11th Annual Psychiatry Research Day Itinerary

On Tuesday June 26th, the Department of Psychiatry is hosting its 11th Annual Research Day in the Bernard Snell Lecture Theatre.

8:45 AM – 9:00 AM  OPENING REMARKS

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM  KEYNOTE ADDRESS
        DR. ANTOINE BECHARA
        DECISION-MAKING AND ADDICTION

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM  STUDENT POSTER SESSION (1)

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM  STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
        YASMEEN KRAMEDDINE
        INTERACTIVE TRAINING OF POLICE OFFICERS REGARDING VARIOUS
        PSYCHIATRIC ILLNESSES: A NOVEL ROLE-PLAY APPROACH LEADING TO
        IMPROVEMENTS IN OFFICER BEHAVIOUR

        VICTORIA SUEN
        EFFECT OF EXPERT ADVICE IN THE STOCK MARKET: WHAT INFLUENCE DOES
        ADVICE HAVE?

        ASHLEY RADOMSKI
        DECISION MAKING WITH EXPLICIT RULES IN PATIENTS WITH MULTIPLE
        SCLEROSIS

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM  BREAK FOR LUNCH

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  FACULTY PRESENTATIONS
        DR. HANNAH PAZDERKA
        IMPULSIVITY, EMOTIONALITY AND ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR: EXPLORING THE “HOT”
        SIDE OF FRONTAL LOBE FUNCTIONING IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

        DR. KATHERINE AITCHISON
        ECSTASY: THE "LOVE DRUG" - OR IS IT?

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM  STUDENT POSTER SESSION (2)

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM  AFTERNOON REFRESHMENTS

4:30 PM  AWARD PRESENTATION
Neuropsychological evidence implicates three key neural systems in complex decision-making: (1) An impulsive, amygdala-striatum-dependent, system for signaling immediate prospects and mediating automatic and habit behaviors, and (2) A reflective, prefrontal cortex-dependent, system for signaling future prospects and for exerting control over the impulsive system. I will review evidence for several mechanisms of impulse control in the reflective system, and the vulnerability of this system during development. Most importantly, the dynamics of these two neural systems can be altered significantly under the influence of homeostatic perturbations brought about by conditions such as deprivation, craving, or even stress, depression, and anxiety. One key neural structure that mediates these homeostatic signals is (3) the insula, where bottom-up (body) signals sensitize the impulsive system, and even “hijack” the top-down cognitive resources needed for the normal function of the reflective system, such as when exercising willpower to resist the temptation to smoke or to use drugs in addicted individuals. I will review the evidence showing that lesions of the insula wipe out smoking addiction. Thus one learning objective of this presentation is gaining an understanding of the neural basis of decision-making and impulse control, based on work in patients with focal brain damage. A 2nd objective is gaining an overview of how different neuropsychological tests are linked to different mechanisms of decision-making and impulse control that are sub-served by different neural regions.