



Postdoctoral Training in Neuropsychology

Objective and Overview

The purpose of the Pediatric Neuropsychology Training Program is to provide training and education in neuropsychological assessment and intervention within the context of a scientist-practitioner framework. There is a strong tradition of integrated clinical care and empirical investigation at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital that offers substantive research opportunities for fellows who intend to pursue academic health care careers. Clinical experiences will be afforded by clinics within the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences at St. Jude as well as neighboring hospitals. Research opportunities will be coordinated by the fellow's research mentor and mentoring team. Didactics are available at St. Jude as well as through the Memphis VAMC and the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center.



Clinical Experience:

The primary populations served by St. Jude Children's Research Hospital include pediatric oncology, sickle cell disease and other hematological disorders, HIV, rare genetic disorders (e.g., neurofibromatosis, Hurler syndrome), and neurological insults associated with immunocompromised status (e.g., posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome). These clinical populations present with a wide-range of cognitive difficulties (focal and diffuse neurological insult related to primary diagnosis and/or treatment including problems with attention, executive functioning, memory, language, visuospatial reasoning and psychosocial adjustment) that will afford fellows with broad-based training. St. Jude serves populations ranging in age from birth through young adulthood. The fellow also has the opportunity to participate in minor rotations with local pediatric and adult neuropsychologists assessing individuals presenting with traditional developmental disorders (e.g., learning disability/ADHD) and/or general medical conditions (e.g., TBI, epilepsy).

Fellows will gain experience in comprehensive neuropsychological evaluations that include the following skills: medical record review (including access to repeat neuroimaging), clinical interviewing to ascertain pertinent historical information, administration and interpretation of neuropsychological instruments, case conceptualization, provision of feedback to patients and their families, comprehensive report writing, consultation with health care professionals and development of recommendations that seek to ameliorate the impact of brain dysfunction on academic and social functioning. Fellows participate in school re-entry planning and IEP development, often in coordination with the St. Jude School Program. Fellows are encouraged to participate in brief bedside assessments of inpatients to monitor recovery following acute neurologic events (e.g., methotrexate neurotoxicity, stroke) or neurosurgical interventions (e.g., posterior fossa syndrome). Opportunities exist to participate in the selection and administration of brief therapeutic interventions for

Training Experience:

This is a two-year, full-time fellowship position with an intended start date in August 2024. The second year is dependent upon successful completion of the first year. Experiences are designed to meet INS-Division 40, Houston Conference and ABPP Diploma in Clinical Neuropsychology preparation guidelines. The fellowship program is an APPCN (Association of Postdoctoral Programs in Clinical Neuropsychology) member. It is anticipated that 50–70% of the trainee's time will be spent in the delivery of clinical services, 10–20% in educational/didactic activities and 20–40% dedicated to research. These percentages are negotiable based on the fellow's interests and training needs. The program is designed to have a greater emphasis on clinical service during the first year and research investigation during the second year.

inpatients and outpatients to address issues related to neurocognitive impact of disease on academic, behavioral, adaptive, and psychosocial functioning; treatment adherence; coping and adjustment. Given the nature of primary populations served at St. Jude, and provision of care irrespective of ability to pay, there is high potential for serial evaluation of individual patients affording the ability to monitor change over time (including transition to adulthood) and evaluate the efficacy of intervention-based recommendations.

Fellows will gain experience working within an interdisciplinary framework that involves regular interactions with team members including physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, special educators, occupational and physical therapists, speech/language pathologists, nutritionists, child life specialists and chaplains. Supervision of clinical trainees (i.e., interns and graduate students) is encouraged, particularly during the second year.

It is anticipated that fellows will participate in approximately two comprehensive clinical evaluations per week. The number of comprehensive clinical evaluations will be determined based on their level of interest and involvement in providing therapeutic interventions and conducting independent research.

