WHRY Announces 2015 Pilot Awards

STUDIES TACKLE AUTISM, SKIN CANCER, CHRONIC URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS, AND CHALLENGES FACED BY ELDERLY DRIVERS

AUTISM

Boys are diagnosed with autism almost four times as often as girls, a discrepancy that is poorly understood. Researchers have historically excluded girls from studies of children with autism spectrum disorder because of their low numbers, or they have included so few as to make it impossible to draw meaningful conclusions.

Now as one of four new studies funded through Women’s Health Research at Yale’s Pilot Project Program, investigators at the Yale Child Study Center seek to understand for the first time how girls with autism respond to a treatment that has been demonstrated to be effective with boys.

“Girls with developmental disabilities have been largely ignored in terms of the research in the field,” said Dr. Pamela Ventola, an Assistant Professor leading the Center’s investigation.

“Right now we are assuming girls are the same as boys.”

Dr. Ventola said that recent research has shown girls can have high-functioning autism and subtle social symptoms that doctors might miss.

continued page 6

Working Together for a Better Future

LONGSTANDING PARTNERS RENEW COMMITMENT TO WHRY

Four foundations have once again delivered major gifts to Women’s Health Research at Yale, reaffirming support that has lasted more than a decade.

The Center closed the books on its fiscal year with generous grants from our longtime partners: The Mary W. Harriman Foundation, The Seymour L. Lustman Memorial Fund, The Seedlings Foundation, and The Werth Family Foundation.

While the federal government continues to limit funding for health research, private donations help to support the critical work needed to narrow the gulf in knowledge about women’s health while translating new findings into practice and public policy for the community we serve.

“We can’t overstate how grateful we are to have such dedicated and generous supporters,” said Dr. Carolyn M. Mazure, Director of Women’s Health Research at Yale. “The work we do takes time and intense focus. Our partners understand this, and their support ensures that our current efforts will continue progress toward a future in which everyone enjoys happier, healthier and more productive lives.”

continued page 8
Women’s Health Research at Yale was founded in 1998 with initial funding from The Patrick and Catherine Weldon Donaghue Medical Research Foundation. Women’s Health Research at Yale is a program within Yale School of Medicine. Yale University is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Meet WHRY’s First Undergraduate Research Fellows

For the inaugural year of our undergraduate research training fellowship, WHRY had planned to select two students for an opportunity to conduct interdisciplinary research in women’s health. But after receiving 24 applications, we simply couldn’t pass up so much talent.

Five of the students accepted our offer to learn about women’s health and sex and gender differences from our talented faculty starting this summer and fall.

“We couldn’t have hoped for a sharper or more promising group of eager, hardworking students,” said Dr. Carolyn M. Mazure, Director of Women’s Health Research at Yale. “Our inaugural class of research fellows will learn from the best and, I’m confident, show us a glimpse of the bright future we can expect in biomedical and behavioral research.”

Sophomore Biruktawit “Birdy” Assefa, a Biomedical Engineering major, will advance her interest in women’s health under the supervision of Dr. Sherry McKee, WHRY’s Deputy Director.

Born and partially raised in Ethiopia before moving to Washington, D.C., Assefa gained inspiration from her mother, who conducted public health research as a nurse in Addis Ababa.

“Even as a little girl, the significant effects of being born as a woman instead of a man on an individual’s health outcome did not escape me,” Assefa said. “I saw firsthand the importance of women’s health to the emotional and economic stability of families and society at large.”

Junior Ann Sarnak majors in both Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology (MCDB) and History. A native of Princeton, N.J., she will also work with Dr. McKee’s team, adding to her growing research and public health resume.

Sarnak has conducted a tuberculosis program evaluation in South Africa, helped coordinate the 2014 Uganda and Ghana Forums for Change on non-communicable disease and mental health, developed materials on the Ebola outbreak for the Ghana Medical Association, helped to organize and support global health-related research and trips to Nicaragua and Ecuador as Assistant Director of Student Partnerships for Global Health, and volunteers teaching English to a local refugee family.

