

**SAN FRANCISCO VA MEDICAL CENTER
PSYCHOLOGY POSTDOCTORAL ADVANCED RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS
TBI/Polytrauma Rehabilitation Research Fellowship
2017-2019**



The San Francisco VA Medical Center is recruiting for a two year Post-Doctoral Advanced Fellowship Program in the Polytrauma and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Rehabilitation Research. This fellowship is funded by the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) Department of Veterans Affairs, and is affiliated with the University of California San Francisco.

The primary goal of the fellowship is to help train clinicians and scientists (neuropsychologists, psychologists, MDs, and other allied health professionals) to become leading clinical researchers in the field of TBI / Polytrauma rehabilitation. The focus of this post-doctoral training in polytrauma and traumatic brain injury rehabilitation is to further develop clinical research expertise in the assessment and treatment of TBI, Polytrauma, and associated problems in Veterans, and to gain expertise in the advanced neuroimaging methods. The educational didactics, clinical, and clinical research training are designed to meet post-doctoral requirements for board certification in clinical neuropsychology.

Amongst the most common and debilitating consequences of mild TBI (mTBI) and psychological trauma are problems with cognition, particularly within the domains of attention, learning, working memory, and executive functioning. Veterans with these deficits experience a multitude of behavioral and functional problems, including achieving educational and occupational goals, and often report difficulty with community reintegration. Unfortunately, few effective interventions are available that target these increasingly common problems in returning Veterans, and mechanisms underlying neuroplasticity are poorly understood. The mentors of this fellowship are conducting novel neuroscience-based interventions aimed at improving cognitive control functioning, with the specific goal of promoting goal-directed behaviors in real-world contexts. Current VA Merit Awards support the implementation and refinement of

evidence-based neurocognitive rehabilitation for individuals suffering from cognitive difficulties associated with chronic mTBI and comorbid mTBI/PTSD. The fellow will have an opportunity to participate in a recently funded research project examining the role of advanced neuroimaging in the study of neuroplasticity associated with cognitive rehabilitation.

Fellows devote 75% of time to research and educational activities and 25% of time to clinical training. In collaboration with their mentors, fellows develop and implement a research project, present and publish their findings, and participate in grant writing. Clinical training will focus on assessment and cognitive rehabilitation of Veterans with TBI/Polytrauma.

For more information about this fellowship program please contact Dr. Tatjana Novakovic-Agopian (Tatjana.Novakovic-Agopian@va.gov)

Faculty:

Tatjana Novakovic-Agopian

Gary Abrams

Johannes Rothlind

Pratik Mukherjee

Kristine Yaffe

Training Term

The research fellowships are full-time, two-year, 52 week commitments (2080 hours per year). Research fellows are entitled to 10 federal holidays and earn sick leave and vacation (annual leave) days at a rate of 4 hours of each per two-week pay period (a total of 13 days of each). San Francisco VA also offers generous professional leave for conferences and other approved educational activities. Some fellowships can extend to a third year. Requirements for state licensure as a professional psychologist can be met within some of our research fellowships.

Stipend and Benefits

The current stipend is \$50,228 for the first year. State and federal income tax and FICA are withheld from Fellows' checks. Fellows are not covered by Civil Service retirement or leave and are not eligible for federal life insurance benefits. The United States Government covers fellows for malpractice under the Federal Tort Claims Act. VA offers individual and family health insurance plans for fellows on a matching basis, (i.e., fellows pay half of the premium and the VA pays the other half.) On June 26, 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional. As a result of this decision, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has now extended benefits to employees and annuitants who have legally married a spouse of the same sex. Dental and vision insurance are also available. San Francisco VA Medical Center also offers a public transportation reimbursement program. Fellows are entitled to 10 federal holidays and earn sick leave and vacation (annual leave) days at a rate of 4 hours of each per two-week pay period (a total of 13 days of each). San Francisco VA also offers professional leave for conferences and other approved educational activities.

Eligibility

Candidates MUST be graduates of APA-accredited doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology and MUST have completed an APA-accredited internship. All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed prior to the start of the fellowship year. Persons with a Ph.D.

in another area of psychology who meet the APA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical or Counseling Psychology are also eligible. The VA requires that applicants are US Citizens, men have registered for selective service, and all have had varicella infection (“chicken pox”) or vaccination for such prior to the start of the fellowship.

Specific details related to eligibility:

1. U.S. citizenship. VA is unable to consider applications from anyone who is not currently a U.S. citizen. Verification of citizenship is required following selection. All interns and fellows must complete a Certification of Citizenship in the United States prior to beginning VA training.
2. Fellows are subject to fingerprinting and background checks. Match result and selection decisions are contingent on passing these screens.
3. VA conducts drug screening exams on randomly selected personnel as well as new employees. Interns and Fellows are not required to be tested prior to beginning work, but once on staff they are subject to random selection for testing as are other employees.
4. Have received a Doctorate from an APA-accredited graduate program in Clinical or Counseling Psychology. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical or Counseling Psychology are also eligible.
5. Have completed an internship program accredited by the APA Commission on Accreditation or have completed a VA- sponsored internship.

Application Procedure

To apply for our one of these postdoctoral research fellowships, please submit application materials listed below to Dr. Tatjana Novakovic-Agopian. The application deadline is **December 16, 2016**. Please do not mail any materials in hard copy form.

1. Letter of interest, including a brief summary of educational, research, and clinical research experiences relevant to the fellowship, a summary of your training needs and goals, and a statement of your career goals.
2. Current Curriculum Vitae
3. Three letters of Recommendation
4. A letter of support from your Dissertation chairperson describing your dissertation status and timeline if you have not completed your graduate degree. Dissertations must be complete before the postdoctoral fellowship begins. Please note we will be monitoring dissertation progress and status on a routine basis. All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed prior to the start of the fellowship year.
5. A letter of support from your current Internship Training Director indicating that you are in good standing to successfully complete your predoctoral internship, including the expected completion date. If internship already completed, you can mail a copy of your predoctoral internship certificate.

Contact Information

Specific questions may be directed to Dr. Tatjana Novakovic-Agopian (Tatjana.Novakovic-Agopian@va.gov).

Other Information

The San Francisco VA's Psychology Research Fellowship Program is affiliated with the University of California, San Francisco.

In accord with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Program, fellows may be subject to urine testing for illicit drug use. Other branches of the federal government (Office of Personnel Management) may conduct routine background checks at their discretion.

The San Francisco VAMC is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply, including minorities and women. VA seeks candidates whose experience, teaching, research, or community service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and excellence.