from others, and to what extent those messages change over time.’
Affiliates in the Media

Universal Pre-Kindergarten

Drs. Terri Sabol and Diane Schanzenbach are featured for their study examining the impact of Chicago’s universal pre-K program on the childcare market. The United States may soon see the largest expansion of universal and free education in the last one hundred years as congress considers President Joe Biden’s Build Back Better bill. Previous research has shown long term improved educational and career outcomes for individuals who had access to Pre-K, making the proposal to provide funding for states who opt into the universal and free Pre-K services for students as young as three years old particularly appealing. As the bill is considered with general favor, many are directing their attention to the potential impacts on the Illinois public Pre-Kindergarten landscape given the disparities in access, economic & logistical, to early childhood centers.

Read the Original Feature here: "Universal pre-K could benefit Evanston’s public childcare centers, potential impact on private providers unclear"
Original Feature by: Pavan Acharya

Do you have an upcoming publication, presentation, or report you would like to see featured in the DevSci Newsletter? Please contact us at devsci@northwestern.edu

Equity in Biomedical Sciences

Dr. William Lowe, Jr., Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and the Thomas D. Spies Professor of Genetic Metabolism speaks on Feinbergs’ grant award from the Walder Foundation via the COVID-19 Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists (FRCS) competition.

"COVID-19 had an unprecedented impact on our research enterprise, resulting in a near-complete shutdown of on-campus research operations and shift of our clinical focus, and will affect the careers of our medical school faculty, especially early career faculty seeking to establish a research program, for years to come. This funding opportunity, supported by the Walder Foundation will provide a unique opportunity to assist early career clinician investigators negatively impacted by the pandemic due to family caregiving responsibilities by providing resources to help revitalize their research programs."

William Lowe, Jr., MD
Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and the Thomas D. Spies Professor of Genetic Metabolism

Pioneering intracranial EEG on Pediatric Patients

Dr. Lisa Johnson, and colleagues are featured for their study of direct brain recordings in children and adolescents, a rare opportunity. Using intracranial electroencephalogram (iEEG), the research team examines how brain development supports memory development.

“Our study helps us actually explain how memory develops, not just that it develops....By understanding how something comes to be — memory, in this instance — it gives us windows into why it eventually falls apart.”

Elizabeth Johnson, PhD
Assistant professor of Medical Social Sciences & Pediatrics

Read the Original Feature here: "Northwestern awarded grant to advance equity in biomedical sciences"

Read the full article here: "Dissociable oscillatory theta signatures of memory formation in the developing brain" by Kristin Samuelson

E. Johnson, Q. Yin, N. O’Hara, L. Tang, J. Jeong, E. Asano, N. Ofen
It was a pleasure working with Emily and Dr. Haase on this book chapter – I immensely enjoyed reading and synthesizing the research on emotion regulation in romantic couples and the far-reaching consequences for both relationship partners.

Jacqueline Stephens
PhD Candidate, Department of Human Development & Social Policy

Emily Hittner, PhD
Director of Research, Hinge

"I will forever remember where the idea for this chapter was born — at a summer school organized by the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences that I attended with my husband, our 3-month old baby, and his 3-year old brother in tow."

Dr. Claudia Haase
Associate Professor of Human Development and Social Policy

Chapter in the Oxford Handbook of Emotional Development

Close relationships are hotbeds of emotions; many of us experience our highest highs and lowest lows with the people we love. In this chapter on emotion regulation in couples, HDSP graduate students Jacquelyn Stephens, Drs. Emily Hittner, and Claudia Haase shed light on how couples can regulate emotions, how these regulation processes develop across the life span, and why they are so important for health and well-being. Recently a guest on the Stanford Psychology Podcast, Dr. Haase discusses the chapter and takes audiences "behind the scenes look at the methods her lab uses to study couples' interactions and outlines key directions for future research on interpersonal emotion regulation."

"The Oxford Handbook of Emotional Development"
C. Haase, J. Stephens, E. Hittner
**RDoC to Real-World Impact**

The National Institute of Mental Health’s Research Domain Criteria (RDoC) framework lacks neurodevelopmentally based tools for clinical decision making thus limiting the impact of RDoC. A conceptual paper by Drs. Leigha A. MacNeill, Norrina B. Allen, and colleagues published in Development and Psychopathology Special Issue: Applying RDoC-Informed Approaches to the Study of Development and Psychopathology introduces the probabilistic mental health risk calculator as an innovation for clinical implementation of RDoC to inform neurodevelopmental risk. The paper outlines a research agenda for generating an RDoC- and developmentally informed paradigm which can be applied to to predict a range of developmental psychopathologies from early childhood to young adulthood. Through their paper, the authors consider methods that weigh the incremental utility for prediction based on intensity and burden of assessment, the addition of developmental change patterns, considerations for assessing outcomes, and integrative data approaches. With the aim of improving early identification and prevention of developmental psychopathology, they discuss approaches to the operationalization of mental health risk calculators.

**Read the full article here:**

**Starting at Birth**

Poor neuromotor health, impacted by a multitude of factors from infancy onward, often go untreated for years before finally being diagnosed in early childhood. Drs. Colleen Peyton, Theresa Moulton, Allison Carroll, Matt Davis, Juan Villamar, and colleagues highlight the team science effort to develop a transdiagnostic approach to neuromotor health interventions designed to leverage the heightened neuroplasticity within the first year. By first extracting common principles and strategies underlying effective neuromotor health interventions in the literature, they organized a series of scientific exchange panels to critically discuss practical considerations and lessons from experts before gathering stakeholders. The resulting framework optimized a transdiagnostic approach that is scalable, pragmatic & holistically addresses the needs of infants & their family.

**Read the full article here:**
As we age, working memory declines, making independent living a challenge as time goes on. A recent study by Drs. Elizabeth Johnson, Hector Arciniega, Kevin Jones, Andrea Kilgore-Gomez, & Marian Berryhill demonstrated positive results in improving working memory through multiple noninvasive transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) at low-risk and cost. In their paper they address the mechanistic account of how, and in whom, one session of tDCS improves working memory by demographic factors. The results of the study are promising for future clinical and commercial pursuit of non-pharmacological interventions to halt age-related cognitive decline.

Read the full article here:
“Individual predictors and electrophysiological signatures of working memory enhancement in aging”