“My principal interests in women’s health are in trauma and protecting women against intimate partner violence and in the intersection of infectious disease and cancer,” Sarnak said. “As a student of biology, history and politics, I am eager to learn more about the biomedical and clinical aspects of health care for women as well as the role that health policy can play in improving the health outcomes and lives of women.”

Lillian Bitner, a junior from Westminster, Colo., will work with Dr. McKee at the Forensic Drug Diversion Clinic, an outpatient treatment center serving men and women in the community who are referred by the judicial system for treatment of substance abuse.

A member of the Yale Women’s Soccer Team and a Master’s Aide at Calhoun College, Bitner plans to investigate women’s mental health, particularly...
Unlocking the Toolbox

A NEW, FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND STUDY TESTS HOW TO HELP GIRLS WITH AUTISM REACH OTHERS

Four months ago, Anna lived mostly in her own world.

A 6-year-old girl with autism, Anna played by herself, spoke in incomplete and often backwardly worded sentences, rarely started conversations, and got frustrated when she didn’t get what she wanted right away. She would grab things without asking and throw her shoes when told no.

After three sessions a week with therapists at the Yale Child Study Center, Anna now acts like a different girl. She speaks in complete, correct sentences with a larger vocabulary. She asks for things, always adding “please.” She can be told no without a tantrum. She starts conversations and even corrects herself.

“I haven’t seen this much progress in such a short time,” said Nancy, Anna’s mother. “It’s really amazing.”

And for the first time in years, Nancy and her husband have found new hope and set higher expectations for their daughter.

“I would say she’s a happier kid,” Nancy said.

Anna and Nancy — not their real names — represent the focus of a new, first-of-its-kind research project at the Yale Child Study Center funded by Women’s Health Research at Yale. While most studies of children with autism involve boys, who are diagnosed in greater numbers, Dr. Pamela Ventola aims to lead the first investigation into how girls respond to a treatment shown effective with boys.

“Boys and girls with autism are generally not the same,” Ventola said. “Girls are often more socially interested, chatty. They want to engage. But they have difficulty navigating social interactions.”

The study also represents the first rigorous look at the effect of children’s treatment for autism on their parents.

Current data suggest that one out of every 68 children in the United States fall somewhere on a broadly defined autism spectrum, with boys receiving diagnoses about four times more than girls.

Limited research and clinical observations reveal a general pattern in which autism may be more subtle and difficult to recognize in girls, who may fixate on topics and subjects common to girls without autism. Girls with autism also have more learning disabilities than boys with autism, show less sensitivity to noise or touch, and display fewer repetitive behaviors. And the underlying brain biology may be different, with girls possessing some kind of natural protection against autism.

To better explore these differences, researchers are recruiting high-functioning girls with autism between the ages of 6 and 9, a time when relationships become infinitely more complex and girls with autism show signs of stress and depression.

“That’s what’s great about this study,” said Dr. Carolyn M. Mazure, Director of Women’s Health Research at Yale. “If you can make an intervention earlier rather than later, maybe you can change the whole trajectory.”

The study also represents the first rigorous look at the effect of children’s treatment for autism on their parents.

“Parenting is stressful, but parenting a child with autism is exponentially more stressful,” Ventola said. “We’re seeing a sense of relief when they are done with treatment.”

The Center practices pivotal response therapy, or PRT, which began in the...
1980s as a way to teach language and then was adapted into a means to instill social motivation. In PRT, therapists lead play-based sessions in which they reward certain social goals, such as eye contact, posing a question to another person about that person’s interests, or going back and forth in conversation as opposed to talking in a stream of consciousness.

“The idea is you teach the skill, and that becomes motivating,” Ventola said. “We teach it, practice, reinforce it, and hope the child runs with it.”

