

Guze Symposium on Alcoholism 2008

Meeting Award Recipients

Amy K. Bacon, M.A.

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Ms. Bacon is a third-year graduate student in the Clinical Psychology program at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and received her B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin. Under the direction of Dr. Lindsay Ham, she is studying the complicated relationship between anxiety disorders and alcohol use disorders. Current projects include the mediating effects of drinking to cope with negative affect on the relation between social anxiety and hazardous drinking in an undergraduate sample, and attentional biases toward threat and safety in undergraduates endorsing social anxiety and hazardous drinking behaviors.

Hilary Casner, B.A.

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Ms. Casner is a first-year graduate student in the clinical psychology doctoral program at the University of Arkansas. She works as a research assistant for Dr. Lindsay Ham in the Laboratory for Anxiety and Substance Abuse Research. Her research interests include the relationship between mental disorders and alcohol substance use and abuse and the etiology, treatment, and prevention of anxiety disorders. Her Master's thesis will explore the relationship between anxiety in social situations and desire to consume alcohol.

Bruk Getachew, Ph.D.

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Dr. Getachew is a postdoctoral fellow at Indiana University School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry. Currently, he is involved in examining gene expressions of receptors and receptor-related proteins in the nucleus accumbens (NACC), an area involved with drug reward and reinforcement, of inbred alcohol preferring (iP) and non-preferring (iNP) rats using microarray technique that helps to survey gene expression changes and zoom in certain pertinent genes that are intimately involved in the actions of alcohol as well as alcohol-related behaviors. The second project attempts to determine peripheral biomarkers of subjective alcohol craving and alcohol seeking; particularly, examining levels of serum tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF-alpha), leptin, and prolactin in alcohol P, alcohol non-preferring (NP) and Wistar rats that are both alcohol naive as well as alcohol experienced via enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA). The third project examines the locomotor sensitizing effects of nicotine on HAD rats and their control low alcohol drinking (LAD) rats. Last project studies the effects of microinjection of different drugs of interest into the ventral tegmental area (VTA) of P and NP rats on NACC dopamine release as well as alcohol intake.

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Brooke H. Harris

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In preparation for graduate school and after completing her Bachelors of Arts degree in clinical psychology at the University of California, San Diego, Ms. Harris has been working as a project coordinator for the Family Research Center (PIs, Dr. Theodore Jacob and Dr. Randy Haber) at the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System for over two and a half years. Currently, in addition to day-to-day office tasks, she is managing three projects including: 1. Religiosity and Health Behaviors in College Students; 2. Offspring of Alcoholics; and 3. Alcoholism Course Throughout Midlife. Ms. Harris plans to pursue advanced education in Addiction Research beginning Fall of 2008.

Sheketha R. Hauser, Ph.D.

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Dr. Hauser is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Indiana University School of Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry. Her current research focuses on the genetic aspects of alcoholism. She earned her Ph.D. and M.S. at Howard University, Washington, D.C. in neuropsychology and a B.A. in psychology at UNC-Chapel Hill, in Chapel Hill, NC.

Laura B. Koenig, Ph.D.

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Dr. Koenig received her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in May 2007, in the area of personality, individual differences, and behavior genetics. Her work as a doctoral student focused on the genetic and environmental influences on religiousness using twin and adoptee methodology. She is currently a post-doctoral research associate at the Family Research Center in Palo Alto, CA. So far, her work with Dr. Theodore Jacob has involved investigating the trajectories of alcoholism in mid-life and the validity of the Lifetime Drinking History.

Paul Korte

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Mr. Korte is currently in his second year of studies at Pacific Graduate School of Psychology where he is working toward a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. As part of his graduate program, he is working with Drs. Theodore Jacob and Jon Randolph Haber at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in the Family Research Center where the research focuses on alcoholism and behavioral genetics along with religious dimensions.

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Deborah M. Stone, M.P.H., M.S.W.

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Ms. Stone is a fourth-year doctoral student at the Harvard School of Public Health located in Boston, M.A. She received her B.A. in psychology and a joint MPH/MSW from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For six years she directed the National Center for Suicide Prevention Training (NCSPT), a project of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The mission of NCSPT is to help professionals and community-based coalitions develop effective suicide prevention programs and policies. Ms. Stone's dissertation research will explore the relationship between sexual abuse and suicidal behavior in a nationally representative sample of children involved with child protective services. Using longitudinal methods, she will examine substance abuse as a mediator of the abuse-suicidal behavior relationship.

Ursula Whiteside, M.S.

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Ms. Whiteside is currently completing her Ph.D. in adult clinical psychology at the University of Washington. Ms. Whiteside's NIAAA funded dissertation is a treatment development project focusing on the integration of two empirically supported treatments. The Brief Alcohol and Skills Training for College Students (BASICS; Dimeff et al., 1999) and the several skills from the skills training component of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT; Linehan, 1993) are integrated into a one-session motivational interviewing based intervention for heavy-drinking young adults who endorse drinking to cope with moods or affect and who meet clinical levels of depression and/or anxiety.

Marcin Wojnar, M.D., Ph.D.

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Dr. Wojnar is a psychiatrist and Associate Professor at the Department of Psychiatry, Medical University of Warsaw, Poland. He is a graduate of the Medical University of Warsaw, where he received both an M.D. and Ph.D. on clinical psychiatry and addictions. Currently, he is a one-year Research Fellow in the Fogarty International Center/NIDA/NIAAA sponsored international programs: Substance Abuse and Alcohol & Injury Research Training Programs at the University of Michigan. He is working under direction of Drs. Robert Zucker, Ph.D. and Frederic Blow, Ph.D. on investigating the relationships between suicidality, impulsivity and treatment outcomes in alcohol dependence. His next research project will involve investigations on relationship between impulsive suicidality, electrophysiological and genetic markers in alcohol-dependent patients.