

RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM 2017
SUPERVISOR/PROJECT INFORMATION FORM



Due on or before **October 21 2016**. Forms received after this date will not be posted on the website.

SUPERVISOR INFORMATION

Supervisor Name: Dr. Robert Levitan

Mailing Address: 100 Stokes Street Toronto M6J 1H4

Telephone Number: 416-535-8501 ext 34020

Email Address: Robert.levitan@camh.ca

Degree (MD, PhD, MD/PhD): MD

Academic Rank: Professor

Field of Research: Mood Disorders, Mood and Eating behavior, Developmental origins of Health and Disease

Graduate School Appointment (IMS, IHPME etc.): IMS, Physiology

Please note that you must be appointed to the SGS in order to be a supervisor in the Scholar Program

Research Institute Affiliation (if applicable):

Allocation of student contact time (# of hours per week you are available to the student for any concerns or to review progress): 1-2 hrs/week

Do you have a student that you have already agreed to work with? Not for CREMS.

Please note, you may go ahead with a self-initiated project with a student of your choosing. If you choose this option, your project will not be posted online, meaning it will not be open to student applicants.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: **Maternal –Placental Serotonin Metabolism in Pregnancy as a Risk factor for Child Psychopathology**

Project Description (max 500 words): This is an ongoing study looking at various aspects of maternal and placental serotonin metabolism in pregnancy as a risk factor for abnormal neurodevelopment in children. The long term goal is to limit the incidence of major psychiatric disorders by addressing the earliest phases of brain circuitry formation. This is a collaborative study between CAMH, Mt. Sinai and University of Toronto based on the Ontario Birth Study Cohort. The plan is to analyze 600 maternal samples of plasma tryptophan/LNAAs and to determine whether individual differences in this measure, sampled at 15-18 weeks of gestation, predicts one or more measures of neurodevelopment including social behavior, temperament and cognition. EEG at 6 months is also planned. The main role of the student will be to help implement the follow-up assessments of the children, and link these to both clinical pregnancy data such as birthweights/head circumference and the biospecimen data above. The biospecimen data collection is well in place and will continue ongoing.

If human subjects are involved, has Ethics been obtained?

☒ YES

☐ NO

☐ Application Submitted

☐ N/A

Do you expect this work will be published within 20 months?

☒ YES

☐ NO

☐ Uncertain

There is already dietary and lifestyle data available on 900 mothers and several publications are possible on this dataset alone.

Student's Roles / Responsibilities (Please be as specific as possible) Please indicate who will serve as the student's direct report. (PI, PDF, PhD student, technician etc...):

The student will work closely with Dr. Levitan and various members of the OBS team to identify mothers willing to participate in the follow-up phase and optimize data collection for their children in a timely manner. Based on the student's interest, they may have the opportunity to contribute to biospecimen analyses and interpretation under supervision of respective lab managers. Given the nature of this study and very large sample size, there is ample opportunity for original ideas and projects as well.