

Brian M. Sweis

850 Washington Avenue SE, Apartment 611-A, Minneapolis, MN 55414
(708) 297-7350 • sweis001@umn.edu

Career and Research Interests

Currently an M.D./Ph.D. student studying neuroscience at the University of Minnesota, I am aiming to expand my research and clinical education, specifically with applications of translational research in the realm of academic medicine. My research interests lie at the intersection of affective, behavioral, and cognitive neuroscience and neuroendocrinology, particularly in studying the effects of stress on the brain and behavior. Ultimately, I aim to pursue medical research and fellowship training in a joint neurology-psychiatry dual residency.

Education

- 06/2012-Present **University of Minnesota (UMN), Minneapolis, MN**
Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP)
M.D./Ph.D. dual-degree student
- Graduate Neuroscience Program
 - Current year: {M1 **M2** G1 G2 G3 G4 M3 M4}
 - Expected graduation: 2020
 - Residencies of interest: Neurology, Psychiatry, Neurosurgery
- 08/2008-05/2012 **Loyola University Chicago (LUC), Chicago, IL**
B.S. Biology, B.S. Psychology
Neuroscience, Philosophy minors
- *Summa Cum Laude* – GPA 3.92/4.00 (3.97 science)
 - Graduate of the *Interdisciplinary Honors Program*
 - Achieved *Departmental Honors* in Biology and Psychology
 - Enrolled in graduate-level courses as an undergraduate student:
 - Seminar in Cognitive Neuroscience
 - Neuropsychology

Graduate Research Experience

- 05/2013-08/2018 **Ph.D. Thesis Research (working project)**
“Neural Basis of Drug-induced Plasticity: Judgment and Decision-making of Addiction”
UMN, Dept. of Neuroscience
Primary Mentor: Mark Thomas, Ph.D.
Collaborating Mentor: David Redish, Ph.D.
Thesis Advisory Committee (tentative): William Engeland, Ph.D.
- Expanding off of the work done during my second M.D./Ph.D. training rotation (below)
 - Investigates the neural basis of judgment and decision-making during addictive drug-seeking behavior in mice
 - Utilizes animal behavioral tasks including conditioned place preference, delayed discounting, and Redish Lab designed “Restaurant Row” tasks
 - Goals to implement in vivo optogenetic behavioral manipulations and ex vivo slice electrophysiology
 - National Institutes of Health (NIH) pre-doctoral F30 research training grant in preparation for submission
- 11/2013-05/2014 **Neurology Medical/Graduate Research Assistant**
“Neurocardiovascular Pathophysiology of Stroke and Traumatic Brain Injury”
UMN, Depts. of Neurology; of Neurosurgery; of Neuroscience; of Psychology
Collaborating Mentors: Afshin Divani, Ph.D.; Jonathan Gewirtz, Ph.D.
- Investigates the effects of stroke and traumatic brain injury in rats
 - Focuses on how cerebrovascular events influence cognitive and motor function
 - I assisted in developing an experimental model of assessing motor deficits as well as changes in anxiety-related behavior simultaneously using “a modified beam-walking apparatus”
 - Manuscript for publication submitted and currently under review
- 05/2013-09/2013 **M.D./Ph.D. Training: Rotation #2**
“Neurobiology of Drug-induced Plasticity and Addiction”
“Neuroeconomics; Judgment and Decision-making; Spatial Reasoning and Navigation”
UMN, Depts. of Neuroscience; of Psychology
Collaborating Mentors: Mark Thomas, Ph.D.; David Redish, Ph.D.

- Investigates the effects of drug abuse on behavior and brain plasticity, particularly in understanding the electrophysiology of the nucleus accumbens (Thomas Lab)
- Investigates neural processing/computational models of interactions between hippocampal, striatal, and frontal learning systems in producing complex behaviors (Redish Lab)
- I am developing a novel approach to studying decision-making and drug abuse in mice in the Thomas Lab by translating complex rat behavioral paradigms from the Redish Lab

06/2012-08/2013

M.D./Ph.D. Training: Rotation #1*"Effects of Chronic Social Stress on HPA-axis Sensitivity as a Function of Circadian Rhythms"*

UMN, Depts. of Neuroscience; of Integrative Biology & Physiology

Collaborating Mentors: William Engeland, Ph.D.; Alessandro Bartolomucci, Ph.D.

