

AMY E. ADKINS, PHD
Senior Scientific Writer
Undergraduate Research Program Director
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- ◆ 10 years of grant writing and grant management experience.
- ◆ Secured \$1.9 million in NIH funding for undergraduate research training programs.
- ◆ Authored federal, state, and local grant proposals across substance use, health equity, and mental and behavioral health topics.
- ◆ Led >20 sessions for first-time grant seekers and early-stage investigators around securing funding and best practices in grant writing.
- ◆ Directed foundational research experiences for >390 undergraduates through an interdisciplinary research course and two NIH-funded research training programs.

EDUCATION

PhD	Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA Human Genetics (Advisor: Brien Riley, PhD) <i>From linkage to GWAS: ... the genetic risk for alcohol dependence</i>	2012
BS	Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA Biological Sciences	2005

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Scientific Writer, VCU School of Social Work (SSW)	2024-Present
• Identify relevant funding opportunities, coordinate proposal development, conduct literature reviews & develop grant drafts in collaboration with SSW Dean • Collaborator on <i>Dept. of Education Center of Excellence grant submission</i> (2024) • Project management of SSW Evaluation Hub including client communications, individual project deadlines & student training • <i>Co-investigator for SSW Evaluation Hub</i>: researching client needs, conducting literature reviews, and drafting summaries of findings and recommendations	
PI/Program Director, NIAAA-funded summer research training program to develop pathways toward biobehavioral research-related careers	2019-Present
• 65 undergrad. fellows (7 cohorts) engage in research training (week 1) and individual research internships with a faculty collaborator (weeks 2-8) • Collaborate with 30 program faculty across 13 departments/divisions • Developed/Lead week 1 bootcamp, teaching foundational research methodology • Developed/Lead biweekly professional/career dev.workshops for current fellows • <i>76% of cohort 1-6 fellows had ≥1 add'l research experience; 91% of graduates earned BS degrees; 54% of graduates enrolled in graduate school or research-related careers</i>	

Recitation director/instructor, "Genetics of Addiction"	2017-Present
- Teach Biology students enrolled in interdisciplinary undergraduate research course - Developed/Lead didactic material and labs wherein students learn to analyze genotypic & family history data and complete manuscripts summarizing their findings	
Program Director of Faculty Development, Center for Research, Health & Social Justice	2023-24
- Led 7-part series of grant writing workshops for 3 cohorts of early stage investigators - Worked individually with faculty to review drafts and offer guidance - Organized and led study sections of Training and Mentoring Advisory Board members to review pilot grant proposals from workshop attendees - Participated in a 2-day <i>Group Model Building</i> session focused on dismantling structural racism in commercial tobacco research	
Scientific Director, VCU Office of Institutional Equity, Effectiveness, and Success (IES)	2022-23
- Provided infrastructure to promote and support IES and IES-related faculty to seek internal & external funding from federal, state, and local agencies - Provided biweekly funding announcement emails tailored to the 8 IES research cores in our institute. IES core faculty members represented most disciplines at VCU including the School of the Arts, Engineering, Nursing, & Psychology - Supported IES faculty in proposal development via mentoring first-time grant seekers/early-stage investigators and developing a series of workshops around securing funding and best practices in grant writing - Project management role with a small team of IES faculty to organize and facilitate their proposal for a transdisciplinary "Momentum" internal research grant including drafting a LOI, establishing a timeline & milestones, and organizing meetings and necessary documents. - Led a multidisciplinary team in directing, coordinating and implementing new research initiatives including the development of a team science grant academy (canceled due to leadership turnover) and an undergraduate research-focused QEP proposal - Served as the primary grant writer for a large, <i>collaborative NSF proposal (2022) for a Regional Innovation Engine</i> grant focused on health equity and access to care. Partners included Virginia State University, community organizations, VCU Innovation Gateway, & VCU Health.	
Co-PI/Program Director, NIDA-funded academic year research training program to develop pipeline for substance use research-related careers	2021-25
28 undergrad fellows (4 cohorts) enrolled in a foundational research course - fall- and were matched with addiction research faculty for a paid research internship - spring - Collaborated with 21 program faculty across 13 departments/divisions - Developed/Led biweekly professional/career dev. workshops for current fellows 71% of fellows had ≥1 additional research experience; 100% of graduates earned BS degrees; 39% of graduates enrolled in graduate school or research-related careers	
Director, Undergraduate research summer bootcamp	2016-17
- Developed/Led Intensive, one week program each summer covering research methods, basic statistics & statistical programming languages - Developed/mentored small group projects related to didactic material using real data 36 undergraduates from 7 majors participated	

