



## Children's National®

### Postdoctoral Fellowship in Autism

Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Children's National Hospital  
Washington, DC and Rockville, MD  
Sept 2022- Aug 2024

### Fellowship Training Overview

We offer one two-year, full time fellowship at the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (CASD). We value trainee diversity, cultural competence, and ability to contribute to our work with diverse and underserved populations. We are deeply committed to training. Our training combines clinical, didactic, and research activities to prepare you for a career in clinical-academic psychology. We provide focused experience in the evaluation and treatment of children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and related conditions including participation in diagnostic and neuropsychological evaluations across age and levels of functioning and experience in group and individual treatment. The fellow will also participate in weekly didactics, case conferences, and individual and group supervision. We offer protected time (minimum 20%) for mentored research activities.



CASD is a part of the Division of Pediatric Neuropsychology at Children's National. CASD specializes in evaluation, treatment, and advocacy for children with autism spectrum disorders. Children of all ages are seen in multidisciplinary teams and treatment programs. We offer training at the externship, internship, and post-doctoral levels. Services are provided by psychology, neuropsychology, psychiatry, neurodevelopmental pediatrics, and speech and language pathology.

### The Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders

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CASD has an active research program focused on the development and evaluation of autism-specific treatments; addressing disparities in access to care by delivering school-based interventions and providing professional mentoring to embedded psychologists in primary care settings and community providers by hosting ECHO Autism clinics; the cognitive phenotype and neural basis of non-social challenges in autism; embracing neurodiversity and welcoming autistic individuals as collaborators and trainees; and investigating autism in females and transgender/ gender diverse individuals. CASD serves families at regional outpatient centers in Maryland and DC with a broad catchment area as a tertiary care center, spanning several states in the mid-Atlantic. Our clinic serves a culturally and clinically diverse population, ranging from toddlers to young adults, and presenting with varying cognitive ability and a wide range of co-occurring clinical and medical conditions.



Division of Neuropsychology office in Rockville, MD

### About Children's National Hospital

Serving the nation's children since 1870, Children's National is ranked the #1 pediatric hospital in the DC-MD-VA region and one of the 10 pediatric hospitals in the country. Children's National offers services at the main hospital in the District of Columbia and at regional satellites throughout the D.C. area. Home to the [Children's Research Institute](#) and the [Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation](#), Children's National is the seventh-highest NIH-funded pediatric institution in the nation. Children's National is recognized for its expertise and innovation in pediatric care and as a strong voice for children through advocacy at the local, regional and national levels. See [www.childrensnational.org](http://www.childrensnational.org) for more information.

*The atrium of Children's National – main hospital campus*



## Clinical Experiences

Our faculty is committed to excellence in clinical care and training. In this spirit, we believe both evaluation and treatment rotations are fundamental to well-rounded training in ASD. At the same time, clinical training experiences are personalized to the fellow's goals and interests. Training rotations include:

- ASD Diagnostic Evaluation: Fellows receive extensive training in ASD assessment across the lifespan and will develop facility with various diagnostic tools including ADOS-2 and ADI-R, as well as evaluation using telemedicine.
- Preschool Evaluation: Fellows will gain experience and facility in the assessment of preschool age children with or suspected of having, ASD.
- Evaluation in Context of Limited Language: Fellows will learn specialized techniques for assessment of children and adolescents with, or suspected of having, ASD and limited language skills and/or cognitive impairment.
- Neuropsychological Evaluation: Fellows will develop skills in comprehensive neuropsychological evaluations for school-age children and young adults suspected of having ASD. Evaluations may be standalone or in the context of multidisciplinary teams (e.g., psychiatry, speech-language pathology, neuropsychology).
- Other Specialized Opportunities: assessment with medically complex and gender diverse populations
- Cognitive Behavioral Intervention: Fellows will have the opportunity to lead an executive functioning group-based intervention for school-age children with ASD and/or provide individual psychotherapy.

## Research Experiences

The fellow will have at least one day a week (usually 25-30% time) of protected time for research and will be matched to an existing research project based on interest, experience, and availability. Each fellow is assigned a primary research mentor to guide their experience. CASD currently has grant funding and contracts supporting: executive function, community-based intervention trials, neuroimaging, cognitive phenotyping, medical populations at risk for ASD, females with ASD, and gender variance. The Fellow is expected to be a productive member of their research team and to demonstrate competency for

independent research after completing the program. For example, fellows are expected to present at professional conferences and to submit a review paper, chapter, research article, and/ or grant application by the end of the residency. Our program includes a research curriculum and monthly research meetings/ seminars to support the development of research skills. Our postdocs are authors on numerous peer-reviewed publications, book chapters, and conference presentations.