Fellows will receive two or more hours of individual supervision weekly to address assessment planning, case conceptualization, interpretation of evaluation findings, relevant research topics and report writing. Supervision will be provided by licensed clinical neuropsychologists and psychologists. Fellows will receive regular feedback regarding their performance with written feedback provided every three months.

Research Experience:

The majority of St. Jude's patients are enrolled on research protocols with significant interplay between clinical care and clinical investigation that both fosters cutting-edge medical care and clinically-driven research. Research initiatives in the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences include: cognitive rehabilitation and neurocognitive effects of childhood cancer and sickle cell disease; psychosocial and complementary interventions for distress reduction, coping and adaptive style and health promotion (smoking prevention/cessation and adherence) in children with cancer, sickle cell disease and HIV. The focus of research in the department is on discovering mechanisms of brain damage and cognitive rehabilitation with the goal of better defining the neurobiological, cognitive and social consequences of

childhood brain damage as well as evaluating the efficacy of pharmacological and behavioral interventions designed to improve patients' quality of life. Details of research at St. Jude are available online at: www.stjude.org/sci-rpt.

Fellows are required to participate in and/or develop a research project within the field of neuropsychology. The research area for trainees beginning fellowship in 2024 is focused on neurocognitive outcomes and interventions in survivors of childhood cancer and/or sickle cell disease. St. Jude is unique in the availability of biostatisticians to assist with study design, statistical analysis and presentation of statistical findings.

It is expected that fellows will gain experience in critical review of empirical studies, research design, statistical analysis and dissemination of findings through presentations and publications. Opportunities for mentored journal reviews and grant writing are also available.

There are ample opportunities available within pediatric oncology, pediatric psychology, and hematology to facilitate tailoring of research projects to a given trainee's interests.

Didactic Experience:

Didactic opportunities include a comprehensive, integrated pediatric neuropsychology and pediatric psychology series, rounds in psychology, hematology, neuro-oncology, and neuroradiology; and multidisciplinary seminars, staff meetings, and conferences. Weekly fellow didactics integrate topics of neuroanatomy, neuropsychological conditions in children, and psychosocial care of pediatric patients and their families.

To foster a developmental lifespan perspective, training in adult and geriatric neuropsychology is integrated into the didactic curriculum.

We embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion in all clinical, research, and didactic activities to ensure competence in professional practice relevant to cultural and individual differences.



HEATHER M. CONKLIN, PhD
University of Minnesota, 2002

Internship Program:

Kennedy Krieger Institute/Johns Hopkins University
School of Medicine

Fellowship Program:

Kennedy Krieger Institute/Johns Hopkins University
School of Medicine
Licensed Psychologist, Tennessee (Clinical)
Chief, Division of Neuropsychology and Full
Faculty Member, Department of Psychology and
Biobehavioral Sciences

Dr. Conklin joined the faculty in the Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in 2005 following a two-year postdoctoral fellowship in pediatric neuropsychology. She provides neuropsychological assessment and consultation for children with cancer, brain tumors, sickle cell disease and other hematological disorders, HIV, and rare genetic disorders. Dr. Conklin is integrally involved in training and supervision of trainees, as well as program development and oversight. Dr. Conklin spends a significant portion of her time engaged in clinical investigations. The overarching goal of her research program is to mitigate cognitive deficits following treatment for childhood cancer. Towards this end, primary research aims include improving specification of cognitive deficits following treatment, identifying neurodevelopmental changes associated with specific treatment modalities, delineating risk/resiliency factors with respect to cognitive outcomes, and developing empirically valid interventions that ameliorate cognitive late effects.

