



Institute on Aging
and Lifelong Health

2025-26 IALH STUDENT AWARD RECIPIENTS



Madden Family Graduate Scholarship in the Cognitive Neuroscience of Aging - \$13,835

Recipient: Stacy Voll, PhD Student, Psychology-Lifespan

Project name: *Intraindividual Variability of Cerebral Hemodynamics and Multi-Task Cognitive Function*

Stacey's research focuses on the dynamic interplay between brain activity, cognition, and mobility. Brain activity of healthy adults aged 65-75 will be measured while they're completing cognitive and walking gait tasks. Her project has the potential to identify neurobehavioral markers of attention lapses and cognitive instability – factors that may precede or predict age-related cognitive decline. Findings will inform future longitudinal research and interventions aimed at mitigating cognitive variability and promoting cognitive resilience in aging populations.



Alice Lou-Poy Graduate Scholarship - \$1080

Recipient: Isabella Tucci, Master's Student, Neuroscience

Project name: *Sex-Specific Neurodegeneration in Alzheimer's Disease: The Role of Estradiol Decline and Concussion History in Postmenopausal Women*

Isabella's research focuses on addressing a critical gap in Alzheimer's Disease (AD) research by examining how menopause-related hormone decline may contribute to AD in postmenopausal women aged 55 and older. In addition, her project addresses whether menopausal hormone replacement therapy or concussion history moderates this relationship. Findings will clarify whether menopausal hormone replacement therapy mitigates AD-related risk and may shed light on its potential as a sex-specific intervention.



David Chuenyan Lai Scholarship - \$1140

Recipient: Mana Minakari, Master's Student, Neuroscience

Project name: *In Vivo Tracking of Microglial Transport of Neurotoxins in Alzheimer's Disease Using a Fluorescent Bead Model*

Mana's research on microglia function and proteins in the brain has the potential to reshape our understanding of Alzheimer's disease (AD) pathology and contribute to the development of targeted strategies that protect vulnerable brains from further damage. Using advanced in vivo imaging techniques, her research explores long-term neuroimmune dynamics and their relevance to brain health and recovery. Her findings may open new therapeutic avenues which, for individuals with AD and their families, could mean earlier interventions, improved outcomes, and a greater quality of life.



Elaine Gallagher Award - \$965

Recipient: Dominique Hancock, PhD Candidate, Neuroscience

Project name: *Endothelial Calcium Signaling as a Regulator of Capillary Flow and Cognitive Health in Aging*

Dominique's project seeks to uncover how endothelial calcium signaling maintains capillary patency and prevents stalling in the aging brain. By linking microvascular dynamics directly to cognitive outcomes, her project will provide critical insight into how vascular aging contributes to cognitive decline. Her work could identify endothelial signaling as a novel and safe therapeutic target to preserve cerebral blood flow, slow cognitive decline, and improve quality of life for older adults. Dominique was awarded this travel grant to present her research as a poster presentation at Neuroscience 2025 in San Diego in November.



Elaine Gallagher Award - \$965

Recipient: Sanjit Roy, PhD Candidate, Social Dimensions of Health

Project name: *Elder Abuse Among Canadian Veterans and Non-Veterans: A Comparative Analysis of Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Perceptions of Healthy Aging Using the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging*

Sanjit's doctoral dissertation aims to understand the relative extensiveness of elder abuse among Canadian veterans and non-veterans and their perceptions of healthy aging using Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) data. Currently, a paucity of research has examined how Canadian veterans and non-veterans who faced any abuses conceptualize healthy aging. Sanjit was awarded this travel award to present his research orally at the Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference in Montreal in October of 2025.



Marilynne Convey Graduate Scholarship - \$1300

Recipient: Masako Anderson, PhD Candidate, Social Dimensions in Health

Project name: *Exploring Access to Care Among Older Adults with Problematic Substance Use Who Have Cognitive Decline and Comorbid Medical Conditions in the Community*

Masako's research focuses on exploring access to care among older adults with problematic substance use who have cognitive decline and co-morbid medical conditions. This research will propose potential modifications to health and social care policies, practices, and structures to enhance older adults' well-being and reduce the frequency of acute care visits. For the last 12 years, Masako has been volunteering with Tonari Gumi, a Japanese non-profit organization caring for the welfare of Japanese Canadians.



Neena Chappell Scholarship - \$1530

Recipient: Olivia Braziller, Master's Student, Neuroscience

Project name: *Using a Multi-Faceted Approach to Diagnose and Treat Aging Adults with a History of Concussion*

Olivia's research aims to determine whether individuals with a history of concussions exhibit increased Alzheimer's disease (AD) markers, such as changes in cognitive performance, fluid biomarkers, and the brain's structural integrity. In addition, her project will assess whether specific interventions can enhance these markers. Adults who experience a concussion often face prolonged recovery and are at risk of accelerated decline of cognitive functions. Interventions that facilitate proper recovery are essential for maintaining brain health and minimizing prolonged impairment. Therefore, her project could have significant implications for both prevention and rehabilitation.



UVic Retirees Association Award - \$1325

Recipient: Naz Babaei, PhD Student, Clinical Psychology - Neuropsychology

Project name: *Trauma Burden and Cognitive Outcomes After Concussion in Older Adults: Neuropsychological and Neuroimaging Markers*

Naz's research aims to clarify how trauma history shapes brain and cognitive outcomes among older adults between the ages of 55 and 70 who have experienced a concussion. Findings of her research could improve screening, inform trauma-sensitive clinical practices, and help differentiate age-related changes from injury- and stress-related effects. Identifying neural and psychological risk markers will support targeted interventions to promote resilience, preserve independence, and improve quality of life for older adults with complex life and health histories.



UVic Retirees Association Award - \$1325

Recipient: Shabana Kapadia, PhD Student, Health Informatics

Project name: *Exploring Virtual Care Delivery Models and Technologies in Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities*

Shabana's research will systematically map the existing evidence on virtual care delivery models and technologies in long-term care and assisted living facilities serving adults aged 55 and older. This project will provide the first consolidated mapping of virtual care innovations within long-term care and assisted living facilities internationally. The review will help guide policy makers and health system leaders in prioritizing investments most relevant to aging populations, as well as identify staff preparedness, digital infrastructure, and resident engagement.

**These scholarships and awards would not be possible without the generosity of donors.
Thank you to our donors who support student research.**