- Investigates the effects of chronic social stress on the HPA-axis in a dominant-subordinate hierarchy mouse model
- Focuses on the role of circadian rhythms and intrinsic clocks, particularly adrenal clock genes, in modulating the effects of stress on HPA-axis activity and sensitivity (Engeland Lab)
- Explores the role of a novel peptide, TLQP-21, which has been implicated in modulating stress-related behavior and energy metabolism (Bartolomucci Lab)
- Utilizes transgenic mice: mPER2::Luciferase knock-ins, β -3-adrenergic receptor knock-outs, BMAL1 knock-downs to better understand underlying physiological mechanisms at play
- I developed an *in vitro* experiment to test the time course of adrenal sensitivity to ACTH
 - *Side projects include:* obesity, diabetes, and stress

Undergraduate Research Experience

04/2009-05/2012

Neuroendocrinology Undergraduate Research*"Behavioral and Neurochemical Effects of Chronic Stress on Mental Health"*

LUC, Department of Biology

Mentor: Louis Lucas, Ph.D.

- Investigates the effects of repeated immobilization stress on spatial memory in rats
- Focuses on individual differences in the extent to which stress can impair memory while looking at other behaviors (e.g., anxiety) that could serve as early indicators of susceptibility/resiliency to stress, which, with neurochemical markers (e.g., neuropeptide Y), may be targets for pharmacological interventions
- I developed the use of behavioral apparatuses new to the lab, was awarded a multi-year grant for project proposal, bred animals, surgically extracted brain tissues for neurochemical analyses, carried out all experiments, and published a peer-reviewed paper
 - Manuscript for publication accepted in *Neuroscience* April 2013
 - *Side projects include:* social stress; drug abuse; aggression; circadian rhythms

09/2009-05/2012

Cognitive Psychology Undergraduate Research*"Electrophysiology of Analogical Reasoning and Inhibitory Control"*

LUC, Department of Psychology

Mentors: Robert Morrison, Ph.D.; Rebecca Levin-Silton, Ph.D.

- Investigates the neural correlates of the cognitive processes underlying the ability of humans to form complex analogies
- Focuses on the role of distraction and inhibitory control in integrating complex relations
- Uses electroencephalography (EEG) techniques to measure the time course of the electrical activity of brain regions during analogy-based visual tasks
- I developed the use of stimuli new to the lab, helped build a state-of-the-art EEG laboratory on campus, designed and programmed behavioral experiments, and recruited participants
 - Manuscript for publication in preparation
 - *Side projects include:* memory and aging; psychology of creativity and insight

11/2008-05/2012

Clinical Emergency Medicine Research*"ProCESS Clinical Trial: Protocolized Care for Early Septic Shock"*

Advocate Christ Hospital and Medical Center Emergency Department; University of Pittsburgh

Mentors: Erik Kulstad, M.D.; Kathleen Hesse, R.N.

- National Institutes of Health funded study that investigates the interventional efficacy of different standards of care for treating sepsis in the emergency department
- I identified and consented eligible patients to be enrolled in the study, randomized treatments to be administered by physicians, monitored changes in patient status, and handled blood samples in hospital laboratories

- 11/2008-05/2012 **Clinical Emergency Medicine Research**
"Emergency Department Overcrowding and its Association with Medication Errors"
 Advocate Christ Hospital and Medical Center Emergency Department; University of Pittsburgh
 Mentors: Rolla Sweis, Pharm.D.; Erik Kulstad, M.D.; Kathleen Hesse, R.N.
- Measured real time emergency department crowding status and prospective error rates
 - Medication errors included tracking incorrect doses, frequencies, durations, or routes, and giving contraindicated medications
- 03/2011-05/2012 **Psychophysics Undergraduate Research**
"The Role of Binaural Cues in Sound Localization Acuity and Perception"
 LUC, Department of Psychology
 Mentors: Raymond Dye, Ph.D.; Richard Fay, Ph.D.
- Investigates the relationship between physical stimuli, the brain's sensory responses, and the conscious perception of sounds using the human auditory system as a model
 - Uses interaural differences of time and level in a two-alternative forced-choice experiment to measure the spatial acuity of the perception of sounds, implementing true and traded audio
 - I developed experimental software and synthesized auditory sound files used in experiments

