

BRANDON X. PITTS, B.S.

Marquette University

brandon.pitts@marquette.edu

(913) 424-9490

EDUCATION

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY – MILWAUKEE, WI Expected 2027
Doctor of Philosophy, Psychology
Area of Concentration: Clinical Psychology
Advisor: Douglas W. Wood, Ph.D.

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY – MILWAUKEE, WI Expected 2023
Master of Science, Psychology
Area of Concentration: Clinical Psychology
Advisor: Douglas W. Wood, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS – LAWRENCE, KS Received December 2020
Bachelor of Science, Behavioral Neuroscience
Major: Behavioral Neuroscience
Minors: Philosophy and Psychology
Certificates: Mind and Brain Certificate
Honors Research Proposal: (*Sex- specific BDNF and APOE ε4 allele interactions on White Matter Hyperintensity Volume*)
Advisor: Amber Watts, Ph.D.

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE – OVERLAND PARK, KS Received May 2018
Associate of Science

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE – OVERLAND PARK, KS Received May 2018
Associate of Arts

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Marquette University – Milwaukee, WI

August 2021-Present

Research Lab: Behavior Therapy and Research Lab (BTRL)

Research Advisor: Douglas W. Woods, Ph.D.

Research Interests:

- Understanding the role that environmental stimuli play in the frequency and severity of premonitory urges experienced by children with Tourette's.
- Exploring the relationship between Tourette syndrome and impulsivity.

Current Research Activities:

- Analyzed data from multiple statistical programs, including Microsoft Excel and SPSS.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

University of Kansas – Lawrence, KS

January 2019-May 2021

Research Lab: Cofrin Logan Center for Addiction Research and Treatment

Research Advisors: Richard Yi, Ph.D.

Research Activities:

- Conducting literature review, creating stimuli, and creating a survey on Qualtrics for a 3-person ultimatum study primarily interested in the effects of manipulating the race (African American and White) of person A and person C in the study.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

University of Kansas – Lawrence, KS

August 2019-May 2021

Research Lab: Behavioral Research in Aging, Neuroscience, Cognition, and Health (BRANCH) Lab

Research Advisors: Richard Yi, Ph.D.

Research Activities:

- Conducting literature reviews, writing abstracts, and writing a research paper over the relationship APOE ϵ 4 has on executive function, verbal memory, and attention in the mildly cognitively impaired vs the cognitively unimpaired.
- Conducting literature reviews and writing abstract over the relationship the TOMM40 gene has on Alzheimer's pathology.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP: ASU – BANNER NEUROSCIENCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Banner Alzheimer's Institute – Phoenix, AZ

June 2019-July 2019

Research Lab: Computational Image Analysis Lab

Research Advisors: Mike Malek-Ahmadi, Ph.D.

Research Activities:

- Pre-processing and quality assurance of MRI and PET images.
- Statistical analysis of cognitive, clinical, and neuroimaging data (SPSS and RStudio).
- Writing literature reviews, abstracts, and posters for three research projects.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

University of Kansas – Lawrence, KS

November 2018-May 2019

Research Lab: Stereotyping and Social Judgement Lab

Research Advisors: Monica Biernat, Ph.D.

Research Activities:

- Conducted a study on infidelity in relationships. Led and oversaw participants through study protocol. This required an in-depth knowledge of the study, effective communication with participants, and knowledge of the software used in the study.
- Used Microsoft excel to organize participants answers to survey questions and grouped survey answers together based on the similarity of their semantics.

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

Principal Student Investigator – McNair Scholars Program Internship July 2021

***APOE* ϵ 4 in Older Adults with vs without Alzheimer’s Disease:**

BRANCH Lab, Amber Watts Ph.D.

McNair Scholars Program Research Internship

University of Kansas

The apolipoprotein E (*APOE*) gene is a well-established risk factor for late-onset Alzheimer’s Disease (AD). The objective of this study was to determine whether *APOE* ϵ 4 genotype has differing effects on executive function, verbal memory, and attention in older adult participants with and without AD, after adjusting for sex, education, and age.

Principal Student Investigator – Banner Neuroscience Program June 2019-July 2019

Computational Image Analysis Lab, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Ph.D.

Banner – ASU Neuroscience Scholars Program

Banner Alzheimer’s Institute

Sex- specific BDNF and APOE ϵ 4 allele interaction on White Matter Hyperintensity Volume:

Recently, white matter hyperintensity volume (WMHV) has emerged as a possible risk factor for Alzheimer’s disease. The aim of this study was to determine whether WMHV is differentially impacted by BDNF genotype, after adjusting for APOE ϵ 4 carrier status, sex, age, education, vascular risk, and imaging-based amyloid load (Florbetapir SUVR).

