

ERICA S. TOWNSEND, M.S.

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Dartmouth College, Lab Instructor and Teaching Assistant

Aug 2021 – Jun 2023

Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences

- Managed an intensive 10-week laboratory-based course on human and animal neuroanatomy, behavioral data collection in animal models, and science writing
- Designed and administered targeted lectures for upper-level courses in addiction, sensory systems, and behavior, as well as large (60+ students) introductory courses in neuroscience
- Generated and graded challenging written and practical assessments
- Earned the Marie A. Center 1982 Award for dedication to teaching and communication quality

Dartmouth College, Doctoral Researcher

Aug 2020 – Present

Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences

- Executing more than five preclinical NIH-funded research projects investigating neural circuits underlying motivation and habit formation with relevance to several neuropsychiatric disorders (e.g., Substance Use Disorder, OCD, Parkinson's); earned three awards for research excellence and rigor
- Extensive experience presenting scientific data at more than 10 professional conferences and symposia (10+ posters, two symposium talks), in addition to regular (two to three times annually) project progress updates to colleagues and faculty
- Supervising a team of more than 15 undergraduate and graduate lab members and provided hands-on training and professional mentorship in experimental design and ethics, data collection and analysis, and wet lab techniques
- Established a novel behavioral data analysis procedure and launched a new cutting-edge neural recording technique, modernizing the lab's technical capabilities
- Published two first author peer-reviewed empirical articles with five more in prep (three first author, two coauthor) in less than five years

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

USA Brain Bee, Regional Coordinator

Aug 2021 – June 2024

Upper Valley Chapter

- Trained a team of 30+ graduate students and faculty in communicating science to broad audiences to engage the local community in biomedical research and facilitate trust in science
- Organized a neuroscience showcase accessible to the public, including symposium lectures, poster presentations, hands-on demonstrations, and a trivia competition for high schoolers
- Secured nearly \$10k in funding annually and maintained relationships with donors
- Generated targeted presentations and resources for visits to semi-annual at local high schools

AWARDS AND HONORS

Marie A. Center 1982 Award for Excellence in Research

June 2024

Dartmouth College

Neukom Award

July 2023

The Neukom Institute for Computational Science at Dartmouth College

Marie A. Center 1982 Award for Excellence in Teaching

July 2023

Dartmouth College

Outstanding Graduate Woman in Learning Award

June 2022

Women in Learning; International Behavioral Neuroscience Society

EDUCATION

Dartmouth College Hanover, NH

Expected Graduation: June 2025

Ph.D., Psychological and Brain Sciences

Concentration: Systems and Behavioral Neuroscience

Dartmouth College Hanover, NH

June 2024

M.S., Psychological and Brain Sciences

Virginia Tech Blacksburg, VA

May 2020

B.S., Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience, Magna Cum Laude

B.S., Psychology, Magna Cum Laude