Term Assistant Professor, VCU Department of Psychology	2015-22
- Directed a large, collaborative project to understand the relationship between college student substance use/behavioral health and academic outcomes - Developed and secured materials for 23andMe research collaboration to examine the effects of genetic ancestry testing on complex trait literacy in undergraduates - Oversaw Spit4Science data registry compilation and data management - Developed and led collaborator clinics for faculty new to the Spit4Science dataset - Contributed to <i>NIDA P50 Center of Excellence submission</i> (2017) and resubmission (2018: "College Substance Use: Etiology, Intervention, Education, & Outreach") - Core Lead for Administrative Core - Drafted sections of text for Data Collection & Administrative cores, drafted letters of support, & coordinated documents and managed documents study measures	
Project Manager, The Great VCU Bike Race Book Initiative	2015
- VCU-wide initiative during a week-long international biking championship in Richmond, Va. - Coordinated 25 mini-courses for 337 students enrolled from 50 majors taught by 31 faculty from 21 different departments, schools or offices - Developed and analyzed quantitative & qualitative assessment measures for participants	
Course Director, "Spit for Science" undergraduate research course	2013-23
- One of the largest curricular undergrad. research courses at VCU; used as a model of best practices for interdisciplinary, large-scale experiential learning - Taught foundational undergraduate research course each fall & spring focused on behavioral genetics & psychology of complex human disorders - Oversaw small group projects wherein students analyzed real "Spit for Science" project data & prepared collaborative presentations - Listed as a service-learning starting 2015. Directed/oversaw students educating peers and broader university/local community about the research project and their findings <i>303 undergraduates enrolled representing ~17 departments/divisions</i>	
Postdoctoral Fellow, Virginia Institute for Psychiatric & Behavioral Genetics	2013-15
- Identified genetic and environmental factors contributing to college student substance use and behavioral health outcomes (Mentor: Danielle Dick, PhD) - Conducted a meta-analysis of Genomewide Association Studies (GWAS) for alcohol dependence (Mentor: Brien Riley, PhD) - Created calculated variable code for longitudinal dataset with >2000 variables	
PhD candidate, VCU Department of Human Genetics	2006-12
- Investigated genetic factors associated with alcohol consumption and related traits using wet lab techniques, convergent model organism data, and quantitative analysis <i>Quantitative skills: GWAS analysis, factor analysis, invariance modeling</i> <i>Wet lab skills: QPCR, gel electrophoresis, DNA & RNA extraction, RFLP analysis</i> <i>Programming skills: R, Unix/Linux, Plink, Mplus, METAL</i>	

CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Course director

Spit for Science: Conducting & Understanding Research, VCU (PSYC 494/BIOL 391 - 3 cr.)	2013-23
· Associated Genetics of Addiction recitation for Biology majors/minors	2017-Present
Genes, Environment, & Human Behavior, VCU (HUMS 391 - 1 cr.)	2016
The Science of Happiness, VCU (UNIV 291 - 3 cr.)	2016
General Biology I and II (class + lab), John Tyler Community College (4 cr.)	2013-14

Guest lecturer

Intro to Undergrad Research, Professional Planning & Dev. Course, VCU (UNIV 291)	2017-21
Reading and Evaluating Scientific Papers, The Science of Happiness, VCU (UNIV 291)	2017
Intro to Survey Research, Social Work Research for Advanced Students, VCU (SLWK 611)	2015,21
Intro to Undergrad Research, Mindset for Academic Success, VCU (UNIV 102)	2015-17

Teaching assistant

Advanced Human Genetics, VCU (HGEN501 - 3cr.)	2008
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MENTORING & ADVISING

