

@UlowaNeuro Notes

October 2023



Have you met our newest group of trainees? They are the first cohort of our new iDREAM postbaccalaureate program, created with the award of an NINDS R25 grant to **Rainbo Hultman, Dan Tranel** and **Michelle Voss**.

[iDREAM](#), “Iowa: Diversifying Research Experiences and Mentorship,” is a two-year postbaccalaureate research program open to recent graduates of undergraduate institutions that do not offer PhDs in biosciences. The additional research experience coupled with their undergraduate degree should strengthen their graduate school applications. Along the way, they are mentored by our faculty, postdocs and graduate students and gain an understanding of lab science that will serve as a solid foundation for their rest of their training.

So, who are these dynamic future neuroscientists? From left to right in the photo:

- ★ Melanie Moquete, graduate of Hofstra University, working in the Buchanan Lab
- ★ Madison Blevins, graduate of Augsburg University, working in the Resch Lab
- ★ Olivia Christian, graduate of Savannah State University, working in the Hultman Lab
- ★ Tempest Henneghan, graduate of Mary Baldwin University, working in the Carter Lab
- ★ Fernanda Hermosillo Arrieta, graduate of Mount Mercy University, working in Aislinn Williams' Lab



They have truly embraced our unofficial INI motto “the best ideas come from collaboration,” remarking that their strongest work happens when they are supporting each other as a team. I see in this group many of the traits of the most successful postbacs in my lab over the years. They are becoming comfortable at the bench and learning that in science, growth is success, mistakes lead to knowledge, perfection is not the goal, each person is on their own journey, and supporting each other is the best way to learn and grow.

This program is only possible because of the strength of our long-running T32 training grant in neuroscience, led by Dan Tranel for 24 years. Dan and our neuroscience faculty have made Iowa a place known for prioritizing training and including trainees in all aspects of academic science.

iDREAM allows us to expand that training focus to students even before they reach graduate school and to take affirmative steps to ensure that students who come from backgrounds underrepresented in science, as defined by the [NIH](#), are included in that pipeline. Many of our faculty have completed training in culturally aware mentoring to enhance our capacity to support students whose life experiences and path to the lab may differ from our own.

I am confident that through iDREAM, we will launch future leaders in academic neuroscience. I am excited to see what that future holds for Melanie, Madison, Olivia, Tempest, Fernanda, and students we haven't met yet who will soon find Iowa as a place to learn, grow, and collaborate.

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