For example, one 5-year-old boy at the beginning of his four months of PRT can be seen on a video recording flailing around the room, shouting in response to the therapist’s prompts but not really engaged in the activity. Months later, he’s playing a board game, taking turns. When asked whose turn is next, he looks up, makes eye contact and says, “Your turn.”

Researchers can’t be sure what is behind the altered behavior. Are children whose autism can block their ability to read social cues really learning to connect? Or are they simply acting out practiced routines to achieve a desired outcome?

Ventola finds the question interesting intellectually but ultimately unimportant for the children and their families.

“All of us in our lives learn to fake it sometimes,” Ventola said. “And that’s a skill. For these kids, they learn: ‘Things go better when I make eye contact.’ ‘Things go better when I ask questions or don’t grab what I want.’ ”

Regardless of what might be happening inside Anna’s head, Nancy sees the improvement in their house. “She knows she has to be aware of other people,” Nancy said. “She’s gotten an idea that there are other people and other things.”

The researchers will follow up on Anna’s progress in four months and then possibly host monthly sessions with another girl with autism who has completed the program, seeking to reinforce their positive social behaviors and watch the pair interact. And while Nancy had never considered even buying a board game for Anna, she now sees new possibilities. “Even though she wanted to play with other kids, she didn’t know how,” Nancy said. “I feel like there is a hope. She is learning the tools.” And so is Nancy.

“As a parent, sometimes you don’t know how to help your kids,” she said. “But watching the sessions, I know what to do. It’s comforting.”

What Does it Mean to Have Autism?

Autism is an early onset neurodevelopmental disorder affecting socialization, communication and learning. It is often referred to as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) to account for the wide variations a child might show in the severity of symptoms, skills and levels of impairment or disability.

ASD characteristics include:

- Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts
- Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities
- Symptoms present in the early developmental period (typically recognized in the first two years of life)
- Symptoms causing clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of current functioning

Current data suggest that one out of every 68 children in the United States fall somewhere on this broadly defined spectrum, with boys receiving diagnoses about four times more than girls.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health
ABOUT THE INVESTIGATOR —
Dr. Christine J. Ko earned her M.D. from New York University and her B.A. from Princeton University. Since 2010, she has been an Associate Professor of Dermatology and Pathology at Yale School of Medicine. Her research into skin cancer has targeted clinical subsets of cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma, including keratoacanthoma.

DR. CHRISTINE J. KO AIMS TO IDENTIFY A BIOLOGICAL MARKER TO PREDICT THE GROWTH RATE AND RECURRENCE OF A FORM OF SKIN CANCER COMMONLY FOUND ON WOMEN’S LEGS.

ABOUT THE INVESTIGATOR —
Dr. Pamela Ventola earned her Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut and her B.A. from Hamilton College. Since 2013, she has been an Assistant Professor and the Clinical Director of the Center for Translational Developmental Neuroscience at the Yale Child Study Center. Since her undergraduate studies, Dr. Ventola has worked with individuals with developmental disabilities. She treats children and adults with autism and studies the treatment response of preschool-age girls with autism.

DR. PAMELA VENTOLA AIMS TO UNDERSTAND HOW MOTHERS AND FATHERS REACT TO THEIR CHILDREN’S TREATMENT TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW TO SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR STRESSFUL ROLES.

PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM

WHRY Announces 2015 Pilot Awards
(Continued from front cover)

The new study also represents the first attempt to examine the malfunctioning circuitry underlying autism by manipulating brain activity related to behavioral change such as social reward and emotion regulation.

“Researchers have not focused on girls when studying autism’s causes and treatments,” said Dr. Carolyn M. Mazure, Director of WHRY. “It’s time for clinicians to understand the differences in how girls and boys present on the autism spectrum and how to tailor different approaches toward their treatment.”

In addition, the study aims to investigate a similarly overlooked group: parents. The researchers plan to better understand how mothers and fathers react to their children’s treatment to better understand how to support them in their stressful roles.