Plasma BDNF and TrkB Expression Do Not Correlate with Cerebrovascular and Neurodegenerative Imaging Markers of Alzheimer’s Disease:

Brain derived neurotrophic factor (Bdnf) and its cognate receptor; tropomyosin-related tyrosine kinase-B (TrkB) are neurotrophic effectors whose expression is downregulated in the pathological progression of Alzheimer’s disease (AD). The aim of the study was to determine if there was an interaction between plasma Bdnf and TrkB, with white matter integrity markers, after adjusting for age, APOE ϵ 4 carrier status, and sex.

Cerebrovascular and Neuritic Plaque Lesion Interaction is Associated with Cognitive Performance in Non-Cognitively Impaired Older Adults:

Vascular damage such as microinfarcts, cerebral amyloid angiopathy(CAA), and arteriosclerosis is implicated in the risk for developing Alzheimer's Disease(AD). Neuritic plaques(NP), are common hallmarks in Alzheimer's Disease(AD) symptomology. This study therefore aims to determine whether there is an interaction between CV Index (a composite of vascular risk factors) and NP load to affect cognitive function, after adjusting for age upon death, sex, and APOE ε4 carrier status.

PROFESSIONAL CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Behavioral Health Specialist

August 2021-July 2021

Adolescent Center of Treatment

The Recovery Place, Shawnee, Kansas

Provides crisis interventions; monitors and/or administers medication as prescribed; monitors and documents mental and physical condition of individuals; teaches on various skills to enable productive lives of individuals; assists individual and family members to identify strategies or treatment options and participates in the development and modification of plans to regain ability to make independent choices and promote coping skills; develops and maintains a positive and effective relationship with service recipients, families, and other service providers, serving as the main point of contact.

Support Group Facilitator

February 2020-December 2020

KU HOPE@CAPS

University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

Started and facilitated a black mental health support group.

Chat Specialist

June 2019-January 2020

Headquarters Counseling Center, Lawrence, Kansas

Counseled anonymous messengers through crisis situations; Provided resources to individuals in need of mental health assistance.

Mental Health Peer Educator

August 2018-December 2020

KU HOPE@CAPS

University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

Provide KU-Lawrence students with support, referrals to CAPS (KUs Counseling and Psychological Services) and or other campus resources, drop in peer listening, outreach and programming, and help assist with developing marketing for CAPS (i.e., social media, poster).

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Teaching Assistant** August 2021-Present
Marquette University: Department of Psychology
Course: Developmental Psychology (PSYC 3101)
- Teaching Assistant** August 2021-Present
Marquette University: Department of Psychology
Course: Theories of Personality (PSYC 3501)
- Teaching Assistant** August 2021-Present
Marquette University: Department of Psychology
Course: Psychology of Racism (PSYC 3240)
- Teaching Assistant** August 2021-Present
Marquette University: Department of Psychology
Course: Business & Organizational Psychology (PSYC 3230)
- KU TRIO Talent Search College Student Panelist** August 2020
University of Kansas: TRIO Program
- Served as a panelist, for STEM college preparatory program, for underrepresented middle schoolers. Discussed what it is like to be a researcher in college.
- JCCC Writing Tutor** August 2017-May 2018
Johnson County Community College, Writing Center
- Teach students study skills, note-taking skills, and test-taking strategies.
 - Provide private instruction to individual or small groups of students to improve academic performance, improve occupational skills, or prepare for academic or occupational tests.
 - Assess students' progress throughout tutoring sessions.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Brandon Pitts, Pranav Narnur, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Stephen Ginsburg, Melissa Aldred, Yi Su. (2020). Sex- specific BDNF and APOE ϵ 4 allele interactions on White Matter Hyperintensity Volume. Poster presented at the Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting, 2020, online.

Brandon Pitts, Pranav Narnur, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Stephen Ginsburg, Melissa Aldred, Yi Su. (2020). Sex- specific BDNF and APOE ϵ 4 allele interactions on White Matter Hyperintensity Volume. Poster presented at the University of Kansas Undergraduate Research Symposium, 2020, online.

Brandon Pitts, Pranav Narnur, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Stephen Ginsburg, Melissa Aldred, Yi Su. (2019). Sex- specific BDNF and APOE ϵ 4 allele interactions on White Matter Hyperintensity Volume. Poster presented at the Banner ASU Neuroscience Scholars Symposium, 2019, Phoenix, AZ.