*Faculty at Children's National have authored multiple assessment tools, a research-based treatment program for children with autism spectrum disorders, and several apps for concussion recognition and response.*

## Didactic and Professional Development Experiences

Approximately 15-20% of the Fellow's time is devoted to specialized ASD-focused didactics and professional development activities.

- At least two hours of individual supervision weekly.
- One hour of Group Assessment Supervision weekly focusing on case formulation and report writing, interpreting IEPs, feedbacks, and special emphasis topics (i.e., diversity, neurodiversity, core and higher order language, transition-age youth, etc.)
- Weekly didactic/professional development multidisciplinary meetings that include didactic presentations, guest speakers, and case discussions.
- Monthly ADOS-2 reliability trainings involving review and scoring of taped/ or live administrations.
- Weekly Autism Research Team meetings.

- Optional Neuropsychology Seminar: a weekly 75-minute seminar series reviewing major topics in functional neuroanatomy and neuropsychological disorders, as well as legal and ethical issues and case seminars.
- Additional opportunities through the larger medical center include: Hospital Grand Rounds, Behavioral Medicine Grand Rounds, Children's Research Institute Seminars, and IDDRC Seminars. Most of these meetings can be attended remotely via video teleconference.

## Supervision and Teaching Opportunities

The fellow will develop teaching and supervisory skills to prepare themselves for independent practice within clinical and academic medical settings. Fellows develop their own supervisory skills with psychology externs and psychometrists. Fellows present topics within neuropsychology and CASD seminar series. Fellows also regularly provide community education and outreach at the local level and beyond.

## Sample Postdoc Schedule

Applicants often wonder how all the above opportunities come together over the two-year period. The sample schedule below is an illustration. Actual schedules will vary depending on trainee goals and interests. Fellows participate in multiple rotations at any given time. Rotations vary in both length (6 months or 12 months) and intensity (e.g., cases weekly or twice a month).

		Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
Year 1	Fall & Spring	NIH Research Feedbacks	School Age Diagnostic Eval. (3 per month) Supervision Research Meeting	*Infant & Toddler Eval. (2 per month) Neuropsych. Didactics & Supervision Group Therapy	CASD Didactics & Supervision Team Feedbacks (2 per month) Writing	*Neuropsych. Eval. (2 per month) Feedbacks Extern Supervision
	Fall	Writing Extern Supervision Therapy (2 patients)	Preschool Eval. (weekly) Research Meeting Feedbacks	Neuropsych. Didactics & Supervision Feedbacks Writing	CASD Didactics & Supervision Research Writing	EF Clinic Eval. (2 per month) Feedbacks
Year 2	Spring	Writing Extern Supervision Therapy (2 patients)	ID/Limited Language Eval. (weekly) CASD Research Meeting	Neuropsych. Didactics & Supervision Feedbacks Writing	CASD Didactics & Supervision Research Writing	Gender & Autism Eval. (2 per month) Feedbacks

\*Part of a multidisciplinary team (e.g., psychology, speech-language, psychiatry, neuropsychology)

## COVID-19

Our training program is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of our Fellows while continuing our high-level training and breadth of training opportunities. We are currently employing a hybrid model that includes in-person clinical care with enhanced safety precautions for some services, and virtual clinical care for others. Children's National has a robust telehealth program which has allowed us to pivot seamlessly to virtual service delivery models when needed and to leverage technology for virtual didactics, meetings, and supervision. Children's National provides training for incoming providers on safety in the workplace with regard to COVID-19, and the Division of Neuropsychology has safety protocols and multiple protections in place to safeguard the health of staff and patients. For more information about Children's National's response to coronavirus, please see our [website](#).

## Salary/Benefits

Start date will be on Thursday September 1, 2022. The current salary for first-year fellows is \$53,760. Children's National offers an excellent benefits package. Postdoctoral Fellows receive more than four weeks of *paid time off per year*. There are also *nine paid holidays*. We provide a *professional expense stipend* for conference travel, books, licensure fees, etc. The hospital offers a selection of health insurance plans, optional dental and vision coverage, flexible spending accounts, employee assistance program, back-up dependent care assistance, optional life and disability insurance. More information is available at [childrensnational.org/careers/benefits/](https://childrensnational.org/careers/benefits/). Fellows have access to private offices with large windows and free parking across our Rockville and Takoma Park locations. The Rockville office also includes free exercise facilities in the building. Fellows receive psychometrist support for their testing cases. We maintain scoring and statistical software, and through our academic affiliate, The George Washington University, offer online access to library resources including full-text journals.

