HIGHLIGHTS

✓ **Due to Coronavirus pandemic, several events have been postponed, or cancelled.** Some of them will be managed online. Please check individual web-links of the meetings for updated information.

✓ “News and Events” column covers new developments in alcohol research; and meetings scheduled in March-April months.

✓ Highlights on the research funding opportunities for international candidates in USA.

✓ “New directions” column discusses the risk of sudden infant death during the first year of life due to alcohol abuse during pregnancy; and G x E interaction of alcohol use disorder.

✓ Coverage on Gordon Research Conference.

Publications You May Have Missed

By Robert Leeman, Ph.D.

Society newsletters often include references for relevant articles. We would like our publication listing in the ISBRA Bulletin to be unique. Thus, we have decided to focus our attention on quality publications that may be overlooked for various reasons such as having been published in a lesser known journal. Each issue, we will report on a selection of such articles with a brief description of why we believe they are worthy of members’ attention. If you know of any such publications that may have been missed, please contact us at isbraisbra@gmail.com.
Publications You May Have Missed
By Robert Leeman, Ph.D.

Men’s Coercive Condom Use Resistance: The Roles of Sexual Aggression History, Alcohol Intoxication, and Partner Condom Negotiation.
In: Violence Against Women, 2018
By: Kelly Cue Davis, Natasha Gulati, Elizabeth Neilson, Cynthia Stappenbeckc

A rigorous laboratory study testing relationships between alcohol administration and response to a sexual scenario where a hypothetical partner indicates preference to use a condom. Interesting findings that participant individual differences and the manner in which risk is couched as part of the condom request had an impact on participants’ stated willingness to use a condom.

The Role and Interpretation of Pilot Studies in Clinical Research:
In: J of Psychiatric Research, 2011
By: Andrew Leon, Lori Davis, Helena Kraemer

Though not new nor focused on alcohol, this brief paper makes a strong argument that the role of pilot studies should be limited to addressing feasibility issues, not for hypothesis testing, however pilot study data are often misused in this way. This paper has had a tremendous impact on my view of the limited yet important role of pilot studies.

Modulation of Gpr39, a G-protein coupled receptor associated with alcohol use in non-human primates, curbs ethanol intake in mice
In: Neuropsychopharmacology
By: Verginia Cuzon Carlson, Matthew Ford, Timothy Carlson, Alejandro Limniczi, Kathleen Grant, Betsy Ferguson, Rita Cervera-Juanes

This rare collection of studies identified a hypermethylated gene that was downregulated in the nucleus accumbens of chronic alcohol drinking monkeys and then pharmacologically manipulated the expressed protein in mice and found reduced alcohol intake and escalation of alcohol intake. This research was taken a step further to demonstrate neural effects of this manipulation.

Transplantation of fecal microbiota from patients with alcoholism induces anxiety/depression behaviors and decreases brain mGluR1/PKC ε levels in mouse
In: Biofactors
By: Wenbo Zhao, Ying Hu, Chuangang Li, Ning Li, Shaowei Zhu, Xu Tan, Meng Li, Yue Zhang, Zheng Xu, Zhaoxi Ding, Lingming Hu, Zengxun Liu, Jinhao Sun

Fecal microbiota from patients with alcohol use disorder or controls were characterized and then transplanted into mice. Robust differences were found between the 2 groups of mice with greater anxiety- and depression-like behaviors and greater alcohol preference and consumption, symptoms resembling those found in alcohol use disorder.
In the United States, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at the National Institutes of Health provides the extramural funding for research projects that can be carried out as U01 mechanism for international research collaboration on alcohol and alcoholism. Applicant organizations may submit more than one application, provided that each application is scientifically distinct. Any individual(s) with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research as the Program Director(s)/Principal Investigator(s) (PD(s)/PI(s)) is invited to work with his/her organization to develop an application for support. All PD(s)/PI(s) must have an eRA Commons account. NIAAA will accept a resubmission (A1) application that is submitted no later than 37 months after submission of the new (A0) application that it follows. The performance of any significant scientific element or segment of a project outside of the United States is permissible in this mechanism, either by the recipient or by a researcher employed by a foreign organization, whether or not grant funds are expended. Activities that would meet this definition include, but are not limited to, (1) the involvement of human subjects or animals, (2) extensive foreign travel by recipient project staff for the purpose of data collection, surveying, sampling, and similar activities, or (3) any activity of the recipient that may have an impact on U.S. foreign policy through involvement in the affairs or environment of a foreign country. Collaborations with investigators at a foreign site are anticipated: to result in co-authorship; to use of facilities or instrumentation at a foreign site; and to receive financial support or resources from a foreign entity. One of the mechanism of international U-01 can be reviewed at: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-14-268.html#

