

*Department of Psychology
695 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10065
212.396.6690*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 12, 2017

Contact: Dr. Michael A. Hoyt
Department of Psychology
Co-Director – Doctoral Program in Health Psychology & Clinical Science

Email: michael.hoyt@hunter.cuny.edu

NCI PREDOCTORAL TO POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW TRANSITION GRANT AWARDED TO EXAMINE YOUNG ADULT BEHAVIORAL ONCOLOGY

Katie Darabos – a 4th year doctoral student in Health Psychology and Clinical Science training program (www.cunyhpcs.org) at the CUNY Graduate Center and a graduate student researcher at Hunter College’s Stress and Coping Lab (www.HoytCopingLab.org) – has been awarded a six year fellowship grant totaling \$316,256 from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to support her predoctoral and postdoctoral research and training.

Unlike pediatric and older adult survivors of cancer, survival rates among young adult women with breast cancer has shown little improvement. The diagnosis of cancer during young adulthood can trigger psychological distress especially as a cancer diagnosis disrupts present life cycle and social roles. Young adults with breast cancer commonly report isolation and alienation as they feel left out by their social support networks.

While face-to-face communication (e.g., talking about one’s feelings with a caring other) has long been held as the gold standard of support, young adults are communicating via technology on a grander scale than engaging in face-to-face support.

The primary goal of Ms. Darabos’ dissertation research is to explore whether technology-based support is related to better mental, physical, social, and biological health in young survivors than is traditional face-to-face communication. Initial work will include the use of multiple research methods including observation of supportive exchanges, comprehensive assessment of cancer-related adjustment, and measurement of biological stress factors.

The dissertation aims to advance biopsychosocial research related to cancer survivorship of young adult patients.

Ms. Darabos' research team includes mentorship from Dr. Michael Hoyt of the Hunter College Department of Psychology and the Health Psychology and Clinical Science doctoral training program at CUNY, as well as Dr. Joel Erlich of Hunter College and Dr. Jennifer Ford of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science. The project will also involve many students and research assistants from the Hunter College Department of Psychology.

The NCI Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Fellow Transition Award (F99/K00) is designed to encourage and retain outstanding graduate students who have demonstrated potential and interest in pursuing careers as independent cancer researchers. The award will facilitate the transition of into successful cancer research postdoctoral appointments, and provide opportunities for career development activities relevant to their long-term career goals.

###

The Health Psychology and Clinical Science doctoral program provides a thorough grounding in an integrated program of psychological science that encompasses both health psychology and clinical science. www.cunyhpcs.org