“Parenting a child with autism is tremendously difficult, and there’s been very little focus in particular on mothers,” Ventola said. “If they are not the primary caregiver, they are the primary worrier. We need to learn how to support these children in a family context.”

See “Unlocking the Toolbox” on page 4 for more about Dr. Ventola’s work with children with autism.

SKIN CANCER

In Dr. Christine J. Ko’s clinical practice at Yale-New Haven Hospital, there is no way to know if certain skin cancers commonly found on women’s legs are slow-growing or more aggressive.

As a result, all such squamous cell cancers currently require removal of the thin skin on the lower leg, leaving a large hole that is difficult to heal or replace with a graft. This cancer, more prevalent in women than men, creates a serious burden in terms of future risk as well as complications from multiple excisions.

“Women with this type of cancer can suffer from painful lesions at the site of biopsy and removal, particularly when the cancer recurs,” Mazure said. “This new study seeks ways to limit such interventions by learning more about which cancers recur and require regular excisions.”

For her new study, cofunded by WHRY and the Yale Comprehensive Cancer Center, Dr. Ko is recruiting her patients to determine if a mutated gene can serve as a biological marker to predict the growth rate and recurrence of this type of skin cancer.

If successful, the research will allow identification of those forms of the cancer that are slow-growing so as to require substantially less invasive treatments and provide the biological basis for ensuring better outcomes.

“If you do the biopsy and find that it’s not going to be that aggressive, we can treat it much more conservatively than a full excision,” Ko said. “We could treat it in a less aggressive manner if we knew it was not going to cause the patient harm.”
URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

For elderly women, urinary tract infections (UTIs) are not just a nuisance. They can be fatal.

And as antibiotics continue to lose effectiveness from overuse, the need for alternative treatments grows greater than ever.

With the help of the second Wendy U. and Thomas C. Naratil Pioneer Award, Dr. Toby C. Chai, Professor and Vice Chair of Research in Urology, aims to determine if localized, targeted application of estrogen can provide protection to prevent and intervention to treat chronic UTIs.

“We’re running out of antibiotics,” Chai said. “We utilize them so frequently the bacteria have become smart. They develop resistance quickly. We really have to open up new avenues to be able to find new treatments for infections.”

One out of two women experience UTIs in their lifetimes, and UTIs recur 25 percent of the time even after appropriate antibiotic treatment as they develop resistance. Recently, only a few new antibiotics have been approved for treating UTIs.

A recent survey revealed 4.2 million emergency room visits for UTIs, with the largest number among women between the ages of 45 and 54, suggesting the depletion of estrogen in menopause as a possible factor for the increased incidence. In fact, although there are no clinical trials that have tested the efficacy of estrogen for UTIs, it is often used to treat these infections in clinical practice despite some patients’ fears of adverse effects.

Chai’s team will study mice genetically altered to produce increased estrogen activity in the bladder lining to see how they resist bladder infections. Chai then hopes to identify other natural mechanisms triggered by estrogen’s activity, possibly leading to treatments other than estrogen or traditional antibiotics that can save lives.

“It’s research like this that aims to deliver on the long-delayed promise of science to offer answers appropriate to real-life clinical problems,” Mazure said. “If successful, Dr. Chai will revolutionize treatment of recurrent UTIs that are both burdensome and potentially deadly.”

SAFE DRIVING AMONG THE ELDERLY

When Dr. Richard Marottoli sees elderly patients, he often struggles to determine when they are no longer able to drive safely.

Marottoli aims to use his WHRY seed grant to identify the cognitive, health and environmental factors that can predict adverse events among women drivers, such as crashes and tickets. His goal is to develop interventions that can make his patients and the public safer.

“I think our study will give us a chance to make a vast improvement over our current capability to assess safe driving capability,” Marottoli said.

ABOUT THE INVESTIGATOR —

Dr. Toby C. Chai earned his M.D. from the Indiana University School of Medicine and his B.A. from Johns Hopkins University. Since 2013 he has served as a Professor and Vice Chair of Research for Yale School of Medicine’s Department of Urology.