DARCY RACHES, PhD
University of Houston, 2009

Internship Program:

Texas Children's Hospital/Baylor College of Medicine

Fellowship Program:

Kennedy Krieger Institute/Johns Hopkins University
School of Medicine
Licensed Psychologist, Tennessee (Clinical)
Pediatric Neuropsychologist and Assistant
Faculty Member, Department of Psychology and
Biobehavioral Sciences

Dr. Raches joined the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in 2012 following a two-year postdoctoral fellowship in pediatric neuropsychology. She provides neuropsychological assessment and consultation for children with cancer, brain tumors, sickle cell disease and other hematological disorders, HIV, and rare genetic disorders. Additionally, Dr. Raches works closely with the rehabilitation team at St. Jude. In this capacity she provides brief assessments, tracks cognitive progress and provides cognitive rehabilitation for children who have experienced an acute neurological insult related to their hematological/oncological diagnosis and/or treatment, particularly posterior fossa syndrome and stroke.

LISA M. JACOLA, PhD, ABPP-CN
University of Cincinnati, 2012

Internship Program:

University of Chicago/Comer's Children's Hospital

Fellowship Program:

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
Licensed Psychologist Tennessee (Clinical)
Board Certified Clinical Neuropsychologist
Pediatric Neuropsychologist and Associate Member
Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences

Dr. Jacola joined the faculty in the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences in 2014 following a two-year postdoctoral fellowship in pediatric neuropsychology. She provides comprehensive neuropsychological assessment and consultation for children with cancer, sickle cell disease and other hematological disorders, and rare genetic disorders. Dr. Jacola spends a substantial portion of time engaged in clinical investigation. Her current projects are focused in two areas: (1) using neuropsychological assessment and functional neuroimaging to improve specification of neurobehavioral function in children treated for cancer and (2) implementing cognitive intervention to ameliorate neurocognitive late effects in children treated for acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

BRIAN S. POTTER, PsyD, ABPP-CN

Antioch University New England, 2006

Internship Program:

Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

Fellowship Program:

Texas Children's Hospital/Baylor College of Medicine
Licensed Psychologist Tennessee (Clinical)
Pediatric Neuropsychologist and Assistant Faculty
Board Certified in Clinical Neuropsychology
Member, Department of Psychology
and Biobehavioral Sciences

Dr. Potter joined the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in 2018 and is the Training Director for the Neuropsychology Postdoctoral Fellowship. Prior to joining the faculty at SJCRH, Dr. Potter held faculty appointments at University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Ohio State University, and Medical College of Wisconsin. He provides comprehensive neuropsychological assessment services for patients from infancy to adulthood with a history of cancer and cancer treatment, brain tumors, sickle cell disease, HIV, genetic disorders, and other neurologically based medical disorders. Dr. Potter works closely with the Transition Program (TOP) supporting hospital-to-home services and school re-entry. Dr. Potter is also the Director of the SJLIFE Cognitive Neuroscience Lab.

Andrew Heitzer, PhD, ABPP-CN

Wayne State University, 2018

Internship Program:

University of Tennessee Health Science Center/
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Fellowship Program:

Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's Hospital
Licensed Psychologist, Tennessee (Clinical)
Board Certified Clinical Neuropsychologist
Pediatric Neuropsychologist and Assistant Member,
Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences

Dr. Heitzer joined the faculty in the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences in 2020 following a two-year postdoctoral fellowship in pediatric neuropsychology. He provides neuropsychological assessment services for children with sickle cell disease and other hematological disorders, brain tumor, cancer, and rare genetic disorders. Dr. Heitzer devotes a substantial portion of his time to clinical research. Broadly, his research program aims to improve neuropsychological functioning in patients with sickle cell disease. His current projects include: (1) determining risk and resiliency factors associated with neuropsychological outcomes, (2) utilizing neuropsychological assessment to improve the transition from pediatric to adult care, and (3) developing and implementing interventions to address the neuropsychological effects of sickle cell disease.