Undergraduate

Honors in VCU Psychology Thesis Chair (Stephanie Cull, Emma Ostenfeld)	2021-22
Senior advisor, <i>Auctus: The Journal of Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship</i>	2020-24
36 VCU undergraduate research internships/independent studies/fellowships	2014-23

Graduate

Morgan Driver, Human Genetics PhD (VCU), Dissertation Committee	2020-22
Nate Thomas, Developmental Psyc PhD (VCU), Internship Supervisor	2021
Terrell Hicks, Clinical Psychology PhD (VCU), Dissertation Committee	2018-23
Kofo Williams, Social & Behavioral Sciences PhD (VCU), Dissertation Committee	2018-20
Neha Rampally, Medical Sciences MS (BU), Thesis Reader	2019-20
Tenesha Lewis, MPH (GWU), Practicum Preceptor	2017-18
Peter (Austin) Carrico, Sociology MS (VCU), Thesis Committee	2017
Carly Lovell, Nursing PhD (MUSC), Dissertation Committee	2017
JK Stringer, Educational Psych PhD (VCU), Externship Supervisor	2016

FUNDING

Active

Virginia Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (Contract)	2025-28
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Marcus Alert evaluation

Award Amount: \$96,475

PI: Gary Cuddeback, PhD

Co-I: Amy Adkins, PhD

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (R25 AA027402)	2024-29
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Guided Research Experiences and Applied Training (GREAT)

Award Amount: \$593,990

MPI: Amy Adkins, PhD (Contact) & Danielle Dick, PhD

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)(R25 DA061485) <i>Training in Research Undergraduate Experience through the Rutgers Addiction Research Center</i> Award Amount: \$1,305,880 PI: Danielle Dick, PhD External Advisory Committee: Amy Adkins, PhD	2024-29
<u>Past</u> National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (R25 DA051339) <i>Building undergraduate research training as a foundation for diversifying alcohol research</i> Award Amount: \$809,498 MPI: Amy Adkins, PhD & Karen Chartier, PhD (Contact PI) [terminated 05-2025 per changes in NIH/HHS priorities]	2021-25
National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) (5P50MD017319) <i>The Center for Research, Health, and Social Justice</i> Award Amount: \$587,826 (Investigator Development Core only) MPI: Carol Cornell, PhD; Pebbles Fagan, PhD; & Mignonne Guy, PhD Program Director for Investigator Development Core: Amy Adkins, PhD	2023-24
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (R25 AA027402) <i>VCU Guided Research Experiences and Applied Training (GREAT)</i> Award Amount: \$485,715 PI: Amy Adkins, PhD	2018-24
VCU Presidential Research Quest Fund <i>Mental health, substance use & academics: Impact of COVID-19 on VCU students</i> MPI: Danielle Dick, PhD & Ananda Amstadter, PhD Award Amount: \$50,000 Co-I: Amy Adkins, PhD	2020-21
VCU Division of Community Engagement Service Learning Grant <i>Examining equity & access in health & wellness among the VCU student community</i> Award Amount: \$1000 MPI: Amy Adkins, PhD & Sally Kuo, PhD	2018-19
VCU Quest Innovation Programmatic Fund <i>Understanding connections between health, co-curricular engagement, and student success</i> Award Amount: \$20,000 PI: Amy Adkins, PhD	2016-17
Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Research Exposure Award <i>Spit for Science</i> Award Amount: \$5000 MPI: Amy Adkins, PhD & Danielle Dick, PhD	2016
Va. Alcoholic Beverage Control Education & Prevention Grant Program <i>Preventing underage and risky drinking among college students</i>	2015-16

Award Amount: \$7500

MPI: Amy Adkins, PhD & Danielle Dick, PhD

SERVICE & OUTREACH

Grant & Manuscript Reviewer

Institute for Research in Behavioral & Emotional Health Pilot Grant proposals	2025
One VCU Research Strategic Priorities Plan proposals	2024
NIDA Career Development Education & Training Study Section	2023
VCU 1st Generation Student Success research grant proposals	2022,25
VCU Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program fellowship proposals	2019
VCU Postdoctoral Fellows Small Grants Program	2018
Ad hoc reviewer, <i>Journal of American College Health & ALJ in Student Research</i>	2018-20