Research Fellowships, Grants, and Academic Support

- 06/2012-2020 Awarded National Institutes of Health Medical Scientist Training Program (M.D./Ph.D.) multi-year training support fellowship (NIGMS grant 5T32GM008244-25, PI: Yoji Shimizu; \$442,692; \$25,000 annual stipend & medical/graduate school full tuition waivers), UMN
- 05/2010-2012 Awarded the two-year Carbon Research Fellowship for conducting interdisciplinary research in the fields of biology and psychology, PI's: Louis Lucas, Robert Morrison; \$25,000, LUC
- 08/2008-2012 Awarded the Damen Scholarship of Academic Excellence, \$40,000, LUC
- 08/2008-2012 Awarded the William J. Cook Academic Scholarship, \$20,000, LUC
- 08/2008-2012 Awarded the O'Brien-Vrba Leadership Scholarship, \$12,000, LUC
- 08/2008-2012 Awarded the Chicago Catholic Heritage Award, \$10,000, LUC

Publications

Nordberg, J., Hevesi, M., Gewirtz, J., **Sweis, B.M.**, Divani, A.A. Comparison of a modified beam-walking apparatus with a standard elevated plus maze for assessment of anxiety in a rodent model of blast injury. (manuscript under review)

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Dhillon, E.S., Urban, J.H., Lucas, L.R. Individual differences in the effects of chronic stress on memory: Behavioral and neurochemical correlates of resiliency. *Neuroscience* 246, 142-159. ePub May 3, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroscience.2013.04.052>. Print Aug 29, 2013.

Morrison, R.G., **Sweis, B.M.**, & Bharani, K.L. The time course of inhibition in analogical reasoning: An event-related potential approach. (manuscript in preparation)

Select Presentations

Sweis, B.M., Ladd, B., Hoversten, P., Olayiwola, T., Wang, J. Don't reinvent the wheel: Measuring patient satisfaction of medical student performance. Poster presented at the University of Minnesota Medical School Essentials of Clinical Medicine Quality Improvement Conference, Minneapolis, MN, March 2014.

Sweis, B.M., Rehbein, T.A., Fiol, M.E. Latino and Native American (LANA) Neurology Clinic: Launching a new specialty outpatient clinic for underserved minority populations. Poster presented at the University of Minnesota Medical School Essentials of Clinical Medicine Service Learning Conference, Minneapolis, MN, January 2014.

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Individual differences in the effects of chronic stress on memory: Examining the biobehavioral correlates of resiliency. Poster presented at the Society for Neuroscience International Conference, New Orleans, LA, October 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Bharani, K.L., Morrison, R.G. Time course of inhibitory control during analogical reasoning: An event-related potential approach. Talk, paper, and poster presented at the Cognitive Science Society International Conference, Sapporo, Japan. In N. Miyake, D. Peebles, & R. P. Cooper (Eds.), Peer-reviewed Proceedings of the 34th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Austin, TX, August 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Bawa, G.S., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Individual differences in the effects of chronic stress on memory: Neuropeptide Y and anxiety as biobehavioral correlates of resiliency. Talk, paper, and poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Bharani, K.L., Morrison, R.G. Relational complexity and relational distraction modulate response-locked event-related potentials in analogical reasoning. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 2012

Sweis, B.M., Bharani, K.L., Morrison, R.G. Relational complexity and relational distraction modulate response-locked event-related potentials in analogical reasoning. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Psychology Senior Honors Thesis Mini-Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Bharani, K.L., Morrison, R.G. Relational complexity and relational distraction modulate response-locked event-related potentials in analogical reasoning. Poster presented at the Cognitive Neuroscience Society International Conference, Chicago, IL, March 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Bawa, G.S., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Individual differences in the effects of chronic stress on memory: Neuropeptide Y and anxiety as biobehavioral correlates of resiliency. Poster presented at the Chicago Society for Neuroscience Regional Conference, Chicago, IL, March 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Bawa, G.S., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Individual differences in the effects of chronic stress on memory: Neuropeptide Y and anxiety as biobehavioral correlates of resiliency. Poster presented at the Regional Chicago Area Undergraduate Research Symposium, Chicago, IL, March 2012.

