

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****August 3, 2022**Contact: Jim Newman 202.624.8811, [jim@amprogress.org](mailto:jim@amprogress.org)**Wayne State University Scientist Awarded ACNP-AMP BRAD Fellowship to Educate the Public About the Role of Animals in Brain and Behavior Research**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Lana Ruvolo Grasser, Ph.D., a research associate at Wayne State University has been awarded the [ACNP-AMP BRAD Fellowship](#). The fellowship is a partnership between the [American College of Neuropsychopharmacology](#) and the health research advocacy group [Americans for Medical Progress \(AMP\)](#). It was created to help raise public awareness about the essential role of animals in health research, specifically for the study of brain-behavior-drug interactions and advancements in psychopharmacology, the study of medications for treating mental disorders. Fellowship winners also help promote careers in the field of neuropsychopharmacology, the study of all forms of mental illness and their treatment.

The primary goal of Dr. Grasser’s fellowship project will be to work with her peers to contribute to meaningful conversations about the essential role of animals in advancing science and medicine. Her priority will be to increase the number of institutions and scientists that participate in [Biomedical Research Awareness Day \(BRAD\)](#), an AMP-run outreach program that educates the public about why, when and how animals are involved in research. Launched in 2016, BRAD is an international day of events hosted by research institutions, staff and volunteers to honor the important role of animals in improving both human and veterinary medicine. BRAD continues to grow and reach new audiences every year through the development of new activities and learning opportunities. Dr. Grasser will work with brain and behavior researchers to help the public better understand the connection between animal studies and human health.

Lana Ruvolo Grasser (she/her/hers) recently obtained her Ph.D. in Translational Neuroscience from Wayne State University. Under the mentorship of Drs. Arash Javanbakht and Tanja Jovanovic, her National Institute of Mental Health-funded dissertation project, “Biomarkers of Risk and Resilience to Trauma in Syrian Refugee Youth,” project focused on the effects of war trauma on civilians, including therapies to help prevent those traumas from having lifelong negative impacts for families resettled as refugees of Syria, Iraq, the Congo, and Afghanistan. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she led efforts to expand these programs to the virtual space in order to reach school children. Dr. Grasser is also passionate about science policy and advocacy and is a member of the National Science Policy Network as well as this organization’s local branch, SciPol Detroit. In the fall, she will begin a postdoctoral fellowship with Dr. Melissa Brotman and the Neuroscience and Novel Therapeutics Unit within the Emotion and Development Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health. Outside the lab, Lana enjoys scuba diving with her dad, being a triathlete, and practicing yoga.

“As an ACNP-AMP BRAD fellow, I will take a multifaceted approach to reaching neuropsychopharmacology and non-scientist audiences alike with the goal of increasing knowledge in and dispelling myths surrounding animal research. I hope to provide broadly accessible educational materials on how essential, ethical and sustainable animal research is conducted and positively impacts everyday life. I also look forward to coordinating and hosting BRAD events with organizations like the National Science Policy Network, Nu Rho Sci, and others,” said Dr. Grasser.

**Note to Editors:** A high-resolution image of Dr. Grasser can be [downloaded at this link](#).

### **About the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology**

The [American College of Neuropsychopharmacology](#), ACNP, founded in 1961, is a professional organization of more than 1,100 leading scientists, including four Nobel Laureates. The mission of ACNP is to further research and education in neuropsychopharmacology and related fields in the following ways: promoting the interaction of a broad range of scientific disciplines of brain and behavior in order to advance the understanding of prevention and treatment of disease of the nervous system including psychiatric, neurological, behavioral and addictive disorders; encouraging scientists to enter research careers in fields related to these disorders and their treatment; and ensuring the dissemination of relevant scientific advances.

### **About Americans for Medical Progress**

[Americans for Medical Progress](#) (AMP) is a nonprofit, health research advocacy group that supports the advancement of human and animal medicine through responsible and highly-regulated research in animals. AMP informs the public about animal-based research through outreach events like [Biomedical Research Awareness Day](#), news and opinion articles, social media interactions and various online and printed publications. AMP is a 501(c)3 nonprofit charity supported by the nation's top universities, private research facilities, research-related businesses, scientific and professional societies, as well as by foundation grants and contributions by individuals. AMP's Board of Directors is composed of physicians, researchers, veterinarians and university officials.

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