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WARREN CENTER
FOR NEUROSCIENCE DRUG DISCOVERY
at Vanderbilt University

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Warren Center Lecture Series

We are excited to continue our Warren Center Lecture Series on campus this spring. In partnership with the Vanderbilt Brain Institute, our next guest lecturer is set to present on Wednesday, April 24, 2024. Please save the date for special guest speaker, Yasmin Hurd, Ph.D., from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai—Addiction Institute.



Yasmin Hurd, Ph.D.

“Cannabis and the Developing Brain:
A Complex Interaction”

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

2:00pm

214 Light Hall, Vanderbilt University

Yasmin Hurd is the Ward-Coleman Chair of Translational Neuroscience and the Director of the Addiction Institute at Mount Sinai. Hurd holds appointments as faculty of Neuroscience, Psychiatry, Pharmacology and Systems Therapeutics at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City and is globally recognized for her translational research on the underlying neurobiology of substance use disorders and comorbid psychiatric disorders. Hurd's research on the transgenerational effects of early cannabis exposure on the developing brain and behavior and on the therapeutic properties of cannabidiol has garnered substantial media attention. Join us in person to learn more about Dr. Hurd's research and have the opportunity to engage with a leading expert in the cannabis field.

Innovation Ignition Fund launches a pilot program to support early-stage therapeutic projects with translational viability

The Warren Center for Neuroscience and Drug Discovery is thrilled to be a part of the Innovation Ignition Fund, piloted by the School of Medicine Basic Sciences and the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Innovation. This program will de-risk small molecule therapeutic projects at a very early target-validation and lead optimization stages. Applications to participate will be accepted from February 1 to April 1, 2024. More details in the link above.



Advocacy and Outreach

Happy New Year, from the WCNDD Outreach Team of Kristen and Morgan! We hope you and your family had a healthy and joyful holiday season.

The Outreach team started the year off with Westminster High School students and faculty visiting the Warren Center in early January to learn about the effects of cannabis on the adolescent brain. The students also played our game “Just the Facts”. This enthusiastic and inquisitive bunch of students truly enjoyed the tour of the WCNDD – We could definitely spot some future scientists in the making!



This month, Kristen travels to Washington, DC to present at the Smart Approaches to Marijuana Good Drug Policy Summit. Other presenters at the two-day Summit include Nora Volkow, MD (Director of NIDA), Karen Tandy (Former DEA Administrator), Patrick J. Kennedy (Former U.S. Representative), and Sam Quinones (Author of *Dreamland* and *The Least of Us*). Also in February, Kristen will be featured on two podcasts regarding substance use disorder: Dr. Roneet Lev’s *High Truths* and New Hampshire’s *Power of Prevention* podcasts. Be sure to listen in!

In March, we will have students from University School of Nashville (USN) come to the Warren Center for a seminar on cannabis and play “Just the Facts”. A few days after their visit, Kristen will present to the parents of USN students about “Substance Use and the Developing Brain” along with Dr. Tyler Barrett (Executive Medical Director, Emergency Services at Vanderbilt) and Sam Quinones (*Dreamland* Author). In the middle of March, Kristen will be interviewed and present the documentary “Speaking Through Me” at the Tromsø Educational Film Festival (TREFF) in Norway, where it was selected as a finalist. After returning from Norway, Kristen will present “The Impact of Stress and Substance Use on the Developing Brain” at her alma mater high school in Los Angeles, CA.

Applied Drug Discovery and Development program (AD3)

In other news, recording is still in progress for the Applied Drug Discovery and Development program (AD3). The certificate program will include these online courses:

- ◆ Introduction to Drug Discovery and Development
- ◆ Introduction to Pharmacology
- ◆ Introduction to Drug Metabolism and Pharmacokinetics
- ◆ Introduction to Medicinal Chemistry
- ◆ Applied Drug Discovery
- ◆ Applied Drug Development

Recent Publications

Jayakodiarachchi, N. *et al.* [Evaluation of the Indazole Analogs of 5-MeO-DMT and Related Tryptamines as Serotonin Receptor 2 Agonists.](#) *ACS Med. Chem. Lett.* (2024).

Dogra, S. *et al.* [Activation of Metabotropic Glutamate Receptor 3 Modulates Thalamo-accumbal Transmission and Rescues Schizophrenia-like Physiological and Behavioral Deficits.](#) *Biological Psychiatry* (2023).