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Bawa, G.S., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Repeated stress impairs or enhances spatial memory depending on individual coping differences in stress reactivity and anxiety. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Biology Senior Honors Thesis Mini-Symposium, Chicago, IL, December 2011.

Sweis, B.M., Veverka, K.K., Bawa, G.S., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Repeated stress impairs or enhances spatial memory depending on individual coping differences in stress reactivity and anxiety. Poster presented at the Society for Neuroscience International Conference, Washington, D.C., November 2011.

Sweis, B.M., Bawa, G.S., Veverka, K.K., Dhillon, E.S., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. Repeated stress impairs or enhances spatial memory depending on individual coping differences in stress reactivity and anxiety. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine St. Albert's Day Conference, Chicago, IL, October 2011.

Sweis, B.M., Hussein, A.H., Fay, R.R., Dye, R.H. The role of binaural cues in sound localization acuity and perception. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Psychobiology Research Mini-Symposium, Chicago, IL, May 2011.

Sweis, B.M., Morrison, R.G., Lucas, L.R. The behavioral effects of chronic stress on mental health. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 2011.

Suzuki, H., Bush, N.E., Lach, M.K., **Sweis, B.M.**, Yohe, L.R., Lucas, L.R. Relationship between aggression and individual hormone response to passive exposure to aggression. Poster presented at the Association for Psychological Science National Convention, Boston, MA, May 2010.

Honors and Achievements

03/2014	Awarded "Best Poster" at Essentials of Clinical Medicine Quality Improvement Conference, UMN
01/2014	Awarded "Best Poster" at Essentials of Clinical Medicine Service Learning Conference, UMN
01/2013	Team Leader, Clarion Interprofessional Health Care & Patient Safety Case Competition, UMN
11/2012	Reached 2 nd Place at the Medtronic Interprofessional Medical Technology Case Competition hosted by the UMN Carlson School of Management, \$2,000
04/2012	Awarded "Best Poster" at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research Symposium
04/2012	Recipient of the "Damen Award" for leadership and excellence as an outstanding student in the Loyola community, LUC
10/2011	Recipient of the "Pre-Health Award" for academic achievement as an outstanding pre-medical student, \$2,500, LUC
10/2011	Awarded "Best Comedy" at the Chicago Campus Film Festival for my third short film, <i>Your Brain On Autocorrect</i> – advanced to compete nationally in Hollywood, CA
08/2011	Honored in a Senior Student Research Spotlight video interview, LUC
04/2011	Awarded "Best Poster" at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research Symposium
10/2010	Completed the Chicago Marathon as a charity runner for the Alzheimer's Association
10/2010	Reached "Top 16" Chicago Campus Film Festival for my second short film, <i>LESION</i>
08/2010	Pre-Health Award Finalist for academic achievement as an outstanding pre-medical student, LUC
04/2010	Acknowledged for my contributions to research published in the following journal: Suzuki, H., Han, S.D., Lucas, L.R. Chronic passive exposure to aggression decreases D2 and 5-HT1B receptor densities. <i>Physiology & Behavior</i> , 99(5), 562-570. 2012

04/2010	Awarded the Sister Johnetta Monaham Memorial Award for dedication and excellence as an outstanding peer tutor, LUC
03/2010	Contributed to a clinical study published in the following journal: Kulstad, E., et al. ED overcrowding is associated with an increased frequency of medication errors. <i>American Journal of Emergency Medicine</i> , 28(3), 304-309, 2010
10/2009	Nominated "Best Picture" at the Chicago Campus Film Festival for my first short film, <i>SONAR</i>
08/2008-2012	Achieved Dean's List for attaining a minimum grade point average of 3.5, LUC
05/2002-2010	Earned Black Belt status in the martial art of Tae Kwon Do