JENNIFER N. LONGORIA, PhD, ABPP-CN

Texas Woman's University, 2017

Internship Program:

Fort Worth Independent School District

Fellowship Program:

Henry Ford Health System
Licensed Psychologist Tennessee (Clinical)
Board Certified Clinical Neuropsychologist
Pediatric Neuropsychologist and Assistant Faculty Member,
Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences

Dr. Longoria joined the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in 2019 upon completion of a two-year postdoctoral fellowship in neuropsychology. She provides comprehensive neuropsychological assessment and consultation to children with cancer, sickle cell disease, and rare genetic disorders. Dr. Longoria oversees a serial neurocognitive surveillance program for patients with sickle cell disease that aims to identify deficits associated with disease course and secondary neurological changes. Dr. Longoria is engaged in collaborative research with sickle cell disease and hemophilia.



Administrative Structure:

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is an internationally recognized leader in research for children with catastrophic illness, including cancer, sickle cell disease, HIV and genetic disorders. For Fourteen consecutive years, St. Jude was named as one of the top institutions in the Best Places to Work in Academia. St. Jude is the only Children's Cancer Center funded by the National Institute of Health and all services are provided to families without reference to their ability to pay. Additional information about the institution can be obtained at: www.stjude.org

The Neuropsychology Training Program is housed within the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences, which includes: 20 faculty psychologists (6 neuropsychologists), 2-6 pediatric psychology fellows, 3 neuropsychology fellows, 15 clinical research associates and 6 psychological examiners. The St. Jude Psychology Clinic serves, on average, 1,000 children annually.

Within St. Jude, collaborations with neuro-oncology, hematology, diagnostic imaging, infectious disease, pain service, bone marrow transplant, school program, rehabilitation, speech, social work, child life and chaplain services are strong. Most faculty within Psychology also have appointments at the nearby University of Memphis and University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center that facilitate outside collaboration.

More information about the Department of Psychology and Biobehavioral Sciences is available online at www.stjude.org



Applicants for any clinical training role, including graduate students, doctoral interns, and post-doctoral fellows, must pass a drug test and background check. The background check includes criminal, license/certificates/credentials, employment/education verification, and various abuse registries. Drug and background screenings are facilitated by St. Jude onboarding. Applicants must have a health screen. The health screen must establish that the applicant is fully vaccinated.

Benefits:

Benefits are attractive, including 3 weeks paid vacation, 2 personal days, 8 holidays, a generous professional development account, relocation assistance, paid leave to attend conferences, a free on-campus gym, and medical, dental and vision coverage. The stipend is highly competitive (For 2023: \$73,153). St. Jude has a Clinical Education and Training Office (CETO) that offers many services for our fellows including weekly journal clubs, an annual retreat and annual poster sessions.

Qualification of Applicants:

Completion of an APA/CPA-accredited doctoral program in clinical psychology, clinical neuropsychology, pediatric psychology, counseling psychology, or school psychology is required. All applicants should have clinical experience and training in working with children. Prior training, coursework and experience in neuropsychology are strongly preferred, including knowledge of neuroanatomy and brain-behavior relationships. Candidates must have defended their dissertation prior to commencement of the fellowship.

Details can be obtained at the [APPCN website \(http://www.appcn.org\)](http://www.appcn.org). The Program Code Number for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is **8633**.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is an equal opportunity employer.

Application Procedure:

- Applicants are asked to send the following materials, by standard mail or email (preferred), by December 21, 2023:
- A cover letter indicating interest in this program that summarizes relevant training experiences, professional interests, fellowship goals and career plans
- Copy of current Curriculum Vita
- Two recent neuropsychological reports (pediatric preferred) conducted and written by the applicant with all identifying patient information removed
- Three letters of recommendation from psychologists or neuropsychologists familiar with the applicant's clinical work and/or training
- Graduate transcript
- Copies of relevant reprints/preprints



**Email application
materials to:**

Brian Potter, PsyD, ABPP-CN
Assistant Member, St. Jude Faculty
& Training Director Division of
Neuropsychology Fellowship
Brian.Potter@stjude.org

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
262 Danny Thomas Place,
Mail Stop 740
Memphis, TN 38105-3678



All interviews will be scheduled
January 22-26, 2024.

E-mail inquiries to brian.potter@stjude.org



262 Danny Thomas Place
Memphis, TN 38105

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