## How to Apply

### Postdoctoral Applicant Qualifications:

Our application process is competitive. Applicants must have completed an APA-accredited doctoral program in psychology (Clinical Psychology preferred) and an APA/CPA-accredited clinical

predoctoral internship. Competitive applicants are well-rounded clinicians in the scientist-practitioner/clinical science tradition, who clearly demonstrate:

- Strong *prior training in* clinical or pediatric psychology: Applicants should have completed two or more year-long practica / externships *and* substantial internship rotation(s) in child psychology. Formal graduate coursework and clinical didactics in this area are expected. Please be sure to describe your autism training experiences clearly in your application.
- Clinical experience with assessment and treatment of autistic youth. Competitive candidates have extensive experience administering gold-standard diagnostic measures (e.g., ADOS-2/ADI-R).
- A clear focus on working with *children and adolescents*, in prior training experiences, and in future goals.
- A record of *meaningful participation and productivity in research*. Completion of an empirical dissertation and formal coursework in statistics and research methodology in graduate school are required. Competitive candidates have peer-reviewed publications and strong skills in statistical analysis and are interested in continuing research on postdoc and beyond.
- [A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.](#) CASD is committed to creating an inclusive environment and dismantling systems of inequity. We celebrate diversity in our trainees and our colleagues at all levels, promote cultural competence, and seek providers who strive to contribute to our work with diverse and underserved populations. Applicants from all backgrounds and communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

**Application Deadline: December 15, 2020**

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis; early application is encouraged.

**Application Procedures:**

We have an online portal for submitting your documents. You will be asked to complete our Application Form online and to upload your documents. If you start the application and want to leave and return later to complete it, please note your

“Return Code,” and enter it (“Returning?” link at upper right of page) when you come back to the site later.

**Access the Application and Online Portal:**

<https://cri-datacap.org/surveys/?s=K3L733KCKW>

**Materials to be uploaded to portal by applicant:**

- Letter of Interest/Personal Statement addressing clinical and research interests, goals, and perceived match to our program and focus area (s) of interest. Please include aspects of your background, experience, and/or skills that demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Curriculum Vitae
- Two de-identified assessment reports written by the applicant

**Materials to be e-mailed or mailed from other sources:**

- Three letters of recommendation e-mailed directly from the recommenders. We do not accept letters sent by the applicant. Mailed hard copies should be signed across the seal of the envelope.
- Official graduate transcripts sent from your graduate institution(s), by mail or email.

**Send letters of recommendation and transcripts to: Cara Pugliese, PhD**

E-mail: [cpuglies@childrensnational.org](mailto:cpuglies@childrensnational.org)

Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Children’s National Hospital  
15245 Shady Grove Road, Suite 350  
Rockville, MD 20850

**Interview Notifications:** Applicants will be notified of their interview status by January 8, 2021.

**Interview Dates:** Two or three individual interviews will be scheduled with staff members. Interviews for selected applicants will be conducted virtually this year (Zoom) during the weeks of January 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.  
\*Onsite tours can also be arranged upon request.

Children’s National Hospital is an equal opportunity employer that evaluates qualified applicants without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender, identity, or other characteristics protected by law.

## CASD Faculty and Staff

### Neuropsychology/Psychology Faculty



**Lauren Kenworthy, PhD**

Director of CASD; Associate Division  
Chief Pediatric Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Non-social ASD phenotypes,  
genotypes, and treatment

[LKenwort@childrensnational.org](mailto:LKenwort@childrensnational.org)



**Anne Inge, PhD**

Clinical Director, CASD  
Clinical Psychologist

**Interests:** Diagnostic,  
neurodevelopmental, and neurocognitive  
assessment of ASD

[Alnge@childrensnational.org](mailto:Alnge@childrensnational.org)



**Angela Bollich, PhD**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** ASD evaluation and treatment  
from school age through adulthood;  
language development

[ABollich@childrensnational.org](mailto:ABollich@childrensnational.org)



**Ann Clawson, PhD**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Medical/neurodevelopmental  
comorbidities of ASD, sex differences in  
the neuropsychology of ASD

[AClawson@childrensnational.org](mailto:AClawson@childrensnational.org)



**Serene Habayeb, PhD**

Clinical Psychologist

**Interests:** ASD evaluation & treatment,  
cultural issues, community integration of  
clinical services for ASD

[shabayeb@childrensnational.org](mailto:shabayeb@childrensnational.org)



**Deborah Potvin, PhD, ABPP-CN**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Early diagnosis of ASD,  
preschool assessment

[DPotvin@childrensnational.org](mailto:DPotvin@childrensnational.org)



**Cara Pugliese, PhD**

Clinical Psychologist

**Interests:** Transition to adulthood,  
evidence-based intervention research

[CPuglies@childrensnational.org](mailto:CPuglies@childrensnational.org)



**Allison Ratto, PhD**

Clinical Psychologist

**Interests:** Developmental evaluations,  
cultural factors in assessment; Spanish-  
language assessment

[ARatto@childrensnational.org](mailto:ARatto@childrensnational.org)