Teaching Experience

09/2009-05/2012	<p>Tutor Leader of the Natural Sciences Loyola University Chicago Center for Tutoring and Academic Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor undergraduate/post-baccalaureate students of various academic levels in biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, psychology, and statistics • Lead scheduled small group tutoring sessions on a weekly basis throughout the semester as well as walk-in study hall groups • Train other tutors in pupil management skills, i.e. how to address commonly confusing concepts in the various subjects; how to communicate with distressed students • Lead as a steering committee member in furthering the development of the tutoring center
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Extracurricular Activities

06/2013-Present	<p>LANA (Latino & Native American) Neurology Clinic, under Miguel Fiol, M.D., UMN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with a neurology team in launching a novel specialty clinic in efforts to address cultural sensitivity and reduce health disparities in underserved Minnesota populations.
04/2013-Present	<p>University of Minnesota Medical School Knowledge Co-op, UMN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collaborative effort to provide educational resources and create practice exams for medical students, by medical students.
04/2013-Present	<p>Shadowing Center for Memory Research & Care, under Riley McCarten, M.D., UMN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked closely with a neurologist, family therapist, and social worker in an outpatient setting, seeing patients and families dealing with cognitive dysfunction, particularly Alzheimer's Disease
11/2012-Present	<p>Student Interest Group in Neurology (medical student org.), President (2013-Present), UMN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings together medical students who are interested in learning about neurology and its connection to the other clinical neurosciences by working closely with faculty and residents in hosting lectures, skills workshops, and fundraisers.
11/2012-Present	<p>American Academy of Neurology Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholastic organization networking medical students with neurology professionals
09/2012-Present	<p>National American Medical Student Association Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholastic organization networking medical students with medical professionals
03/2010-Present	<p>National Society for Neuroscience Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholastic organization networking graduate students with active neuroscientists
01/2013-05/2013	<p>Courage Center Volunteer, Wheelchair Basketball Assistant Coach, UMN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked to empower people with disabilities via rehabilitation sports and recreation programs to regain strength and coordination
01/2011-2012	<p>Shadowed Mateo Calderon-Arnulphi, M.D., Neurology Dept., University of Illinois at Chicago</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My first experiences with clinical neurology, I had the opportunity to discuss and present an array of neurological cases while on rounds, becoming familiar with diagnostic radiology, infarct and lesion localization, comprehensive neurological exams, and applied clinical neurology research.
01/2011-2012	<p>National Tri-Beta Biology Honors Society & Psi-Chi Psychology Honors Society Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholastic organization promoting achievement in biology and psychology studies
10/2009-2012	<p>Writer, Director, & Editor; Campus Film Festival, Chicago, IL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A traveling film festival where students are given one week to shoot a 5-minute film and compete locally with a chance to advance to national and international rounds in Hollywood, CA.
03/2009-2012	<p>Neuroscience Society (academic student org.), Vice President, LUC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides support for the growing field of neuroscience at LUC, organizing scholastic events and hosting lectures, fundraising for our partner, the Alzheimer's Association.
04/2009-2011	<p>GlobeMed (non-profit student org.), President (2010) & Director of Media (2011), LUC</p>

- A national student-led social justice organization that spreads global health awareness and fundraises to support sustainable solutions to health issues by working directly with leaders in poverty-stricken communities locally and around the world.
- 11/2008-2011 Shadowed Eric Kulstad, M.D., Emergency Dept., Advocate Christ Medical Center, Chicago, IL
- At a level-one trauma center, I gained my first experiences observing an array of surgical procedures, appropriately eliciting a patient history, analyzing aspects of an ultrasound, and administering an electrocardiogram.
- 11/2008-2011 Emergency Department Triage Assistant, Advocate Christ Medical Center, Chicago, IL
- Responsibilities included checking patients into the ED, serving as a liaison between patients and their doctors or nurses, retrieving and transporting medical supplies, and comforting the families of patients who have been triaged, interacting with a diverse range of patients, including women in labor, victims of gunshot wounds, and patients suffering from a stroke or heart attack.
- 10/2008-2010 English Tutor for Adults, Loyola Community Literacy Center, Chicago, IL
- Tutoring not only English as a primary or secondary language to socioeconomically diverse adults of the Rogers Park neighborhood, but also other educational skills necessary for obtainment of a General Equivalency Degree.
- 05/2002-2010 Black Belt Instructor, Joon H. Lee's Tae Kwon Do School of Martial Arts, Chicago, IL
- Part of a philosophy that emphasizes the notion of character building and fosters the development of the body and mind through discipline and intense physical and mental training, I instructed and mentored students in training longitudinally over several years.