Individuals can also apply as foreign national as an early-stage career investigator using K99 extramural mechanism. Both US national and international candidates with PhD/MD or equivalent degree holders within four-year of postdoctoral training can apply for this funding to carry out research in a US research agency (University/Institution). More details on K99 mechanism can be reviewed at: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-19-130.html
New Directions
By Ricardo Pautassi, Ph.D.

SIDS is the sudden death of an infant during the first year of life, not attributable to known causes. Although SIDS is a multifactorial phenomenon, the use of alcohol during pregnancy seems to increase the risk of its emergence. A new study indicates that (a) this risk is further increased by smoking and that (b) mothers who both drank and smoked beyond the first trimester of pregnancy have a 12-fold increased risk of SIDS, than those who quitted this substances by the end the first trimester of pregnancy. These findings highlight the need to assess substance use early in pregnancy and intervene as soon as possible. More information here: https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/combined-prenatal-smoking-and-drinking-greatly-increases-sids-risk

Gene x environment interactions that put individuals at risk for alcohol use disorders are relevant for the design of treatment and early interventions. A recent study led by researchers at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine in collaboration with researchers from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) indicated that individuals with a genetically less active COMT variant and a history of exposure to adverse life events (e.g., divorce, childhood stress) are more likely to begin using alcohol or other drugs at age 15 or before. An early onset of alcohol use, in turn, is a well-known predictor of risk of alcohol use disorders. COMT is an enzyme that degrade catecholamines (such as dopamine). More information here https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/research/niaaa-research-highlights/study-identifies-genetic-variant-may-contribute-to-addiction
Global Jobs
By Nioud (Neo) Gebru, M.P.S.

1. **Field Researcher, Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use, Prevention, Care, and Treatment (New York, USA)** - The Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, Care and Treatment works to reduce morbidity and mortality related to alcohol and substance use among New Yorkers. The Bureau seeks one Field Researcher who will report to the Director of Qualitative Research to collect data and conduct analysis as part of the Rapid Assessment and Response (RAR) team on a range of alcohol and drug related topics to

2. **Director, Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Addictions (CASAA; New Mexico, USA)** - The University of New Mexico (UNM) is seeking a dynamic, innovative, results-oriented, addiction scientist for the position of Director of the Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions (CASAA), one of UNMs premier strategic research centers. The selected candidate will report directly to the Vice President for Research (VPR), and will become a tenured faculty member of the College of Arts and Sciences with full academic year University salary support.

3. **Research Associate (London, UK)** - To work on the NIHR funded Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) South London Alcohol Theme programme of research, led by Professor Colin Drummond. The post holder will work as part of a team on all aspects of the ARC Alcohol Theme research including literature reviewing, study design, preparation of ethics and governance documents, data collection, analyses, and dissemination.

**Fellowships/Post-doctoral positions**

1. **Postdoctoral Clinical Research Fellowship in Traumatic Stress and Addictions (New Jersey, USA)** - This is a two-year endowed post-doctoral clinical research fellowship available to psychologists, and other social scientists interested in developing their professional trajectory towards translational research on interventions and treatments for traumatic stress and addictions.

2. **Postdoctoral alcohol research training (Pennsylvania, USA)** - The Developmental Alcohol Research Training (DART) program at the University of Pittsburgh, directed by Gale Richardson, PhD and Brooke Molina, PhD, approaches training in alcohol use and addiction research from a developmental perspective, focusing on gestation to adulthood.
News and Events
By Fengyuan (Linda) Li, M.S.

News

Jan 8, 2020
A wakeup call from an analysis of U.S. death certificate data from 1999 to 2017: Alcohol-related deaths increasing in the United States. Click here to learn more: Alcohol-related deaths.