For the last 15 years, his research has focused on the behavior of urinary tract tissue and cell communication in non-cancerous bladder conditions.

The Women’s Health Research at Yale Pilot Project Program is supported in part by the Maximilian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation, the Seymour L. Lustman Memorial Fund, The Seedlings Foundation, The Werth Family Foundation, and anonymous donors.

The Wendy U. and Thomas C. Naratil Pioneer Award, supported by an endowment gift from a Yale College ’83 couple, expands the Pilot Project Program by funding investigations that are highly inventive or close to a major breakthrough in advancing women’s health.
By 2030, one-fifth of all drivers will be at least 65 years old. Currently, 73 percent of women over 65 still drive. Between 1990 and 2020, the distances traveled by older female drivers will increase by 500 percent.

“Older women are more likely to live alone and feel compelled to keep driving in order to maintain their social connections and keep important appointments,” Mazure said. “Yet, driving when skills are not adequate leaves women at risk. Dr. Marottoli’s study will help shed light on this growing issue and lead the way toward solutions.”

Because women, on average, live longer than men, the study addresses an urgent need to provide guidance in determining when women should stop driving.

“It’s a big deal for people,” Marottoli said. “In the vast majority of our country, if you don’t drive, you can’t leave home. It’s synonymous with freedom and independence.”

Continued: Working Together for a Better Future

The Mary W. Harriman Foundation, named after a trailblazing advocate of social reform who founded The Junior League, became a partner of Women’s Health Research at Yale 16 years ago, one year after our Center’s founding.

The Seymour L. Lustman Memorial Fund, named after the renowned Professor of Psychiatry who worked with the Yale Child Study Center for more than 20 years, has been supporting WHRY for 13 years, carrying on Dr. Lustman’s passion and dedication to supporting clinical care with solid, evidence-based research.

The Seedlings Foundation, dedicated to our shared mission of enhancing physical and mental health while fostering an educated and engaged public, has supported the Center with operational and seed grant funding for 14 years now.

And The Werth Family Foundation joined our team in 2006, starting with a benefit concert featuring singer-songwriter Judy Collins.

“For nine years, The Werth Family Foundation has remained steadfast in our commitment to advancing gender-specific medicine with Women’s Health Research at Yale,” said Suzanne K. Werth, Board Member of The Werth Family Foundation. “We are confident that our renewed partnership will help deliver new scientific discoveries to improve lives in our communities.”
Improving Women’s Health With Your Help

I’m delighted to report that our generous and loyal donors have once again provided the crucial support we need to continue funding research to deliver gender equity to medicine. Contributions to the 2015 Annual Appeal and the 36-hour Great Give pushed us past our goals and set us up to continue working to fund new research, share findings with the community, and train the next generation of researchers to advance the effort.

Thank you so much!

As detailed in this newsletter, we are funding four new studies this year to tackle skin cancer, urinary tract infections, autism, and challenges facing elderly drivers. These seed grants — including the second Naratil Pioneer Award recipient for research on the verge of a significant breakthrough — offer funding that has grown more and more difficult to secure from the federal government. It’s only with your support that our investigators can strive to deliver inventive, new therapies and treatments that can improve and in some cases save lives.

As the newly named Chair of the Philanthropy Committee, I must thank my predecessor, Patti Russo, for her tireless and extraordinary work in leading our fundraising efforts. As she transitions into her new role as WHRY’s government liaison, I accept the humble challenge of following the path she has so expertly blazed.

But only with your help!

Ways To Give

Women’s Health Research at Yale relies on contributions to support our pioneering research to benefit women’s health. Through Planned Giving, WHRY can help interested donors make larger gifts than they ever thought possible, including options that can increase income to keep pace with inflation, avoid upfront capital gains taxes, and reduce estate tax liability.

