



Clinical Research Training Track Residents

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Third-Year Resident

Brennan Carrithers , MD



Brennan Carrithers holds a BS in Biology and Psychology from Georgetown College and an MS in Biophysics & Physiology with a concentration on Integrative Medicine from Georgetown University, where he initially developed an interest in cultural and traditional medicine. He later earned an MD/MBA from the University of Louisville School of Medicine. His work with the NYU Center for Psychedelic Medicine began early in his residency, where he has since contributed to multiple ongoing and upcoming clinical trials. These include studies on psilocybin-assisted therapy for cancer-related existential distress, depression, alcohol and tobacco use disorders, and LSD for pain in advanced cancer. His research primarily focuses on investigating the long-term effects of psychedelic therapy and elucidating underlying mechanisms driving therapeutic efficacy, particularly in addiction-spectrum disorders.

Third-Year Resident

Benjamin Trnka , MD



Benjamin Trnka grew up in Seattle within the ex-Yugoslavian diaspora, informing his third-culture identity and appetite for languages. He completed his BA in Biology (Neuroscience) at the University of Chicago, while also pursuing subjects in South Asian Studies leading to his Fulbright-Nehru Research Fellowship (Public Health) in New Delhi. There, he developed the concept of 'chakkar' as 'social vertigo,' a unique idiom of distress. Then, as a Yenching scholar at Peking University (Philosophy and Religion) in Beijing, he situated the displacement of the local category 'shenjing shuairuo' for 'depression' within wider trends of Western Psychiatric hegemony. While earning his MD at The University of Washington, his fieldwork in Sarajevo led to a localized model for intergenerational resilience among young professionals. Threading his academic engagements are themes of individual agency, cultural expression, and structural constraints which now inform his work with the Nathan Kline Institute. Alongside mentor Helen-Maria Lekas, he studies the agentival and structural dimension to the phenomenon of patient-directed discharges (previously: against medical advice discharges) by enjoining emergentist theories of agency and Lekas' reworking of Bourdieu's habitus. Dr. Trnka's research involves both patients and providers across New York State and the role of consult-liaison providers in these encounters. Through this research, he hopes to enrich our understanding of structural constraints and enablements in our health systems in order to reduce further harm to already vulnerable populations. In doing so, Dr. Trnka also contends that the insights of social theory can pair with the pragmatics of psychiatric work to generate even more ethical and humanistic clinical practices.