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## iDRIV to iTHRIV - iTHRIV Sows the Seeds of Research Success

This year, the iTHRIV Scholars cohort is growing from within. Dr. Irène Mathieu, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, and Dr. Patricia Rodriguez-Lozano, Assistant Professor of Medicine, have joined the 2022 Scholars cohort following their participation in the iDRIV program. iDRIV, Inspiring Diverse Researchers in Virginia, is a year-long mentoring program to jump-start the research journey of early-career and aspiring faculty at UVA who are from groups that are nationally underrepresented in clinical and translational science.

Diverse research teams have a proven track-record of boosting creativity and productivity, yet diversity is notably lacking in our current scientific workforce. iDRIV has a foundational commitment to supporting the success of driven investigators and sees the crucial value of creating a network of diverse researchers in order to enhance our mission to improve human health. “For teams to be effective, they must reflect the communities they serve, especially in translational medical research”, says Dr. Sana Syed, program director of iDRIV and alumna of the iTHRIV Scholars program. “I have seen firsthand how different experiences voiced in a group promote clearer thinking and better conversations. If ideas are contextualized against the experiences of others, unintended consequences, implicit bias, and unjust outcomes can be avoided and we can ensure that modern medical advancements improve the lives of all.”

By designing complementary programs, iTHRIV supports researchers throughout their careers. “The iDRIV program is a great opportunity for aspiring researchers to think about tools and techniques for time management, project management, negotiation, and more. It's really about preparation and planning, whereas iTHRIV is about actually implementing a research project,” Mathieu says.

“As a primary care pediatrician with a primarily clinical role, iDRIV was a perfect program to help me get my foot in the research door,” Mathieu says. Because of her iDRIV experience, Mathieu successfully negotiated more time for research in her job description and has smoothly transitioned from primarily clinical faculty to spending the majority of her time on research as an iTHRIV Scholar.

Mathieu entered iDRIV knowing that she would apply to be an iTHRIV Scholar. She had already drafted her letter of intent and identified most of her mentor/collaborator team prior to joining iDRIV. Because she was “informed by the mentorship of some of the faculty I met through iDRIV”, Mathieu used her year in iDRIV to bolster and finalize her iTHRIV Scholars program application.

For Rodriguez-Lozano, iDRIV solidified her goal to be an “independent, continuously-funded investigator in women's heart disease clinical research” and “matured her 10-year career plan”. The program helped her to recognize the importance of strong mentoring relationships and better understand the skills necessary to become a successful research scientist.

“After graduating from iDRIV, I felt equipped with the knowledge of the opportunities I could be eligible for. I also built a solid mentoring team and network to look for guidance,” Rodriguez-Lozano remarks. It was during iDRIV that she first heard of the iTHRIV Scholars program, and it fit right in with her future plans. “[Through iDRIV] I realized I needed to mature my understanding of research methods and quantitative and analytical skills in clinical and translational research.” These are just some of the skills that she will develop during the iTHRIV Scholars program.

**Irène Mathieu**  
**MD**  
University of Virginia



This year, Mathieu and Rodriguez-Lozano join 5 other early-career scientists in the iTHRIV Scholars program, a mentored career development award that takes place over a two-year period. In addition to conducting their proposed research project, Scholars meet weekly for professional development activities that prepare them for a successful future in translational health research. Programming focuses on the principles of data science, the conduct of rigorous and reproducible science, and team science as a means to enhance innovation and discovery in health-related research.

## Patricia Rodriguez Lozano MD

University of Virginia



“While iDRIV is designed to provide impactful support and mentorship to accelerate the career trajectories diverse, young faculty, iTHRIV catalyzes their growth as translational investigators by providing impactful resources and infrastructure,” says Syed. “We are so proud of the iDRIV Scholars who have been accepted into the iTHRIV program. This synergy has fostered the growth of brilliant investigators who will soon become the next leaders in science and medicine, paving the way towards a more diverse, representative and equitable scientific workforce.”

## Our THRIVING Scholars

Earlier this month iTHRIV released the RFA for its flagship Scholars Program. This competitive program prepares trainees to excel in a transformed biomedical research environment in which digital data drives health care hypotheses, interventions, and health quality evaluation. The program also contributes to the growth and development of team science culture created by the marriage of data-driven approaches with robust clinical translational research this program.

With the 2022 Scholars Symposium right around the corner, iTHRIV takes a moment to highlight recent accomplishments of those in and close to the Scholars Program...

iTHRIV Scholar and Virginia Tech researcher Julia Basso, PhD, CYT is studying the role of dance on healthy mother-child interactions. She will investigate whether a mother with PTSD can establish a healthy attachment with her child to decrease the likelihood of passing on trauma from one generation to the next. [Read the announcement here.](#)



iTHRIV Scholar and cancer researcher, Christine Ibilbor, MD, MSc was interviewed in an Essence Magazine article discussing "What The Black Men In Our Lives Need To Know About Prostate Cancer" [Read the article here.](#)

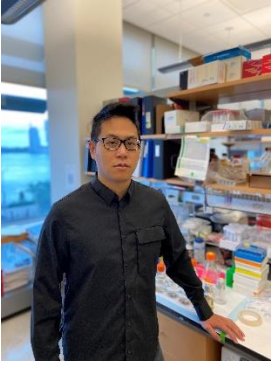
iTHRIV Scholar and an assistant professor at Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC, Brittany Howell, PhD is leading part of a nationwide National Institutes of Health (NIH) study to address the opioid crisis. Howell wants to better understand how early exposure to opioids and other factors influence babies' brain, physical, and behavioral development. [Read the story here.](#)



iTHRIV Scholar Alumna and current Scholar Program Mentor, Sana Syed, MD has been awarded an NIH R01: for \$3.6M to study population-based characterization of metabolic pathways to predict pediatric Crohn's disease outcomes. This is collaborative project with one of iTHRIV's KL2 Principal Investigators, Jason Papin, PhD, as well as, Emory University's Subra Kugathasan, M.D. [Read all of the details here.](#)







Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC/Children’s National Hospital researcher, and current iTHRIV Scholar Jia-Ray Yu, PhD was selected as one of eleven local researchers from Children’s National Research Institute, Johns Hopkins, Georgetown, University of Maryland, and the National Cancer Institute to receive CCF grants intended to advance treatments and cures for children diagnosed with cancer. [Read the announcement here.](#)

A poem composed by UVA pediatrician and current iTHRIV Scholar, Irène P. Mathieu, MD is featured in Scribner's "The Best American Poetry 2022". [Read about the series here.](#)



iTHRIV Scholar Alumna, Meghan Mattos, PhD, RN, CNL has been awarded a NIH K76- \$1.22 million for her research titled "Internet-based insomnia intervention to prevent cognitive decline in older adults with mild cognitive impairment". Read about [Dr. Mattos' award here.](#)

iTHRIV Scholar Program Co-Director, Bradford Worrall, MD was featured in a Radio-IQ interview about his study indicating blood type may correlate with risk of stroke. [Listen to the segment here.](#)



## iTHRIV Under the Microscope: Lynn Margheim

Lynn Margheim, MS, MPH, CHES is an Instructional Design Specialist, in the Department of Population Health Sciences, at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech where she assists the departmental faculty in designing online courses. Additionally, she educates on faculty on how to utilize the learning management system for all their courses. Part of her time she works for the Virginia Cooperative Extension assisting with the online delivery of Diabetes prevention and management programs. Lynn became involved with iTHRIV while supporting Kathy Hosig, RD, PhD, MPH at Virginia Tech's Center for Public Health Research and Practice.

Lynn's work is crucial to the creation of iTHRIV's "Learning Shorts", a series of short educational videos covering a number topics related to translational research. A self-described "Swiss Army Knife", she is motivated by the opportunity to problem solve while communicating complex topics to the general public.

Lynn credits her ability to learn new technologies and train others as a key reason she is able to support students and faculty in adopting new ways of doing things. She is excited to help her colleagues become more efficient and successful.

When not at work, Lynn takes full advantage of the natural beauty of Virginia's New River Valley where she enjoys backyard campfires, farmers' markets, hiking with her dog Jack, skiing, photography, and riding her new E-bike. Lynn's secret to stress relief has been making sourdough bread; she professes to having made over a hundred of loaves, passing many of them out to her friends and colleagues!



## Meet an iTHRIV Scholar Mentor

Tracey Krupski

Jay Y. Gillenwater Professor of Urology  
University of Virginia School of Medicine

"Dr. Tracey Krupski is the perfect mentor! She has all the qualities I strive to possess and cultivate both clinically and as a researcher. She is a skilled and renowned surgeon, an empathetic clinician and an experienced clinical trialist. I am fortunate to be able to learn from her and also to call her my friend." - **Christine Ibilbor, MD, MSc**



## Resource Highlight – The iTHRIV Research Concierge Portal

The iTHRIV Research Concierge Portal provides a single online entry point to essential clinical and translational research resources and information.

[Check it out!](#)

The screenshot displays the iTHRIV Research Concierge Portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the iTHRIV logo, a 'Help' button, and a 'Request a consult' button. Below this is a search bar with 'Search Resources' and 'Browse Resources' options. The main content area is titled 'Find Health Research Resources and Support' and includes four circular icons labeled 'LEARN', 'PROPOSE', 'CONDUCT', and 'CONNECT'. Below these icons is a section titled 'myTHRIV Workspace' with tabs for 'Research Data Commons', 'Events', 'My Favorites', 'My Resources and Events', and 'Recently Updated'. The 'Events' tab is active, showing a list of research events. A 'Download this list as a CSV file' button is located at the top right of the event list. The events are displayed in a grid of cards, each with a title, dates, and an 'Add to Calendar' button. The events include:

- Event: NIH Grants Conference and PreCon Events (Aug 2, 2022, 1:07 am - Mar 1, 2023, 2:07 am EST Virtual)
- Event: FUNDING: 2022-3 Ivy Biomedical Innovation Fund - Deadline Thursday, November 17th, 2022 at 5pm (Sep 29, 2022, 9:00 am - Nov 17, 2022, 10:00 pm EST)
- Event: FUNDING: Molecular Phenotypes of Null Alleles in Cells (MorPhic) Phase I: Data Analysis and Validation Centers (Oct 1, 2022, 9:00 pm - Nov 2, 2022, 9:00 pm EDT Funding)
- Event: 2022 iTHRIV Scholars Clinical Translational Research Symposium (Oct 18, 2022, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm EDT Zoom - Registration Required)
- Event: 4th Annual Healthcare Disparities Conference (Oct 18, 2022, 4:30 pm - 7:15 pm EDT Online)
- Event: "Sprints and Marathons: The Realities of Clinical Research: Voices in Clinical & Translational Science Seminar Series"
- Event: Health Sciences Entrepreneurship "The Development of 463: UAMS Amino Acid Formulation" (Oct 27, 2022, 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm EDT)
- Event: Datapalooza 2022 (Nov 11, 2022, 9:00 am - 5:30 pm EST Newcomb Hall)
- Event: iPRIME Launch Symposium (Nov 15, 2022, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm EST Pinn Hall Auditorium)
- Event: REGISTRATION IS OPEN for the 12th Annual Appalachian Translational Research Network Summit (Nov 16, 2022, 10:00 am - ...)