**Srishti Rau, PhD**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Prevalence of ASD in medically  
complex children

[SrRau@childrensnational.org](mailto:SrRau@childrensnational.org)



**John Strang, PsyD**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Assessment/research  
transgender/gender diverse youth,  
transition to adulthood

[JStrang@ChildrensNational.org](mailto:JStrang@ChildrensNational.org)



**Eliana Sudikoff, PhD**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Epilepsy, ASD, adaptive and  
executive functioning in complex medical  
conditions

[ELSudikoff@childrensnational.org](mailto:ELSudikoff@childrensnational.org)



**Meagan Wills, PhD**

Clinical Psychologist

**Interests:** Early identification of ASD,  
parent-child relationships, anxiety

[mcwills@childrensnational.org](mailto:mcwills@childrensnational.org)



**Rachael Yates, PhD**

Neuropsychologist

**Interests:** Medical comorbidities of ASD,  
including hearing loss

[ryates@childrensnational.org](mailto:ryates@childrensnational.org)



### **Current CASD Postdocs**

**Yangfeifei Gao, PhD**

2<sup>nd</sup> Year CASD Postdoctoral Fellow

[ygao@childrensnational.org](mailto:ygao@childrensnational.org)



**Rachael Arowolo, PhD**

1<sup>st</sup> Year CASD Postdoctoral Fellow

[rarowolo@childrensnational.org](mailto:rarowolo@childrensnational.org)

## Associated Faculty and Staff

- Abigail Brandt, MA, CCC-SLP, Speech and Language Pathologist
- Colleen Morgan, MA, CCC-SLP, Speech and Language Pathologist
- Amy Youmatz, MA, Psychometrist
- Kelly Register Brown, MD, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Rebecca Lane, MD, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrician
- Cathy Scheiner, MD, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrician
- Nicol Awadalla Bacon, MD, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrician

## Recent Publications by Our Postdocs

Reflecting work done during fellowship with us (postdoc names are in **bold**).

**Habayeb, S.**, Kenworthy, L., De La Torre, A. et al. (in press). Still Left Behind: Fewer Black School-Aged Youth Receive ASD Diagnoses Compared to White Youth. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

**Habayeb, S.**, Al-Harashsheh, S., Ratto, A., Verbalis, A., Pugliese, C., Nadwodny, N., Al-Meer, F., & El-Akoum, M. (2021). Meeting the needs of autistic adults in Qatar: Stakeholder perspectives on gaps in services and priorities for future programming. *Autism*, 0(0), 1–13.

**Habayeb, S.**, Dababnah, S., John, A., & Rich, B. (2020). Cultural Experiences of Arab American Caregivers Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 50(1), 51-62.

**Ratto, A. B.**, Kenworthy, L., Yerys, B. E., Bascom, J., Wieckowski, A. T., White, S. W., ... & Scarpa, A. (2018). What about the girls? Sex-based differences in autistic traits and adaptive skills. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 48(5), 1698-1711.

**Kraper, C. K.**, Kenworthy, L., Popal, H., Martin, A., & Wallace, G. L. (2017). The gap between adaptive behavior and intelligence in autism persists into young adulthood and is linked to psychiatric comorbidities. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 47(10), 3007-3017.

**Ratto, A. B.**, Anthony, B. J., Kenworthy, L., Armour, A. C., Dudley, K., & Anthony, L. G. (2016). Are non-intellectually disabled black youth with ASD less

impaired on parent report than their white peers?. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 46(3), 773-781.

**Ratto, A. B.**, Anthony, B. J., **Pugliese, C.**, Mendez, R., Safer-Lichtenstein, J., Dudley, K. M., ... & Anthony, L. G. (2017). Lessons learned: Engaging culturally diverse families in neurodevelopmental disorders intervention research. *Autism*, 21(5), 622-634.

**Pugliese, C. E.**, Anthony, L. G., Strang, J. F., Dudley, K., Wallace, G. L., Naiman, D. O., & Kenworthy, L. (2016). Longitudinal examination of adaptive behavior in autism spectrum disorders: Influence of executive function. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 46(2), 467-477.

**Granader, Y.**, Wallace, G. L., Hardy, K. K., Yerys, B. E., Lawson, R. A., **Rosenthal, M.**, ... & Schultz, R. T. (2014). Characterizing the factor structure of parent reported executive function in autism spectrum disorders: The impact of cognitive inflexibility. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 44(12), 3056-3062.

Kenworthy, L., Anthony, L. G., Naiman, D. O., Cannon, L., Wills, M. C., **Luong-Tran, C.**, ... & Sokoloff, J. L. (2014). Randomized controlled effectiveness trial of executive function intervention for children on the autism spectrum. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 55(4), 374-383.