Jan 22, 2020
The 24th annual NIAAA Mark Keller Honorary Lecture by Dr. Laura E. Nagy: Inflammation and Cell Death in Alcohol-Associated Liver Disease. Stream the full lecture via NIH Videocast.

Research News:

Large epidemiological studies revealed the co-occurrence of alcohol use disorder (AUD) with antisocial personality disorder and borderline personality disorder. Read the full article at: AUD and Personality Disorders.

Researchers providing an overview of the association of AUD and anxiety from psychiatry psychological and neurobiological perspectives. Full article can be found at: AUD and Anxiety.

Events

March 9, 2020
ICCFASD Annual Public Meeting
Bethesda, MD
See the detailed meeting agenda at: ICCFASD Spring 2020
The meeting is available online at: NIH Videocast-ICCFASD Mar 9th.

March 28 to April 1, 2020
2020 NASPA Annual Conference
Austin, TX
[Cancelled]

March 30 to April 5, 2020
National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week 2020
To register: National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week
[Cancelled]
The NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens) encourages virtual participation of the teens, parents, caregivers, and teachers. Find more activities here: NDAFW activities.

March 31, 2020
NIAAA 50th Anniversary Science Symposium
Bethesda, MD
Agenda: NIAAA 50th Anniversary Webcast is also available at: NIH Videocast-NIAAA 50th
[Cancelled]

May 5, 2020 to May 8, 2020
5th Annual International Congress on Alcoholism and Stress
Volterra, Italy
Register: Volterra Conference
[Postponed to Sep 15-18, 2020]

In Memoriam:

Dr. Richard Veech
Conference Report By
Karina Possa Abrahao, PhD

The 2020 Gordon Research Conference (GRC) on “Alcohol and the Nervous System” was held at Galveston, TX USA.

This was a 6 day meeting (March 1-6, 2020); and this year the theme was “Developing a Clear Vision of the Integrated Neural Actions of Ethanol”.

The “Alcohol and the Nervous System” GRC started in the 2014 with the focus on the major biological areas of alcohol research: molecular cell biology, neurobiology and pharmacology and therapeutics. The central goals are to: 1) Foster deep and open discussion of groundbreaking research at the forefront of investigation into alcohol effects on the nervous system. 2) To highlight cutting edge neuroscience techniques that facilitate discovery of brain mechanisms driving alcohol abuse. 3) To promote interaction between young and senior investigators. 4) To foster the development of the next generation of alcohol researchers by encouraging participation of students and postdoctoral fellows. 5) To recruit scientists from related research areas to the alcohol addiction field by promoting and fostering new collaborations.

The 2020 GRC provided a unique forum to bring together a diverse range of young and established alcohol researchers and experts in complementary fields. The conference was chaired by Danny G. Winder and Sara R. Jones. Keynote session discussed “Alcohol Abuse and Addiction from Mice to Humans” was led by Dr. Patricia Janak. NIAAA Director, Dr. George Koob presented a talk on “50 Years of Neuroscience Research at NIAAA: From Membranes to Microcircuits (Allosterism, Hyperkatifea and Allostasis)”. The 6 day GRC 2020 had several important narrative and poster sessions. Talks also addressed the questions centered on the neural substrates that contribute to alcohol-related health disorders across the entire lifespan and will include systems ranging across phylogeny. There was also a Power Hour session where issues related to women in science were discussed. Funding for this conference was made possible (in part) by 1R13AA028160-01 from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).
Communications Committee Bulletin Editors
Dr. Ricardo Pautassi, Managing Editor
   Email: rpautassi@immf.uncor.edu
Dr. Robert Leeman, Managing Editor
   Email: robert.leeman@ufl.edu
Dr. Vatsalya Vatsalya, Managing Editor
   Email: v0vats01@louisville.edu

ISBRA Communications Committee
Dr. Rosana Camarini, Board of Directors Rep.
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Dr. Ricardo Pautassi, Board of Directors Rep.
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Nioud (Neo) Gebru, M. P. S. (Twitter moderator/ E-Bulletin writer)

Looking for Leadership Opportunities?
Be part of an organization that is dedicated to building community amongst ISBRA’s diverse population; that is committed to bringing news about career building resources and events to ISBRA members; to being a voice regarding issues that are of importance to ISBRA members.
Contact any of the committee officers to find out about being a part of the Communications Committee.