Guest Lectures

- 11/2013 Brain Awareness Week: 7th Grade Biology
Richfield Middle School
- 06/2013 Published Research Talk; Sweis et al. 2013 paper in *Neuroscience*
M.D./Ph.D. Medical Scientist Training Program Seminar
- 08/2011 Research Opportunities; Stress and Memory
Science Undergraduates, Incoming Class of 2015, Loyola University Chicago
- 08/2011 Teaching Strategies and Problem Areas in Peer Tutoring
Tutor Orientation, Loyola University Chicago
- 08/2011 Research Opportunities; Stress and Memory
Honors Orientation, Loyola University Chicago
- 04/2011 Food Intake and Feeding Behavior
Neuroscience Society, Loyola University Chicago
- 04/2011 Personal Academic Journey and Research Experience
Scholar's Night, Incoming Class of 2015, Loyola University Chicago
- 10/2010 Stress and Memory
Neuroscience Society, Loyola University Chicago
- 10/2010 Synesthesia
Neuroscience Society, Loyola University Chicago
- 08/2010 Personal Academic Journey and Research Experience
Promoting Connections in Research, Loyola University Chicago

Certified Training

- Basic Life Support / Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation Training, American Heart Association, UMN
- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) Radiation Safety Training, LUC, UMN
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Safety Training, LUC, UMN
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Laboratory Training, LUC, UMN
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Training for the Social and Behavioral Sciences, LUC, UMN
- Protocolized Care for Early Septic Shock (ProCESS) Clinical Trial Training, Advocate Christ Hospital and Medical Center Emergency Department; University of Pittsburgh Critical Care Department
- College Reading and Learning Association Level 1 Tutor Training, LUC

Related Skills

- Electroencephalography system installation, use, and data analysis experience (e.g., BioSemi, EMSE)
- Cognitive psychology & animal behavior experiment software programming experience (e.g., E-Prime, AnyMaze)
- Radioactive neurochemistry laboratory bench work techniques (e.g., *in situ* hybridization, radioimmunoassays)
- Animal (rodent) breeding, care, and behavioral experimentation (e.g., memory, anxiety, and stress paradigms)
- Animal (rodent) surgical procedures (e.g., virus brain infusions and fiber optic cannulation), tissue harvesting
- Expert in media production (e.g., Photoshop, Final Cut) and statistical/office suites (e.g. SPSS, Microsoft Office)

References

Mark Thomas, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Depts. of Neuroscience; of Psychology
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 251-0118
tmthomas@umn.edu

Alessandro Bartolomucci, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Integrative Biology and Physiology
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 626-7006
abartolo@umn.edu

Louis Lucas, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor/Principal Investigator
Department of Biology
Loyola University Chicago
1032 West Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60660
(773) 508-2720
louis.r.lucas@gmail.com

Yoji Shimizu, Ph.D.
Professor
Dept. of Microbiology, Immunology, & Cancer Biology
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 626-6849
shimi002@umn.edu

Afshin Divani, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Depts. of Neurology; of Neurosurgery
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-3035
divani@umn.edu

Kathleen Hesse, R.N.
Research Coordinator
Emergency Department
Advocate Christ Hospital and Medical Center
4440 West 95 Street
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
(708) 684-3450
hessek4@gmail.com

David Redish, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Depts. of Neuroscience; of Psychology
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 626-3738
redish@umn.edu

William Engeland, Ph.D.
Professor
Department of Neuroscience
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 625-4976
engel002@umn.edu

Robert Morrison, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor/Principal Investigator
Department of Psychology
Loyola University Chicago
1032 West Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60660
(773) 508-2973
rmorrison@luc.edu

Miguel Fiol, M.D.
Physician, Associate Professor
Department of Neurology
University of Minnesota
321 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 626-7044
fiolx001@umn.edu

Aubrey Videtto, M.A.
Director
Center for Tutoring and Academic Excellence
Loyola University Chicago
1032 West Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60660
(312) 929-7799
aubreyvidetto@gmail.com