- **Legacy Gift** — as simple as leaving a dollar amount or percentage of your estate to WHRY in a will or trust. It can also include naming WHRY as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or of the remaining funds in a retirement plan or IRA.

- **Charitable Gift Annuity** — a gift of cash or securities to WHRY, resulting in a lifetime annuity for the donor or an income stream for a loved one.

- **Charitable Remainder Trust** — a trust of securities which will pay income to the donor or loved ones for a number of years, with the remainder at the end of the term of the trust gifted to WHRY.

- **Gift of Appreciated Property** — giving stocks, bonds or mutual funds that have appreciated in value, thus avoiding taxes on built-in capital gains.

Now is the time to think big, step up and help realize our Center’s plans for dramatic, long-term growth. We need your sustained commitments to build a better, healthier future for everyone.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
RAMONA E. GREGG AT (203) 764-6600 OR MONA.GREGG@YALE.EDU

Sincerely,

Bobbi Mark
Philanthropy Chair
Council Member Dr. Eve Hart Rice has been elected as the newest alumni fellow to the Yale Corporation. After a worldwide vote of her fellow graduates, Hart Rice earned a six-year term that began in July. The Yale Corporation is the governing board and policy-making body of the university. Congratulations to Eve on this great honor.

Council Chair Carol F. Ross will be inducted into the Gateway Community College Foundation Hall of Fame for her community leadership on Oct. 1.

The Hall of Fame honors business leaders who contribute to the community’s well-being and alumni whose professional accomplishments, academic excellence and service to others bring honor to Gateway.

Congratulations to Carol on this well-deserved recognition.

Carol has been named in “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers.” She is a fellow of Yale’s Calhoun College, serves as Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees of the National Guild for Community Arts Education and has served on numerous other civic nonprofit boards.

Patti Russo Takes on New Role as WHRY Government Liaison

As a young feminist at George Washington University, Patti Russo pined to work for Bella Abzug, then a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and a legendary activist of the Women’s Movement.

After encountering a woman who had just resigned from working at Abzug’s office, Russo quickly wished her well and even more quickly rushed to try and fill the vacancy. While Russo made her case to a staff member, Abzug came into the room and didn’t waste any time of her own.

“She came out and said, ‘You, sit,’” Russo said. “Answer those phones. That was the beginning of my career. My roller coaster.”

Russo’s roller coaster took another turn this spring as she became Executive Director of the Women’s Campaign School at Yale University. Russo turned over her seat as Chair of the WHRY Philanthropy Committee and accepted a newly created role as the Center’s liaison working with our elected representatives and state and federal agencies.

“I’m really excited about it,” Russo said. “I’m such a political person. A bipartisan political person. It just dovetails beautifully with my everyday work.”

As Bobbi Mark takes over the fundraising duties, Russo plans to establish more of a working relationship with our congressional delegation.

“I at least want to be in the pipeline with the delegation so when they think about research, they will naturally think about Women’s Health Research at Yale,” Russo said. “When you are not on their radar on a daily basis, it’s really hard for them to remember to reach out to us.”

She aims to highlight a handful of issues on the state and national agenda to keep our elected officials informed about the pressing needs to advance women’s health research and maintain adequate funding to save and improve lives.

“I think it will make a big difference for us on a variety of fronts,” Russo said. “Further establishing ourselves as the premiere program for women’s health research in the country.”
Reporting on a Public Health Crisis

After joining Women’s Health Research at Yale in May, it didn’t take long for me to feel a profound sense of urgency. How could it be that in 2015, health studies accounting for the very real biological and social differences between men and women were not more common? Without exploring such a vital avenue of inquiry, how much do we really know about what makes us who we are and how we work? And how much remains unknown?

Over 17 years, WHRY has helped fund and train researchers to overcome decades spent without addressing such fundamental needs and ensure that the medical community has the best evidence-based information behind their diagnoses and treatments.