K-12 Outreach

Project Screener, Metro Richmond STEM Fair	2019,20
Guest lecturer: genetics, RJO Intermediate School, 5th grade class	2019
DNA extraction workshop, MLWGS annual STEM event, 6-8th graders	2018,19
Guest lecturer: genetics, Schuylkill Elementary, 5th grade class	2018
Guest lecturer: genetics, St. Mark's, 8th grade class	2018
DNA extraction workshop, Full STEAM Ahead event, 6-8th grade girls	2018
Guest lecturer: genetics, Thomas Dale High School	2016
Judge, American Society of Human Genetics "DNA Day" annual essay contest	2013-22
Judge, Manchester Middle School Science Fair	2012-13,15
Judge, Metro Richmond STEM Fair	2010-15

Committee Service

Spit for Science data registry steering committee	2023-Present
VCU Relevant and Applied Learning (REAL) Council curriculum committee	2020-23
VCU Psychology "Diversity Driving Excellence" strategic planning committee	2020
Research Society on Alcohol "Increasing Diversity in the Pipeline" sub-committee	2020-22
VCU Relevant and Applied Learning (REAL) Council	2019-21
Spit for Science research project steering committee	2017-19
College Behavioral & Emotional Health Institute leadership committee	2016-19

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS (ORAL AND POSTER)

- **Adkins, A.** (2025, April). *Best practices in grant writing*. [Invited talk]. VCU Health Hub pilot grant proposal applicants webinar, Richmond, VA.
- **Adkins, A.** & Golding, S. (2022, March). *Writing student training grants* [Invited talk]. VCU Clark Hill Institute, Richmond, VA.
- **Adkins, A.** (2021, June). *Undergraduate research programming as a means to address underrepresentation in the behavioral and biomedical sciences* [Symposium]. In D.Dick & R. Palmer (Chairs), Efforts to Increase Diversity in Behavior Genetic Research, Teaching, Mentoring, and Outreach. Behavioral Genetics Association Annual Meeting, virtual.
- **Adkins, A.** & Kuo, S. (2021, May). *Inclusive teaching practices in an undergraduate research class* [Conference Presentation]. VCU Ctr. for Teaching & Learning Excellence, Richmond, VA.
- **Adkins, A., Hill, H., & Dick, D.M.** (2021, June). Building an undergraduate research training pipeline to increase diversity in alcohol research [Poster presentation]. *Alcohol Clin Exp Res*, 45, 80-262. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.14628>

- Rector, A., **Adkins, A.**, Corcoran, J., Kinnebrew, A., Richman, I., Ronquillo, T., & Totah, F. (2019, May). *Successes and challenges: a conversation about inclusive teaching across disciplines* [Symposium]. VCU Ctr. for Teaching & Learning Excellence, Richmond, VA.
- **Adkins, A.** & Walsh, M. (2018, July). *An interdisciplinary model for incorporating research into undergraduate coursework* [Conference presentation]. Council on Undergraduate Research Biennial Conference, Washington, D.C.
- **Adkins, A.** (2016, May). *Alcohol & drug use among VCU students* [Invited talk]. Inpatient Treatment Options & Recovery Resources for Families Workshop, Northstar Community, Richmond, VA.
- **Adkins, A.**, Aliev, F., McMichael, O., Thiselton, D., Prescott, C., Dick, D., Vladimirov, V., Bettinger, J.C., Bowers, S., Kendler, K. & Riley, B. (2011, Sept). *Examining the association between GPM1 & human Alcohol Dependence using association, bioinformatics and expression studies* [Conference presentation]. International Society of Psychiatric Genetics Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & BOOK CHAPTERS

NCBI Bibliography- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/1vqcorxVjjs5w/bibliography/public/>