Pranav Narnur, **Brandon Pitts**, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Sylvia E. Perez, and Elliott J. Mufson. (2019) Cerebrovascular and Neuritic Plaque Lesion Interaction is Associated with Cognitive Performance in Non-Cognitively Impaired Older Adults. Poster presented at the Banner ASU Neuroscience Scholars Symposium, 2019, Phoenix, AZ.

Pranav Narnur, **Brandon Pitts**, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Stephen Ginsburg, Melissa Aldred, Yi Su. (2019) Plasma Bdnf and TrkB Expression Do Not Correlate with Cerebrovascular and Neurodegenerative Imaging Markers of Alzheimer's Disease. Poster presented at the Banner ASU Neuroscience Scholars Symposium, 2019, Phoenix, AZ.

Brandon Pitts, Marissa Satterfield, and Jasmine Middleton. (2018) Students involved in Greek Life on Neuroticism and Extroversion. Poster presented at the University of Kansas Statistics in Psychological Research Symposium, 2018, Lawrence, KS.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Brandon Pitts. (2021) APOE ϵ 4's role in Cognition in participants with and without Mild Alzheimer's Disease. Presented orally at the McNair Scholars Graduate Research Symposium, 2021, online.

Brandon Pitts, Amber Watts. (2020) APOE ϵ 4's role in Cognition in participants with and without Mild Alzheimer's Disease. Presented orally at the Baylor University McNair Scholars Research Conference, 2020, online.

Brandon Pitts, Amber Watts. (2020) APOE ϵ 4's role in Cognition in participants with and without Mild Alzheimer's Disease. Presented orally at the Heartland McNair Research Conference, 2020, online.

Sadra Gerami, **Brandon Pitts**, Paulo Ringor, and Lindsey Vandergraph. (2019) Effects of Music on Heart Rate During Action Sequences in Movies. Presented orally at the University of Kansas Experimental Psychology Methods of Psychophysiology and Neuroscience Presentation Session, 2019, Lawrence, KS.

Brandon Pitts, Pranav Narnur, Michael Malek-Ahmadi, Stephen Ginsburg, Melissa Aldred, Yi Su. (2019) Analysis of relationship that BDNF and APOE ϵ 4 carrier status have on White Matter Hyperintensity Volume. Presented orally at the University of Kansas Honors in Psychology Presentation Session, 2020, Lawrence, KS.

ACADEMIC AWARDS AND HONORS

University of Kansas Honors Program Candidate	Graduated 2021
Research Experience Certificate	Received 2020
National Nu Rho Psi National Neuroscience Honors Society	Inducted 2019
Shutz-Christopher Memorial Award <i>Funding Agency:</i> Banner-ASU Neuroscience Scholars Program <i>Amount Awarded:</i> \$2,500	Received 2019
National Psi Chi National Psychology Honors Society	Inducted 2018
Johnson County Community College Honors Program Graduate	Graduated 2018
Phi Theta Kappa Johnson County Community College	Inducted 2017
Eagle Scout Boy Scouts of America	Received 2015

COMMUNITY & LEADERSHIP SERVICE

Secretary

KU Nu Rho Psi, Lawrence, Kansas, 2020

Drafted emails, created presentations, and presented presentations to students about psychology and neuroscience, and opportunities available for students at the University of Kansas.

Outreach Chair

KU Nu Rho Psi, Lawrence, Kansas, 2019

Networked with other organizations in Lawrence to plan events and activities for students at the University of Kansas.

Crisis Counselor (Phone worker)

Headquarters Counseling Center, Lawrence, Kansas, 2018-Present

Intensive, 11-week training program in counseling.

Provided phone counseling for adults and children in various circumstances, ranging from everyday stressors to abuse and suicide.

Robotics Team Leader

Urban Scholastic Center Robotics Team Leader, Urban Scholastic Center, Kansas City, Kansas, 2017-2018
Provided guidance to a group of students as they prepared to compete in the regional FIRST Lego League Competition.

Chess Club Coach

Urban Scholastic Center Chess Club Coach, Urban Scholastic Center, Kansas City, Kansas, 2016-2018
Established and led a successful chess club for students in the inner-city that continues to thrive after I had to leave.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: C++, MATLAB, Python

Statistical Software: SPSS, RStudio

Statistics: Regression, Descriptive Statistics, ANOVA, MANOVA

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Tic and Obsessive-Compulsive Related Disorders SIG	2021-Present
Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, University of Kansas	2018-2021
The Gerontology Society of America	2019-Present
American Psychological Association (APA), Student Member	2018-Present

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Tutor, Level I by College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA)

Certified Peer Educator, BACCHUS initiatives of NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) Certified

Certified in Mental Health First Aid by USA Mental Health First Aid