And yet, there is so much more to do. I studied psychology as an undergraduate, worked in pharmaceutical advertising and most recently spent a decade as a reporter on a wide range of topics, aiming to help readers better understand their world and the people in it. I see my new role as WHRY’s communications officer as a culmination of everything I’ve done so far.

With the help of our smart and talented staff and a growing band of brilliant and accomplished investigators, I hope to spread the stories of our work as far as possible. I want to translate complicated, jargon-laden subjects into language that non-science people can understand. And help focus attention on this public health crisis.

The need is urgent, and I hope my voice helps us meet the challenge to reach a healthier, happier future for everyone.

Concerning mood disorders and addictive behaviors, before applying to medical school. In addition, she has expressed an interest in studying nutrition and how public policy can influence obesity.

“The gender difference in health outcomes is a field of study that deserves a great amount of attention,” Bitner said. “And as a woman who is passionate about improving my own health and the health of other women around me, I am very interested to learn how I can help others through biomedical research and policy discussion.”

Junior Benjamin Fait will work with Dr. Mazure in a communications position taking advantage of his role as a science and technology writer for Yale Daily News and work on nicotine addiction that he continues with Dr. Marina Picciotto in Yale Department of Psychiatry’s Division of Molecular Psychiatry.

Fait, who majors in both Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry (MBB) and Comparative Literature, has also worked on epigenetics and developmental biology research at Geisinger Medical Center in his hometown of Danville, Penn. And he has expressed an interest in exploring WHRY’s interdisciplinary research on women’s health.

“First, and most obviously, any attempt to further specify treatment by gender or demographics is worthwhile,” Fait said. “I would even go so far as to say that the trend in medicine more broadly has been to tailor treatment to the individual. And gender-sensitive treatments will be part of this trend.”

Laura Gould Goetz, a junior from Evanston, Ill., will assist Dr. Kelly Cosgrove in her lab’s work on the neurochemical and molecular basis of addiction and psychiatric disorders through brain imaging technology.

Pursuing a double-major in MBB and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Gould Goetz has worked on viral RNA structure and stability in Yale Sterling Professor Joan Steitz’s lab, traveled to rural Honduras to investigate how social networks could be utilized to improve maternal and neonatal health care, and currently researches endometriosis in mice in Dr. Hugh Taylor’s lab.

In addition, Gould Goetz is analyzing birth records from three hospitals in Argentina to see if there is a difference in timing between when women give birth in indigenous and industrialized populations. This summer, she is in Argentina conducting an independent study on iron deficiency anemia among adult indigenous women after a shift from nomadic hunting and foraging to a more settled industrialized lifestyle.

“I hope to spend my life working in women’s health,” Gould Goetz said. “Gaining experience working in clinical research will further widen my understanding of medical science.”

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Continued: Meet WHRY’s New Undergraduate Fellows

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Women’s Health Research at Yale

135 College Street, Suite 220
New Haven, CT 06510

Women’s Health Research at Yale generates research on women’s health and sex and gender differences, dedicated to improving well-being for all through scientific knowledge translated into medical and personal practice.

To learn more, visit our website:
www.yalewhr.org

Email us:
WHResearch@yale.edu

And join us on social media:
@WomensHealthRes
facebook.com/YaleWHR
youtube.com/WHRYale

How does a daily dose of Aspirin Impact Heart Health?

Our latest Heart Health Q&A addresses an FDA-issued reminder that taking an aspirin every day may help prevent heart attack or stroke in some people but not others.

For more information on this and other Heart Health Q&A topics, join our email list, or visit our website: www.yalewhr.org.

Educational and outreach activities are made possible through the generous support of:

- The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
- The Grace J. Fippinger Foundation
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How does a daily dose of Aspirin Impact Heart Health?

Our latest Heart Health Q&A addresses an FDA-issued reminder that taking an aspirin every day may help prevent heart attack or stroke in some people but not others.

For more information on this and other Heart Health Q&A topics, join our email list, or visit our website: www.yalewhr.org.

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