- Reid, J., Ahmadian, M., Jennings, D., Pepperl, A. A., **Adkins, A.**, Anthony, K. C., ... Johnson, A. A. (2025). Saying it aloud: inclusive teaching statements impact on sense of belonging and engagement. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0047231X.2025.2487437>
- Hicks, T. A., Bountress, K. E., **Adkins, A. E.**, Svikis, D. S., Gillespie, N. A., Dick, D. M., Spit For Science Working Group, & Amstadter, A. B. (2023). A longitudinal mediational investigation of risk pathways among cannabis use, interpersonal trauma exposure, and trauma-related distress. *Psychological trauma: theory, research, practice and policy*, 15(6), 969–978. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0001207>
- Williams, K.D.A., **Adkins, A.**, Kuo, S.I., LaRose, J.G., Utsey, S.O., Guidry, J.P.D., Spit for Science Working Group, Dick, D.M., & Carlyle, K.E. (2022). Risk, protective and associated factors of anxiety and depressive symptoms and campus health services utilization among black men on a college campus. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 9(2), 505-518. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-021-00981-1>.
- Williams, C. D., Smith, T., **Adkins, A.**, Walker, C. J., Santana, A., Lozada, F. T., Su, J., & Dick, D. M. (2021). Effects of receiving genetic ancestry results on emerging adults' ethnic racial identity affirmation. *Emerging Adulthood*, 9(4), 422-428. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21676968211020880>
- Thomas, N. S., Barr, P. B., Hottell, D. L., **Adkins, A. E.**, & Dick, D. M. (2021). Longitudinal influence of behavioral health, emotional health, and student involvement on college student retention. *JSCD*, 62(1), 2-18. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2021.0001>
- Su, J., Hancock, L., McGann, A., Alshagra, M.*, Ericson, R.*, Niazi, N.*, Dick, D.M. & **Adkins, A.** (2018). Evaluating the impact of a campus-wide social norms marketing intervention on alcohol use, perceptions, consumption, and blackouts. *J Am Coll Health*, 66(3), 219-224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2017.1382500>. (*undergraduates)
- **Adkins, A.**, Hack, L.M., Bigdeli, T.B., Williamson, V.S., Mamdani, M., Edwards, A.,...Riley, B.P. (2017). Genomewide association study of Alcohol Dependence in a homogeneous Irish sample identifies risk loci supported by model organism studies and convergent functional evidence. *Alcohol Clin Exp Res*, 41(5), 911-928. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.13362>.
- Prom-Wormley, E., **Adkins, A.**, Waldman, I., & Dick, D.M. (2017). Critical Issues in Genetic Association Studies. In I.D. Waldman & S.O. Lilienfeld (Eds.), *Psychological science under scrutiny: Recent challenges and proposed solutions* (pp. 221-249). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Arendt, J., Bryant, N., Kendler, K.S., Dick, D.M. & **Adkins, A.** (2016). From saliva samples to the classroom & beyond: What students are telling us about genetic & environmental influences on substance use & emotional health. *Substance Abuse Library & Information Studies eProceedings*, 3(1), 4-10. https://salis.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SALISJournal-vol3_2016.pdf#page=7
- Dick, D.M., **Adkins, A.** & Kuo, S. (2016). Genetic influences on adolescent behavior. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, 70, 198-205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2016.07.007>.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

You First Ambassador Training (supporting first-generation college students)	2025
VCU HHMI Institute for Inclusive Teaching "Champions for Change" participant	2021
AAC&U's Transforming STEM Higher Education Conference	2018
Institute on Inclusive Teaching faculty learning community	2018-19
Recovery Ally Training (supporting students in recovery)	2018
23andMe Educators Summit	2017
SafeZone Training (supporting LGBTQ+ students)	2015
VCU Service-Learning Institute (three day conference)	2015

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, & HONORS

#VCUWomenMakingHistory nominee (March)	2021
VCU Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence Thank a Professor nominee	2020
O'Neill Addiction Science Education Award finalist	2015
Research Society on Alcohol Early Career Investigator Program Travel Award	2011
Predoctoral Fellow, NIMH NRSA T32 training grant	2009-11
C.C. Clayton Award recognizing PhD student achievement	2008
S.G. Wright Excellence Award for PhD student leadership potential	2006
James F. Powell Scholarship	2004-05