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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ten Assistant Professors Receive Mental Health Research Grants in Texas

AUSTIN, Texas – Ten tenure-track assistant professors in Texas have been awarded \$192,440 in grants by the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health to conduct innovative research in mental health.

The grants are capped at \$19,250 each. The ten research projects were selected from a pool of 44 proposals from universities across Texas.

The goals of this initiative are to increase the pool of junior faculty doing quality mental health research, and to encourage the disbursement of research findings to other researchers, policy makers and service providers through presentations at state and national conferences and meetings.

“As a foundation we are dedicated to doing our part to make sound, evidence-based treatments for mental health conditions the norm in our society,” said Dr. Octavio N. Martinez, Jr., executive director of the Hogg Foundation and associate vice president for diversity and community engagement at The University of Texas at Austin. “Expanding the evidence base for the interventions we use to alleviate suffering, or to develop new ones, is what all of these excellent research projects have in common.”

The recipients of the 2015 Mental Health Research Grants for Tenure-Track Assistant Professors in Texas are:

- **Baylor University: Dr. Thomas Fergus**, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, is conducting a study that will provide initial outcomes data for the attention training technique, a novel and promising intervention for anxiety and related disorders. **Dr. Lindsay Wilkinson**, Department of Sociology, will examine the mental health effects of the economic recession of 2007–2009 among black, white and Hispanic older adults.
- **Texas A&M Health Science Center: Dr. Ranjana Mehta**, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, will study the impact of major depression on precision motor control and associated functional changes in the frontal brain regions.
- **Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center: Dr. Suzanne Gonzalez**, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine, Department of Biomedical Sciences, will study deletion variants in genes associated with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder among a cohort of Texas Hispanic psychiatric subjects. Research in this field may lead to the development of

novel and effective treatments for psychiatric disorders among an underserved population: Latino Americans.

- **The University of Texas at Austin: Dr. Jessica Cance**, Department of Kinesiology and Health Education, will study the relationship between substance use patterns and suicidality among college students. **Dr. Marci Gleason**, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, will examine the role of daily mood and social support in predicting postpartum depression in new parents.
- **The University of Texas at El Paso: Dr. Jennifer Sánchez**, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, will evaluate the effectiveness of a group motivational interviewing intervention for people with serious mental illness that will emphasize vocational recovery –i.e. the activation of thoughts and behaviours conducive to gaining employment.
- **University of Houston: Dr. Samuel McQuillin**, Department of Psychological, Health, and Learning Sciences, will conduct a pilot study of a youth mentoring program designed to promote adolescent mental health.
- **University of Houston-Downtown: Dr. Katrina Rufino**, Department of Social Sciences, will examine mechanisms of change and predictors of post-discharge suicide risk in suicidal psychiatric inpatients.
- **UT Southwestern Medical Center: Dr. Carrie McAdams**, Department of Psychiatry, will conduct a follow-up study of the relationship between attribution biases and recovery among mental health consumers with anorexia nervosa.

The Hogg Foundation advances recovery and wellness in Texas by supporting mental health services, policy analysis, research and public education. The foundation was created in 1940 by the children of former Texas Gov. James S. Hogg and is part of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at The University of Texas at Austin.

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